



## NEWS

ISSUE NO. 83 | MAY 2022



## CLASSROOMS TRANSFORMED



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# Introduction and Contents



## From The Editor *Anthony Russell*

This edition of the newsletter, the ninth that I have edited, comes out as we embark upon our summer programme of events commencing with the Annual General Meeting. It was the previous practice to publish the minutes and accounts in the newsletter, but last year everything was published online, and we have decided to continue this practice. One of the consequences of the last two years of changes in life as a result of the pandemic has been that there is hardly anyone who does not use the internet, so this should not cause any problems for members. However, paper copies of all relevant documents will be available at the AGM, and the Development Office will always provide paper documents for anyone who wishes to have them.

Whilst there was a small minority who preferred the new style of online newsletter which was available as an experiment for the last issue, most people preferred the present format, so we have decided to continue with the old-style online version for the time being. I am grateful to everyone who responded.

My letter to all OKS as President resulted in some interesting feedback which will be considered by the Executive Committee, but also some very interesting and entertaining news from members of the Association and much of this newsletter is comprised of the results of this exercise. I hope readers find these articles and news items as interesting as I have. OKS are encouraged to keep me informed about their activities and interests so that others may learn of what their old school friends have been doing.

All news and potential articles are welcome, and photographs add considerable interest. The school archives, while comprehensive and available on line via the school website, have some surprising omissions, so any material which may be added to these is much appreciated.

The next newsletter will be published in early December 2022.

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## President's Message



### From the President

*Anthony Russell*

Just when we thought we were getting back to normal last Autumn, further Covid restrictions were announced shortly before Christmas, and for a few weeks we were all being very careful and reducing our social contacts. As a result, we decided to postpone the planned quiz evening from January to later in the year, and the consequence has been that my term of office as your President has so far been very quiet. However, as you will see from this newsletter, there is a full programme of events planned for late Spring and the remainder of the year, and I very much look forward to meeting you at some of these.

As I write this the infection rate remains high, and it seems that "living with Covid" will result in a degree of uncertainty when planning social activities. Being in a vulnerable category myself, and having been shielding for much of the past two years, I understand the caution that many members of the Association will feel about attending crowded events. However some of our events are out of doors, including the summer get-together planned for Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> July, so the risks from attending these must be minimal.

Meanwhile the officers and committee have been busy. Earlier in the year I wrote to all members, and I was pleased with the positive response and the helpful suggestions that have been made. We will be considering these, and working out how we can implement some of the ideas. What shone through the replies was a considerable affection for the school, pride in having been educated at King's and a willingness to become involved if

practicable to do so. One of the aspects that we had already appreciated is that there are Old King's Scholars all over the world, in every continent including Antarctica, which I visited over 15 years ago, and in the hope that we can occasionally reach out to the membership too far away to attend our events we aim to provide something online on an occasional basis. Also, we will be investigating the possibility of arranging events in different parts of the country to cater for those members who are unable to get to Chester or London for our regular gatherings.

Many members continue to pay a voluntary subscription to the Association, which is very welcome, and it enables us to put our funds in support of good projects to benefit current students and former pupils. The OKS Exhibition was set up at about the same time as the Association, and the annual award of the exhibition is regarded as the highest honour of its kind that the school bestows and is much appreciated by the recipients. We decided last Autumn to increase the annual value of the OKS Exhibition to £300 a year.

In addition we have discussed how we might assist the current pupils who receive a bursary, and decided that OKS would subsidise each bursary student some of the cost of the iPad that each pupil at the school is required to have. These are specially formatted for use in school work, and the cost of each is £500, a significant expenditure for the family of a bursary student. Students on a full bursary will receive £400 towards an iPad, and those on partial bursaries will receive a pro rata reduced payment. This is a one-off expenditure at the commencement of the pupil's time at the school. There are currently between 4 and 8 bursary students admitted to the Removes each year, so the cost to the Association each year will be in the region of two to three thousand pounds, well within our current means. The first beneficiaries will be the bursary recipients admitted in Michaelmas Term 2022.



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## Officers' Messages

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Liz Gwyther, the Head of Development, who has been a great support to the Association and become a good friend to many OKS, has been off work seriously ill for most of the year so far. I understand that she is making good progress, and we all look forward to her return to the office when she is able to resume her duties, and send her our very best wishes as she recovers. In Liz's absence Gina Whittlestone has been running the Development Office and I am very grateful to her for all her assistance.



From the  
Secretary

*Peter Bernie*

Almost a year has passed since I was elected for the first time at the June 2021 AGM. With considerable help gratefully received from the School Development Team's Liz Gwyther, Courtney Roberts and Gina Whittlestone, I am pleased to report that the role has not proved too onerous and I am pleased to offer myself for re-election at this year's AGM.

After two fairly quiet years, the good news is that CAOKS is planning a full programme of events over the next twelve months, details of which are set out in this newsletter.

I encourage you to reconnect with your peers and with us if you possibly can.



### 2022 Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 7 June 2022 at 18.30  
At The King's School and via Zoom  
See Page 10 for Zoom joining details

### Agenda

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of 2021 AGM
3. Matters arising
4. Hon. Secretary's report and waiver of honorarium
5. Hon. Treasurer's report, with accounts for the year ended 31 December 2021, and waiver of honorarium
6. Dinner Secretary's report
7. Newsletter Editor's report
8. Reports of events in 2021-2022
9. Events proposed for 2022-2023
10. Election of:
  - (a) President (from September 2022, for the second year of his two-year term)
  - (b) Vice President
  - (c) Honorary Secretary
  - (d) Honorary Treasurer
  - (e) Dinner Secretary
  - (f) Newsletter Editor
  - (g) Further Alumni member(s) of Executive Committee (where someone holds two or more of the above offices)
11. Any other business

### Documentation for the AGM

Copies of the Minutes of the 2021 AGM and Accounts may be requested from the Development Office, and may be viewed by following these web links:

2021 AGM Minutes - <https://bit.ly/3vzXvZZ>

CAOKS 2021 Accounts - <https://bit.ly/3rINtVu>



## Headmaster's Message



### From the Headmaster

*George  
Hartley*

Dear all

I write this introduction as we approach the end of the Lent term in warm spring sunshine at Wrexham Road. We've had a particularly busy last few of weeks with everything pretty much returning to normal in school after the slings and arrows of the pandemic. It has been wonderful to see the playing fields teeming with stripy blazers and sports fixtures again, and delightful to be back amongst full audiences in the Vanbrugh Theatre watching music concerts and drama productions. I have always considered the co-curricular life of the school to be just as important as the more prosaic, academic aspects of school life – certainly in terms of fostering personal development but also for the sheer enjoyment of it all. We also enjoyed our first full-on Comic Relief day in two years, with many pupils and staff in fancy dress; I had the pleasure of chatting to a number of Peaky Blinders, two Tyrannosaurus Rexes and Mr and Mrs Potato through the course of the day. Together with a recent appeal day for Ukraine we have raised well over £6000 for those in need and less fortunate than ourselves both at home and abroad.

One thing I've been passionate about in my time at King's (coming up to five years, somewhat unbelievably, this summer), is making sure we are very much part of the local community. Given our somewhat remote location in the city – albeit becoming far less remote with 700 houses appearing opposite us – I think it's easy for King's

to be perceived as existing in its own little bubble, doing its own thing in its own way thank you very much. We've therefore looked to get far more involved locally, with all Sixth Form students now having to fulfil a 'service' option for local charities, primary schools and residential homes as part of their weekly timetable, alongside the service activities traditionally carried out by the CCF and as part of the Duke of Edinburgh award programme.

We've also strengthened links with local institutions such as the Storyhouse, Chester Zoo, the cathedral and the University of Chester. The latter is an excellent example of a mutually beneficial partnership between two thriving local institutions; we provide placements for their trainee teachers in various departments every year and the university provides us with facilities to use in the heart of Chester. Our biggest community project, however, has been setting up a local schools partnership called Chester Schools Together which has now been running for three years. The partnership, which currently consists of King's, Blacon High School and Bishops' Blue Coat School (with The Catholic High School about to join shortly) involves various projects with pupils from all the schools working and mixing together. The flagship project to date has been a series of Saturday Masterclasses, involving pupils voluntarily coming together at weekends to work collaboratively on challenging tasks hosted by different subjects. Having recently secured significant sponsorship from the Westminster foundation, we anticipate 'CST' going from strength to strength over the next few years with student conferences, careers events and joint music concerts planned for the future.

Being at the Heart of the Community also means being accessible to as many bright pupils in Chester and the surrounding areas as possible. With this in mind, we continue to make good progress with our King's 100 Challenge (100 bursaries in place forever more from 2041) and I would like to thank all alumni who contributed to our recent appeal. We are due to have 64 pupils

on bursaries next year in the Senior School – a new record for recent times – and believe that transforming the life opportunities of deserving young people from the local community is one of the most important things we do as a school. On this note I would like to thank CAOKS for committing to funding the iPads for new bursary pupils coming into Removes from next September

– and look forward to telling you about various aspects of the school's digital strategy in the next newsletter.

*George King*

## School News

### Normal Service Resumed

This term things at King's have got back to normal after nearly two years of Covid restrictions, and the school is operating fully with such precautionary measures in place as are necessary given the continuing existence of the virus.

### Classroom Renovation

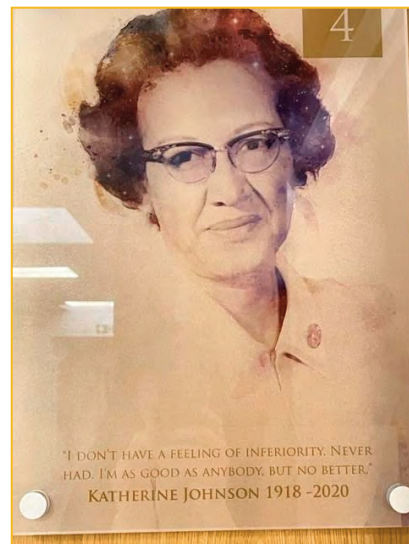
The programme of improving the classrooms has continued and recently inspirational art work was installed across the Maths Department. Each teacher was tasked with picking an iconic image or person to become the 'theme' of their classroom, which was then used to create a sign for the corridor and some stunning wall art for each room. After a great deal of thought and debate the Maths team chose Alan Turing, Katherine Johnson, Florence Nightingale, Isaac Newton, Maryam Mirzakhani and Carl Gauss.

A quote from each Maths hero is etched on the corridor sign and the areas of the subject they explored or discovered are brought to spectacular life on the back wall of each room.

This latest development is part of a scheme of improvement across the Senior School which will eventually see every classroom fully renovated with a purpose-built Teaching Wall, Smart screen,



*Classroom with Carl Gauss mural*



*Katherine Johnson door sign*

specialist desks and chairs and new air conditioning units. The next department to reveal their artwork will be English, with teachers using different genres of literature as their inspiration.



## Careers Initiative

The careers provision at King's has been expanded. Dr Hensman, Head of Careers, is now based in the Careers Office next to the main reception where he will be available for one-to-one sessions with pupils. As well as providing a base for careers resources, it is a place where they can arrange to talk to Dr Hensman about their career plans and get advice. Pupils will be able to make an appointment with him directly, or they can be referred by their form tutor or a subject teacher.

In conjunction with this, a series of weekly Careers Breakfasts was launched this term, the first taking place on Friday 11 February with an Accident Investigator. Dr Hensman has been working with parents to give pupils an insight into the wide range of professions and industries that are open to them. The school has a rich resource of experience in the parent community and parents have been delighted to share that with King's students.



*Dr. Hensman*

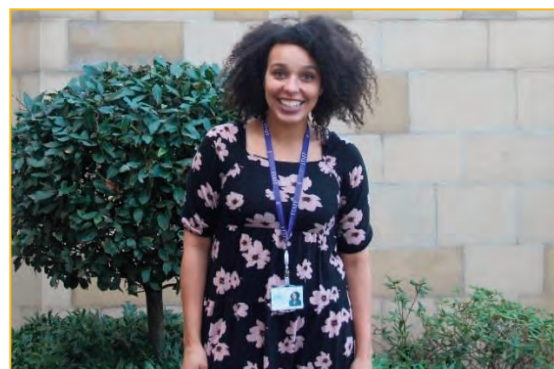
As well as giving students an insight into well-known professions such as Medicine, Law and Engineering, the Careers Breakfasts will also open their eyes to lesser-known industries and career paths. Speakers at the Careers Breakfasts have included a Games Developer, a Child Abduction Lawyer, an International Musician and the MD of a "unicorn" tech company. Other speakers lined up are a Chemical Engineer, Head of Marine

Ecology, a Clinical Neuropsychologist and many others.

Last April the Development Office launched a careers initiative among the alumni community. Some of those who responded produced short videos giving an insight into what they did after leaving King's and their career paths and others offered mentoring. Due to the pandemic, work experience was out of the question but that is certainly something the Development Office would like to explore going forward. If alumni are happy to provide careers advice by either speaking at one of the breakfasts (they would need to be fairly local) or by offering mentoring and/ or work experience, that would be great. In the first instance please contact the Development Office and arrangements can be made to take the offer forward.

## Diversity and Inclusion

The school has appointed a diversity and inclusion co-ordinator and Miss Emily Sherriff, arrived at the beginning of this term and she has hit the ground running! Miss Sherriff is working closely with the pupil-led Equality and Diversity group to bring real focus to the issues that matter to our school community.



*Miss Sherriff*

Commenting on her role Miss Sherriff said: "It is key that the pupils lead the discussion and the initiatives, and I am delighted that we have such an engaged pupil body at King's. The pupils I have spoken to have a lot of ideas. They recognise what

needs to be done and they are already coming up with realistic, actionable solutions. It's very exciting."

In February, the Equality and Diversity group, with support from Miss Sherriff, focussed on LGBT+ issues. Miss Sherriff recently led an assembly on LGBT+ History Month and has been overwhelmed by the response to it. She said: "We will be using LGBT+ History Month to put the focus on LGBT+ issues within our school and community. Since my assembly last week, so many pupils have approached me to ask how they can get involved, and that's fantastic."

Miss Sherriff joined King's from Blue Coat School in Coventry where she was Head of House with a focus on diversity and inclusion. As well as leading on Diversity and Inclusion at King's, she also teaches English.

### Chester Schools Together

The King's School has joined a partnership with Bishops' Blue Coat School and Blacon High School to work in equal partnership to *provide a range of educational and cultural opportunities for pupils across the Chester community and to facilitate the professional and personal development of staff.*

The Partnership launched its first joint project with a series of Saturday Masterclasses held at King's, Blacon High School and Bishops' Bluecoat High School over three consecutive weekends with mixed groups of students from each school, working across the three sites. The Masterclasses had an overall theme of 'creativity' and projects included a collaborative sculpture, a student newspaper and a virtual reality history learning resource.



The Saturday Masterclasses project aims to bring together students from three secondary schools for a variety of exciting learning experiences and to encourage collaborative working and to challenge students' misconceptions or concerns about working and learning alongside students from different schools and/or socio-economic backgrounds.

More than 40 Year 7 and 8 children attended the three sessions and feedback was overwhelmingly positive.

### Grease – The Musical



The school's major drama production in Lent term was the musical "Grease". Sally Hardy-Jones (U6WAL) wrote a review, published below.

### *Grease is the way I am feeling!*

The latest King's School theatrical production makes for a charming, diverting and spirited evening, and sees a group of 11-18 year olds transformed into joyful performers, glowing with



professionalism. The cast breathe life into this well-known and cherished classic brilliantly, unphased by its huge legacy.

A poignant moment that should be highlighted is the explosion of genius in the 'Summer Nights' scene whereby the enchantment of the cast was evident through their use of vocal skills and physical expression. The chemistry between lead role 'Danny' (Sameer Dhanjee) and 'Sandy' (Freya Beyeler) was simply captivating as they showed the tentative opening stages of a blossoming high school romance. Spellbinding performances also came from Vince Fontaine (Sonny Santangeli) through comical characterisation and charisma, and Frenchie LeFevre (Winnie Thomas) whose performance resonated as an angelic dalliance.

Clare Howdon should be credited for pulling together this exceptional spectacle, alongside Julia Williams and Shirley Davis who have created dances brimming with sass and attitude. And of course, finally, the band were integral to sustaining the energy and pomp of the iconic songs.

### Reunions



Unfortunately lack of numbers meant that the reunions planned for 1962, 1972, 1982 and 2002 leavers had to be cancelled, although it has been possible to arrange visits to the school for some individuals who were disappointed. It may be that fear of Covid is affecting willingness to travel and attend such functions, and it is hoped that next year more alumni will be able to attend.



However, a large number of former pupils attended the 2012 reunion which was greatly enjoyed and which, apparently, continued in the city centre, and by the time the newsletter is published the reunion for 1992 leavers will have taken place.

### The King's Tudor Society



Members of the King's Tudor Society were invited to attend the school's carol service in Chester Cathedral in December and met for breakfast in the refectory before the service.



## Future Events Dates for Your Diary

### **CAOKS AGM – Tuesday 7th June 2022**

18.30-20.00 – at school and on Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83536213752?pwd=ZDFGdldTWwK1VzhYdDIKajRQRG9tdz09>

Meeting ID: 835 3621 3752

Passcode: u2H0Fd

Supper tickets: £15 per person

Contact Peter Bernie [honsec@caoks.co.uk](mailto:honsec@caoks.co.uk)

07836 567490

### **Bowls & Supper – Saturday 18th June 2022**

At the delightful Goshawk, Mouldsworth CH3 8AJ, meeting from 17.15, with first ends at 18.00. No experience needed, so come along to play, watch, dine or simply enjoy a beer!

The pub's next to Mouldsworth Station and the 17.02 from Chester arrives at 17.13.

Choose your own supper on the night, served at about 20.00.

Contact Jem Lloyd

[jemandjennyllloyd@aol.com](mailto:jemandjennyllloyd@aol.com) 07932 000524

### **Cricket – CAOKS v School – Friday 1st July 2022**

Join us at school to enjoy this traditional fixture, as the two teams compete for the Ashes of the old pavilion.

Contact David Atkin

[davidewardatkin@gmail.com](mailto:davidewardatkin@gmail.com) 07979 523943

### **Rowing - CAOKS vs School. Monday 4 July (4:30pm onwards, at the KSRC Boathouse)**

An opportunity to get back in a boat and race for the CAOKS Vlls against school opposition. Alumni races for men & women, recent and not so recent leavers! Full details to follow, including Alumni captains and details on how to purchase food for the evening.

If you would be interested in being a team captain, please contact Gina Whittlestone on [giw@kingschester.co.uk](mailto:giw@kingschester.co.uk)

### **Alumni Summer Get-Together – Saturday 9th July 2022**

Join us in the marquee at school for an Alumni get-together, family fun day and barbeque.

Book at:

<https://www.kingschester.co.uk/alumni-summer-get-together/>

### **Golf & Supper – Friday 29th July 2022**

At Eaton Golf Club, meeting from noon, with fourballs teeing off from 14.00. Anyone wishing to come along at 19.30 just for the evening meal is very welcome.

Contact Ian Beech

[iandbeece@gmail.com](mailto:iandbeece@gmail.com) 07710 104468

### **Annual Dinner – Saturday 10th September 2022**

Join us at school from 18.30 for 19.30

Book at:

<https://www.kingschester.co.uk/156th-caoks-dinner/>

Contact Robin Hardi

[dinnersec@caoks.co.uk](mailto:dinnersec@caoks.co.uk) 07875 486399

### **London Event – Thursday 10th November 2022**

This year's London event is being held at One Moorgate Place, home of Chartered Accountants' Hall, the historic and beautiful Grade-II listed venue in the heart of the City.

Book at:

<https://www.kingschester.co.uk/2022-london-event/>

### **Supper & Snooker – Friday 18th November 2022**

Join us at The City Club, Chester for supper (and optional snooker!)

Contact Peter Bernie

[honsec@caoks.co.uk](mailto:honsec@caoks.co.uk) 07836 567490

### **Races – Saturday 26th November 2022**

Join us at Bangor-on-Dee for a great day out, enjoying seven National Hunt races.

Contact Will Lamb

[sixhitter@hotmail.com](mailto:sixhitter@hotmail.com) 01244 534830

Please check the Alumni section of the School website for updated details of these events

## Alumni News

### Liverpool Crown Court Internship in memory of Sir David Maddison OKS (1966)



It was recently announced that Liverpool Crown Court has established an internship in memory of Sir David Maddison, former Recorder of Manchester and High Court Judge, who died in 2019.

The annual award will be made each year to a young person to give the intern an opportunity to acquire an insight into the criminal justice system and the working of a busy Crown Court. There will be an annual competition for the award, which was launched in March with a workshop at Goodison Park, Everton attended by 50 students from 6 Merseyside schools.

Applicants for the internship are required to write an essay of 1,000 words on a chosen topic – this year the subject is “If you could change one law, what law would you change and why?”. 6 candidates will be chosen for interview and the successful student will take up the internship each July.

### John Gowlett (1969)



Professor John Gowlett is Professor of Archaeology and Evolutionary Anthropology in the Department of Archaeology, Classics and Egyptology at the University of Liverpool.

His particular interests are in the origins of human fire use and the evolution of design form in technology. He is involved in fieldwork in eastern and southern Africa. He was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 2017.

### Godfrey Ashby's Memories of the King's School in the 1940s

We were delighted to hear from the Right Revd Godfrey Ashby, aged 91, with notes of his happy memories of the school in the 1940s, and other aspects of his life.

Bishop Ashby had a distinguished ministry as a Church of England priest, later bishop, and as a theologian. Born in 1930 he was a pupil at the school during the Second World War. After Army service he studied at King's College, London graduating in 1954 with a Bachelor of Divinity degree and Associate of King's College London. Later he became a Doctor of Philosophy. He was ordained Deacon in the Church of England in 1955



and Priest in 1956. He was a curate in St Helier, Surrey, where he met his wife, Sally Hawtree, and in 1958 they emigrated to South Africa where he held a number of posts in the church, including Archdeacon and Dean of Grahamstown, and various academic posts in South African universities.

In 1980 Godfrey Ashby was consecrated Bishop and served as diocesan Bishop of St. John's. At this time he was also Professor of Divinity in the University of Witwatersrand. He returned to England in 1988 and was appointed Assistant Bishop of the Diocese of Leicester, a post he held until retiring from full-time ministry in 1995. However he continued to serve as Assistant Bishop in South Africa, and in the dioceses of Portsmouth and Exeter until recently.

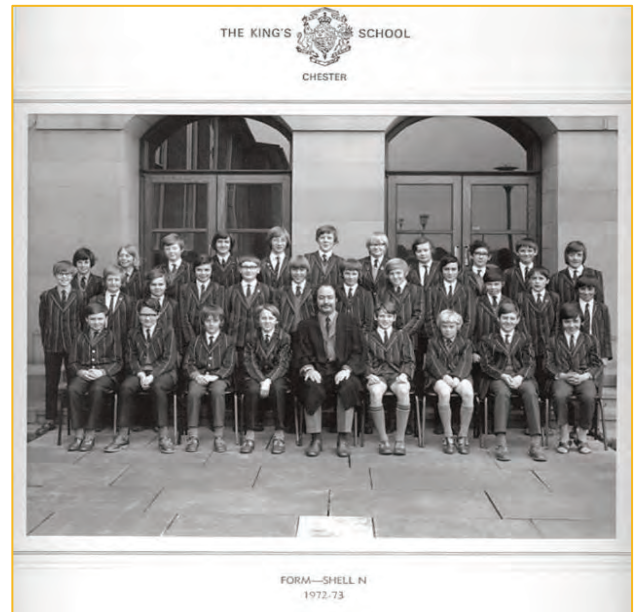
His notes contain the following recollections:

- B.T. Williams who taught me French and all French culture and Arts and History. He spoke French, not "Franglais", with a clear accent and with patience.
- Johnny Walsh who taught maths and what it was to be a Christian and to love the Lord.
- Running with the Cheshire Beagles across the fields of Cheshire.
- The early trains from Chester (General) into the Welsh valleys, to follow the streams that flowed with the Dee or the Clwyd. This was foot-slogging into the wonderful Welsh Hills before Beeching closed the railway lines.
- Many memories of Chester Cathedral, and its glories!
- Standing on Wolverhampton (high level) station to be whisked off terrified to Catterick Camp and Army Service with Royal Signals and the Intelligence Corps at Maresfield in Sussex.
- Student at King's College London and being taught by a Jewish-German scholar,

Ulrich Simon, whose breadth of knowledge I shall never forget.

- Above all a nurse, Sally, at St. Helier Hospital in my first parish and we went to South Africa together.

## Memories from Martin Rawling (OKS 1978)



I have the fondest memories of King's and owe so much to the 7 years I spent there (1971-78). I'll generously describe myself as having been on the average scale, academically, having excelled much more at rowing and athletics. That said, I thoroughly enjoyed Maths (Reg Reed) and French (Paul Parker / Hillary Fox) in particular, and got on well with many of the other teachers too - Messrs Hutton, Jones, Leyshon and others.

I remember turning up late to one of Reg Reed's lessons - which was usually a big no-no, but I'd just competed in a lunchtime boxing bout and walked in 10 minutes after the lesson had started with a black eye, and he just gave me a slight smile and asked me to "Take a seat, Rawling, thank you". Tom Clamp the PE master was a great guy, and I recall his wife ran the tuck shop.

Mike Fox was probably the teacher I remember best, though, mainly through King's Rowing. I was fortunate to be Head of Rowing in my last year and attended many wonderful regattas across the country, often driven there by Mike in his old Range Rover towing our boat behind him.

In the 6th form I applied for a Midland Bank sponsorship which after King's led me to a year working in Liverpool and Chester before heading off to Loughborough University to read Banking & Finance. Always thinking I'd find something more interesting to do than banking, the Bank had other ideas and kept finding exciting new opportunities for me, such that after a career in UK, Jersey and all over Asia, I ended up in Hong Kong - Midland Bank long since subsumed by HSBC. I retired from the Bank last month actually, a 43 year career, although I'm now being invited back in on another project - just for 6 months they keep telling me, we shall see.

I was looking at that old photo of me aged 11 (middle row, 5<sup>th</sup> from right) and remember instantly the names - and the nicknames - of just about every one of my classmates with no prompting. If only my short-term memory was as good!

#### News of Jim Denning: OKS (1958)



Jim Denning joined the King's School in Remove A in 1950, and left in 1958. In his last year he was asked to speak in the school's annual mock election, usually won by the head boy for the Conservative party. Jim invented the Unconditional Primitivist party and won in a

landslide, chaired shoulder-high from the hall by cheering boys.

He went on to St Edmund Hall, Oxford, on an open scholarship to study French and German. After graduating he moved to Paris to research the French novelist Jean Giono. He spent a lot of time in cafés with French friends.

Eventually (1965) he returned to England, presented his thesis for a B.Litt. (a master's degree) and found a job as a business journalist, knowing nothing about business, but learned from interviewing people. Later (c.1969) he was a founder member and chief editor of the business publishers Gower Press.

Meanwhile he got married and he (or his wife) had two children. He still hadn't written any poetry. Years passed. He formed his own rather esoteric business publishing on literature and mysteries, and sold it for the value of its overdraft.

Towards the end of the 80s his life evolved further. He set up another publishing business called Archive Editions, which became quite successful producing research-based collections of diplomatic records; this company was sold to Cambridge University Press in 2008.

Meanwhile Jim had a new partner and in 2011 got married again. Years earlier he had joined a poetry group and began to write regularly. In 2002 he won a commendation in the National Poetry Competition with his poem 'Another life,' which appears in his first collection *Pebbles, debris* (2003).

Subsequent collections are:

***Dealing with the edge*** (2011) (reviewed in South magazine April 2017);

***Les chemins d'ici/The roads round here*** (2016) (bilingual);

***The accident of birth*** (2020) (reviewed in South magazine September 2021);

***Landscape: image and word*** (2021) ( an anthology of earlier poems facing watercolours by Jim's friend John Starling).

Jim has given many readings, including at the Ledbury Poetry Festival. He continues to write: the poem in this issue, 'To a melancholy bird,' is an example.

Jim's recent work, or some of it, reflects the fatalism of age: he is now 82.

### ***To a melancholy bird***

When the sun was shining  
I heard you sing, so high, so clear,  
that the wind dropped and the sun shone  
more brightly on your feathers.

And when I heard your song,  
it made other songs appear, not on a branch  
but in strange marks on a piece of paper  
which I read to you in our garden.

Now clouds have covered the sun,  
and cold is shivering everywhere –  
I see you perching on your branch,  
eyes closed, beak closed, body trembling.

But let us share the wings of love,  
and fly together to a new level.

### **Finding the Way by Timothy Arden OKS (1965)**

Encouraged by the Editor I thought I would describe an alternative and perhaps unconventional journey for those students who do not necessarily feel ready on leaving school to follow the usual path of Sixth Form, University and a career grounded in the conventional routes. No education is wasted but not everyone (as in my case) is ready to respond at the same age. Most of my contemporaries worked hard at school and went on to University studying for a professional career. However theirs is not the only path.

'To thine own self be true' is an important concept and (forgive my writing about myself) as a boy and young man without any clear idea of where my education was leading I didn't perhaps give it the same attention as others who were either more dutiful or more mature. I saw no point in going to university simply because it was what one did. In my case I was passionate about music and the theatre- but still had to learn that some careers ( and music is one ) cannot be chosen but have to choose you.

Having left the King's School I was persuaded by a friend to apply to the Royal Manchester College of Music where the Principal, having heard me sing offered me a place on the basis I was unlikely to have a big career but could perhaps "sing the odd 'Messiah' and teach". This was exciting - although had I been more honest with myself and listened to my inner voice I would have known I could not justify a career in music. However it was a way forward and gave me time to develop and ultimately to discover that my musical talent was limited but fortunately there were other talents I could better develop.

After three years at music college I managed to win a contract with the professional chorus of Scottish Opera - then a company with 24 choristers and this gave me the opportunity of watching close at hand great artists and musicians. I have never forgotten being part of Berlioz Les Troyens with Dame Janet Baker in the Edinburgh Festival or Verdi's Otello in the King's Theatre Glasgow with Dame Kiri Te Kanawa.

In a break from the opera I went to Amsterdam to visit a girlfriend studying singing there. After a couple of lessons with her teacher I decided not to renew the contract I had been offered with the opera but to study in the Netherlands. I needed to finance myself and found a job as a rehearsal pianist with The Dutch National Ballet. Immediately new (and in the beginning rather scary) experiences appeared. I had no previous experience of the work but needed the job and by



native wit and cunning managed to get by until I knew what I was doing - one morning a dancer came to me with bleeding knuckles saying she had hit the wall because of the way I was playing! I stayed for four years and even played for Rudolf Nureyev while continuing to study singing in the afternoons.

Around 29 I finally recognised (and I accept this was late but it was a fascinating and absorbing life) I was not sufficiently gifted to justify further time in professional music and looked about for an alternative career where I could be useful. Happily I had the right grades at 'A' levels to enable me to study Law and began five years training to qualify as a Solicitor. Since my interest was in people rather than finance I opted for a career specialising in Criminal Law and after three years in Manchester moved to London where I worked as a criminal lawyer until I retired. Again a very challenging career but very fulfilling.

My career journey will be disregarded by many as unworthy even of the writing of this article and a long way below the standards of excellence and distinction expected of and achieved by many King's School Scholars - but The King's School gave me a strong sense of moral responsibility and an awareness of integrity and standards in professional life which have guided me all my life. It also gave me at least three close friends who have remained friends for some 60 years and who have distinguished themselves in their respective professions.

Although my career has not been conventional I am grateful to the King's School for the all-round education it gave me and for the enlightened concepts which have enabled me to explore options and to 'find the way'.

**Timothy Ardern**

## The King's School Railway Club

Ian Travers OKS (1958) sent this picture, taken by Mr. Walsh.



The King's School Railway Club was one of the school's most popular societies in the 1950s and 1960s, its attractions diminishing with the phasing out of steam. The accompanying photograph was taken during a visit of the King's School Railway Club to Birkenhead Docks in 1954, members pictured with "Perrin", one of the shunting locomotives which were a familiar sight in the area until the docks declined in the late 1960s.

Pictured are: John H D Heath on the left, then Alan Williams, Noel Roy and Chris Preston - 3<sup>rd</sup> from right is Ian Travers with Aubrey Fricker in blazer next to him.

*[The other two boys are unidentified. If anyone is able to help please contact the Editor. Also any further photographs of the Club's visits or pictures of other School outings would be of interest.]*



### The King's School trip to Paris in 1947

Article by Mr. G.R.Tolliday, abridged from the School Magazine

***Tolliday's holidays were a feature of King's School life for a quarter of a century. This account of the first such trip, two years after the end of the War, shows how things have changed over the subsequent 75 years.***

Paris in the spring has a traditional fascination for the Englishman, so that when the arrangements for a visit to Belgium broke down, the French excursion proved even more popular. Travel by coach can be a little trying at any time – by night especially so – and it was therefore a somewhat dissipated-looking group of boys which the Crosville bus disgorged at Victoria in the small hours of Monday morning...After a snack lunch thirty-three boys, Mr. Crofton and Mr. Tolliday left on the Boat Train for Newhaven. Here the passage through from the train to the boat was characterized by Red Tape Fumbling, but eventually, same three hours later, the "Isle of Thanet" put out to sea with all our party in one piece.

To Messrs. Crofton and Tolliday's secret regret the crossing was unexpectedly placid and we reached Dieppe punctually. Here we were met by a M. Guibon of the Dieppe Tourism Bureau. M. Guibon had been contacted by letter and proved kindness personified. He devoted some 24 hours of his time to showing us to our hotel, arranging for restaurant meals, and taking the party on a sightseeing tour of the town. The following day we were proposing leaving for Paris on a train after lunch, but it had not yet dawned on the boys that punctuality in arriving at rendezvous is absolutely imperative ... so that we did not finally leave until 5.30 and had to travel via Rouen with a break of trains there.

We reached Paris at 9.30, to be met by Miss Bartle, of our Embassy there, and the head of the Camp Volants. To Miss Bartle was due the success of the whole visit, and grateful thanks are due to her for her share in the arrangements. After a certain amount of haggling, a Black-Market truck was chartered to take luggage and boys to the camp site, and by 11.30 all were in bed. Staying at the Camp Volant proved very successful, since the expenses are about equivalent to the Youth Hostels of Britain and the domestic chores less tiresome. The site is on a demolished site near Les Invalides, and proved most convenient. Fortunately the weather throughout our trip was superb, and after our own shocking winter it was relief to feast our eyes on the chestnut trees in flower in Paris, and roses blooming in the Champs Elysées.



***The party outside the hotel in Dieppe with Mr. Crofton and M. Guibon***

As the Leaders of the King's School Party had a fair amount of administrative work to do, especially with Ration Cards and similar inventions of officialdom, little in the way of organised expeditions was possible... Anyhow, the boys, armed with maps of the Métro, explored Paris in small compact groups, and did this with far greater efficiency and enjoyment than in bulk. It would be safe to say that many Paris citizens learnt a great deal of English during our stay, but at the same time undoubtedly the boys must have learned, at least, that French is a spoken language, and not simply a Text book exercise.



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Sanitary arrangements in the Camp were unbelievably primitive and realising the danger here, the two Masters spent a morning trying various hotels in the neighbourhood in order to make suitable alternative arrangements. They learnt that French hotel manageresses are not in the least shy about discussing this sort of thing. A Mr. Johnson, owning Johnson's Bar, very near our camp, finally provided what we wanted, and subsequently did a roaring trade in fruit juice and white wine. His Bar became the camp rendezvous, and he was most kind to us in every way.

Our one organised excursion, to Versailles, provided our only wet day, and as a result we were prevented exploring the Trianon gardens. Our impression of Paris generally was that the French are harder hit than we are by post-war conditions, but far more cheerful about it. They certainly could not have been more friendly and helpful to us... Many Anglo-French contacts were made...and many people went out of their way to mention to me that the boys were well-behaved and good-mannered, and to contrast their self-discipline with French boys. Each evening we, the Masters, heard about more and more parts of Paris being "discovered", and this pooling of knowledge helped boys to plan their visits for the following day.

The trip home started in the early hours...and it was a saddened party which took the boat train from the Gare Saint Lazare. The Channel crossing was a very bad one and (we) were relieved when we at last entered Newhaven harbour. Here we were met by many familiar things – rain and a piercing wind, and a protracted trip through the Customs. Personally I was infuriated that four boys were charged 66 2/3% duty on alarm clocks, which I knew were intended for family presents and had actually been used in camp. On taking this up with Customs people later, by letter, I was astonished to learn that in any case Customs officials are entitled to value any article as they see fit. Altogether I feel that this sort of treatment of schoolboys with limited pocket money will tend to encourage the traditional

attitude to the Customs that they should be defeated if at all possible.

It was therefore a much chastened party who, after all this unnecessary delay, caught the London bound train. The prospect of a long soak in a hot bath and breakfast at home revived our spirits, and by 9.30 the next morning the party dispersed with many happy memories of the Paris Trip of 1947.

***In the years that followed Mr. Tolliday organised many school trips abroad, and following his leaving the school other teachers continued the tradition. Memories of these, and photographs, would be welcomed for future issues of the newsletter.***





## Power Quest

Steve Williams OKS (1990) writes about his career at and after King's



I was born in St. Asaph., North Wales in 1971 and spent most of my formative years living in the village of Rhosllanerchrugog which is about 3 miles outside Wrexham. It was from there in September 1981 that I began my tenure at the King's School which was to last until the summer of 1990.

I began in Form Beta under the tutelage of Mrs. Davies and one of the first things I noticed was how I had gone from being top of all classes in my previous school, to being top of none at KSC. From there I moved to Form Alpha which was taught by Mr. Izzett and it was he who first referred to me as "Taffy" when he said something along the lines of "I thought you Taffy's could run fast". I doubt that kind of thing would be said nowadays but here we are forty years later and my colleagues from the class of 1990 still refer to me as Taff rather than Stephen or Steve. This is strange as well because that nickname has only ever been mentioned in relation to schooldays.

Moving to the senior school in September 1983 it quickly became apparent that science based subjects just didn't agree with me or interest me. It took me 3 attempts to get a Maths GCSE for

crying out loud, and this was a boy who used to be top in maths. I found a liking for Ancient Greek and Latin though and these subjects were my favourites along with History. I can remember the frustrations of teachers like Mr. Scott and Mr. Aves at my inability to grasp even simple scientific concepts but I also remember the incredible support of people like Mr. Johnson, Mr. Goodrich, Mr. Mellor and of course Mr. Ball.

Although I obtained 9 GCSEs I went on to make a mess of my A levels and didn't get the grades to go to Durham, Nottingham or Exeter. I ended up on a Theology course in Southampton, in an attempt to get as far away from home as possible. I lasted a single year. I think the polite way to put it is going off the rails.

I suppose looking back I was surrounded by much more academically minded guys than myself but I still say to this day that my education at KSC was about far more than examination grades. We were taught how to behave, to be respectful, polite, courteous - all those things that have stood us in good stead throughout the rest of our lives. This is really important as youngsters should not live or die by the sword of academia. There are other paths to be embraced and are no less worthy just because they are not a "career" or such like. The world of 2022 is radically different to even the world of 1992 and I think education needs to consider and reflect that.

Music played a big part in life growing up. My parents were keen for me to learn a couple of instruments and I was very fortunate at KSC to be taught by the likes of Barry Ball, Veronica Solloway and Marilyn Shearn and I managed to obtain Grade 8 in Piano and Grade 6 in Violin. I actually had to stop violin lessons at that point due to the amount of cricket I was playing and in hindsight maybe I should have stopped the cricket not the violin. I also took part in a number of choral and orchestral events at the school and also at Chester Cathedral. My father being a Vicar

also led to many opportunities to play the organ in Church and I used to earn some nice pocket money playing for weddings and funerals.

In amongst all this classical music training, which I wasn't so keen on at the time but am ever so grateful for now, was a developing love of rock music - in particular what was known as heavy metal. Over the years listening to bands like Iron Maiden, Motorhead, Deep Purple, Van Halen and so on I got the urge to start writing songs and form a band. We tried many times at school and it never quite came off. However I have kept those notebooks from the mid 1980's and it's fascinating to look at them now considering what I went on to do.

Throughout my time at KSC I was quite active in the sporting arena, particularly with regard to cricket and football. I played in my year side as we worked our way through school and I was proud to play for the cricket First X1 for 3 years and end up being Vice-Captain. I was a swing bowler primarily. Sadly I sustained a back injury playing whilst still at school and, as a result, didn't play more than a handful of games once leaving school. I played a number of times for the football first team as well but was more usually found in the second string for football. I am now back in touch with a number of my colleagues from the Class of 1990 as we were due to have our 30th anniversary in 2020 but of course the pandemic put paid to that notion and we are yet to organise something to replace that due to it being nigh on impossible to align diaries across the piece. I'm hopeful that we can get together at some point.

So, what happened after that single year at University? Well, somewhat fortuitously I got a temporary job a couple of weeks later at Southampton Solent University (although it was then Southampton Institute of H.E) doing a bit of electrical work and, over a period of months, I struck up a friendship with the Chief Comms Engineer there, who I am still friends with to this

day (Ray is now 87 years old). He saw something in me that led to a number of jobs in IT at that University over the next 15 years.

I also spent most of the 1990's trying to find a band to play with or to form a band with likeminded and skilled individuals (bearing in mind we were still in the pre-internet age so it was all about adverts in Kerrang and similar magazines) but it wasn't until 1999 when I started jamming with a band in London called DragonHeart (now known as Dragonforce and a multi-national success) that things really started to click. I played with those guys for a couple of years before forming my own keyboard powered band called Power Quest in 2001, which is still around today. Over the years I've made 6 studio albums with PQ and been fortunate to play all over the world, including Japan and the US. It's funny looking back to when me and my friends used to look at the pictures from classic live shows in Japan and say that that would be us one day haha! I guess it shows what perseverance can do. I also spent a couple of years playing in another band called Eden's Curse, with whom I made a studio album and a live DVD.



Nowadays, and particularly post-covid, I maintain my IT career and am currently employed by Tata Consultancy Services as a Citrix specialist, working on an account for the Virgin Media/O2 joint venture. I've fortunate to be able to do all my work from home for the past 8 years and it's been well over 10 years since I actually worked in an office. Quite ironic in way ending up working in IT



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given how poor my maths and science were. I don't know what the post-Brexit and post-Covid world will mean for a musician like myself, but it's not likely to be good news sadly. In the meantime I'm working on a brand new project, unlike anything I've been involved in before. Let's see where the next chapter takes us :-)

I've not been back to King's since the day I left sadly. I think for many years I was embarrassed by not being a "high flier" and not having 4 A grades at A level but with age comes wisdom and the appreciation of the bigger picture. My parents moved to Aberystwyth in 1992 and as a result I've never had the need to be in the Wrexham/Chester area but I hope to be able to attend an event or two during the coming 12 months and to see how the old place has developed in the 32 years since I was a student there and I also have a feeling that after everything the school did for me, maybe it's time for me to give something back in some way, shape or form. To those who knew me, I hope you are well and happy. To those who don't, I hope you enjoy reading a slightly different take on the King's School Chester journey.

***Steve (Taff) Williams***



From the  
Dinner  
Secretary

*Robin Hardi*

Just a quick reminder from me on a couple of the dining events.

Following last year's successful first summer get together we are planning to host another on 9<sup>th</sup> July in the afternoon at the school. Friends and family are most welcome.

The 156<sup>th</sup> annual dinner will be held in the school on 10<sup>th</sup> September, and we are now in the process of selecting the menu.

This year the guest speaker at the dinner will be a distinguished Old King's Scholar, Sir Stephen Phillips, who left the school in 1980. The Right Honourable Lord Justice Phillips is a judge of the Court of Appeal and has attained a higher rank in the judiciary than any other former pupil of the school.

Last year's event was so lively and such a pleasure to see everyone after the lockdowns that we heartily recommend you come along and meet old friends that you might have missed in these last few unusual years.

Booking links for both events will be found in the Dates for your Diary, page 10, in this newsletter and will be put on the Alumni pages of the School website.



## **Rod Emberton OKS (1974)**



Rod Emberton died suddenly of a heart attack whilst cycling in January 2022. Born on 27<sup>th</sup> January 1955, he entered the Junior School in 1964, progressing through the Senior School, leaving in 1974 for the University of Wales at Cardiff to study architecture. At school he was a good footballer and he won the Randolph Caldecott drawing prize.

After obtaining a B.Sc. in Architectural Studies at Cardiff he took a Dip. Arch. at Hull School of Architecture, qualifying in 1981. His first job as a trainee architect was in London for two years and then he took posts in Scotland until 1993. During this time he won the 1982 Banff and Buchan Design Award. He was also the Project Architect for the restoration of the Grade 2 Listed Mansion Colstoun House, Haddington. Restoration and work on historical buildings became his speciality.

In 1993 he moved from Scotland to take up a post in Lampeter, where his numerous and varied output included a library for a theologian, a private astronomical observatory, as well as church restoration work. In 2005 to 2006 he was the Project Architect for the Restoration of the Molineux Hotel, Wolverhampton including the design of the new City Archive building adjacent. The project is listed as one of the 20 exemplary conservation in practice projects in England by

English Heritage. Other commissions included Project Architect for a new Music School in the grounds of the Royal Hospital School in Suffolk, and he was Conservation Architect for numerous Reports for Her Majesty's Court Service.

For over four years he was based in Abu Dhabi, and then in 2013 he returned to Chester where he was a self-employed consultant reporting and advising on the conservation of historic buildings.

## **Michael Gledhill OKS (1957)**

John Michael Gledhill died in January 2022 after a long period of illness.

## **Dr Keith 'Joe' Johnson OKS (1962)**



Keith Johnson died in 2021, in Wellington, New Zealand where he had lived since 1991. His father was killed in the Royal Air Force in World War II nearly eight months before he was born and Keith was brought up on a farm near Nantwich, after his mother remarried. He was the first pupil to pass the Eleven Plus examination from his country school and he won a scholarship to study at King's in 1955.

In 1962, he was awarded an Exhibition scholarship in Geography at St. Catharine's College, Cambridge, and he was the winner of the Westminster Medal in the same year. A keen

member of the school's Army Cadet Corps, he was also a Prefect and Cross-Country Runner.

In 1966, Keith joined the Department of Economic Affairs in Newcastle-upon-Tyne planning development in the Northern Region but left in 1967 to take up a doctoral scholarship at the Australian National University, funded by the Reserve Bank of Australia. His PhD, focussed on the developmental impacts of the Australian Government's 'Beef Roads Program' in the Northern Territory and involved fieldwork interviewing cattle station managers, 'road train' operators, traditional overland-drovers and aboriginal stockmen.

Over the following forty or so years, Keith worked widely, across some 25 countries, as a development economist and public policy advisor, with spells, for example, preparing regional planning and project feasibility studies for an Arab engineering company based in Beirut, and a seven year stint as an Economic Researcher and Senior Development Policy Officer with the Asian Development Bank, based in Manila, Philippines.

In 1991, Keith settled in Wellington, New Zealand where he worked in the public service in a range of sectors and policy settings and undertook economic policy consulting assignments in New Zealand and abroad. Retiring in 2009, he set about fulfilling a long-standing ambition to become a Creative Writer and Citizen Journalist and developed his own website 'Keith Shorrocks Johnson, Wellington, New Zealand'. This currently hosts over 3,000 magazine articles about current affairs, contemporary culture, anglophone politics, and the arts, has recorded over 1.6 million pageviews from readers worldwide, and is the point of first publication for his considerable stock of original poetry.

Keith adopted the old family name Shorrocks, having discovered through exhaustive research and DNA testing that his grandfather, Harry, changed his name to Johnson, after fleeing Manchester for London around 1907. At a convivial meeting with long-lost relatives, some

years ago, it was quietly agreed that Harry was 'a gambler, an alcoholic and a womanizer' – characteristics fortunately not entirely shared by his adventurous grandson!

*This obituary was compiled from notes sent by Keith Johnson to the Development Office in 2020. Below is an extract from one of his poems.*

No stranger to contempt, defeat and strife  
You little thought your day would last this long,

But the showers of summer brought new life:  
This the miracle that comes of staying strong.

Time's bounty and its scars alike revealed  
that life itself comes finally to yield.

## James Watson OKS (1946)

James (Jim) Robert Matthews Watson died of cancer on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2021, aged 92. Born on 17<sup>th</sup> January 1929, an only child, his father died when he was aged four. As a result he was brought up by his mother and grandparents. His grandfather was Mayor of Chester during the Second World War.

On leaving school Jim continued his studies at Reaseheath Agricultural College in Nantwich. His first job was working on the Duke of Westminster's estate in Wiltshire.

At the age of 22 he married his first wife by whom he had three children. Shortly after this the family moved to a small farm in North Wales, and Jim supplemented his income by driving a JCB land excavator. However, he decided this wasn't for him after managing to put out all the electricity supply to Hawarden by cutting the electricity main with the digger.

After this he worked as a pig supply officer in the North West of England which involved buying pigs from farmers and arranging for them to be processed. At this time he met and fell in love



with his second wife Bertie, and they married in 1978.

In 1981 they purchased The Mill in Port Isaac, Cornwall, and after the move Jim returned to farming and rearing pigs, which he continued to do until ill-health caused him to give up the pigs in 1992.

Jim was a keen Free Mason, remaining a member of the Deva Lodge which his grandfather had founded when Mayor of Chester. He also joined lodges in Cornwall, becoming master of several.

When living in Chester Jim became a server at the Cathedral, and both he and his wife Bertie were servers and readers at the church of Saint Endellion, Cornwall.

About twelve months before his death the couple moved to a bungalow in Ross on Wye, having found their much-loved home in Port Isaac too difficult to manage any longer, and shortly after the move Jim's illness was diagnosed. However, he had come to regard Cornwall as his home and it was there that his funeral took place.

### **Mr Iorwerth Gruffudd-Jones**

Shortly before this issue went to press we learnt of the death of Mr Iorwerth Gruffudd-Jones who taught woodwork and technical drawing at The King's School in the 1970s. We hope to publish an obituary in the next issue of the newsletter.



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