

THE CHESTER ASSOCIATION OF OLD KING'S SCHOLARS

  
CAOKS  
NEWS

ISSUE NO. 86 | NOVEMBER 2023

*Remembering  
Anthony Russell, Reg Read and Dr. Adrian Ackroyd*



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# Introduction and Contents

## NEXT STEPS



### *Life after King's Sixth Form*

Advice & Guidance from Recent Leavers



You can read more about Next Steps and what this fantastic initiative is all about later in this edition of the newsletter.

## From The Editor *Steve Williams*

Welcome to the Winter edition of the CAOKS newsletter.

I was due to take over as Newsletter Editor during the course of 2024 but with the sudden passing of our President and Newsletter Editor Anthony Russell, I have stepped into the breach somewhat sooner than anticipated. Please bear with me as I find my feet in this new role, and I hope to be able to live up to the standards set by my illustrious predecessor. I was pleased to be able to attend Anthony's funeral in Littleborough on September 13th, which was very well attended.

I only knew Anthony for 18 months but in that time we became friends and enjoyed a number of telephone conversations. He was very keen that I should become involved with CAOKS and thought that my background might offer something a little bit different. I've thoroughly enjoyed the last year or so as part of the CAOKS Executive Committee and I'm looking forward to my new roles as editor of this publication and VP of CAOKS.

Don't forget that the 157th Annual CAOKS Dinner takes place at the school on Saturday January 20th 2024 between 18:30 and 22:30, where our guest speaker will be Andrew Green (OKS 1970). You can read more about Andrew later in this issue and you can book your place via the link below.

<https://www.kingschester.co.uk/caoks-157th-annual-dinner/>

In the meantime, I would like to wish you and your families a very Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays and all the very best for the coming year.

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## President and Officers' Messages



### From the President

*Mark Thorp*

Development Team does an excellent job, and I am looking forward to the upcoming Kings in The Capital flagship event at the House of Lords which will no doubt be a great success.

I would like to wish all CAOKS members and the school community a Merry Christmas and all the very best for 2024.

Merry Christmas

Mark

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It is a great pleasure and honour to be taking on the role of CAOKS president. Under normal circumstances, this would have taken place after the 2024 AGM, and we would have enjoyed the pleasure of Anthony Russell's company for his full term as President including the next Annual Dinner. Unfortunately, this was not to be due to the untimely loss of Anthony in August this year.

Anthony was an extraordinary man, and this Newsletter includes a full obituary. I would though like to take this opportunity to highlight his contribution to CAOKS in recent years. When he arrived on the scene, it's not unkind to say that the relationship with the school still needed further work. Anthony was instrumental in that process and leaves that relationship in a very healthy place. His wisdom and calm, thoughtful guidance was invaluable to CAOKS and its Committee members. We owe Anthony a great deal and he will be sorely missed.

Sadly, the news of Reg Read's passing came through shortly after Anthony's. We all remember vividly the teachers who were a major part of our time at School. Reg taught at King's for the whole of his career including my seven years, he even managed to get me through Maths A-level. He was a legendary figure, not least because of his sporting prowess at both football and cricket. In later years, he took up golf and I had the pleasure of playing with him on several of the CAOKS golf days – he certainly had not lost any of his competitive spirit!

I am looking forward to attending as many of the CAOKS and alumni events as possible. The pandemic was clearly a major blow to CAOKS and its activities, but we now seem to be fully back in our stride after a hesitant restart. The events listing in the newsletter is impressive and hopefully there is something there which will be of interest to every OKS. The School



### From the Secretary

*Peter Bernie*

This year's Annual General Meeting held at School on 13 June was clouded by the news that my predecessor as Honorary Secretary, Adrian Ackroyd, was gravely ill in a nursing home on the Clatterbridge Hospital site and this was followed a few days later by confirmation that Adrian had died on 16 June.

Then in August we learnt of the tragic and untimely death of our President, Anthony Russell. These two CAOKS servants will both be very much missed, and the Newsletter contains tributes to them both.

This meant that on 13 September we held a Special General Meeting to elect:

- Mark Thorp as President, and he will also continue as Treasurer
- Steve Williams as Vice President and as Newsletter Editor
- Andy ('AD') Jones as a Committee member

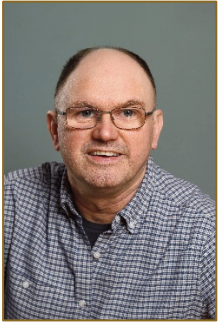


# Officers' Messages

In addition to the newly elected three, Ravi Jayaram continues as a committee member, Robin Hardi continues as Dinner Secretary, and I continue as Honorary Secretary. We could not of course manage to operate CAOKS as we do without the help and technical back up that School provides, so I thank Gemma, Gina and Selena for all that they do on our behalf in front of and behind the scenes.

I wish you all a Happy Christmas and a very Happy New Year, and I hope to see you at one or more events in 2024.

Peter



## From the Dinner Secretary

*Robin*

In writing this I'm looking at my old notes and dinner correspondence through the year, of course with Anthony, our President at the time. It's still a shock to think of his passing so suddenly. He really was a terrific person and although we only met a few times over his tenure I really appreciated his support and wise judgement in all matters. I'm sure we will hear more about him from others in this newsletter.

So, to the 157<sup>th</sup> CAOKS annual dinner. We are well ahead in our planning for the event. As a reminder its Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> Jan 2024, 6.30pm, formal dress.

Once again, the school has kindly agreed to host the event. I know we have tried various other venues, each of which have their qualities, but there is something reassuringly familiar about coming back to the school. Even with the significant changes to the school for many of us, the pre-dinner drinks in the old dining hall are an immediate opportunity to share a few memories that get the conversation started.

The catering team have proposed a superb menu with both meat and vegetarian options, full details of which can be found on the ticket website.

### Menu (abbreviated)

Starter – Belly pork or Manchego arancini.  
Main – Thyme infused chicken breast or wild mushroom and leek pie.  
Dessert – Raspberry meringue tart.

We are keeping the tickets at £40 per person which includes a half bottle of wine and I think is very attractively priced to encourage attendance.

Our speaker for the evening is Andrew Green (OKS 1970). With a long career as a BBC radio presenter interviewing among others two Prime Ministers, two Archbishops of Canterbury and Sir Paul McCartney, and as a senior visiting research fellow at the University of Hereford I'm sure he will have a few stories to tell.

As ever we pitch the dinner as a great opportunity to meet old friends, make new ones and catch up. The alumni have met for 156 years, and we hope this great tradition will continue and grow so we'd love to see you for the CAOKS 157<sup>th</sup> year.

Once again, its Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2024, 6.30pm, formal dress, at the school.

We look forward to seeing you.

Link to tickets below:

<https://www.kingschester.co.uk/caoks-157th-annual-dinner/>

Regards  
Robin Hardi





# Christmas Message

Whilst thinking about content for the 2023 Winter edition of the CAOKS newsletter, I thought it might be fitting to include some thoughts around Christmas. My Father, who recently celebrated 60 years as a Vicar in the Church of Wales, always enjoyed Christmas time at KSC and especially the end of term carol service at the cathedral. (Ed)



## Christmas Message

*Rev. Gareth Thomas*  
TSSF

I left King's in 1993. If you had told me back then that I would one day be an Anglican priest writing an article for the Christmas edition of the OKS newsletter I would have looked at you with utter disbelief. Perhaps something more like complete dismay. Christmas was for presents and parties, food and drink – the birth of a child in a distant land some 2,000 years ago wasn't even on the radar. Life is peculiar...

Christmas is still a time for presents, food and drink (hopefully I've not become a party-pooper), but now also a time for midnight communion services, followed by a season of celebration for something theologians call the 'Incarnation' – the coming of God in human flesh. It is perhaps Christianity's unique contribution to the world of religion, full of both the familiar and the mysterious.

The notion that the human can be home to the fully divine is hard to conceptualise, and yet we know from those occasional glimpses of profound kindness in those of all races, and of all faiths and none, that humanity at its utmost potential is full of the most profound goodness. It is perhaps said best in a slightly paraphrased saying of the second century Saint, Irenaeus of Lyon: 'The glory of God is the human fully alive'. We each bear the divine spark, and something of this is suggested in the Hindu greeting *namaste*, which connotes 'the divine in me bows to the divine in you.'

This year has been difficult for so many both here in the UK and all over the world. The effects of war and growing hardship are felt everywhere. The very earth itself is in crisis, reminding us how tenuous all life can be. What does Christmas have to say to us, no matter our creed, in the midst of it all? Perhaps this: in our fragility and mess, we are nevertheless each the bearers of the image of all that is good, and can each thereby seek to take appropriate responsibility for the welfare and peace of the world in which we live. St Francis of Assisi, the inventor of the nativity play, would greet all he met, no matter their mess, with the words 'Good day, good people.' Let us remember, then, our fundamental goodness.

Peace to you this Christmastide.

Reverend Gareth Thomas TSSF





# Headmaster's Message



## From the Headmaster

*Goerge Hartley*

Both Adrian and Anthony had in common a great love and commitment to King's and demonstrated this through putting a huge amount of work back into the school, for the benefit of both its current pupils and its alumni; for this they will have my eternal thanks.



Whilst not in the habit of paying tribute to distinguished members of CAOKS who pass away in this introduction, I would like to provide a few words in recognition of two leviathans of the association in recent times, namely Adrian Ackroyd and His Honour Judge Anthony Russell KC.

Although Adrian himself would have probably wanted to be best remembered as the pupil who served the greatest number of detentions at King's (a fact he was always keen to publicise), most of you will know him as an old boy who gave outstanding service to the school as the CAOKS secretary for 21 years. Famous (infamous?) for his unreservedly forthright views and year-round sandal wearing, Adrian not only committed thousands of hours to CAOKS and the school in various ways (including regular attendance at school events) but was also a key supporter of the significant changes made to CAOKS a few years ago to make it a more inclusive, purposeful, and effective organisation.

Anthony Russell likewise gave great service to CAOKS over recent years as its President and led the way on the consolidation of the changes as well as further measures to develop the association for the benefit of its members. Anthony was also particularly supportive of CAOKS projects that supported our current bursary pupils from lower income backgrounds; for instance, the provision of iPads for Removes pupils and the 'endangered instruments' in the music department. Notably sagacious and clear-thinking along with an excellent sense of humour and inherent modesty, Anthony marshalled the CAOKS committee with a great aplomb and naturally we were all shocked and upset to learn of his passing whilst at the height of his presidential powers.

In terms of other news, our fantastic new Sixth Form Centre and Drama Studio have been in full use this term to the delight of the pupils, and we are looking forward to the formal opening of the Centre by The Duke of Westminster on 9th November. Whilst many alumni have already visited such new facilities, I am sure that many of you are eager to do so in due course so if you are passing do pop in to say hello and for a cheeky tour. The whole school really is looking fantastic in the autumnal sunshine, and I'd be delighted to show you around.

Finally, you will note that we have changed the format for our alumni gatherings this year, moving to Saturday events which cover three 'anniversary' year groups at once. The events this year will be '64, '74 & '84 leavers on 25<sup>th</sup> February and '94, '04 & '14 leavers on 9<sup>th</sup> March. This format will allow us to provide more appropriate and substantial school gatherings for all and I hope to see you at one of them soon, or else one of the many other CAOKS events over the course of the year.

GH



## School News

### New Sixth Form Centre

By the time this issue goes to press, the new King's School Sixth Form Centre will have been formally opened. (It's certainly a massive leap forward from the Sixth Form building we had back in the late 80's - and to be fair that was brand new for us then. Ed)



THE OPENING OF THE KING'S SCHOOL SIXTH FORM CENTRE

The Official Opening of the King's School Sixth Form Centre took place on Thursday November 9<sup>th</sup> at 14:00, followed by afternoon tea. The Chairman of Governors and the Headmaster were pleased to welcome His Grace the Duke of Westminster DL to formally open the new facility in front of a number of guests and invitees.

### GCSE Results

Delighted King's School students celebrated an outstanding year of GCSE results, with half of grades achieved at the top level of 9/8.

The fantastic results reflected the hard work and dedication of a talented year group, with the amount of grade 9/8s exceeding pre-pandemic levels (2019).

An incredible 27% of results were grade 9, with 71% at grades 9-7. Ten subjects celebrated more than 80% of grades at 9-7. Overall, 48% of students achieved seven or more 9/8 grades, with 19 students celebrating 10 or more grade 9/8s.



Headmaster George Hartley said: "I know there has been some understandable concern about the grading of this year's exams, but our advice to students has remained the same over the past few years; concentrate on your own revision, goals and preparation, and that focus will pay off on results day.



"The lessons learned from that process and the challenges they faced will be as critical to their futures as the results today will be.

"I am delighted that the vast majority are electing to stay on with us for Sixth Form and I also look forward to welcoming the new students who will join us in September. I know they will all thrive in their A Level studies."

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GeveMsCM1tM>



## A Level Results

Delighted students secured places at top universities after receiving their A Level results.

Students, parents and staff celebrated a stellar year for first-choice university places, with 2023 leavers going on to study a diverse range of subjects including International Development, Classic Civilisation, Acting (Musical Theatre) and Mechanical Engineering. Overall, 86% of students secured their first choice, with ten students gaining a place to study Medicine, seven to study Law and a record 14 opting for Psychology courses. Three students will take up places at Oxford and Cambridge.

83% of all grades were A\*-B and an incredible 86% of grades for the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) were A\*-A. Seven subjects celebrated more than 70% of grades at A\*/A, with six departments achieving 100% A\*-B.

Head of Sixth Form, Josh Carter, said: "This year group deserve all the success that these results will bring them. I am also delighted to see them choose such a vast array of university courses; we do our absolute best to encourage students to think creatively about their futures and to follow their passions.

"I wish them the very best for the future and I look forward to hearing about their next steps after leaving King's".

### Class of 2023 - A Level Results Day



## In Memory of Finn Abberton

In October 2023 Alex Abberton completed the Chester Marathon alongside David Blackham (DofRowing), Alex Slater (OKS 2015), Ben Paxton (OKS 2015), Kate Robson (OKS 2015), Ellie Robson (OKS 2015), Ben Monk (OKS 2015), Toby Miller (OKS 2014), Ben Cliff (OKS 2016), Charles Smith (OKS 2017), Inigo Atkins (OKS 2010)



Their aim was to raise £7,500 for [James' Place UK](https://www.jamesplace.org.uk) in memory of Finn Abberton (OKS 2014) who sadly passed away in 2017. They managed to reach just over, with a fantastic total of £7,592.00. James' Place is a game-changing male suicide prevention charity. Their lifesaving treatment offered completely free of charge at their centres has already transformed the lives of over 1,500 suicidal men in London and Liverpool. They are now raising funds to open three more centres across England so more lives can be saved. The total cost of supporting one man at James' Place is £2,500. We are very proud of the efforts of all who took part.

To sponsor the "Running for Finn" team, please donate through their JustGiving page:

<https://www.justgiving.com/page/runningforfinn>

To find out more about James' Place and how they will use the money raised, please visit their website:

<https://www.jamesplace.org.uk/>





## Next Steps

We are very grateful for the time given by OKS to the Next Steps Programme.



The Next Steps initiative gives current students the opportunity to connect with recent Alumni to hear about their experiences of higher education and the workplace, as well as to benefit from their insight and advice about the next steps after King's.

This is usually done in the format of a careers breakfast however this can always be adapted dependent on what the OKS would like to do



Over the past few months, we have had Grace Roberts (OKS '15) Trainee Solicitor, Nicola Temple (OKS '15) RF Systems Engineer who works in Radar development and Graham Elwell (OKS 1989) Professional Actor back to King's.

Thank you again for your support, it really makes a huge difference to students who have questions about career paths.



If you would like to help and be a guest, we would love to hear from you. Please email Gemma at [gec@kingschester.co.uk](mailto:gec@kingschester.co.uk) for more information.

## Sixth Form Scholars

Students in Lower Sixth are awarded scholarships based on their mock GCSE results and a competitive, subject-specific interview.

Our 2023 King's Sixth Form Scholars are:

Felix Adey (L6BRD)      Kimmy Chen (L6GRO)

Dominic Egan (L6BRD)    Neha Sharma (L6GRO)

Mani Thaman (L6BRD)    Angela Yang (L6GRO)

Zach Hard af-Segerstad Smith (L6GLA) is the recipient of this year's Investec scholarship.





## Instrumental Fanfare

The enhanced *Let's Get Playing* scheme has been made possible thanks to generous funding from KSPA and CAOKS.

This September saw the launch of the enhanced *Let's Get Playing* scheme, which provides free weekly instrumental lessons to every Remove (Year 7) pupil. Until the end of term, every pupil will enjoy weekly 30-minute lessons on an instrument that is brand new to them as part of their timetabled music lessons. All pupils are working towards the same aim of playing together in an end of term concert and achieving an ABRSM music medal.

Director of Music, Debbie Whitfield, is really pleased with the progress that the pupils are already making on their new instruments. She said: "This is an ambitious scheme, but it has been amazing to see the pupils so engaged with their lessons and really exceeding all our expectations on their new instruments."



Mrs Whitfield went on to explain why the scheme is so important: "King's has a strong and proud tradition of excellence in music, and it is important to me that as many pupils as possible benefit from being a part of that. I hope that many of these pupils will continue with their lessons, join one of our many ensembles and enjoy the lifelong joy of playing an instrument."

"In addition, we know that learning an instrument has many other fantastic benefits such as teaching perseverance, boosting mental health and giving pupils a real sense of achievement, all of which will have a wider positive impact on these pupils."

Pupils are taking lessons on a wide range of orchestral instruments and when lessons end in December, they will have the opportunity to continue with peripatetic lessons at half price for the remainder of the year.

## Alumni News

### Alan Vallance (OKS 1983)



ICAEW has picked Alan Vallance (OKS 1983 and CAOKS President 2016 -2017) as its new Chief Executive.

Vallance, an ICAEW Chartered Accountant, is currently Chief Executive of the Chartered Insurance Institute. He previously worked as Chief Executive of the Royal Institute of British Architects and the Group Chief Operating Officer at the Law Society.

Prior to this, Vallance was the Chief Operating Officer and Deputy Head of Australian Bureau of Meteorology, the national weather agency based in Melbourne, where he spent time participating in and leading Australian delegations at the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland.

Peter Wyman, Chair of the ICAEW Board, added: "I am greatly looking forward to working with Alan in the coming years as we address together the challenges and opportunities facing our Institute in a fast-changing world".



## Andrew Green (OKS 1970)



Andrew is a Senior Research Fellow (and Hon Fellow) at the University of Hertfordshire, where he specialises in oral history. Across fifteen years he has devised and managed a long series of memories projects focused on the likes of Waitrose, the de Havilland aircraft business, migrants to Australia, Watford Football Club and the Society of Radiographers. *Starting Again*, a study of retirement, featured in a BBC Radio 4 documentary which won a Royal Historical Society award. Andrew's most recent exercise has been the collection of memories of thirty-three individuals who sang as boy choristers at the 1953 Coronation.

As mentioned elsewhere in this issue, Andrew will be our guest speaker at the 157<sup>th</sup> CAOKS Annual Dinner on Saturday January 20<sup>th</sup> 2024. We look forward to welcoming Andrew back to King's for what promises to be a wonderful evening.

## Want to contribute?

Across more than three decades, Andrew Green (OKS 1970) has presented and/or produced many hundreds of programmes for BBC Radio 3, 4 and the World Service, covering everything from sport, politics and religion to classical music and history. His broadcasting work has taken him across Europe and to the Middle East and Australia.

As a journalist, Andrew has written for a host of national newspapers and magazines chiefly on classical music, but on many other topics. Among thousands of interviews conducted over the years his subjects have included Prime Ministers; Archbishops of Canterbury; Paul McCartney, Meatloaf and Cliff Richard; World Cup-winning striker Geoff Hurst; plus a string of English and Australian cricketing legends.

As a public lecturer, Andrew has spoken on wide-ranging subjects at home and abroad. Particular interests have been aspects of the life and music of Vaughan Williams and dimensions of Great War history.

Here at CAOKS Towers we are always on the lookout for new articles and features for the newsletter. Memories of school, teachers, school trips, sports events, musical performances - if it is school related then we would love to hear from you and we are keen to hear from OKS from all eras.

We are also keen to hear what OKS have been up to since they left school. Not everyone follows the same path in life so it would be wonderful to hear from you should you wish to put pen to paper (or should that be finger to keyboard these days).

If there are things you would like to see included in the newsletter that we don't currently cover, please let us know. New ideas are always welcome.

Please send any submissions for the newsletter to the following email address - [Editor@caoks.co.uk](mailto:Editor@caoks.co.uk)

Steve Williams – CAOKS Editor



Calendar of Events

If you would like to book onto an event, please visit

<https://www.kingschester.co.uk/alumni/alumnievents/> or call Gemma on 01244 68949

King's in the Capital

Thurs 23rd November 2023

This year's event will take place at the House of Lords with our guest speaker confirmed as Jonathan Samuels (OKS 1991)

Jonathan is an experienced broadcast journalist and for more than 20 years has reported on breaking news stories around the globe for Sky News, BBC, Channel 4 and Five.

2023 Leavers Catch Up

Tues 2nd Jan 2024 - The Ship Inn

It will be over 6 months since our 2023 leavers left King's. Time flies and we know how busy life can be during the first semester of university, at the start of a new job, or even during a gap year. Join us to enjoy a well-deserved catch up with friends and former teachers. It's a free event, including a complimentary drink upon arrival.

CAOKS Annual Dinner

Sat 20th Jan 2024 - The King's School

All alumni spanning the decades are invited to join us for what promises to be a fabulous evening of great food, good wine and camaraderie! We are delighted to welcome BBC broadcaster Andrew Green (OKS 1970) as our guest speaker at this year's dinner.

Tickets: £40

'4 Reunions

Feb/Mar 2024 - The King's School

We will be inviting our '54, '64, '74, '84, '94, '04 and '14 leavers back to school for their reunion. There will be two events, one in February and the other in March. Invitations will be sent out shortly. Please keep an eye out as these reunions are always great fun and are free to attend.

Chester Races - Ladies Only

Fri 10th May 2024

This is the perfect opportunity for our female leavers to connect and enjoy time together within the Festival Village, at the Boodles May Festival. An all-inclusive event and a highlight of the racing calendar.

Tickets: £80

2024 Battlefields Trip

Sunday 7th July - Thursday 11th July 2024

We hope you can join us on our popular Battlefields Tour. Our very own Seb Neal is excited to be guiding the tour based around the wartime exploits of former King's teacher, Jonny Walsh.

Captain Walsh served with 24th Battalion Manchester Regiment – the 'Cotton Town Comrades' – a pioneer battalion largely recruited from Oldham. For several months whilst the Battalion was on the Western Front, Captain Walsh kept its War Diary, and in old age he wrote a short memoir about his experiences as well as writing an unpublished account of his battlefield tour which took place in 1939.

Deposit: £100 (to be paid by November 6th)

<https://www.kingschester.co.uk/battlefields-tour-2024/>





## Features

### Before Wrexham Road

A report in the Chester Standard this summer told us that Chester Cathedral is to 'regain a major piece of its architecture'. This referred to the former King's School building that stands opposite Chester Town Hall. It adjoins the Cathedral on St Werburgh Street and the Abbey Gate on Northgate Street, and has been occupied for many years by Barclays Bank. During my time there between 1951 and 1958 I'd had no idea that the building was anything other than the School's property. Consulting the School's website for enlightenment, I found the following passage under 'About us/History'.

'The King's School has a proud history which forms the bedrock of the current modern, dynamic school. The School was founded in 1541 by King Henry VIII following the dissolution of St Werburgh's Abbey, which became Chester Cathedral. The School was housed in the former Monastic Refectory for most of the next 400 years until 1869. The School was variously called "The Free School" and "The Grammar School". It was not known as The King's School until the mid-19th century when it was referred to as the "Grammar School or King Henry VIII". Dedicated school buildings were opened by Gladstone in 1876 adjoining the Northwest corner of the Cathedral. We celebrate this history with a cathedral service every term and continue to have strong links with the cathedral.'

I was briefly puzzled as to how 'until 1869' could be 'most of the next 400 years' after 1541 (1541 + 400 = 1941), but I remembered the pulpit in the refectory beneath which there is a stone with this inscription, showing that the School probably continued to use the refectory until well after the 1869 building was opened by Gladstone.



What was the ownership/occupation relationship of the 1869 building between the School and the Cathedral over all those years? When did the school finally end its daily use of the refectory for education, rather than just for special events like plays and prize-giving? And do we know anything about how the Cathedral now plans to use its 'major piece of its architecture'? Can any reader enlighten us?

I still have my pack of seven postcards, sold for 1/- (5p) to raise funds, showing some internal views of the 1869 building. I'm sure the School Hall has gas lighting, probably dating the images as pre-WWII. The cards can be seen via the following URL.

<https://kingschester.web-archives.net/Browser/ABImageView.asp?src=128&alt=7+pictorial+postcards>

*Ian Travers (OKS 1958)*



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# Features

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## KSC during World War II and beyond

These are some of the memories that the late Peter James Rutter recalled of his time at KSC. Many thanks to his son John (OKS 1985) for sharing these memories and these words of introduction.

"My father, an OKS from the 1940s recently passed away after a very long and happy life. While searching through his belongings I found the attached account of his time at King's. Peter came from a very humble background and gained a scholarship to King's and, subsequently, a place at Oxford University. In later life he became a teacher at Sir John Deane's Grammar School, later Sixth Form College, in Northwich. Dad would have wanted people to know about the good times he had at the school, which he credits with enabling him to study at Oxford - an experience which he enjoyed immensely."

### **KSC during WW2 and After - the memories of Peter James Rutter from 1942-1949**

"I gained the Robert Oldfield Exhibition to King's in 1942. This gave me free books and free tuition. I had previously been at Victoria Road Council School for Boys and although a good school, it had no facilities such as a gym or playing fields. Going to King's was a shock. Unlike half the class, who had been to the Junior School at Arnold House in Parkgate Road, I had never studied Latin or French and it took me some time to catch up. The same applied to football and cricket which led to some ghastly errors such as handling the ball, much to the amusement/horror of my team.

In those days the school had certain disadvantages due to location opposite the Town Hall. There was no gym so we went to Arnold House for P.E and woodwork. The main playing fields in those days were in Lache Lane. I took part in athletics and rowing but not ball games. The School building was short of class rooms so, at the end of the war, additional rooms were purchased in The Bluecoat School (near the Northgate) which also allowed for space for a kitchen and dining area. Prior to this, meals were served in the Cathedral Undercroft. I went home for lunch though as we only live 1.5 miles from school.

Until the War ended there were no school visits abroad or to other parts of the country. Nor were there after school clubs and pupils travelled by public transport.. After the war things improved. We could stay for dinner and societies like the Debating Society opened. Teaching standards improved and with exams such as School Certificate (later O Levels) and Higher School Certificate looming, school work became very serious.

A new Headmaster arrived in 1947, Rev. Harvey, who started work on getting new school buildings. B.T Williams returned as Head of French and he taught me for A Level French. Our Chemistry teacher told us that if the whole class passed the School Certificate in Chemistry he would take everyone out for dinner, which he duly did as we all passed. The upper Fifth for had 18 pupils in 1946/47 and my last years at Kings were very happy. I decided that I would like to go to University. The 1944 Education Act had made that possible because fess and living allowance had become means tested which enable me to get a full grant. I applied to Oxford University which was more expensive but a higher grant was available here if you gained admission. An examination was necessary for each college, involving a 2 day visit.

I gained admission to Keble and I chose this college as it had a track record of admitting students of modest means. Most universities then were still prioritising those who had fought in the war. Ahead of taking up my place at Keble I undertook 2 years National Service, which was a legal obligation in those days unless medically unfit, in the Royal Navy. I took up my place at Keble in 1951.

My years at King's were, overall, happy. I had a shaky start but a very happy few years later. What is more, I would never have got to Oxford if I had not gained admission to King's."



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## Features

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### The Professor “Down Under”

#### **Emeritus Professor Peter J Rimmer - OKS 1954**

Peter J. Rimmer AM, BA, MA, GCEd, PhD, DLitt, is an Emeritus Professor in the School of History, Culture and Language, ANU College of Asia & the Pacific and the Australian National University, Canberra. He was born and educated in the United Kingdom at the William Stockton County Primary School, Ellesmere Port, and the King’s School, Chester (1947-1954).

Beginning in the small and tightly packed rooms of Burton Hall in the late 1960s, Peter's journey at ANU has taken him around the world. This has included time in Thailand during the Vietnam War, in the Phillipines during the fall of Ferdinand Marcos, and in Los Angeles during the riots of 1992.

When he arrived at the Australian National University in 1967, Peter's area of research was intended to be on Papua New Guinea . However, he evolved a wider area of interest to encompass Asia and concentrated his work upon the transport and movement of people and goods within this wider region. Up until the mid-1970s, he had focussed on Southeast Asia, but following a visit from an academic from the Institute of Developing Economies in Tokyo, Professor Rimmer started to take an increasingly keen interest in Japan as well. After he retired, he included Korea in the mix, where he convened a course in global and local logistics at Inha University in Incheon, the first of its kind in that country.

Today, he is a renowned economic and human geographer, specialising in urban and regional development within the Asian-Pacific Rim, with a particular emphasis on the role of communications and transport (road, rail, sea and air). He has undertaken extensive research in China, Japan, Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, the Phillipines, Singapore, Thailand, Taiwan and Vietnam.

Peter continues to have an active role in the College of Asia and the Pacific, mentoring and supervising PhD candidates. Working with his students offers a more cooperative approach, where student and supervisor are equals. According to Peter, this makes it far easier to collaborate and gives candidates the chance to challenge their supervisors.

The Peter J Rimmer Prize was initiated in 2023, to be awarded to the student with the highest marks in the new undergraduate course offered by the School of Culture, History and Language on 'Maps and Mapping in Asia and the Pacific'.

His 320 publications include: Asian-Pacific Rim Logistics: Global Context and Local Policies (2014); Consumer Logistics: The Digital Wave with Booi Kam (2018); China’s Global Vision and Actions: Belt, Road and Beyond (2020); and Configured by Consumption with Booi Kam (2022).

Many thanks to the School of Culture, History and Language, ANU College of Asia and the Pacific, The Australian National University Canberra and of course to Peter himself.

Adapted from Peter’s own biography and from an article In Focus 2021-22 by Steve Williams (Editor).



## Curry and Quiz Night Report

We held our very first annual Alumni Curry and Quiz Night on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2023. The first event of this academic year was fully booked more than a week in advance, and it was wonderful to see so many keen quizzers enjoy an evening of good fun and excellent food.

The evening began with a choice of delicious curries served up by our catering team and guests enjoyed the opportunity to catch up with old friends. The new Sixth Form Centre was a fitting venue for the evening, prompting many Alumni to reminisce about their own time in Sixth Form when things looked very different!

After dinner, guests settled in for the start of the quiz, which was written and hosted by Dr Ravi Jayaram (OKS 1985). His jokes were a big hit and the variety of quiz rounds meant that everyone had to get their thinking caps on!



The picture round was a particular challenge for all but the well-travelled few, with many of the teams wishing they were members of our Vexillological Society (that's flag club to those not in the know!). The music round was another crowd-pleaser featuring music from a variety of genres and eras.

A total of 90 people, competing in 16 teams, fought it out for the coveted first prize with "Duncan and the Losers" eventually walking away with a bottle of fizz each, the coveted winners title and hopefully more faith in their general knowledge than their team's name suggests!

Best Team Name went to "We thought this was speed dating" and the wooden spoon went to a team of current parents who prefer to remain nameless.

We look forward to repeating the event next year. Will Duncan and the Losers retain the title in 2024? Only time will tell!





## Features

### CAOKS Annual Snooker November 10<sup>th</sup> 2023

Eighteen gathered at 18.30 for a drink at the Chester City Club, including Headmaster George who arrived straight from School, before making his apologies because of a prior commitment. It's always good to see numbers up from the previous year.

Then there were seventeen, including four Grammar School Old Boys, who remained to enjoy reminisces over supper. This included various rival accounts of 'the Chester run', with all those present eventually conceding first place to a year group in the early Seventies. Their route took in both Watergate Street and Northgate Street, starting at the Custom House, with the then Higsons' Bull & Stirrup as the eventual goal. They won respect due their inventive and vividly descriptive bonus and penalty points rules that had somehow arrived in tattered form in Micky Moore's hands, despite him being several years older. Perhaps one day we will publish those rules.

New President, Mark Thorp, did of course ask us to raise a glass, firstly to the Old Boys from the Grammar School and the one hundred and fourteen Old King's Scholars who lost their lives in the two World Wars, and secondly to our deceased President, Anthony Russell KC.



Boosted by a late arrival forced to travel up from a day in Nottingham, eighteen were available for Alex Horne to attempt to organise for snooker or similar. With more present than the maximum twelve who could enjoy a second year of Old English Pool, snooker it was, playing each frame for ten minutes, starting with a triangle with just three reds.

To avoid cries he'd fixed the draw and after about forty-five minutes of pencil-in hand deliberations at a side table, Alex decided that those sitting on the East side of the supper table should face those on the West, conveniently meaning he, four-times-listed on the City club noticeboards and representing West, would face your Hon Secretary in one of the final pairings.

Battle commenced, and despite Horne's gerrymandering, East stormed home 7-2 in the singles matches. Modesty precludes me revealing here the result of Horne v Bernie, though I have very much enjoyed recounting the tale to a select few.

Informal doubles continued late into the evening before the last hardy few departed sometime after 23.15.

Peter Bernie



## Features



**CAOKS 157TH**

# Annual Dinner

SATURDAY  
6.30 PM

**20**

JANUARY  
2024

**At  
The King's School Chester**

£40 per person  
Includes, arrival drink, 3 course meal and  
1/2 bottle of wine per person.

Our guest speaker is Andrew Green (OKS 1970)  
Andrew has enjoyed a long career as a BBC  
radio presenter/producer and a journalist. As a  
research fellow at the University of  
Hertfordshire he directs memories projects of  
local, national and international dimensions.



## Anthony Russell OKS (1970) 1951-2023



My fellow CAOKS committee members and I were shocked to hear of the sudden passing of Anthony Russell. His service to the school and CAOKS has been commented on many times in this issue of the newsletter. Personally, I only knew him for around 18 months but I'll remember how encouraging he was with regard to me getting involved with CAOKS and how good it was to have someone on the committee who had travelled a different road in life to most OKS. He made me feel that, despite not having a great academic record, I still had something of value to offer to the school and the Association. (Ed)

His Honour Judge Russell became a Circuit Judge in 2004. He was appointed Honorary Recorder of Preston, Senior Circuit Judge and Resident Judge for Lancashire Crown Courts in 2006. He retired with effect from 8 August 2015.

Judge Russell was called to the Bar (M) in 1974 and took Silk in 1999. He was a Member of the General Council of the Bar from 1987 to 1994, appointed a Recorder in 1993, Standing Counsel to Inland Revenue from 1994 to 1996.

Outside work, Judge Russell was known to go on various adventurous holidays to colder climates in northern Canada and Norway. He encountered polar bears and walrus at Spitzbergen, Norway, inside the Arctic Circle and had hoped to travel south to the Antarctic. Judge Russell had a passion for music both

as a choral performer and listener. He was previously vice president of the Guild of Church Musicians.

At the time of his passing, he was a much valued and respected President of CAOKS alongside being the editor of this publication, both roles which he carried out with enthusiasm and dedication.



A former classmate and friend, Rev Dr Tim Macquiban (OKS 1970), shares his memories in tribute.

Anthony Russell was a well-rounded student at school (1959-70) who threw himself into his academic studies and its cultural life, overcoming considerable health challenges which necessitated periods off school for surgery. He greatly enjoyed the musical contributions and dramatic productions led by Robert Sutton, David Lyons and others, ranging from Toad of Toad Hall in the Junior School (but he wasn't the Judge!) to G and S productions and Hamlet, as well as contributing to the school magazine with his writing and editing skills, which fitted him for the legal career ahead and becoming CAOKS editor in his retirement.

Membership of the choir and music groups to which he belonged fostered an abiding love of music and choral singing, as did our termly visits to the Cathedral of the liturgical life of the Church of England. He was a most sociable and amiable companion on trips abroad, notably the Mediterranean cruise led by Graham Tolliday and A T Owen which introduced many to the delights of classical antiquity and the glories of Ancient Greece and Rome. His love of

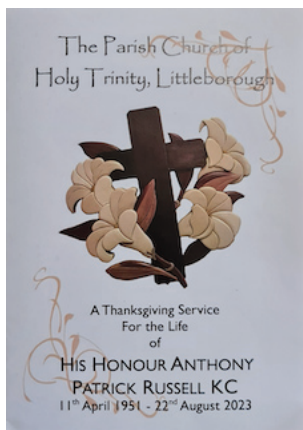


history was engendered by the excellent teaching of Messrs Lyons and Lysons, skills he put to good use in writing his own family history (“I think I know who I am” – the anatomy of a family”) in retirement.

He honed his speaking and debating skills at school and developed leadership qualities as a prefect, even though he was not a member of the bridge playing set of that time or involved in sports activities! He engaged in the lively debates of the 60s regarding local and national politics, from such issues as the building of the Cathedral belltower and the breaching of the city walls at St. Martin`s Gate to the fortunes of his party in and out of government. By nature, conservative and traditionalist, he nevertheless was open to change and latterly despaired of what he saw as the diminishment of the standards of public service.

In his later years, he always spoke warmly of his time at school and nurtured the connections and friendships he had made, valuing the way in which they shaped and framed his later life. He always maintained a link and involvement with the school with his roles in retirement as Editor and President of CAOKS as evidence of his love for and commitment to the school. In one of our last exchanges by text, I sent Anthony a picture of the newly rehung portrait of King Henry VIII in the Walker Art Gallery in Liverpool. To which he responded: “The immortal memory ...!”

May those of us who cherish the memories of him as a friend at school and ever since echo that toast and bid him rest in peace and rise in glory.



## Reg Read - Teacher 1963-1999 (1942 – 2023)



Reg, who was Head of Maths for many years at King’s and, at one point, stood in as Deputy Head of School. Reg served the school for 36 years before he retired in 1999.

He was born in the middle of World War 2 in Tottenham, London on 22 March 1942 to Lottie and Percy. It wasn’t an easy start in life with bombs dropping around Lottie and young Reg most nights and his dad Percy didn’t return from the war until Reg was 4.

After he left school, he went to UMIST, part of Manchester University, to study Mechanical Engineering. He met Margaret Davies in March 1962 at a university dance and they married in August 1964, just weeks after he had gained a first class honours degree, student of the year and numerous other prizes. Following a short honeymoon in the Lakes, the newlyweds travelled to Chester to start their new life; in time for Reg to join the King’s School in what would be his first and last teaching post. He remained there for 35 years! Reg and Margaret’s daughter Katy was born in May 1965 and their son Philip in July 1967.

Reg always aimed to emulate his own influential teachers in the classroom. He had a rare gift for the profession, making even the most complex maths problems understandable. The question you had been staring at blankly the night before suddenly became crystal clear. And, despite the no nonsense approach, there were moments of humour in lessons with everyone looking forward to another outing of his catchphrase: ‘It’s our old friend one, nought, nought, one’ which the Upper Sixth of 1982 commemorated on



# Obituaries

a tankard they presented him with at the end of their A Level year. Something he greatly treasured.

As a teacher of the old school, Reg didn't believe that his job finished when the bell went. He wanted to produce rounded individuals, so was always to be found on the games fields on sports afternoons and after school. He ran year group teams, travelling all over the Northwest on a Saturday morning in the football season, and on a Saturday afternoon in the cricket season. On a sports afternoon, he enjoyed playing in and refereeing the game. Anybody present on those occasions will have memories of him going in to 50/50 tackles with boys who had irritated him ... and coming out with the ball, but also having 'left a bit' on the unfortunate recipient who would be whimpering on the ground while Reg ran off shouting: "Get up, fair tackle, play on."



Reg was an excellent sportsman in his own right of course. He always said his best sport was hockey and he represented Hertfordshire while he was at school. But when he moved to Chester, he concentrated on football and cricket, playing for Nomads, Boughton Hall and Barrow.

By the year 2000, when his knees had gone and Reg had retired from his illustrious career at the King's School, golf became his main sport. Becoming a member at Vicars Cross, before moving to Eaton some years later. During that period, he would always look to play at least twice a week; the Saturday round with the ex-Nomads was a particular highlight of the week. Whilst he always said he wasn't a great golfer, he never lost his competitive edge and was good enough to win a number of competitions.

Reg loved travelling, and retirement gave him and Margaret the chance to explore the world with friends

and family. In 2002, Reg and Margaret did just that, flying to South Africa, then Australia, over to New Zealand before rounding off their jet-setting trip of a lifetime in Los Angeles. Over the years the pair would continue to indulge their passion for travel and adventure, cruising across the northern hemisphere with trips to Scandinavia, New York, Iceland and the Mediterranean.

Whether you knew him as a friend, a colleague, teammate, teacher, husband, brother, father, grandfather or any of the other roles he filled so well.

There really was only one Reg.

## Dr. Adrian Ackroyd PhD OKS (1974) 1955-2023



Adrian Ackroyd attended The King's School from 1964 to 1974. Those who remember Adrian in his schooldays may recall the boy who was always getting into trouble; indeed, he often boasted that he held the record for both masters' and prefects' detentions.

However, there was much more to Adrian than that unenviable record. In the Junior School he excelled at gymnastics, carrying this skill into the Senior School in 1967, where he also took up hockey as his winter sport. A scientist in the sixth form, he left the school in 1974 to study Physiological Zoology and Genetics at Newcastle University followed by a PhD in the biometrics and genetics of aging at Swansea.

Adrian's professional career was interesting, varied and distinguished. Much of his work involved developing occupational health and safety management systems in a variety of industries.

His expertise spread into the fields of business re-engineering, organisational learning, cultural impacts of mergers and operational management. This work involved much travel to Europe and the Middle and Far East, giving him the opportunity to meet many people from diverse cultures.



However, it is through his involvement in CAOKS for more than 25 years that most of us came to know Adrian. His first active involvement was restarting the newsletter, which had not been published for some time.

He went on to take on the important office of Dinner Secretary and organised several very successful and memorable dinners at the school during his tenure. When Norman Harrison retired in 2000 after 20 years in post, Adrian was an obvious choice to take over as Secretary of CAOKS.

Adrian was keen to encourage more diversity in the association. His time coincided with the admission of girls to the school and he began to invite staff and senior pupils to attend CAOKS events. After steering the association through some difficult times, Adrian was instrumental in encouraging the improved relationship which continues to exist between CAOKS and the school.

As Secretary, Adrian was responsible for the administration of CAOKS, a huge task that involved sending out correspondence and newsletters to hundreds of members on four occasions each year, writing letters of condolence to the families of deceased members (and often offering them some solace over the phone), attending funerals and memorial services, organising wreaths for Remembrance Services – and much more. His knowledge of the history of the association and its membership was second to none.

Former President Anthony Russell knew Adrian well. He said: “Adrian devoted many years to CAOKS as Secretary and President. He resurrected the

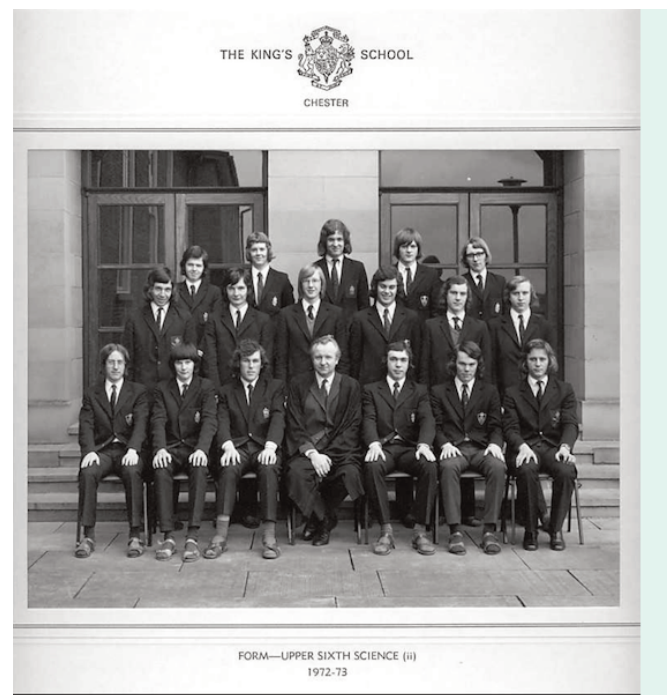
newsletter and was a keen supporter of diversity and welcoming female members to the association when the school went co-educational. He had an extensive knowledge of the membership and made many friends throughout the generations of Old King’s Scholars.”

Headmaster George Hartley met Adrian on a number of occasions and shared his memories: “I was aware that Adrian had been in poor health for some time and was personally very sorry to hear of his passing.

“He was a characterful and somewhat idiosyncratic person who was never afraid to share his own views and always boasted that he held the record for the greatest number of detentions ever ‘achieved’ by a King’s pupil.

“He also, of course, latterly did an extraordinary amount for the school as CAOKS President and subsequently, for many years, as Secretary, including an instrumental role in the major changes we made to CAOKS membership soon after my arrival in 2017. We all wish him a huge debt of gratitude for all that he did for the school over such a long period of time. ”

Adrian made many friends through CAOKS and he will be sadly missed by all who knew him. We extend our sincere condolences to Adrian’s family and friends.





## Peter James Rutter OKS (1949)



Peter was born into a poor family who had seen better times but were badly affected by the depression of the late 1920s/1930s. His father went to sea at age 13 after being offered a job on ship by a Captain at Liverpool docks when skipping Sunday School.

Joining the merchant navy at such a young age was apparently preferable to going home and facing the wrath of his mother. After a successful naval career, he was made redundant around the time of Peter's birth.

The family valued education highly, however, and Peter gained a scholarship to King's on leaving primary school in 1942. Initially finding it difficult to fit in, his later years at the school were very happy. For many of these years he was dropped off by a former pupil and successful businessman who passed his home in Parkgate Road in his chauffeur-driven Rolls Royce and wanted to do a favour for a fellow scholar. Peter did very well academically and gained a place at Keble College, Oxford reading History and specialising in Renaissance Italy - an opportunity he felt was entirely down to the time he spent at Kings.

Upon leaving Oxford Peter was employed as a salesman by Lever Brothers but, always more of an academic, he quickly gave up on what could have been a financially lucrative career and decided to become a teacher instead. He joined the staff at Sir John Deane's Grammar School in Northwich in 1958, retrained in 1969 to become a teacher of Religious Studies and took up the post of Head of Department at the school. He stayed there for the rest of his

CAOKS Newsletter

career, through the school's transition to a Sixth Form College. Tributes on the grammar school former pupil website show he was a very well-liked teacher, remembered for his school trips, his love of a good argument / discussion and, above all, as a "real gentleman".

Peter loved opera, foreign travel and had a particular liking for trains. In his 80s he and his wife Enid (married in 1962 after meeting at a film society outing to see *Those Magnificent Men in their Flying Machines*) relocated to Scotland to be closer to his grandchildren, eventually settling in Inverness. He did not slow down, however, even into his 90s and through several health issues and it was on a visit to Preston to see cousins that he suffered a heart attack that would eventually signal the end of what was a richly well-lived life.

Peter is survived by his wife, Enid, sons Mark and John (also an OKS from 1985) and grandchildren Finlay, Angus, Islay and Catriona who remember him with much love and respect.

## Nick Breed OKS (1976)

Dr Nicholas Breed died peacefully at St John's Hospice Lancaster in September 2023 after a short illness. He was sixty-five.

Nick qualified at Sheffield in 1981 and went on to specialise in anaesthesia, working for many years for the University Hospitals Morecambe Bay NHS Trust.

Nick went to both went to the Junior School and the Senior School. I will remember him best from our time together in Shell H, under the watchful eye of Norman Hallas, who organised us in the then traditional alphabetical order. Nick sat directly behind me and every day we heard 'Ashley, Bernie, Breed, Browne, Burns, ...' as the Form Register was taken. Four people in that form of thirty-one went on to work as doctors in the NHS and sadly, we've now lost two, Nick Breed and Jon D'Arcy.

Nick is survived by his wife Jean, two daughters Sophie and Charlotte, and his mother Jennifer.

Peter Bernie



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# Officers

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## OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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	Andy Jones (1990)	
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