

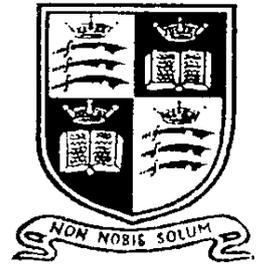


# ECSOSA

Edmonton County School Old Scholars' Association

Website: [www.ecsosa.org.uk](http://www.ecsosa.org.uk)

NEWSLETTER June 2014



## Have your say !!!

This is advance notice of the Association's A.G.M. which is scheduled for Wednesday 15th October 2014 at the Cambridge Campus, starting at 7 p.m. All members are welcome to attend. If any member wishes to submit a motion for consideration this should be sent to the Secretary, Dave Day at 11 Coniston Green, Aylesbury, Bucks. HP20 2AJ. Email: [dave@ecsosa.org](mailto:dave@ecsosa.org). or [diddy11cg@talktalk.net](mailto:diddy11cg@talktalk.net) to arrive before 15th July 2014. If you wish to attend, or cannot attend but would like a proxy form, then please let Dave know. The Agenda will be circulated in due course.



### There's no business like show business

By DENNY DREW (Dennis Madeley—1946-50)

"EXTRA TIME" or "how tall do you want me?"

The above was to be the title of my book, 'Wot I woz going to rite'. Bits and pieces of it still exist, but I never got round to finishing it! Too many other things needed attention. That's my excuse anyway.

"As I was saying to Sean Connery and Albert Finney the other day" (I hate name droppers) "Have they got no life of their own?"

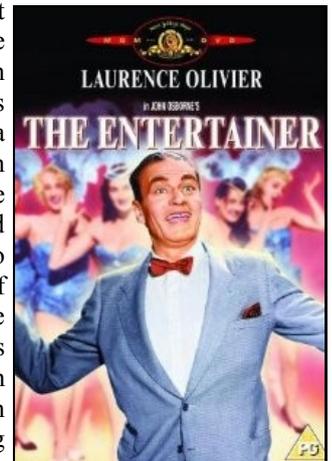
Unfortunately I have no choice folks. Nearly every film or T.V. show I've worked on obviously had so-called 'stars', but not all of them lived up to the hype and admiration showered on them by their adoring public. You may be one of them!

I mentioned Albert Finney—Is he a "Sir"? I can't remember (old age again) as I was his first "stand-in" in a film called "The Entertainer", starring Larry Olivier. He had just finished a Shakespeare season at Stratford and was keen to do the film about an entertainer called Archie Rice on the then vanishing Music Halls of London. As a great Shakespearean actor it was an unusually sad and wistful part for Larry to play—that of a seedy comic seeing his way of life 'on the boards' rapidly disappearing.

Albert Finney had impressed Larry as a young actor at Stratford, so he gave his protégé a very small part in said film, i.e. 5 words, coming down the stairs of Broad Street Station as a young soldier home on leave to visit his family. As Albert had no experience of the film business whatsoever, being fresh from stage school and living 'up north', it behove yours truly to show young Albert the ropes, "vis a vis" how the

lighting procedure worked and what the battens on the ground were for. (Starter for 10 to any film buffs out there). Do you know?)

Albert and I became friends and he said he was destined for big things as an actor. I said I would look out for him. Six months later, lo and behold, the filming of 'Saturday Night and Sunday Morning' was announced starring, guess who, my mate Albert. It was of course the making of him and he never looked back from then on. Unfortunately I never got the three month job of his stand in. I went to see him at the Sloane Theatre in London. He was starring in 'Luther' He invited me into his dressing room for a chat and a drink, but said he had no say in who would be his stand in as he was new to the business and had no 'clout' in any decision to do with the film. The punchline of this story is that a mate of mine in the business got the 'gig' as Albert's stand in and worked on all his films from then, which were many and various, earning lots of 'dosh' and finishing up going to the Olympic Games in Seoul in 1960—something with Albert, and then on to the U.S.A. to film over there.



That's it folks. "You lose some you win some in Life". I did win some, but that's for another day and another tale from 'The Old Geezer', still working to make it in the film and T.V. business!!

# Obituary

## ETHEL WHITE (1933-1939)



Ethel was born in an age when education was only for boys. In my family the boys went out to play and read books but the girls were meant to stay at home to help in the house. She passed the scholarship and went to the County School in 1933.

Ethel wanted to be a teacher, but my parents didn't want her to stay on in the sixth form. My father had got her a job in a shop in Enfield Highway as a florist. However, the school persuaded him to let her stay on for an extra six months to take the Civil Service entrance exam. She was expected to concentrate on classical subjects and humanities as the school said that was what the Civil Service wanted, but Ethel was particularly good at languages, so she specialised in French and German. Thousands of people took the exam and Ethel came 126th.

She began working in London in April 1939 and a few months later war broke out. The Ministry changed its name to the Ministry of Economic Warfare, so Ethel's language skills came into their own and she did top secret work for the war effort.

After two years of travelling to work in London, stepping over people sleeping on the tube stations and walking through the blitz she decided to change careers and become a nurse, a career which fulfilled her caring nature. Those who knew her as a ward sister had nothing but praise for her care and commitment. She went on to study midwifery, and as the church was always at the centre of her life she decided to become a missionary. She went to Selly Oak in Birmingham, the missionary training college, and then to Belgium to study tropical medicine.

She was posted to the Belgian Congo and started her long adventurous journey on The Union Castle, which took her to Mombasa in Kenya. Thence she went by train to Leopoldville, where she changed to a river boat which took her to Stanleyville. The journey ended by having to climb down the side of the boat into a canoe, which paddled her to Yakuso, where she was to spend ten years, with a brief return home on furlough. She added Lokele, Lingala and a bit of Swahili to her repertoire of languages.

She spent time with pygmies in the rainforest, although she wasn't too impressed when presented with the delicacy of a large caterpillar cooked in a banana leaf. She helped to found a leper colony and helped them to build a church. One of the highlights of this time was the occasion when she crossed the river with a medical bag containing a wonder drug. A cure had been found at last.

I always hoped she would bring me a monkey home from Congo. She had one called Charlie, but one night Ethel woke feeling a presence in the room. She got up and looked around but could find nothing amiss. The next morning, when going to her dirty linen basket, she found a large python asleep with a suspicious bulge in the digestive system. The house boys came and shot it and took it away. Python steaks apparently taste like chicken. Charlie was never seen again.

She returned home in 1958 and became a nursing sister at the North Middlesex Hospital and at last took her teaching degree in Bolton so that she could become a nurse tutor at the Whittington Hospital.

She was an enthusiastic member of ECSOSA and went to all reunions possible. She also went to parties organised for the old folk by the school, and was always pleased with Goodie Bag.

Ethel had an indomitable spirit, but lost her fight against ill health at the grand old age of 91.

Hilary Kenny (White) 1954-61



## AIMING TO PLEASE .....



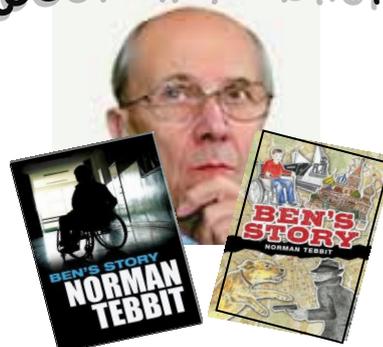
We have had an enquiry from Switzerland:

*"My name is Gwenäelle Barillon and I am doing some research about the British side of my family. My grandmother was Brenda Poynton. I believe she is on one of the pictures featured on your website. Do you have archives about her? Do you know who I should contact to get more info. please?"*

*I don't have too much information, anything you can tell me ... like how she was, which career she chose, what she studied etc. She never actually spoke about the past, she only mentioned her dad to me a couple of times, and told us a few stories about the war, but that's it really. She came to live in Switzerland and it's as if she turned a page back then. Even with her language, (she always spoke French to me), so I am really, really curious. Are you able to help?"*

Graham Johnson was able to point out Brenda in some of the group photos in our Newsletters or on our website. Frank also found that she went RADA and became an actress. If any of our readers have news or memories of Brenda perhaps they could email her at [gwenba@hotmail.com](mailto:gwenba@hotmail.com).

## Recently published



## Lord Norman's book for children

**The Daily Mail reports:** In Government Norman Tebbit was renowned for his brutal style of politics, but he displays a softer side in his children's novel called Ben's Story. It features Ben, a talking dog and his young owner, Sam who is left paralysed after a car crash. Ben is named after Lord Tebbit and his wife Margaret's own Labrador. The book is described as a contemporary story about murder, friendship adversity and personal struggle. Rupert Matthews of Lord Tebbit's publishers, Bretwalda said "When Lord Tebbit talks about his fictional characters suffering sudden life-shattering injury he knows from his own experience how it feels".

## RAY POWELL (Bucket) (1950-55) concludes

Mr. Quartermaine (Q) seemed to be able to instil a sense of dread with his presence and was a person not to be taken lightly, very different from the current Headmaster at that time, Mr. Champion. Therefore it came as a shock to me one morning, on a family holiday in a caravan at Dovercourt Bay, to witness this very man coming out of a van near to us, in civvies, with his pet dog, a Pomeranian if I remember correctly, and setting off for a walk. If he recognised me he gave no indication of it, nor I of him.

I was followed to the County by my sister Norma in '51, and later by my brothers, Ron and Chris in '59 and '61 I believe. My second sister Gillian, two years younger than Norma, also passed the 11+ but had to go to Latymer. I cannot understand the reason for this and do not know if my parents even questioned it or endeavoured to get it changed. I do know that school days were not Gill's happiest, and she left school at 15 with no qualifications. My youngest sister, Susan, born whilst I was in Catterick Camp with the Royal Signals for my National Service, elected not to follow us to the County, but went instead to the Bishops Stotford School in Enfield (that had been the old Suffolks School when we moved back to Enfield in 46/47).

For my part those days generally were happy days and the County School did a good job in preparing you for a life in adulthood which subsequently stood me in good stead in my first employment and later in National Service. Having said that though, and subsequently reading Paul Smith's "Personal Reflections" in the last two Newsletters, although I cannot recall any black pupils in my five years, there were several Jewish boys younger than me in the school as I remember coming into contact with them in the hall at dinner/lunchtime, a Kingberg, Solemberg and Goldberg! There was no animosity or ill feeling, just lots of mirth and laughter, especially when we made a lad called Spikins laugh and subsequently choke during the dessert, just to see the custard come down his nose. This did not amuse the table-heads at the time. (I believe they were girls!)

I do agree that there was a middle class ideal, as witnessed by the aghast look on one of my mates' face when he learnt that I lived in a council house and our milk was delivered by the Co-op! I learned later in adult life that his father was not above "getting on his bike".

Upon reading through this account of some of the happenings at the County one could be forgiven for thinking it was a boys' school, but I cannot think of any events that were directly connected with the girls. Obviously the girls themselves have a whole load of memories, but apart from the lessons themselves the majority of us had no real contact with each other. I say majority and use the word "contact" figuratively! Back seats on coaches on school trips spring to mind!. However, the P.T. Teachers did organise a joint basketball match in the gym, I think during our last term at school. Needless to say the girls made rings around us—shades of too much embarrassment to tackle them I suppose. Fifth year pupils were almost young adults then!!

Finally I would like to apologise to anyone if I have got their name wrong and the stories slightly different to how they remember them. As someone has said in the Newsletter in the past, different people come up with differing versions of the same event after such a long time interval. I hope this collection of some of my memories will bring a smile to whoever reads it.

## More musings from RON ROULIER (1940-44)



Outside of school and home I was still doing a morning newspaper round (on foot at first, and in the wartime blackout), before going home for breakfast, and then on to high school. When I'd saved up enough money I bought a bike, even though my father said I should have saved the money (don't ask me what for, but he was a product of the Depression), and probably thought that bad economic times were going to return. Looking at it now it's easy to understand his point of view, but mine was that I had worked for the money and it was mine to spend as I saw fit. Elementary capitalism or self-expression if you like, but it was really the first money that I had ever earned on my own, and I thought dad's attitude about the whole thing was unreasonable and very unfair. Of course I didn't have the vocabulary or debating skills that he possessed to advocate my viewpoint, and there was no sensible discussion about it.

But I bought the bike anyhow. It also gave me one of many lessons in the power of parental disapproval, even if it didn't stop me, a pattern that would be repeated many times over in dealing with dad. It's easy to see now that he was probably having a tough time of it, supporting a young family, dealing with all the worries and concerns that the war was probably giving him, so that when he came home at night he wanted to be "master in his own house" at the very least.

My earliest mentor, although the term most likely didn't exist then, was a boy about two forms above me named Ingvol Dean. His family were most likely Scandinavian, and lived the other side of Bury Street Hill in a tiny cottage right next to the railway tracks, because his father worked for the L.N.E.R.

Ingvol was tall and lanky, played in the school cricket team, and was a very fast bowler (in the era when Larwood was making headlines with the controversy of the day, "bodyline bowling"). He had a real working model steam engine powered by a small methanol flame, and was the one to put me straight about where babies came from!! Up till that point I had thought, with absolutely no knowledge of anatomy, that babies were carried in a woman's chest, on the assumption that the swelling I noticed in many women was accounted for by the size of the baby. Some time later Ingvol Dean left school, joined the British Navy, and was killed in action. The feeling of loss was something we all have to face, but this was the first time I can remember it, and it was the loss of someone who had chosen to befriend me.

The other death I recall in that period was a boy named Maskell, who fell out of an apple tree and broke both arms. We were accustomed, along with all the other kids around, to going "scrumping", that is to say collecting apples from what had been an orchard, during the summer holidays from school. Nobody seemed to own the place, and it had been started as a housing development when the war had broken out. There was some kind of Caretaker who chased us sometimes, but that just added to the excitement. One time, running away across the railway track the paper bag, overflowing with apples, broke, but we couldn't go back for them because a train was coming down on us fast, so that day we went home empty-handed. Our parents, though generally strict, were surprisingly lenient about scrumping, because they liked the apple pies that our mothers made with the ill-gotten gains.



# MEMOR-E-MAILS



Thanks Dave (Day) for sending the email version of the March Newsletter.. It made such interesting reading. I remember all of those teachers, and most of the pupils mentioned who were my contemporaries (1951-58). I believe the names of the girls in the hockey photo (Marion Southgate's article), where only their Christian names are shown are:...

Back row, third from right = Penny Ford (in my class)  
 Front row, far right: = Elaine John.

Well done for being on the Committee. I was Secretary for many years—from soon after I left school until I moved to Surrey in 1975. I think I am still a Vice-President of the Association (one of many) - or a similar title. John and I try to support the Old Scholars' functions when possible

Regards, *Val (Challiss) nee Dunn*

Interested to read the March Newsletter, which brought back a few memories.

Firstly the memory of playing against George Scott for the annual School Cricket Match against the Old Scholars' Eleven, and also, later, playing in the same Old Scholars' team on a few of my rare appearances.

Secondly the 1955 photograph of the girls' hockey 1st eleven. The two missing names, I think, are Penny Ford and Elaine John. Penny, again I think, joined the school in the fourth form and I remember Ken Matthews having rather a 'thing' about her.

Elaine was also in the same year as myself along with, in the photograph, Marion Southgate, Brenda Atterbury, Viola Ackhurst and Jean Bayliss. The last four all being in 5A, along with myself, Dave Rogers, Tony Eaton, Stan Fletcher, Cyril Scott and the aforementioned Ken Matthews, to name but a few.

The photo also jogged other old memories, but I think the libel laws would prevent their publication.

Thanks to the team for producing these Newsletters. I am sure they are avidly read by so many old and really old Scholars.

Kind regards, *Dave Stringer (1950-58)*

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Wed. 2nd July.	12.00 Noon.	Lunch at the Plough.
	7.00 p.m.	Committee Meeting.
		Cambridge Campus.
Wed. 8th Oct.	12.00 Noon.	Lunch at the Plough.
Wed. 15th Oct.	7.00 p.m.	A.G.M.
		Cambridge Campus.



In the latest news sheet you were asking for reminiscences about the O.S.A. I would like to share our memories, which were life-changing for us.

Mike, (my husband) and I were taken independently to a Youth Club in Enfield in December 1951. I looked around and saw a face I recognised from school who was in cricket, football, relay and high jump I said "Weren't you at the County?" He was surprised and said "Yes, were you?" We started to talk and he suggested we go out together. On the Saturday we went to an aquatic exhibition in the afternoon, and in the evening to a play at the School (We can't remember the name of the play but think it was performed by the Thespians. Can anyone help?) I won't bore you with the whole story. I was 18 and Mike was 21. We married in 1955. He played in goal for the O.S.A. when Alf Gant reformed the team, and we both sang in the O.S.A. choir led by our dear friend Eric James. Eric was Mike's best man before he left for Canada. It was a great time.

We are still enjoying a full and happy life together—four daughters, 14 grandchildren and three great grandchildren included. We are so grateful for our beginnings at County and celebrate our diamond jubilee next year, all being well.

Thank you for all you do to keep the memories flowing.

*Frances (nee Lorkins) and Mike Thompson.*

In March Ray Powell wrote a very interesting and nostalgic account of his memories in which he makes reference to our 5th form visits to the Old Vic. I think we must have done Hamlet for our Mock 'O' levels as I have no recollection of this, and I know that I was in hospital around that time. However I do remember the other visit, which was in fact to see Richard II. for our English Lit. proper. I have a vivid picture in my mind of us all excitedly meeting up outside Turnpike Lane tube station. Dear Miss Emery had allowed us to wear our own clothes, and we felt very grown up. However one of the girls interpreted this relaxation of rules as an excuse to wear lipstick too. (Horror of Horrors). Miss Emery, modern in her outlook as she was, nevertheless was not amused and told the culprit to wipe it off immediately. How things have changed since 1955.

The play was fantastic, and yes, Ray is right, Virginia McKenna did appear in it as Richard's Queen, along with Paul Rogers, Paul Schofield (I think), and definitely John Neville as the King. To a young girl of barely 16, such as myself at the time, the whole experience made a huge impression on me and achieved the visit's objective of helping me to better understanding the play. Oh happy days!

Regards *Pat Long (nee Rainbird) 1950-55*

Published by the Edmonton County School Old Scholars' Association.

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