



# EC SOSA

Edmonton County School Old Scholars' Association

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

NEWSLETTER March 2016



## SEVENTY TWO YEARS ON!

John Norrington-Davies (1938-43)

A number of clubs were active at the school in the 1940's; the Field Club drew its membership from the Biologists. It was led formally by the Biology Teacher "Bill" Comber and his wife Mary. From time to time we assembled independently of staff and took less exacting hikes, where discovering bomb craters filled with water was much more interesting than identifying the local flora!

Doreen Ellis, modestly placing herself at the rear for the group photograph shown here, was a most talented student who could declaim in french on Speech Day, take the lead in many of Miss Emery's productions on the school stage, whilst also flying high in academic studies. John Norrington-Davies, on the other hand, was notable for the number of times each term that he was either late or absent, and was the last member of the first eleven football team to be awarded his colours.



Field Club, Easter 1941. Doreen Ellis, Joan Marriott, Pete Garner, Mike Whitley and J.N.Davies.

Doreen went on to read medicine at Bristol University, and once qualified practised first of all in Llandoverly, before setting up her own practice at Bradford-on-Avon.

On her retirement she received a number of gifts and encomia, but treasured the card which read "You were always there!"

"Taff", as he was known at school, was, for his sins, drafted by his employers, Farrow, Bursey, Gain and Vincent, to Monk & Glass custard powder factory as a Junior Audit Clerk. Totally unsuited to the task, smelling sweetly beneath a fine covering of custard powder, the Junior Audit Clerk handed in his notice after three months. The path that led to redemption was long and tortuous; four years military service, St. Paul's College, Cheltenham, teaching, University degree. Thirty six years then followed as a lecturer at University College Wales, Aberystwyth in Agricultural Botany.

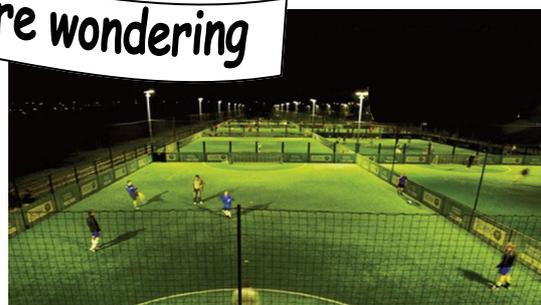
Several years ago, when writing "Cheerful with Insufficient Reason", Doreen and I made contact once more so that in May, when she came on tour in Wales with her local society, we met at Llanerchaeron, a small country estate in Ceredigion, now in the ownership of the National Trust. Restricted by the shortness of the visit, we set up our priorities and started with a large mug of coffee before setting off for an inspection of the house and its walled garden, where the two old students were photographed by Valerie, my wife. It was a most enjoyable reunion, but left us regretting that time was so limited. After all, one of us had seven years of memories of a first class school, the other just five.



### In case you were wondering



about all the building work that has been taking place alongside and behind the school



### Dr. Susan Tranter explains



We are in partnership with Powerleague and they are building a set of 5-a-side and full sized all-weather football pitches and a new sports hall. These will be operated by Powerleague commercially in the evening, at weekends and holidays but we have exclusive use of them during the day. This is a very significant investment in our school and the children are very excited.

# Obituaries

# More musings from RON ROULIER (1940-44)



## ERIC JAMES (1941-47)

FRANCES AND MIKE THOMPSON emailed us (alas too late for our December issue) to say that they had just received a letter from Pat James in Canada to tell them of Eric (Jimmy) James' passing last July. They go on to say they came to know Eric through the Old Scholars' Choir, and he was best man at their wedding in 1955. Apparently he had many health problems in the last few years but passed away peacefully. Frances and Mike say "We will remember him with affection and appreciation".

## THE APPRENTICESHIP DEAL

It would be really interesting to locate the original document sometime, but the deal my father had made, but I the one I had to live with went as follows, to the best of my recollection:

I was to work part-time as a research laboratory assistant and go to school part-time at The Sir John Cass Institute in Aldgate, near the Tower of London, and get a degree, B.Sc. Special in Chemistry, from London University as an external student. This was to take four years. During those four years I would be paid a part-time salary, starting at 35 shillings (less than 2 pounds, or about 7 dollars) a week. The contract was binding for four years, and once signed there was no legal way to get out of it.

Maybe there was something more to it, but not spelled out to me in terms I could understand at the time. My parents also told me, not asked, that out of the 35 shillings a week I would be making I was to give them a pound (or 20 shillings) from then on for my room and board. "That will still leave you 15 bob a week for pocket money and bus fares" was the way they explained it.

**The Catalin Corporation**, known to me then on as "Catlin's", had originated in Germany, with some business connections in the United States, and manufactured phenol-formaldehyde resins exclusively, otherwise known as PLASTICS! Part of my father's sale pitch to convince me that this was a good deal took the form of saying "Plastics would be one of the great scientific industries of the future". He wasn't wrong of course, given what has happened since, but when I first saw the movie of "The Graduate" many years later, the scene of that conversation was almost identical, and the visceral connection it made in my psyche practically knocked me right out of my seat.

The other part of my father's reasoning, as I recall him saying, was that by studying for a degree in chemistry I would be exempt from being called up for the armed forces, and that maybe by graduation time the war would be over. But right then the war was still raging in both Europe and the Pacific, and I'm sure dad was thinking about his own experiences in World War I, with all its horrors, and doing what he could to protect me, albeit in the guise of getting me started on a career. But he couldn't really say that directly because it was probably too much to deal with emotionally, and would have raised questions about his patriotism and so on.

## ANN and RALPH CHRISTMAS also share their memories of Eric

Eric went to E.C.S. where he became a star pupil. We remember him singing, playing musical instruments, acting in many plays and teaching ballroom dancing during wet playtimes. He progressed so well in French that he went to L'Institute Francais, ably guided by Sam Elengorn. He was a valuable member of the Thespians and enjoyed it greatly.

When he visited us he entertained the children with tricks, keeping them amazed. He always had a fund of old jokes, and used to say "the old ones are the best".

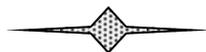
After he moved to Canada he would visit us when he came home. When a Professor at Toronto University he was allowed every 7th year on sabbatical. Then we would stay with him in France. One year he lived in a wonderful old cottage with three caves—one for wine, one for mushrooms and one for frogs. It was a fascinating place, used by the resistance against the Nazis. Eric loved showing people around his place and the surrounding area near Chinon.

On his last visit he was not in the best of health, but was delighted to meet up with Old Scholars, and enjoyed a happy coffee morning with them.

Sadly he deteriorated and died from a stroke on July 19th 2015. His life was full and interesting, and he leaves behind happy memories for his wife Pat and all who knew him.



We have been informed by Frances M. White (Solicitor) that **BERYL BEATTIE (Nee Spencer) (1934-40)** died on 21st October, 2015 after a short illness, having reached the grand age of 92.



## JAN MILLS (CROSS) 1944-49)

We have just heard that our former Editor, Jan Mills, died in hospital on 30th January, 2016. We do not have any further information at the minute, but will put more details in the next Newsletter when we hear more.



## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

|                |                          |   |
|----------------|--------------------------|---|
| Sat. 14th Mar. | 12.00 Noon.              | Annual Luncheon<br>Robin Hood.                                  |
| Wed. 13th May  | 12.00 Noon.<br>7.00 p.m. | Lunch at the Plough.<br>Committee Meeting                       |
| Wed. 1st July; | 12.00 Noon.<br>7.00 p.m. | Lunch at the Plough<br>Committee Meeting                        |
| Wed. 7th Oct.  | 12.00 Noon.<br>7.00 p.m. | Lunch at the Plough.<br>A.G.M. followed by<br>Committee Meeting |

# HOORAY FOR HOLLYWOOD!

By DAVID DAY (D.Day) (1947-52)

The great immediate post-war entertainment for children was the introduction of Saturday Morning Pictures. The Regal Cinema at The Angel, Edmonton was leased by the Gaumont British Cinema Corporation. Our gang, and at least two thousand other local kids, joined the G.B. Club. How the cinema staff coped with us is beyond my imagination. The Manager was named Ernie Hurry, and we called him Uncle Ernie. We would start with a singsong that pre-dated karaoke by some forty years. The words of the song appeared on the screen and a dot would jump from word to word so that hopefully we would all sing in time. We would bellow out the song at the top of our voices. The opening song was always the G.B. club anthem.

*We come along on Saturday morning, greeting everybody with a smile.  
We come along on Saturday morning, knowing it's well worthwhile.  
As members of the G.B. Club we all intend to be*



*Good citizens when we grow up and champions of the free.  
We come along on Saturday morning, greeting everybody with a smile, smile, smile.  
Greeting everybody with a smile.*

Other songs would be sung, usually the same one, week after week until we were sick of it. Another character was the local beat bobby, naturally called Uncle Bob. He would give us streetwise kids a talk on road safety, which always ended up with a paraphrased version of "Show me the way to go home"



*We know the way to go home, Uncle Bob has made it plain.  
We stop at the kerb, look right, look left and then look right again,  
No matter where we roam when we go out alone,  
You will always hear us singing this song  
We know the way to go home.*



There were eventually a couple of short films, sometimes Flash Gordon, if we were lucky, and of course evergreen Laurel and Hardy. In all, the whole show lasted about an hour and a half and cost nine pence. (4p).

When we were in our twenties and the G.B. Club had ceased to operate we started drinking in a pub in Silver Street called The Owl. Ernie Hurry was a customer and we still called him Uncle Ernie. As he remarked ruefully "You were a right crowd of little bleeders".

What a shame that this beautiful cinema finished up as a German Supermarket

You may be interested to tap the following into your computer key pad:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LUFdDWcaew>

## TALES OUT OF SCHOOL

We still desperately need to hear from you. Send your stories to:  
(Jean and Dennis Patten)  
editors@ecsosa.org.uk

## MAKE SURE YOU DON'T MISS OUT ON OUR

**ANNUAL LUNCHEON at the ROBIN HOOD, Botany Bay, Enfield, EN2 8AP**  
**SATURDAY 12th March 2016 12.30 P.M. for 1.00 p.m.**  
**Three course meal (order vegetarian option on booking) £25.00**

First Name ..... Surname ..... Nees .....  
 Address .....  
 Years at School: 19..... To 19..... E-mail .....

### MENU

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <b>STARTER:</b> Soup of the day.<br>Prawn Cocktail.<br>Paté | <b>MAIN COURSE:</b> Roast Beef.<br>Roast Pork.<br>Roast Turkey.<br>Vegetarian option Nut Roast | <b>SWEET:</b> Ice Cream<br>Apple Crumble.<br>Crème Brulé |
|---|--|--|

Cheese and Biscuits and Coffee are extras to be paid for on the day.



I forward a cheque/postal order for £..... Made payable to ECSOSA  
 Together with the full names of my guest/s and the choice of menu.  
 Please return this form, together with the appropriate payment, to David Day, 11 Coniston Green, Aylesbury, Bucks, HP20 2AJ. Tel: 01296 484382. E-mail: diddy11cg@talktalk.net

## GWEN YOUNG (Atkins) 1947-52)

Sadly I had to attend the funeral of a very dear friend last year, and met up, after 60 years, with her younger sister - Rosemary Handford (school years 1955-60).

I knew she went to the County a few years after I left, so we had a good conversation about school and the teachers. We agreed they were happy days for both of us.

The Handford family lived just a few doors along from me in Sennen Road, and apparently my mother had passed on my old school tie to her. Rosemary told me she loved that tie because the new ones were 'yucky yellow', but hers was gold.

Is there anyone out there who remembers Rosemary? Her parents and her sister Dawn (my lifelong friend) moved to Mudeford in 1958. Rosemary stayed with friends in Enfield to enable her to complete her 5 years at the County. She subsequently joined them where she got married and now lives in Surrey. She has two children and several grandchildren.

If anyone does remember her I'm sure she would be delighted, and I could put you in touch.

## CONGRATULATIONS to Sir ROY STRONG



upon being appointed  
Companion of Honour  
In New Year's Honours  
**2016**

*He now joins*

## LORD NORMAN TEBBIT



Appointed  
Companion of Honour  
**1987**

## IT'S OFFICIAL

Says David Day

In our last issue Douglas Waugh (1930-1934) wrote asking if he was our oldest surviving Old Boy. Well indeed he is. There aren't any 'Old Gels' either, the next oldest is Joan Deacon Moore (1932-1936).

## LONG MAY DOUGLAS REIGN

## BRENDA NICHOL (Baxter) (1939-44)

Thank you for the Newsletter which I found most interesting. Sadly I did not recognise any of the people mentioned in the anecdotes, except the celebrities of course! I am now 87 and I do not suppose there are many of us left. I started school in 1939 and was immediately evacuated to Braintree in Essex. There we ran wild for a week or two before starting school locally. We only stayed there for about 12 months and then came home in time for the air raids. I remember my time at school with great fondness and a lot of the teachers: Mr. North, Mr. Quartermaine, Mr. Comber and Mr. Pretty. My French teacher, Mr. Elengorn, taught us a lot of French songs, the words of which I can still remember. He gave us all nicknames. One of the boys was called Grenouille, but I cannot remember why. Mine was Bebe because my initials were B.B. for Brenda Baxter. It's always interesting to hear about old times. I know it is a lot of work, but try not to give up, a lot of pleasure is had by all.

Many thanks, Brenda.

**VALERIE CHALLIS (Dunn) (1951-58)** responds to Roy Smith's December email telling of his 1965 O.S. Draw tickets. "How interesting Roy, it is a massive prize for the price of 6d. - a whole day's food!! I see that the Promoter was Syd Perry, the Boss Man of E.C.S.O.S.A. I went to many committee meetings at his house in Wellington Road. He was heavily involved with the Middlesex Federation of Old Scholars' Associations and negotiated three free annual lettings of the school premises for us, and all other Middlesex Old Scholars' Associations within their own schools.

I guess we all have precious documents from our school days—I have a box of them, including the school magazines. I still have my school report book—Miss Emery said that I talked far too much, but that I was public spirited. (I didn't even know what that meant at the time!) Keep searching as you might uncover some more gems".

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
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