



EC SOSA

Edmonton County School Old Scholars' Association

Website: www.ecsosa.org.uk

NEWSLETTER December 2017



Happy Christmas TO ALL OUR READERS!



The Postman has already started to feed Christmas cards through our letterbox and among them was this "thank you" letter from Kenny Wilkinson (Clayton) referring to his write-up in our last Newsletter. He goes on to say

Thank you Derek Jay and E.C.S.O.S.A. for reminding me of what I have been "up to" for the last 60 years! And for Lord Norman Tebbit and Sir Roy Strong to have half the front page—and me to get ALL of the back page is recognition indeed. I must inform you that ALL of my companions have been Honourable.

My memories of ALMA MATER are crystal clear: My elder brother, ERIC WILKINSON was five years ahead of me and entering the sixth form when I started in 1947. He was a superior scholar at all things and a fine middle distance athlete. I was in awe! Also RONALD PERRIN had just won the School Music Prize. I was in awe!

I was a catastrophic pupil. I sit now with my school report reading "will not concentrate", "could do much better" etc. The only good moments for me were spent in class with the beautifully named MR. WILKINSON (no relation), who taught, amongst other things, "MUSICAL APPRECIATION". What bliss! What moments of actual contact I had then, for about 45 minutes out of two weeks.

'Q' only excited me with geometric shapes and measurements, Algebra—forget it!, Chemistry—"pew", English Lit.—"Tuff for a Cockney", P.E. (or P.T.) Bruiser was a 'B', Woodwork—joints?? - Where are the nails?? After five years, having learnt the Canadian National Anthem every school morning (and it DID come in useful when I opened a game for the 'OILERS' Ice Hockey with Petula Clark in Edmonton, Alberta), I succeeded in winning the School Music Prize in 1952.

Thank you Edmonton County Grammar School for your discipline, your persistence and your understanding in making a man of a mouse.

'MUSIC MAKES THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE'.

Kenny Wilkinson (a.k.a. Clayton) (1947-52)

And from Maureen Jacques (nee Forster) (1947-52)

I joined as a Life Member years ago and really appreciate receiving the printed Newsletter.

I was very amused by the "apparently ordinary Grammar School in a very ordinary place like Edmonton" remark. Edmonton was an ordinary working class area, but it boasted two excellent Grammar Schools (and a Higher Grade School) and a superb market at The Green.

The County School may have been "apparently ordinary" - but what extra-ordinary teachers it possessed: Miss Henderson, Miss Staples, dear Miss Emery, Harry Clarke (who inspired most of our form to enjoy maths), Mr Wilkinson (who showed us how enjoyable music could be), and our beloved Form Master for three years, Sam Eलगorn—so many more.

There was indeed "something about Edmonton County", and I remember my days there with gratitude and great affection.



Obituary

BERYL DEWHURST (nee Townsend) (1933-39)



Beryl was made Life President of ECSOSA in recognition of the work she had done as a committee member, editing the newsletter and helping with fundraising. She thoroughly enjoyed helping out the Old Scholars, which allowed her to indulge her love of writing, her love of people and her interest in local history.

She attended Raglan Primary School, then started at E.C.S. in 1933. She was evacuated to Buckinghamshire, where she worked for Canada Life Assurance, then an electrical firm in Brimsdown. She told memories of being in London during the blitz, one involving a doodlebug. One day, being late for work she heard a doodlebug's engines stop above her and threw herself flat on the ground. Luckily the doodlebug exploded in the air and Beryl escaped with her life.

Beryl had wanted to be a Journalist but the war put a stop to that. She did manage to study a course published by the Pitman School of Journalism and Authorship, and her love of writing stayed with her whole life.

After the war she worked for a firm of Auditors then for Harris Lebus factory in Tottenham, which enabled her, even at the age of 95, to draw a pension of about £30 a year.

Near the end of the war she was introduced to Dennis Dewhurst, who had been sent home from what is now Sri Lanka after the death of his mother. A couple of years later, they went on what must have been the holiday of a lifetime—to Switzerland—where, at the top of the Jungfrau in the Alps Dennis proposed to her. Beryl turned him down because, she said, the whole thing was unreal! She later accepted Dennis after he repeated the proposal in her parents' kitchen. They were married in 1949 and lived in Enfield.

Beryl and Dennis had to wait for ten years before their first daughter, Caroline, came along, followed three years later by Claire. The family moved to Bush Hill Park to be nearer Beryl's parents, and when her children started attending Edmonton School Beryl got involved with the Old Scholars. Eventually she became Life President in recognition of all her work.

Beryl had many other hobbies. She had a great love of art and belonged to an art class in Bush Hill Park, and Enfield Art Circle. She painted every week, producing hundreds of paintings over many years, exhibiting many locally, and even occasionally selling them. She also loved writing. As well as the Old Scholars' Newsletter Beryl wrote to Caroline every week, who spent several years travelling around Asia, and every night Beryl wrote her diary, leaving us with more than 20 years of detailed accounts of everyday life.

Many of her later years were taken up with caring for Dennis, who gradually became more frail and died aged 85 in 2006. Beryl then moved to Southgate Beaumont Care Home in 2008 after a fall, where she stayed for nearly nine years, dying on 25th August, 2017. A tribute to her strong constitution and personality and their good care.

She will be greatly missed.

Reported by her daughter CAROLINE EVANS (1970-77)

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TONY KIRBY (1949-54)

I have just learned that my cousin and good friend Tony Kirby passed away on September 1st. He was at school from 1949-54, the entry before myself. He was an accomplished soccer player, playing for the school, Old Scholars and Cambridge Albion, which was a spin-off from the Old Scholars.

Brian Ware (1951-57)

LESLIE KIRBY (1939-44)

We have also just heard from Leslie's wife Betty (Brooker) (1941-45) that Leslie died on 17th December last year. He had been Captain of soccer and cricket at school as well as the old Scholars.



GERALD BAILEY (1937-42) remembers:

I was amazed to discover Beryl Dewhurst was still Active in the organisation of ECSOSA. I started at the County School in 1937 and she was ahead of me and a Prefect if I remember rightly. I would love to know how many of that vintage are still around.

I retired from teaching/lecturing 34 years ago and am still active—mainly on the bowling green. I would love to hear from anyone who remembers me.

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A message from your Chairman



Dear Members,

The Annual General Meeting of the Association was held on 4th October at the Cambridge Campus (as the old school is now known!). There were no amendments to the Rules and Constitution of the Association. Your Chairman and all Committee Members offered to continue to serve the Association and were re-elected unopposed.

It falls on me to thank several members of the Association who have made extremely generous donations to the funds which will ensure that it will not be necessary to draw upon the Association's savings in the following year.

It is proposed that next year's Annual Luncheon take place as usual at The Robin Hood, Botany Bay, but it has been decided to make it a bit later in the year, so it will now be on 14th April.

In preparation for the School's centenary in 2019 our archivist, Beryl Cushion, is compiling a potted history of the school and has sent a message to members for assistance, which appears in this issue. See page 4.

OOPS: There was an unfortunate occurrence with the September issue. Some faulty labels fell off the envelopes and thus at least three of you who usually get postal copies will not have received it. Please either telephone Dave Day on 01296 484382, Mobile 07743 479752, or write to him at 11 Coniston Green, Aylesbury, Bucks, HP20 2AJ to claim your back number.

WE WELCOME OUR NEW PRESIDENT

At our A.G.M. on 4th October it was proposed that following the death of Beryl Dewhurst we ask Mr. John Kerridge to become Honorary President of our Association.. We are delighted to announce that he has kindly agreed to accept the post

September Meeting—The Rave or Cluster—10th September 2017 By GRAHAM SOUTH (1947-52)

This year, on Sunday 10th September, nine plus one fleeting lady held court at Copthorne Avenue, Broxbourne, which is just north of London, not all that far from Edmonton County School, our venerated Alma Mater. Once, Broxbourne was in the country and had many nurseries, growing the capital's pot plants. Most pots, many millions of them, made with London clay, came from the famed South's pottery in White Hart Lane, Tottenham Everything there now gone (progress).

Broxbourne once had it's own large grass airfield. As a small boy I had my first flight there in a Proctor. All gone. Progress?

We were class 1A. 1947-1952, and have been flocking together since 2006. The first mass huddle of this group to include travel was in 2007, when Ealing was chosen, and a very good gathering was had there. Onwards and upwards from then on.

Here, in order, are our previous destinations: Woolacombe; Broadstairs; Ipswich; Northampton; York; Bristol; Winchester (2014). Every year seemed better than the last, but in truth each had its own flavour. Not one had top billing, though a personal favourite might surface:-

I was astonished at the Great Hall at Winchester. The Bristol water boats and their girl crews amused me, whilst Northampton's shoe museum was engrossing. Travel brochure sunsets? Nope, a Woolacombe sundown across Lundy (avec a glass of champagne, thanks Colin) beats all.



Each year we learnt more about our once school chums, now with a vocation behind them. There were wives and consorts, plus significant others to add to the mix. We stirred them in and found this most agreeable. One such arrival even learnt our names before meeting us for the first time. How impressive was that? (you know who you are sweet thing).

Who was mostly responsible for our annual gathering? These meetings do not just happen, there is so much arranging beforehand. Step up he who is perfectly formed for this task; why, it is none other than our very own Tich, or Brian the Armitage for the many. Never deterred, despite having many balls in the air at times, his organising won through, always.

Anyone to praise? It be Tich! Anyone to blame? It be Tich! We helped a bit sometimes, but his secretary behind the scenery was the illustrious Eve. Je t'adore Eve. (Sorry Mr. Leeming if that is not right). And it was this team who greeted us at Broxbourne, September 2017.

Here, in no particular order, are those who were present: ... Les and Betty Dean, Colin Walker and Sandy, Bryn and Helene Root, Eve and Brian Armitage, Graham South. The fleeting lady, making for some of us a surprise and welcome visit, was Eileen Ambridge.

The main event was, of course, ourselves! Closely followed by a sumptuous, nay lavish lunch come banquet, taken at a leisurely pace, as befits such food and company. Non-stop conversations, photos, some previously seen, others not so, and various bits of memorabilia, was the pattern for the afternoon. A particularly comfy sofa, tea and cake made it hard to leave. But leave we had to.

The farewell hugs and handshakes take a little longer, each more poignant each time. As we remember those not with us any more, absent friends the toast, this has inevitably reduced our numbers. Future reunions will become a dilemma, but not yet, not yet, though even our mobility will sooner or later be a hurdle for some. Brian knows all this and will consult another sherry whilst pondering the right move next year. His 'phone line is a conduit for news (sad tidings sometimes), views and gossip. This he ponders over, then sends on as required. Every group like ours needs a "Brian". No, you can't have ours, we need him yet



ANNUAL LUNCH—THE ROBIN HOOD, BOTANY BAY—14th April 2018

The usual three course meal will be arranged and the price will be £25 per head, but this year, due to rising costs, wine will not be included, and those wishing a glass of tippie will need to pay on the day. The menu will be published in the March issue. Please advise Dave of your intention to come along and send him your cheque, payable to ECSOSA, for £25. Guests are welcome.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Wed. 7th Feb..	12.00 Noon	Lunch at the Plough
	7.00 p.m.	Committee Meeting
Sat. 14th April.	12.30 p.m.	Annual Lunch
		The Robin Hood
Wed. 9th May.	12.00 Noon	Lunch at the Plough.
	7.00 p.m.	Committee Meeting.
Wed. 18th July.	12.00 Noon.	Lunch at the Plough.
	7.00 p.m.	Committee Meeting.
Wed. 3rd Oct.	12.00 Noon.	Lunch at the Plough.
	7.00 p.m.	A.G.M. followed by Committee Meeting.

WINTER GAMES AND PASTIMES (1941-42)

By John Norrington-Davies

Whilst the boys concentrated on football, the girls divided their interests between hockey and netball, but in the season 1941-42 played with less distinction than the boys. Under the captaincy of Ernest Ryman the 1st XI football team had an outstanding year. With the exception of Dennis Hatt, who came into the team after Christmas, the remainder were awarded their colours.

1st eleven: Tester*, Smart*, Smith*, McAdam*, Wade* (Vice Captain), Hatt, McCabe*, Haydon*, Coals*, Ryman* (Captain), Bailey*.

Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Goals for	Goals against
18	12	3	3	131	34

The eleven were unbeaten by any competing school; each of the three games lost was against an adult side. Tester, the goalkeeper, was exceptional. Wade dominated in defence, initiating many aggressive counter attacks to galvanise the forwards, amongst whom Bobby Haydon was a rare talent, Sam Elengorn, the member of staff who coached the team to such heights was to write, *“School football has owed much to its Captain and Vice-Captain. By their inspiring examples, by their teaching, no less than by their own outstanding skill, they have set a standard that future captains will find hard to equal.”* A high scoring season was crowned by the defeat of Enfield Grammar School. Following drawn games: away 6-6, home 4-4, after Christmas the school won the final game handsomely 7-0.

Even now one feels to some extent culpable for the modest performance of the 2nd XI, reported as having had a mixed season, although playing keenly and improving in teamwork in the second half of the season. As centre forward one was always in the thick of it, expending considerable energy to little purpose, perhaps it had something to do with having a similar polarity to that of the ball. Constantly dashing into an open space when the ball was not there, and being elsewhere when it was, became tedious and calling out for the ball only signalled to the opposition. When the ball was in the air, flighted suitably for directing goalwards into the net from the head, there was little incentive to do so. At the same time it was necessary to make a great show of it, leaping high into the air to meet its leather soaked panels. In order to retain the eyes in their natural housing, one closed them; this, of course, had a negative effect upon the likelihood of deflecting the ball into the net. Heading on a wet winter's day was an invitation to compaction of the cervical vertebrae and the opening up of the cranial sutures. Of the ten matches played that season we won but four, with two draws. Even so we managed, on average, to score three goals per game; our First Eleven - 7 goals per game. A strong case can be made in favour of watching non-professional football if the interest is in seeing the ball going into the back of the net rather than in penalty shoot-outs! Spectators are also spared the tedium of watching whilst a gaggle of health support professionals minister for minutes on end to a player who, having tripped over a blade of grass, lies prostrate on the pitch holding the game up.



In the 1941-42 season we had an away game with Southgate County. We travelled to the school independently by bus one Saturday morning; fare 1.4 pennies (240=£1), to be met by Bill Comber who was to referee. The pitch was a quagmire, the rain continuous and air temperature low. First class conditions for the ball to take on a wilful passage about the field. Within the first five minutes it was difficult to distinguish one team-shirt from another. Nevertheless, when an onslaught was being pressed home on the Southgate goal, the goalkeeper, with great courage, made his sliding tackle. On reflection he must have regretted it. Following a cry which convinced all by its authentic presentation he was seen to raise his head a little to look at the lower part of his body. Anyone who has seen a daddy-long legs after it has been swatted down will have some idea of the unnatural angle of his left leg. Our referee told the knot of boys gathered about the subdued and anxious goalkeeper to stand back. It did not take our Master Mariner, Bay of Bengal veteran used to patching up shipmates after steaming through the odd typhoon, long to give his diagnosis. “You have dislocated your left hip, keep still and do not worry, I will send for an ambulance; once you get to hospital they will manipulate the limb and you will be right as rain in a couple of days.” Tears welled up in the goalkeeper’s eyes, whether of gratitude for good news well put or pain. As the incident pre-dated the formation of ‘Centres of Excellence’ the ambulance arrived within ten minutes and the ambulance men, with the good natured proficiency that characterises their work, dealt with matters. Furthermore, in the absence of detailed health and safety instructions, the casualty was stretched a hundred or so yards over uneven surfaces to the ambulance.

Once the excitement was over sympathy transferred to the self, cold wet and shivering; worse! The fingers had turned a cadaverous white extending downward over the first two joints. It did not need Raynaud to tell me that a degree of vasoconstriction had shut down the small blood vessels in the fingers. The only solace was that Bobby Hayden had the same affliction and we could make reassuring noises one to the other as we dipped our hands into hot water in the boys’ cloakroom. The water treatment was a prelude to the ‘hot-aches’ as the fingers, with some reluctance, came back to life.

Extracted from Dr. Norrington-Davies’ book ‘Cheerful for insufficient reason’ available from Lulu.com. Amazon.co.uk or Donnorri@btinternet.com



CAN YOU HELP?

We have been compiling a potted history of the school for its centenary in 2019, and in doing so we have come across several household names among former pupils, such as Lord Tebbit, Sir Roy Strong, Ray Winstone, Larry Lamb and Kris Akabusi. It is known that many others have achieved great success in less prominent careers, and we would like to compile a companion volume of “Notable Alumni”. Dave Day and Arthur Spencer have come up with many suggestions, but can members of other eras add to this record? Stories please, and photographs too if possible.



Beryl Cushion 1943-51

Published by the Edmonton County School Old Scholars’ Association.

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