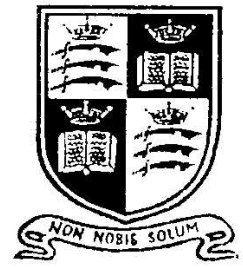


ECSOSA



Christmas 2004 Newsletter

Published by the Edmonton County School Old Scholars' Association

EDITORIAL

Whilst browsing on the Net the other day, I came across the new ECSOSA Website. I found it really interesting and informative and very colourful. Have a look at it when you get the chance, Graham is certainly doing a first class job.

I had an E mail from Pam Addison (nee Humble) an old pupil who remembers the 'Doodlebug Matric'. I was very intrigued by this and asked her for an explanation. It seems that during the early forties Matric exams were taken as usual but during raids and times when the doodlebugs came over, someone would be on watch and alert the pupils who would then dive under their desks! I hope the desks were a lot stronger than the modern ones!

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO THE AGM

This has been another time of retrenchment rather than progress, however it heralds one of the most promising years for the Association since I took over the Chair. Our finances allow us to recommend maintaining our subscription rates at the same level, at least until we can monitor the effects of the planned reunion next year.

Socially, Whitewebbs meetings continue to be popular although Sevenoaks failed to live up to its early promise and has been dropped from the calendar. This decision could always be reversed if sufficient interest is generated. The Annual Dinner was enjoyed by a smaller number of members than previously. Those present could not understand why more people did not join them, as this is a comfortable venue with a nice atmosphere and a good value quality meal. Why don't you join us in March, 2005?

We were unable to arrange another Reunion this year because of the unavailability of the School during the Summer, however the Head has given her agreement in principal to hold one during half term of the Autumn Term, 2005.

The response to my letter asking for help

from the membership was gratifying, although I hope even more volunteers will surface as we approach the date.

Finally, my personal thanks to all those who make the existence of the Association possible. Every single member of the committee contributes - we have no passengers. Our Treasurer, Peter Mansell, produces immaculate accounts. The Newsletter continues to flourish under Jan Mills. Maureen Bealby and Beryl Cushion have made big inroads into the task of archiving School and Association records, programmes, magazines, etc. Graham Johnson has brought professionalism to a very attractive website, which is a huge asset to us and is already attracting new members. Thank you all for your efforts, which are appreciated throughout the Association. My special thanks however, go to Cliff Wilkins who has already achieved the impossible - ensuring that no one notices the gap left by Eric's retirement. I trust that we can continue to provide a worthwhile service and that Cliff and Graham will soon be joined by others representing the "next generation".

Frank Wallder

WEBSITE

Graham Johnson is making a great job of the website with regular updates and some excellent archive material, much of it contributed by Beryl Cushion. If you have not visited the site recently (or yet even) then you are missing a treat. You can now find it on ecsosa.org.uk although if you still have it bookmarked as ecsosa.co.uk Graham has arranged for you to be automatically transferred.

REUNION 2005

We still await final confirmation of the date but it will probably be the 29th October, which is a Saturday in half-term in the Autumn Term. This is the perfect opportunity to meet old friends, share memories and look at old photos, magazines and programmes.

We have held our first two Reunion sub-committee meetings but are looking not only for help on the day but also ideas and input on the planning side. This should entail no more than four or five evening meetings at the school during next year.

We are already working on our archives and not only should there be more photos, magazines and programmes available this year but they will be laid out in relevant groupings and much easier to peruse. More details of the programme in the next newsletter.

If you would like us to make special arrangements for your own group please let us know.

A reunion takes a lot of organising so any help you can offer will be very welcome. We plan to limit the time offered by volunteers on the day to just one hour each.

DINNER

Meanwhile, why not get a party together for the Dinner. An excellent meal in a nice atmosphere with convivial company. And we have even been able to hold the price for yet another year! What more could you ask? You will find a booking form in this newsletter.

SHUTTLEWORTH

Although our days out have never exactly been oversubscribed, they have always been most enjoyable. After several requests and expressions of interest, next year therefore we plan to visit Shuttleworth on Thursday, 5th May. No need to book, just meet us in the car park just before 11.00am. although if there are sufficient we may get a group discount.



LIFE AFTER ECS

Frances Thompson (nee Lorkins) writes:
 Just recently we made contact with EC-SOSA through a friend. It brought to mind our early days after leaving school when we belonged to the old scholars choir under the able leadership of Eric James. He was our best man and emigrated to Canada in the late fifties. Lots of good times there including making a record with HMV

My husband Mike also played for the Old Scholars' football team as goalie for about seven years until injury took him out of the game. We moved several times because of work, and have now retired to Warwick where we are busy and happily involved in the life of Warwick Baptist Church, the National Trust, keeping fit (me), DIY (Mike) and are handy for a watering stop for family and friends en route for a holiday destination or for a visit.

Our family consists of four daughters, their husbands and seventeen grandchildren – yes really! We get great pleasure from all their involvements and activities. Our eldest granddaughter, Naomi, is nearly 21 and is at university in Cambridge. We hope this and the photos will revive a few memories.

Frances Thompson (nee Lorkins, 1945-50)
Mike Thompson (1942-47)
 21 Oakwood Grove, Warwick, CV34 5TD

Joan Young (nee Bevis) writes:
 I left the County School in 1950 and went to work in an Assurance office in the City, which I hated. Then at 19 I took a Beauty Therapist course in Beauchamp Place, Knightsbridge. I worked as a Beauty Therapist until I married in 1955, then became a fashion model until my first baby arrived. Since then I have mainly concerned myself with looking after the needs of husband,

home and three children.
 We lived in Potters Bar when we first married then moved to Cheshunt for two years whilst my husband set up his business. Just over 20 years ago we moved to Old Welwyn and are now living in the second of our two houses there.

In my late fifties, I decided to write a novel, mainly to show my grandchildren and offspring that I was not just a wife, mother and grandmother.! I enjoyed the experience very much, the research required took many months and I learnt a great deal. Unfortunately, I had no success with the publishers, but the experience was fun and interesting. In the meantime, quite a few people have read and enjoyed it. I am, now putting it on the computer for posterity!

Recalling names from the past, I recollect having Lord Tebbit as my dinner monitor, amongst others I cannot recall. In his autobiography he mentioned several times his best friend Jack Pierce. Jack was my childhood friend and neighbour, and during the 1946 General Election,, Jack, Bruce Goddard and I delivered Conservative pamphlets to half of Upper Edmonton.

My sister Pat married Tony Brown who is on the ECSOSA committee . It has been great to reminisce. I await with an-

icipation to see if there is anyone else out there that remembers me.

Joan Young (nee Bevis)
 High Trees, 4b Firway Close,
 Welwyn, Herts. AL6 0RE

MISSING MEMBERS

- Kriss Akabusi**
No known address
- Roger Emmett**
93 Belgrave Rd. Ilford
- Ken Powley**
Little Wych Croft, High Wych,
Nr. Sawbridgeworth.
- Kenneth Sabberton**
5 Avondale, 109 Truro Rd. Wood Green

These are their last known addresses.
 Does anyone know their whereabouts?

MEMBERSHIP SUBS

Our Membership Secretary reminds us that there are still a number of members who choose to pay their subscriptions annually and they are reminded that payment is now due. As some of these members do not appear to have paid for a few years it has been decided that if the current year's subscription remains outstanding on 1st January 2005, membership will be lapsed and no further copies of the Newsletter will be sent.

If any members wish to make donations

Please reserve places at £21 each for me at the Annual Dinner, to be held at the Old Owens Pavilion, Coopers Road, Potters Bar on Saturday 19th March 2005 at 7 for 7:30pm.

First Name(s)..... Surname

Address..... Telephone No

Years at School 19.....to 19..... Fax

E-mail

I enclose a cheque/postal order for £ made payable to ECSOSA.

My guests are (full names please)

Please return this form with the appropriate payment to
 Frank M Wallder, 12 Bray Lodge, High Street Cheshunt,
 Waltham Cross, Herts., EN8 0DN. Tel / Fax 01992 636164

to the Association, these will be received with pleasure! Cheques should be made payable to ECSOSA and sent to the Membership Secretary

Cliff Wilkins

CANON DONALD BRADLEY

It was reported in the Daily Telegraph in September that Canon Donald Bradley had died. I recall that Donald was the first boy to win a scholarship to Cambridge c.1940/41. To mark the occasion, Mr. North, the Head, granted the whole school a half day's holiday. Donald's father managed the Osborn and Greening grocery provision shop in St. Marks Road, Bush Hill Park

John Kerridge

HISTORY TIME

In the last issue I printed a little bit of nonsense about the meaning of some of our sayings. This has provoked the following onslaught from Peter Mottley.

Let us hope and pray that whoever wrote *History Time* in your last issue is not a teacher! "Getting quite an education aren't you?" he or she writes. To which the simple answer is NO.

At the risk of letting accuracy intrude into an amusing piece of froth, let's go through the 'history' of the 1500's that's quoted.

1. Many (not most) people got married in June – not because they'd had their annual bath, but in accordance with the ancient custom that June marriages were lucky: "Good to the man and happy to the maid", a superstition dating back to the Romans. In addition, Christians weren't allowed to marry in Lent, which took them well into April and sometimes almost into May.

2, What annual bath? It was the custom for everyone to wash their hands, face and teeth in the morning, and to wash their hands before eating. Rich families bathed quite frequently, and sometimes together; however, "soap was scarce and expensive, and as a result people seldom washed either their bodies or their clothes". (*Nick Yapp: Life in the Age of Chivalry*). Babies, however, were bathed up to three times a day. (*Adam Nicholson: Life in the Tudor Age*)

3. The phrase 'Don't throw the baby out with the bathwater' is usually meant as a warning to impractical theorists, and actually dates from 1946. (*Eric Partridge: A Dictionary of Slang and Unconven-*

tional English) Anyway, if you couldn't see the baby at all because the water was so dirty, its head must have been underwater – so, since it had presumably drowned, you might just as well throw it out.

4. The custom of carrying flowers at a wedding has nothing to do with the bride's BO; in the middle ages everybody stank all the time. However, many other cultures as well as ours use flowers to symbolise fertility, and a nosegay of sweet-scented flowers was commonly thought to ward off the plague.

5. The phrase "Raining cats and dogs" has nothing to do with thatched roofs but has a common ancestry with such phrases as "Raining pitchforks/hammer handles/old boots/chicken coops", as well as 'sluice forks' (American) and 'old ladies and sticks' (Welsh) - in short, anything unlikely.

6. The floors of most houses were indeed made of dirt, including those of middle-class merchants, as can still be seen in Tewkesbury. In fact, it was so common that no one would have bothered to mention it. The phrase 'dirt poor' is again much later, and is brother to the phrase 'dirt cheap', meaning 'as cheap as dirt.

7. To bring home the bacon means to succeed, to bring home a prize and is probably a reference to the Dunmow Flich, or possibly to the sport of catching a greased pig at a fair. The phrase is first recorded in in 1924. (*Partridge*)

8 'To chew the fat' has nothing to do with bacon. The phrase originally meant

'to grumble' probably comes to us from the Indian Army, and is first recorded in 1885.

9. Pewter does indeed leach its lead in response to acid; however, according to a very senior chemist I asked, the amount of lead leached by the acid in tomatoes could only be detected by microscopic analysis. The only danger comes from ale and, some 30 or 40 years ago, the composition of the pewter used in tankards was changed to remove the lead.

10 In any case, tomatoes would be an unlikely candidate for causing lead poisoning in the 1500s.; they aren't even mentioned as such until 1604 (*OED*).

However, 'not until the twentieth century did Britain acquire a taste for tomatoes' (*Reay Tannahill: Food in History*), having been previously considered to be 'an extremely "cold" food (in terms of the four humours), a cause of gout and lacking in both nourishment and substance'.

11. There are two reasons why the idea of bread being divided according to status is nonsense.

The first is a matter of physics; medieval ovens weren't heated from below like a cauldron, but from wood that was put into the oven and burned. The ashes were then raked out, and dough put in to bake. Consequently, the bread cooked evenly all round, and there was no burnt bottom. The phrase 'the upper crust', meaning the top people, comes from North America, is first recorded in 1836, and refers not to bread but to the cream

Application to join the Edmonton County School Old Scholars' Association

First Name(s) Surname

..... Nee

Telephone No E-Mail

Fax No

Address

.....

Years at School 19... To 19.....

I enclose cheque/postal order for £ made payable to ECSOSA.

How did you contact the Association –

from School () through Newsletter () through Friend ()

Through Reunion () Through Annual Dinner () Other

Please return this form with the appropriate payment made payable to ECSOSA to Cliff Wilkins, 214 Maltby Drive, Hoe Green Village, Enfield, Middx. EN1 4EP

Tel: 020 8805 1570/8350 3670

E Mail: membership@ecsosa.org.uk

May we retain your details to pass on to any old scholars who may wish to contact you?

Yes () No ()

Current Membership Rates: Annual £3.00, Joint Annual £4.00, Five years £12.50, Five years joint £16.50, Ten years £22.50. Ten years joint £30.00. Life £30.00, Joint £40.00.

DIARY DATES 2005

Spring term starts		Tuesday 4th January	
Archive Group	Upper School	Wednesday 2nd February	4.00 pm
Committee Meeting	Lower School	Thursday 10th February	7.45 pm
Half Term	week commencing	Monday 14th February	
Annual Dinner 2005	Old Owens Pavilion	Saturday 19th March	7 for 7.30 pm
Spring Term Ends		Thursday 24th March	
Summer Term starts		Monday 11th April	
Lunch Get together	Whitewebbs Park	Thursday 21st April	12.30 on
Day out	Shuttleworth	Thursday 5th May	11.00 am
Half term	Week commencing	Monday 30th May	
Lunch Get together	Whitewebbs Park	Thursday 23rd June	12.30 on
Lunch Get together	Whitewebbs Park	Thursday 15th September	12.30 on

at the top of the milk. "There's certainly no connection with royalty or medieval etiquette," says the author of *POSH* and blames the writers of tourist guides to Historic houses for inventing such a silly idea.

I'm sorry to be a killjoy – but the County was a grammar school, not a nursery school that taught its pupils fairy tales.

Peter Mottley (1946-54)

(Oh dear, we do seem to have upset the applecart with a bit of frivolous nonsense! I stand corrected on all counts and at the risk of incurring further wrath from Mr. Mottley, I will now finish the article started last time! Ed.).

HISTORY TIME part 2

Lead cups were used to drink ale or whisky. The combination would sometimes knock the imbibers out for a couple of days. Someone walking along the road would take them for dead and prepare them for burial. They were laid out on the kitchen table for a couple of days and the family would gather around and eat and drink and wait and see if they would wake up. Hence the custom of

holding a "wake".

England is old and small and the local folks started running out of places to bury people, so they would dig up coffins and would take the bones to a "bone house" and re-use the grave. When re-opening these coffins, one out of 25 coffins were found to have scratch marks on the inside and they realised they had been burying people alive. So they would tie a string on the wrist of the corpse, lead it through the coffin and up through ground and tie it to a bell. Someone would have to sit out in the graveyard all night (the "graveyard shift") to listen for the bell, thus, someone could be "saved by the bell" or was considered a "dead ringer".

Now, whoever said that History was boring!!

SCHOOL NEWS

Welcome to the new staff at the school, particularly to Mr. Elliott, (Dep. Head), Ms. Lawrence (Asst. Head) and Mrs. Barrow (Asst. Head) We hope they have many happy years at ECS.

REMEMBER to leave the last weekend in October 2005 free for the grand REUNION

On behalf of all the Committee and myself, we wish you all a very **MERRY CHRISTMAS** and a happy and healthy New Year.

Please send all communications to:
Mrs. Jan Mills,
278 Westhorpe Road, Gosberton,
Spalding, Lincs. PE11 4EP,

Tel: 01775 841320.
E Mail: Janmills@beeb.net

Please mention ECSOSA in the subject heading when sending E mail.

Any opinions expressed in this Newsletter are those of individual contributors and are published in the interests of information and debate. ECSOSA itself holds no collective opinions.

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