



# ECSOSA



Edmonton County School Old Scholars' Association  
<http://ecsosa.org.uk/>

## NEWSLETTER Autumn 2006

### *Have you got one?*

It's a funny way to start a Newsletter we know, but we couldn't think of another headline. Cliff Wilkins tells us that he has twenty names and addresses without the now customary postcode. Please could you look on the envelope enclosing this publication to see whether or not this refers to you, if so Cliff would appreciate it if you could give him the necessary information. His address is 214 Maltby Drive, Hoe Green Village, Enfield, Middx. EN1 4EP, or you can ring him on 020 8805 1570 or 020 8350 3670.

### *Maureen Shelley's*

### **JOURNEYS TO HELL - Part 2**

From India I went on to Nepal from Delhi, which by comparison was very quiet. I took some time out in Pokhara, going by bus, but deciding to fly back down to Kathmandu after. This was a dinky flight. The runway was a red dirt track on which cows grazed, and the waiting room a large, exotic tree which gave shade. As the planes landed or took off a huge hooter was sounded and everybody herded the cows off the runway.

Having been asked to surrender our arms to the pilot (yes, honestly) my tiny penknife was confiscated and the pilot stuck it in his pocket. After take-off, very, very quickly and steeply as there are a lot of very high mountains in that part of the world, the curtains between us lesser mortals and the pilots were pulled open. This revealed a breathtaking view of the Himalayas, almost too beautiful to imagine, AND the pilot wearing two odd socks! I must just add here that from Kathmandu I flew on to Bangkok, flying over Everest on a brilliant day, with just a ring of mist a little below the summit.

My second delicious taste of the Far East, also an amazing spectacle, was seeing the Delta of the Ganges, so massive and intriguing.

Another flight which amused me no end was one I made some years later in West Africa. I had flown to the Ivory Coast, and having spent a whole week being bussed around a dry, dusty area, decided to chill out for a week down country at Sassandra. Now the Air Afrique plane which was to fly us there was one of those you see lined up for salvage at the very limits of airports, and there were also too many passengers. However, as it was a once a week service nobody was going to miss it. There was quite a brawl at the stairs as people fought for seats, but no sweat, the PILOT organised us into orderly lines and packed us in like.

like sardines. The hostesses in long, colourful boubous took the seats while the remaining passengers sat on the floor in the aisle. Luggage was wedged in wherever it would go. No refreshments were served as nobody could move, and things like reading lights, loos, luggage lockers were non-existent. Luckily our flight, with its rubber band propellers, was only an hour and we skimmed in safely over the palm trees into a pineapple plantation. Boy, did it smell good. The "arrivals and departure lounge" was again a tree!



*Maureen has sent along this photograph taken on the School field, whilst letting their hair down on their last day at school.*

*Reading from left to right the photograph shows Maureen, Joan Harness, Pat Shepherd and Veronica Puttock.*

Those who jump off a bridge in Paris are in Seine.

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Dijon-vu - the same mustard as before.

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Reading while sunbathing makes you well red.

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A bicycle can't stand on its own because it is two tired.

## Received from GERALD BAILEY (Gerry)

I attended the County School from 1937 to 1942. Although my spell there was not at all distinguished in any way I have retained vestiges of good practice in some respects, and for this I am grateful to Mavis Emery. She was my form mistress in the last year and her memory stays with me as much as a friend as a guardian of the English language. It was not until I got to a teacher training college in 1948 that I reaped the fruits of her seemingly unsuccessful tuition.

My only contact now is Pat Tidbury (nee Johnson), who was in my final year, and though she now lives in Australia we keep in loose contact and we see each other from time to time. Pat has a tremendous memory and is constantly jogging mine, so that names pop up that have lain buried for years.

I was evacuated to Bocking with Tester and George Alexander. My good friends at school were Reg Francombe, Derek Ferdinand and David Barrett, who were all killed whilst serving. Ron Emery was a great pal but I have heard nothing since 1942. Somebody Adam was on HMS Ganges in 1944 and Gordon Walton was on HMS London, going out to Sydney in 1946. Alan Biffen I bumped into in 1957.

Do you think you could put out a call for the '37 intake to contact you with brief details of whereabouts and careers? I don't have to point out that next year it will be 70 years since we gathered in the hall to sing hymn 333 for the first time. (Part two of said hymn was Lord dismiss us, etc., and was always sung with gusto).

Pat keeps in touch with Doreen Ellis who, although not in my class, I shall attempt to call upon if we find our way wending in her direction. Although I am very fit I think that the haul to London for a reunion is out of the question, but if anyone out there remembers me I would be glad to hear from them.

## OBITUARY

### Siegfried Schwer (Fred) 1947-52 Remembered by Derrick Stone

Fred Schwer, after a long and spirited fight with his illness, died peacefully on September 1st, the day following his 70th birthday. I first really met Fred when, following second year rearrangements, I found myself sitting alongside him in Form 2A. Our close friendship started then and continued until his death.

At the age of thirteen he was already seriously anticipating a future golfing life, and practicing and preparing for such an eventuality was usually foremost in his mind. This was not, I suppose, at the expense of other considerations; he was a popular pupil and enjoyed most school activities.

Upon leaving the school he, for a while, worked full time in an accounts office and at weekends at South Herts Golf Club. Here he, with determination, secured full time employment as a junior assistant with his golfing hero, the legendary Dai Rees, the current Ryder Cup Captain.

Fred could now begin his upward climb within his long chosen profession. He enthusiastically learned his craft at South Herts Golf Club, and subsequently whilst assisting the golfing dynasty of John Hunt and his sons Bernard and Geoffrey, all Ryder Cup men, at Moor Park Golf Club. With the Hunts he maintained long friendships.

In 1964 an ambition was achieved and he became his own man as the resident golf professional at Felixstowe Ferry Golf Club, the fifth oldest Golf Club in Britain. Now married and with a young family he worked hard to establish himself, and in doing so earned a considerable reputation both within his own club and out into his county as a teaching professional.

A long held passionate interest in coin collecting led to his eventual movement from professional golf into coin dealing and professional numismatics. In this field too he forged a fine reputation and produced a number of authoritative, learned and internationally respected pamphlets, articles and other publications on coins, coinage, tokens and such.

Within his last years he was made a Captain of his Golf Club, this being an honour only rarely bestowed by the golfing establishment upon erstwhile employees!

Fred's terminal illness was frighteningly diagnosed for him just days before the E.C.S.O.S.A. reunion of 1997, and he chose not to attend. However he attended our later reunions, also several annual dinners and the occasional lunch at Whitewebbs.

He displayed a courageous acceptance of the nature of his illness and fought with it bravely. When he succumbed Fred left with us his wife, Gillian and his three sons.

Gill wishes to convey her thanks to Old Scholars who have sent her their condolences and best wishes.

## Chairman's Report

We suddenly find the A.G.M. upon us as time yet again surprises us with the speed of its passing -it will be Christmas before we know it!

One unwelcome change is the resignation of Pat Mattingley from the committee due to ill-health. Pat has been associated with the school since 1939 (with only a break whilst her family was young) as a pupil, a member of the Association and the committee, and has also served as a School Governor (1978-1992).

Pat was one of the stalwarts who joined Beryl on the committee in the early 1990's to help to keep the Association going through one of its most difficult phases, when it was in danger of collapsing. She has served continuously ever since, amongst other things helping with the distribution of the Newsletter, and was not phased by the change of regime when I took over. I have found her extremely supportive, although always independent, and a tower of strength, particularly in the organising of our three major reunions.

In recognition of her service your committee has recommended that she be elected as a vice-president at the forthcoming A.G.M.

This reminds us that your current committee is showing signs of its, shall we say, maturity, but our suggestion that the “younger set” organise something for their generation has not been taken up. This does not bode well for our future or any more reunions.

We are therefore suggesting that we set up an “electronic” committee to start to plan the next reunion. This will allow far flung members to contribute their ideas and skills and although the final arrangements will have to take place “locally” should obviate the need for meetings in the Edmonton area. The Old Eds’ very successful reunion was organised mainly by email - let’s see if we can learn from them - and if it works it could provide us with a way forward.

Which brings us to my final point. We have been able to maintain our subs at a very reasonable rate for some time now, but increasing costs, particularly of postage, mean we will have to look carefully at our subscriptions in the near future. We may, however, be able to put off any increase if more of you can be persuaded to take your Newsletter by email. Contact Cliff Wilkins for further details.

*Frank*

## **and from Pat Mattingley (nee Gibbins)...**

I was interested to read Dee’s wartime recollections in the Spring Newsletter. Here is my version:-

### ***A pupil of the War years - 1939-1944***

I was due to start at our School in September 1939, but, with the outbreak of war imminent, this did not happen for some time. Like most pupils who had just left their junior schools in July 1939 we had the choice of returning to those schools or be evacuated with our new schools, and as I was a considerable distance from the County I chose to return to Oakthorpe.

During August we were busy preparing for the Government evacuation scheme, which was put into action two days before the outbreak of war on 3rd September. This school was sent to Walton-on-the-Naze and after a few weeks I was transferred to Clacton County with the Latymer.

After 8 months there I received a letter telling me that the County School was re-opening in May, and this coincided anyway with our withdrawal from Clacton.

So it was with some trepidation that I attended the first day not knowing anyone. However, the evacuees from Braintree, to where our school had been evacuated, were far more confident and, in some cases, quite helpful.

The school building was already prepared and protected against enemy attacks. All the windows had strong tape on them and dark curtains for the blackout. The south wing of the boys’ downstairs cloakrooms had been converted into safe havens, with sandbags up against all the windows, as indeed had the long corridor downstairs where the classrooms were. Nothing had been left to chance.

One of my first teachers was Jackie Long who, unfortunately, only taught us for a few weeks before being drafted into the R.A.F. Sam Elengorn was our French master and I clearly remember the day that France fell because, as he entered each classroom for his lesson, he ordered everyone to stand up and sing the Marseillaise. All day long the French National Anthem echoed throughout the building. A most stirring tribute to our fallen ally.

I soon settled down to school routine, not however for very long as the Battle of Britain raged above our skies as I entered the 2nd form. This led to us being in the shelters nearly all day and completely disrupting teaching arrangements.

At this time we still had school hours of 9 a.m. to 12 noon, 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., and going home for dinner, but, with the increased risk of going backwards and forwards during the air-raids, the Government decided we should discontinue going home at mid-day and attend school from 8.30 a.m. to 2.30 p.m., taking sandwiches during a lunch break. This, however, led to doubts as to whether we were getting enough nourishment, with rationing at home stretched, and thus the introduction of school dinners was started. Yes, ‘we’ are responsible for this national institution!!

Gradually we became used to the sirens, the blackout, the constant air-raids, the sleepless nights, the barrage balloons like shining silver flies for as far as one could see looking south. The Ack Ack guns nearby, the constant convoys carrying troops along the A.10. There was the need to carry our gas masks with us everywhere, and should we forget them there would be Mr. Quartermain’s beady eye on us at the school gate with a firm order to return home immediately to collect them.

It was decided by our Headmaster, Mr. North, that we should do our bit for the war effort. Everyone had been urged by the Government to dig for victory and all available land was converted into growing vegetables. The north end of the field was given the task of being responsible for the pupils’ efforts. The small piece of land just to the left of the north gate, now a car park, was divided into four strips of land, one for each of our Houses - Andrew, Patrick, George and David. There was close competition throughout the year as to the best results. Not being much of a gardener I found this effort extremely tiring, but we all joined in with much enthusiasm.

In the domestic science lesson Miss Hadler instructed us how to ‘make do and mend’ with our clothes and make the most unbelievable dishes with left-over scraps. To this day I still can’t look a rissole in the face!!

*to be continued next time*

# SCHOOL MEALS AT EDMONTON COUNTY

At Edmonton County we have been successful in maintaining 2 working kitchens where all our school meals are cooked. We buy into the Council provider CTS, an internal Council department. We feel that as a 'not for profit' organisation they reflect our aims to provide real food that is value for money and produced with the needs of our pupils and not the profits of the organisation in mind. We constantly monitor the quality of provision and the efficiency of all outside contractors and meet regularly to ensure that the canteens are efficient, well run and the food is of a good standard..

We have worked with CTS to move our menu towards Healthy Eating. Our menus are agreed with dieticians and are Healthy Schools' approved. We have already introduced low salt, lower fat and low sugar alternatives to all our produce. All our snacks, biscuits and desserts are home-made and include high fresh fruit content. We are ahead of Government directives to remove fizzy drinks and confectionary from schools and have installed healthy option vending machines.

The school and CTS are aware of the issues of healthy eating and have an action plan for removing chips and fast food. We know that children prefer these and we are working to both remove

some items and make old favourites healthier. For instance, all our pizza and bread products are home-made.

We offer a choice of healthy, nutritionally balanced 2 course hot meals on both sites, with vegetarian options every day for £1.80. There is also a large selection of baguettes, flat breads and other bread products, a salad bar, fruit (which we subsidise to encourage take-up) and a snack food range of fast food which are lower salt, lower fat and added fibre and vitamins. We will soon only offer chips once a week and will be offering potato wedges and other products as an alternative.

We have spent a large amount of time and money refurbishing the canteens to make them a more pleasant environment as we recognise that eating and socialising at meal times is part of every pupil's social education. As Business Manager I meet regularly with the school council to ensure that pupil feedback is considered with any improvements or changes to menus.

We hope that parents will join us in encouraging their children to make healthy eating choices and we hope this information reassures them about the quality of food in the canteen.

*This article has been reproduced from the School's Newsletter by kind permission of its author Sara Litchfield-Brown.*

## Sorry about this folks but our **subscriptions are now due**

### RATES FOR 2006/7 ARE AS FOLLOWS:



Annual	£3.00
Joint Annual	£4.00
5 years.	£12.50
Joint 5 years	£16.50
10 years	£22.50
Joint 10 years.	£30.00
Life	£30.00
Joint Life	£40.00

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