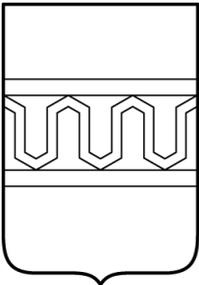


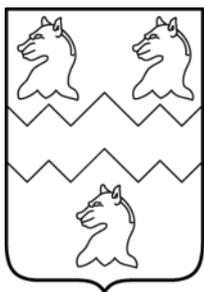
SCHOOL



GOODAIR



HARRIS



MILLER



THORNLEY

The New Hoghtonian

The Newsletter of the Preston Grammar School Association - Issue 5 - April 2016

Letter from the Editor.

2015 was a year of rather more turbulent times than the Association has been accustomed to in its 140 year, usually placid, history. The principal cause of this excitement has been the realisation that the existing Constitution of the Association, ratified and promulgated in 1967, had been unfit for purpose for a long time and that a new and relevant Constitution needed to be established for the coming years. Inevitably the discussions by the Executive Council about the format and content of the new version frequently generated more heat than light but a proposal has now been agreed and it will be put before the Annual General Meeting in May for consideration by the Members.

In the last few months we have gained a few new Members, and lost rather more, and there has been a variety of events, including the usual bowls and golf tournaments.

An item of particular interest concerns that well-known polymath and schoolmaster Mr Ron ("Carrots") Foreman, who celebrated his 100th birthday on Tuesday 26th April (see page 5).



Association Annual Dinner 2016

The Annual Dinner was held on Saturday, 19th March at The Samlesbury Hotel and it marked the culmination of a great deal of preparatory work by a small team of Members. Events like this don't just happen – dates and venues are first decided, contract agreed, invitations sent out, replies and cheques received, food orders sent to hotel, seating arrangements decided and place cards detailing choice of food created. All this is done prior to the day of the event when all comes together: place settings, seating plans, lectern, microphone, exhibition of memorabilia and so on.

As someone who has been involved in this process over the years, though only peripherally on this occasion, I feel that I should draw your attention to some of the work done behind the scene in order that the event takes place smoothly and serenely (if that's the word!), rather like a swan gliding across a lake with all the work being done out of sight. I mention this background work as a tribute to all involved and so that Members are aware of the huge efforts made by the small, but dedicated, team.

The menu saw probably the first change within living memory: the introduction of Scottish Salmon as a main course option. This proved a very popular option, despite one highly-respected Member complaining that the very smell of fish made him feel nauseous, and he was sitting next to someone who had chosen Salmon! (Perhaps there should be an additional space on the reply form for a "Who I don't want to sit next to" block).

The evening followed traditional lines, with Father Timothy Lipscomb delivering a short grace – we were delighted to see him as it was thought that he had a prior engagement. David Bunting, Master of Ceremonies, then welcomed Members and Guests and delivered the notices on behalf of the Secretary, Charlie Billington, who had throat problems. So the meal began, interrupted (as usual) by the Acting President, Jim Goring, taking wine with a seemingly-endless string of people who had represented the School in various activities, or, indeed, been in one of the four houses. Some of us from the Johnson era still recall the intense opposition to the introduction of rugby. Such antipathy still exists as evidenced by the fact that the Master of Ceremonies reduced it to "represented the School at other Sports" in the toasts.

Then came the speeches. David Bunting excelled himself this year: his in-depth research into the background of the Chief Guest – often longer than the Guest's speech – was not only informative, but succinct. The Guest of Honour, Detective Superintendent Bob Helm (retired) delivered a short, but interesting, speech in which he outlined some of his adventures while a serving officer. Bob exuded authority, and not just because of his physical presence. Rumour has it that he may become an Associate Member of PGSA, despite being an Old Boy of Hutton Grammar School. I hope he does because he would be a valuable acquisition.

It is an open secret that, during the year, there has been a certain amount of, shall we say 'turbulence', in the camp, which resulted in the resignation of the President. Jim Goring, after much gentle persuasion – bullying? - agreed to do the job in a one-off, acting capacity in order to front the Annual Dinner, and a very splendid job he did, too. Always a friendly and courteous host, he excelled himself on the night. The bit he was dreading, The Speech, went down well with just about everyone. It was light, entertaining, amusing and short. Who could ask for more? Perhaps he can be persuaded to stand for President at the AGM? Certainly, the Association owes him a huge debt of gratitude for what he did at The Annual Dinner 2016.

Finally, it simply remains for me, on behalf of the Association, to thank everyone who attended the event for your support and I hope that you had a memorable evening.

Tony Olivine.

Moor Park High School and 6th Form College.

From the beginning of the 2015/16 school year our alma mater has been expanded by the introduction of a 6th Form facility and has changed its name to recognise this significant achievement (it was previously known as the Moor Park Business and Enterprise School). The Association congratulates the School's staff and students on its remarkable successes. The Editor notes, with some amusement, that the new School has an astonishing similarity to the old (pre-1968) School, so savagely destroyed by that vandal and former pupil Tuson.

Visit to the National Memorial Arboretum

On Thursday 17th September 2015 thirteen Members and guests went by coach to the National Memorial Arboretum. Based in Staffordshire on the edge of the National Forest, the NMA is the UK's Centre of Remembrance and a living, growing tribute to all those who have served our Nation.

There are 50,000 trees forming the Arboretum, on a 150-acre site bordering the River Tame. The site contains over 300 memorials, each with fascinating stories to tell, covering both military and civilian associations, along with tributes for individuals. To cover such a vast site, several of our members took the road train which provided an excellent guided tour with a commentary on all the major items of interest.

This was followed by a visit to one of the café/restaurants for a spot of lunch and the opportunity to visit the gift shop and purchase mementoes of the occasion. The glorious sunny afternoon was spent on foot, allowing members to roam the huge grounds at leisure and to visit those memorials and places of most interest to themselves.

It is a calming, peaceful and thought-provoking environment and there was unanimous approval that it was a wonderful day out, though there were many tired old legs by the time the coach returned to collect us.

Annual Service of Remembrance 2015

The Association's annual Service of Remembrance took place on Sunday 8th November at Preston Minster, formerly the Church of St John the Evangelist, in Preston (also known as Preston Parish Church). It was organised, with his usual efficiency, by our Secretary Charlie Billington, although a series of unforeseen events caused a little apprehension in the lead-up, and, on the day itself, 5 minutes before the service was timed to start, there were only 2 persons present. However the dreadful weather failed to prevent a splendid congregation from arriving in time!

The Service was led by Canon Timothy Lipscomb - Vicar of Preston and Acting Archdeacon of Blackburn, who is also Chaplain to the Association. The hymns (O God our help, O valiant hearts, I vow to thee) and the National Anthem were sung heartily and pretty much in tune, the collection was strong-armed by the Jims Goring and McDowall, the Reading (Ecclesiasticus 44, v1-15) was by David Swindlehurst, and the Remembrance and Commitment by Tony Olivine, in spite of his temporary affliction (orthopaedic problems caused by over-exuberance on the bowling green). The wreath was placed by former President John Whalley, in the unavoidable absence of the current President.

After the Service a goodly array of comestibles and pots of teas provided by the Minster were consumed with the same gusto as the hymns had been sung. Some of the usual suspects were missing this year, illness and badly-timed holidays being the more frequent excuses. On the

other hand it was good to see former President Keith Nightingale, who has had a tough time recently but made it with the help of a walking stick.

It was also pleasing to welcome the ladies who participated, including Mesdames Haywood, Rigby, Whalley and Yates (not to mention a couple of other ladies so far unidentified by name). Putting them in alphabetical order demonstrates the undiminishing value of a Grammar School education.

Report by D M Swindlehurst

THE "NOT THE WW1 TRENCH WARFARE" PRESENTATION

On Friday 16th October last, more than 20 Members and Guests gathered at the Fulwood Conservative Club for a presentation on Trench Warfare in World War One. Unfortunately some wires had been crossed and the Speaker, Adrian Worrell, who had been highly-recommended, was away on holiday! Disappointed but undaunted, the Association decided to carry on with the event as a social gathering, with the buffet now being free of charge.

It was a wise decision. With the appropriate apologies having been made, practically everyone stayed behind, and all settled down for what became one of the best events we've ever had. The food was truly excellent, the bonhomie superb, and most people stayed deep into the night. Perhaps another contributory factor was the move from the Function Room to the 'Blue Room', which provided a more cordial ambience.

It was good to see Jen and Tony Olivine after Tony's recent health problems, and we were also pleased (as ever) to welcome their Guests, Col 'Dickie' Bird and his wife Bennie. There were several Members from the Preston Historical Society (with which the Association has many connections), one of these being an Old Boy who was also a colleague of mine at the Harris College, as indeed was another Guest. All in all it was a very eclectic group, which had no problem in 'gelling' and getting down to the serious business of enjoying the night!

Several people have responded to pass on their thanks and compliments, and whilst the Association took a small 'hit' financially, there is no doubt that the event was a wonderful public relations exercise as well as being a huge success. For this Jim Goring has to take the credit and the Association would like to pass on its thanks to him. Thanks also to Steve and his staff at the Club for providing an excellent service and a free room!

We hope to fix another date for the Presentation, which we shall announce in due course.

Charlie Billington.

Ron Foreman's Centenary.

Accompanied by Charlie Billington, I went along to Coniston House in Chorley to visit Ron Foreman, one time Master at Preston Grammar School. Ron spent most of his working life at the School and managed to get me through the French 'O' level. He also taught Charlie the intricacies of the Spanish Language both at the School and later at the Harris College.

He is still very mobile, though with failing eyesight is occasionally a little unsteady on his feet. We spent well over an hour chatting to him and thoroughly enjoyed the experience. He talked at length about his time at the School, even remembering the slope of the playground where, in frosty weather, one had to be extremely careful not to slip after leaving the canteen, confessing that he was 'no good at sliding' (although he would have loved to have been!).

His sense of humour was infectious, constantly laughing and not afraid to poke fun at himself. He has had an extremely happy life, meeting many lovely people (and a few of the others) along the way. He considers himself to be very fortunate in still having good health and being extremely happy in his current environment, though missing some of his favourite pastimes like swimming and playing the piano (but not at the same time).

On the 26th of April 2016, Coniston House will be putting on a party to celebrate Ron reaching his 100th Birthday. We understand that the Queen has been informed and will be sending him a Telegram, though unfortunately she is unable to attend in person. I too regret that I am unable to attend as I will be out of the country at the time, though Charlie hopes to be there with Dave Sharp, as both of them not only know Ron, but also knew his late son Alan, who was Dave's Best Man.

(Jim) I have fond memories of my time at PGS, having the greatest respect for Ron Foreman, and would like to take this opportunity to wish him all the very best for his 100th Birthday and the future.

(Charlie) Like Jim I have the greatest respect for Ron ("Carrots" doesn't seem right anymore!), and I always remember him spurring me and others on in 2A by giving us a copy of "Le Figaro" if we came out on top in his tests. The fact that I later qualified as a Linguist meant that at least one Master (as well as "Splints" Woodall) had got through to me, despite my legendary rebellions. Testament indeed! Of course, he was also a great raconteur and quite easy to sidetrack during lessons if they became too boring. It was a privilege to see him again, although I never quite lost touch. By the time you read this his century will have been and gone, but I shall have passed on the best wishes of all of you as Members of the Preston Grammar School Association, as well as my own.

Jim Goring with Charlie Billington, 18th April 2016.



MEMBERSHIP

Obituaries

Since the last issue of the New Hoghtonian, the following Members have passed away:

| | | |
|----------------------|----------|------------|
| John Brandwood | Miller | 1939-49 |
| Derrick Brunt | | c1938/39-? |
| Brian Hall | Miller | 1958-65 |
| Jim Heppell | Miller | 1932-39 |
| Peter McGunnigle | Harris | 1941-46 |
| John Paterson | Master | 1965-69 |
| John Trevor Robinson | Thornley | 1941-49 |
| John Scambler | Harris | 1941-48 |
| Keith Scott | Miller | c1938-45 |
| Gordon Shadlock | | c1934-1939 |
| Alan Sheridan | Miller | 1945-50 |
| Alex Whiteside | Goodair | 1960-66 |

Another Old Boy, John Ingham (1958-63), also passed away in August 2015.

Obituaries were sent out by email at the time, and they are on the Website. However, it is particularly poignant that the names include John Brandwood, uniquely twice Past President of the Association, Jim Heppell, Past President and Author of "A History of Preston Grammar School", John Paterson, Master and previous PGSA Secretary, Keith Scott, renowned Architect and founder of Building Design Partnership, and former Liverpool FC star Brian Hall. The world and the Association are in a poorer place without them and the others listed above.

New Members

In the same period the Association was pleased to welcome the following new Members:

| | | |
|---------------|---------|---------|
| Des Dobson | Miller | 1964-70 |
| Chris Kinloch | Miller | 1954-61 |
| Frank Pearson | Goodair | 1955-61 |
| Frank Thomas | Harris | 1960-68 |
| Harry Woan | Miller | 1954-59 |

We wish them all the best and hope that they enjoy their Membership. Really, it is incredible that people are still joining the Association! On the other hand there is the continuing frustration of Old Boys requesting Membership forms never to be heard from again!

Update and Overview

Late last year I conducted an overhaul of the Membership database, sending out 84 individual hard copy letters and 26 emails to Members. Whilst this was a painstaking exercise it was highly profitable in that I was able to completely revise the records and the Association was at the same time able to express its gratitude to those Members who forwarded donations to the total of £350.00. Many thanks indeed!

I responded to all replies, and in the end transferred just 37 addresses to an 'inactive' list without losing any of the details. Active Membership therefore now stands at **306**, of whom at least **249** have email addresses, which represents a huge saving in printing and postage costs. If there are any email addresses I don't have, or anyone changes email address (which can occur quite often), I always appreciate an early notification.

Charlie Billington.