



WHITGIFTIAN ASSOCIATION

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President - DAVID STRANACK



Chairman - PIP BURLEY



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NEWSLETTER 356 - November / December 2014

Message from the President



How time flies! It seems as if my Presidential year has only just begun, and yet it is already three quarters of the way through. I'm really enjoying it, and I'm confident that we're moving the WA forward positively in the right direction.

I was particularly delighted to attend the Celebration of Whitgift Life at the

School at the end of the Summer Term. Many of us OWs would remember this annual event simply as 'Prize Giving', but it is now much more than that with many aspects of life at Whitgift being combined to deliver a truly impressive and thoroughly engaging entertainment.

Regional gatherings of OWs are becoming an increasingly important part of the Association's year, and Ann and I particularly enjoyed the dinner in Oxford in October.

Jesus College provided a most atmospheric venue and Guest of Honour David Raeburn delighted the diners with some reminiscences of his time in charge of the School ([page 2](#)).

More recently our WA Chairman, Pip Burley, organised a splendid evening of music in Big School based on the hugely successful television programme 'The Darling Buds of May' - a programme which Pip happened to have produced! It was a delightful event which really caught the audience's imagination ([more on page 3](#)).

As the end of my Presidential year approaches, I am delighted to announce that a hugely worthy successor has been identified: Sir Keith Lindblom QC has agreed to accept nomination as WA President for 2015, and I'm sure this proposal will be welcomed with enthusiasm by the WA membership at the Association's AGM on 13th December.

David Stranack

Sportsman's Lunch

On Saturday 11th October, over 30 OWs spanning the age ranges from 19 to 90 gathered for champagne in the Sixth Form Centre (pictured below) before enjoying a delicious two-course lunch in the Old Library. As always, the food and service were both exceptional. The company was tolerable too!

After lunch, the Old Whits headed up to Big Side to watch Whitgift first XV finish off John Fisher with a very satisfying 38-10 win. Some great tries scored by Young, Kulenicz, Patton and Gallagher with three conversions and four penalties from Hogg.

Thanks to Richard Blundell, Nick Somers and Sam Barke for their help in the organisation of this popular annual event.



Oxford Dinner 2014

The bi-annual Oxford Dinner was held this year on 2nd October at Jesus College, Oxford University.

We began with pre-dinner drinks in the very beautiful setting of the Harper Room with its handsome panelling (and no steps!), ideal to get us off to a sociable start.

Dinner was then served in Hall with all in attendance seated at High Table, under the gaze of Queen Elizabeth, engendering a magical, intimate atmosphere. The food was excellent and widely applauded (the curly kale was a welcome “first” for me), served smoothly and elegantly throughout.

The highlight, however, was undoubtedly past Headmaster David Raeburn’s thoughtful speech. Although really it felt more like an intimate, donnish chat. He began with reference to Peter Cox’s book, “Memories of Whitgift”, to introduce his perception of Whitgift in transition, moving onto his personal educational philosophy. Everyone was totally attentive, and appreciative. I’m sure he relished it too.

As the company became increasingly mellow, various



*David Raeburn, David Stranack
and Graham Leeke*

attendees took turns to pipe up. WA Chairman, Pip Burley, led a chorus of Carmen and Professor Paul Wordsworth volunteered to organise the next dinner; his idea being at Green Templeton which would allow an in-term event, which we would hope might appeal to OWs currently studying at Oxford.

After prompting by WA President David Stranack, we repaired to the King’s Arms, where the mellow atmosphere continued.

It was altogether a memorable evening, which was followed by widespread enthusiasm for another Oxford Dinner soon! Thanks to Alistair Lack for his help organising.
Graham Leeke



Senior Prefects’ Dinner

It is a WA tradition to welcome the School’s Senior Prefects for supper at the start of their tenure in the new academy year.

Stefan Amokwandoh, the 2014-15 School Captain, and eight Senior

Prefects joined Old Whitgiftians Nick Somers, Sam Barke, Andreas Dracoulis, Dom Edwards (also a Whitgift Senior House Master) and David Stranack (WA President) for a curry supper at Whitgift Sports Club on Friday 3rd October.

It was a pleasure to also welcome Whitgift Master Richard Martin, the Deputy Proctor and Assistant Head of 6th Form.

The evening provided an opportunity for the WA to tell the current Whitgiftians what the WA can do for them, both now and in years to come, and for the boys to tell us what they would like their alumni association to do for them.

Overwhelmingly, the boys reported that they would welcome the opportunity to use the OW network for careers advice, work experience or in-term placements.

If you might be able to help, please get in touch with the WA office at office@whitgiftianassociation.co.uk.



Whitgiftian Benevolent Society

The WBS is seeking new subscribing members to support the Society’s aims as set out on the WA website. The standard annual subscription is £20, but many of our current members contribute more. We are also keen to hear of any Old Whitgiftian, or other member of the Whitgift Family, who may be in need of the Society’s help. If you would like more information about the Society and its work contact the Secretary, Peter Dunn at peter@thefc.freeserve.co.uk or on 020 8660 5535.

News from the School

Whitgift has long been known as an innovative school, so it is no surprise that innovation is a theme that runs through this report. Starting with something close to my heart: the House system has adopted a new structure whereby all the events for a single year group take place on a single lunchtime. Given the current size of the school, on any given Tuesday or Thursday lunchtime, up to 220 boys partake in activities to inch their House further up the table. Some things never change, however: Mason's were still at the top of the league come half term!

An impressive line-up of children's authors have visited recently including Alex Scarrow, Eoin Colfer and most recently, BREIS, who, as well as being a writer, is also a dynamic hip-hop and rap artist. The boys enjoyed his lilting, lyrical logic and got the opportunity to 'bust a rhyme' and 'flex' themselves. (How's that for keeping up with the kids?) To build on this momentum, the inaugural Junior English Festival (described as "Just like the Hay Festival, only better") takes place on 21st November.

On 10th October, the school was privileged to present an evening of music and entertainment from the hit television series, *The Darling Buds of May* (see page 3) featuring the Whitgift Chamber Orchestra, and members of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. This was, indeed, a fabulous evening, made all the more special by the fact it was hosted by WA Chairman, Pip Burley, who composed the music and produced the original show. The department's next showpiece is the traditional Autumn Collection concert at Fairfield Halls on 20th November.

Not to be outdone, the Drama Department has shown the capacity to step outside of its comfort zone competing in the 2014 Hispanic Theatre Festival, hosted at North London Collegiate School, in Harrow, on 1st October. Six Whitgift students represented Whitgift against other top independent schools, such as Eton, Harrow, St Paul's and University College School. Whitgift performed the gripping play *La Muerte y La Doncella* by the famous Chilean writer, Ariel Dorfman, and won the grand prize of 'Best Group - Spoken Spanish'. The Sixth Form play this year, *Trapped*, was performed in Big School on 14th and 15th October. The performances were mesmerising and by the time the show

was over, Big School had never felt so small! The Upper school play this term is Oscar Wilde's, "*The Importance of Being Earnest*", and will be performed in Big School from 10th to 12th December.

Thirty of Whitgift's Combined Cadet Force travelled to the Tower of London, on 28th September, to take part in their 'Poppies in the Moat' project (pictured above). The art installation transformed the dry moat into a powerful visual commemoration for the First World War Centenary. The venture displays 888,246 ceramic poppies, each representing a Great War fatality. The Whitgift boys were part of a volunteer team that planted a staggering 9,000 poppies during the afternoon, an apt undertaking that honours the 248 Whitgiftians lost during the War.

The school has enjoyed a phenomenal run of sports successes but before I feed back on the main sports, here is a taster of achievements in other sports:

- The U15 cricket team were crowned National T20 Champions.
- Upper third former, James Smith, was selected for the England Youth Squad in table tennis.
- Harvey Byers made his debut for the England U16 Golf team in a match against Wales. George Mullins also represented England, playing for the U18 team in Spain.
- In the Modern Pentathlon programme, one of the School's newest sports, no less than three medals were won in the British Tetrathlon Championships. The school was awarded Academy Status by Pentathlon GB, the national governing body for Modern Pentathlon. The department celebrated its 10-year anniversary in September, with a reception attended by the Headmaster, coaching staff past and present, Senior Modern Pentathlon boys and a number of Old Whitgiftians who are currently making great strides in the sport at the very top level.

The Rugby First Fifteen got their season off to an incredible start by defeating a



formidable Sedbergh team who had recently returned unbeaten from a tour to South Africa. This result started a run of wins that was only halted by two narrow defeats to Wellington and Warwick. The team got back on track, however, by pounding old rivals, John Fisher, 38-10, in front of another bumper crowd on Bigside, who enjoyed supporting the team by belting out verses of Carmen in an awesome display of school spirit.

The Hockey First Eleven have recently enjoyed even more success than their rugby counterparts! Having trounced the very best - an 8-0 victory over Millfield here, a 5-1 win over Kingston there - they went looking further afield for someone to challenge them and decided to take on Universities. The result? More of the same: a 4-2 win over Oxford and a 4-1 win over Christ Church Canterbury. This success has been matched on an individual level by players such as Rhys Smith, who made his East Grinstead Hockey debut in September, even though he is still a Sixth Former, and OWs Luke Taylor, Rob Farrington and Jonty Griffiths, who were selected to play for England U21s in the Sultan of Johor Cup, in Malaysia, from 12th-19th October.

I have left the most endearing and encouraging news to the end: Football - another relatively new sport in Whitgift's rich history - has gone from strength to strength in recent years and all age group teams are currently progressing well through the early rounds of their national competitions. The U11 side have already found their way into the national finals of the ISFA competition! That's right: before they know their Puntabout from their Big School, they are already representing Whitgift in a national final! The future is bright; the future is Whitgift!

Dominic Edwards

Sussex Dinner

Over forty Old Whitgiftians and their wives and partners met for dinner, drinks and memories at the Birch Hotel in Haywards Heath on the evening of Friday 24th October 2104.

The terrific venue was perfect for the needs of the Sussex contingent; easy to get to, with splendid service and delicious food.

Alan Cowing, who had gone to great lengths to organize such a fine gathering of Old Whitgiftians, gave a very welcoming opener including a special welcome to guests Julian Kennedy-Cooke (Whitgift Master 1953-89), Dick Glynne-Jones (Whitgift Master 1955-95), and to two OWs who had flown all the way from Canada to attend the event: Shaun Cashman (1951-58) and Peter Webb (1950-56).



WA President, David Stranack, makes his speech



Alan was followed superbly by WA President, David Stranack who delivered a description of the various WA events that have been held during the year of his Presidency and updated those who were not aware of the numerous benefits now available to WA members (whilst giving those who had not yet signed up a gentle nudge to do so!)

Thanks to Alan Cowing for organizing such a great evening.

Darling Buds of May Concert

The evening of Friday 10th October 2014 brought a truly unique event to Big School: A concert of music from the hit TV series, *The Darling Buds of May*, presented by Old Whitgiftian and WA Chairman, Pip Burley, who was Executive Producer of the show and composer of some of the music.

The School's Chamber Orchestra were supplemented by members of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, providing a wonderful learning experience for the boys.

Pip talked the audience through the creation of the series, the discovery of the now superstar, Catherine Zeta-Jones, and invited special guests to talk about their memories and experiences of the production. He was joined by Barrie Guard, Musical Director and co-composer of the TV shows' music and by actress, Abigail Rokison (daughter of OW Ken Rokison QC) who played Primrose in the second series (pictured right).

Whitgift's Director of Orchestral Music, Mr Philip Winter, also joined Pip for an interview and was complemented on the extremely high standard of the performance. Much to Pip's delight, the orchestra was the largest to ever play the show's music, and included a percussionist who had played on the original recording all those years ago.

This was a truly magical evening, long to be remembered by all who had the pleasure of attending.



Phil Winter conducts the Whitgift Chamber Orchestra and members of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra



OW Pip Burley with Abigail Rokison (daughter of esteemed OW Ken Rokison QC) who played Primrose in the series

A note from the Editor

Whilst the membership continues to enjoy the wide range of activities this autumn as described in the various reports, it is good to know that the Association also has time to reflect on other matters within its wider circle of care. There was a strong representation of rugby club members at the recent musical memorial service for Tony Eve held at St Lawrence Jewry in London and also for David Blanchard's service held at kick off time at Limpsfield Chart. The flying winger was also remembered at the OWRFC supporters' lunch at the Whitgift Sports Club the same afternoon by the lunch's host Patrick Marsland-Roberts.



Whitgiftian Association *and*
Whitgift Sports Club
invite you to celebrate

Christmas Family Lunch

Sunday 14th December
 at Whitgift Sports Club

£35 per adult and £12.50 per child

£80 per family of four

Book now at

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WHITGIFTIAN ASSOCIATION
**ANNUAL GENERAL
 MEETING & LUNCH**

to be held on

Saturday 13th December

in

The Old Library,
 Whitgift School, Haling Park

All members welcome

Papers will shortly be available in the
 Members' Area of the WA website:
whitgiftianassociation.co.uk/members/agm-2014/

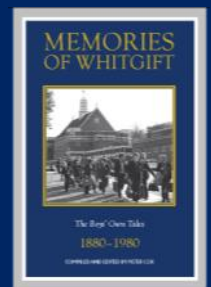
Christmas Offers for WA Members!

*10% off all online purchases with code WAMem14**



WA specially selected claret
 - RRP £125 for a dozen (free delivery)

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GIFT OF MEMBERSHIP

Buy for another OW and get
 10% off first year annual subscription

* This offer is exclusively available to Full, Country, AMS, Sports Members and Patrons of the Whitgiftian Association. Please do not share this code with non-members, in order to avoid embarrassment! Valid until 15th December 2014.

OW Golf Society Report

The Autumn Meeting was held at Royal Ashdown, on the West Course, on Sunday 7th September.

In the end, we only had 19 OWs playing, which was a bit disappointing but everyone had a good day and the weather was great.

Our President, Mike Wilkinson, was the winner of the Autumn Cup with 40 points (and it was his birthday!) David Mason came in second with 35 points and James Wilde got third with 34 points on a count back.

Many thanks to Mike Spanswick for organising the day.

A total of thirteen players took part in the Autumn Tour to Kent and East Sussex at the beginning of October. We played Chart Hills, Littlestone, and Dale Hill over the three days.

The weather was kind to us on two of the three days but at Littlestone we experienced all the hazards of links golf, with high winds and some rain lashing into us on the back nine.

Mind you, the very same day, we came across a golfer being photographed in honour of his just having holed-in-one on the 377 yard 11th hole - unfortunately it was not one of our party!

Some good golf was played, in particular by Captain, Mike Berners Price, and our incoming 2015 Captain, Tony Harris. Tony was a winner on both of the first two days and, in view of his cumulative 11-shot lead going into the last day, suffered a hotly-contested mid-tour cut of four shots to his handicap, imposed by the Captain.

And so, inevitably, it can be recorded that the final outcome after all three rounds was a 3-shot win by none other than Mike Berners Price, repeating his 2013 tour win, with Tony Harris a gallant runner-up who is no doubt plotting vengeance next year.

Many thanks should be recorded to John Gould for organising a thoroughly enjoyable tour, now an established feature of OWGS golf calendar.

If you would like to play with other Old Whitgiftians, do get in touch with me at peterbgale@sky.com. Or follow our progress by checking out the OWGS 'micro-site', which you'll find under Affiliated Societies at www.whitgiftianassociation.co.uk.

Peter Gale (Hon Secretary)

Dates for the Diary

Sat	1 Nov	OWRFC Supporters' Lunch	WSC	12.00
Thur	4 Nov	Westminster Abbey Evensong	The Abbey	5.30
Sat	8 Nov	WSA Dance	School	7.30
Tues	11 Nov	Remembrance Service	School	10.30
Thur	13 Nov	Careers Conversation	School	7.00
Sat	15 Nov	OWRFC Supporters' Lunch	WSC	12.00
Thur	20 Nov	School Music Concert	Fairfield	7.00
Sat	6 Dec	OWRFC Supporters' Lunch	WSC	12.00
	10-12 Dec	The Importance of Being Earnest	School	7.30
Fri	12 Dec	School Christmas Concert	Hanover Sq	6.30
Sat	13 Dec	WA AGM and Lunch	Old Library	11.00
Sun	14 Dec	Christmas Family Lunch	WSC	12.30
Tues	16 Dec	School Carol Service	Minster	7.30

Further information and booking details at www.whitgiftianassociation.co.uk/events

What's On - Fixtures

Sat	1 Nov	1st XV v Camberley	H	L	2.30
Sat	8 Nov	School 1st XV v High Wycombe	A		2.00
Wed	12 Nov	School 1st XV v St Cecilians	A	Cup	3.00
Sat	15 Nov	1st XV v Kingston	H	L	2.30
Sat	15 Nov	School 1st XV v Dulwich	A		2.30
Sat	22 Nov	Wands XV v Effingham	H	L	2.30
Sat	22 Nov	School 1st XV v Millfield	H		1.30
Sat	29 Nov	School 1st XV v Langley Park	H		10.30
Sat	6 Dec	1st XV v Old Wllingtonians	H		2.15
Sat	6 Dec	School 1st XV v Ravens Wood	A		10.00
Sat	13 Dec	Wands XV v Sutton	H	L	2.15
Sat	13 Dec	School 1st XV v Glyn	A		10.00
Fri	26 Dec	1st XV v Old Alleynians	H		2.15

500 Club - Autumn Draw

Autumn Draw Winners:-

Chris Wrigglesworth - £100

John Straw - £50

Peter Crane - £50

Mike Wilkinson - £50

For £12 a year win hundreds of pounds in our quarterly draws! For an even greater chance of winning in our Special Draw, visit www.whitgiftianassociation.co.uk/3-for-a-100.

Recent Deaths

The WA has sadly been informed of the following losses:

Philip Beattie (1949-58) died October 2014, aged 74

David Blanchard (1948-54) died 19th Sept 2014

John Cole (1944-52) died 27th Sept 2014, aged 80

Simon Featherstone CMG (1969-76) died 26th August aged 56

Robert Gray (1938-39) died 8th April, aged 86

Dick Greaves (1936-43) died 19th September, aged 88

James Ross Hutcheson (1946-54) died 29th September, aged 78

D J Mabey (1930-36) died June 2013, aged 92

Derek Richmond (1939-46) died October 2014, aged 86

Tony Vail OBE (1939-46) died 15th September 2014, aged 85

Bob Webber (1936-44) died 12th September 2014, aged 88

Peter Wride (1944-50) died aged 81