



WHITGIFTIAN ASSOCIATION

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NEWSLETTER 389 - MAY/JUNE 2020

VINCIT QUI PATITUR

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

A big hello to all OWs

We all find ourselves in a very strange situation with Life in governmental lockdown and an uncertain future when we emerge out the other side. I personally think that much will have altered as emergencies rapidly bring forth change and that we all must be ready to react and adapt to these changes.

The School closed down early and has swapped to digital learning for the boys and who knows where this might lead? The clubhouse also closed down and stopped all sport and one wonders how this will affect the WSC and associated amateur sporting activities.

All I can promise is that the WA will keep as close an eye as possible on all the membership with the main committee

working as hard as ever behind the scenes to ensure we are ready for the return to normal lifestyles.

I know that individual members of clubs, societies, year groups and friends are keeping in personal contact with each other, which demonstrates the true 'Whitgift Spirit' so well and which must continue for all our well-being.

With very best wishes to all to stay safe and keep well.

RICHARD BLUNDELL OW (1956-63)
WA PRESIDENT



NEWS FROM THE SCHOOL

In what has undeniably been the strangest two-month period I have ever experienced during my twenty years of teaching thus far, two dates in particular stick out.

The first is Thursday 19th March and the second is the very next day, Friday 20th March. In these unprecedented times, every day is strange, but those mentioned above will long linger in the memory of every boy and staff member at Whitgift as they were the days when the serious, life-changing nature of the impact of the corona virus truly hit home.

Thursday 19th March should have been a day of celebration for Whitgift

sport. Unfortunately, the chance of a hat-trick of national titles being acquired on one day had passed when the Hockey First XI had narrowly lost to Dean Close (2 – 3) one week earlier. Their rugby counterparts had booked themselves another day in the sun at Twickenham with an epic semi-final victory away to Sherborne (more on that later) and the U15 football team had earned the chance to win the ISFA cup by sealing themselves a place in the final against Royal Russell with a magnificent 7-2 defeat of St Bede's in the semi.

However, due to the impact of the virus, neither match could happen and

over 40 boys missed out on the chance to create memories to last a lifetime in the thrilling theatre of sport. And they were not the only ones: the U12 footballers and U13, U15 and U16 hockey players all missed out on their opportunities to play in national finals due to take place at the end of the term.

The theme of missed opportunities does not just extend to the sportsmen, however. As I write this, there is a very real chance that Friday 20th March was the last day of school for nearly two hundred Sixth Formers. The cancellation of all public exams has been well publicised and would have been enough of a wrench on its own given the huge amount of work the boys had put in over the previous

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NEWS FROM THE SCHOOL CONTINUED

twenty months in preparation to take them, but when you also think about some of the other things they might have to miss out on – ‘muck-up’ day, Graduation, the Leavers’ Ball, results day parties – you have really got to feel for them.

I can remember all of these occasions very clearly and whilst the class of 2020 may still get the opportunity to partake in these events (as I write this, the media seems to be flip-flopping on a daily basis as to whether schools will be reopening in weeks or not until September), the fact that they might not be able to finish their Whitgift careers in the ‘right’ way is truly very sad.

When I drove out the front gates at about 5 o’clock on that fateful day, Friday March 20th, I paused to say goodbye to a group of about twenty-five Sixth Form boys who had mustered to both reminisce the good times and ponder the uncertain future. Had the Whitgift chapter of their lives come to an end two weeks shy of the Easter term? I sincerely hope not.

And so when the final staff member left the building and the smattering of sixth formers waved goodbye and dispersed, the age of remote learning began. Obviously, the school has remained open to pupils of key workers, but that is only a very small proportion of the whole school body and so, to all intents and purposes, Whitgift became a digital school on Monday 23rd March.

Boys and staff had to rapidly get used to the world of Microsoft Teams as a means of delivering lessons and Firefly as a medium to set and submit work. There were a few hiccups early on, but on the whole, everyone has mucked in to make the best of an undesirable situation.

Teachers have been innovative in trying to create a digital interactive

experience for the students; ways were found to maintain registration and form periods; senior staff uploaded pastoral assemblies to maintain morale; sports staff set weekly challenges to keep up fitness and agility; and the Headmaster provided regular updates to boys and staff alike to keep an open dialogue about what the school was doing to ride through these rough waters.

In addition to doing their best to remotely educate and pastorally guide the pupils, the Whitgift staff also have been doing their bit to contribute to the national efforts to protect the NHS and those in need of care and assistance.

Firstly, assistance was provided to Croydon Voluntary Action in the form of minibuses and volunteer drivers for the delivery of vital food / supply deliveries. On 31st March, Howard Primary School had no hot lunch provision and so the resourceful Whitgift catering team made hot meals

for all their keyworkers and pupils which were then delivered in a school minibus by volunteer driver Mr Jenkinson.

Mrs Boon organized the Lower School English society to write a series of letters to the NHS to thank them for their efforts which were then delivered to local hospitals. Finally, during the first few days of the lockdown, DT teacher, Mr Wendes, designed a prototype visor in the hope that it could be used as PPE by the NHS. Within days, it was officially approved by Croydon University Hospital and so 100 were made the next day and sent off.

Not happy with the speed of the output in the wake of the substantial demand, Mr Wendes toiled away in the school’s DT lab until he was able to improve the efficiency of the design process. When interviewed by www.verdict.co.uk, he stated, “The main challenges were developing a



visor that could be sterilised, reused and efficiently manufactured using school-based materials and manufacturing techniques.”

As a result of his efforts, the school can now produce 200 a day. The entire DT department is now being used as a manufacturing centre for these visors with volunteer members of staff coming in to help Mr Wendes to use the 3D printers and laser cutting machines to produce hundreds of masks for the front-line workers. Vincit Qui Patitur!

And so to conclude, let us pretend that none of this ever happened and I was just writing a conventional update of what has been happening at the school. Well, where better to finish than with the magnificent First XV squad who, due to last-minute budget cuts in the RFU, found themselves travelling for over three hours on Saturday 7th March to face the might of Sherborne School on their home patch rather than at the neutral (and geographically much closer!) Allianz Stadium, which

has hosted the national semi-finals for the last few years.

Sherborne had enjoyed a fantastic season thus far and, buoyed by the support of over a thousand fans, got off to a devastating start by racing to a 13-0 lead. Whitgift managed to get a converted try back through a powerful line-out maul before half-time, but inspired by the braying of the increasingly vocal home crowd, Sherborne scored again soon after the break to take a 20-7 lead and this was the challenge that presented itself to the gallant Whitgift boys as they entered into the final fifteen minutes of the game.

Suffice to say, their determination and resilience did not let them down and they overcame the deficit and silenced the crowd when Ben Fitzgerald (who, incidentally had been one of two Whitgift players to have been yellow carded earlier on in the match) nervelessly slotted a challenging penalty from the 10 metre line to take

the match 24-23 in the last action of the game.

The write-up on the popular school's rugby website, fifteenaside.com, had this to say about the boys' efforts: "A comeback of stunning proportions, epic determination, incredible patience, but most of sheer guts. Bucket loads of guts. The reigning champions had found a way back to Twickenham, found a way to win, and given themselves the chance to repeat the feat of their sides of 2010 and 2011 by going back to back...Ultimately it was a semi-final that will go down as one of the greats."

Well, as we know, the boys never got the chance to take on Warwick in the grand Twickenham finale, but the character they showed on that day back in early March will live long in the memory and is reflective of everyone at the school who is doing their best to adjust to the new way of life in the world's efforts to beat this virus.

DOMINIC EDWARDS OW (1988-96)



SCHOOLCHILDREN TEAM UP WITH ELDERLY PEN PALS TO SPREAD SOME CHEER DURING SOCIAL ISOLATION



Children from the three Foundation schools are using the art of letter writing to help bridge the gap between generations and tackle loneliness during the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic as part of a new pen pal initiative set up by John Whitgift Foundation.

The pen pal project asks schoolchildren who are now learning from home to write letters, poems and drawings detailing everything from their family and school life to holiday memories and favourite pets before sending them to elderly residents at the Foundation's care homes to help bring a smile to their faces and provide some welcome relief from the loneliness of social isolation.

Year 6 and 7 pupils at the Foundation's three schools, Old Palace of John Whitgift, Trinity and Whitgift, as well as local school Oakwood Primary, have written over 40 letters and pieces of art to residents so far.

Residents who are able to put pen to paper are sending replies to the children expressing their delight at receiving the surprise letters and sharing their own stories.

The children have found all manner of subjects to talk about with their elderly

pen pals, with a common theme of missing school and the teachers, their friends and even their minibuss driver.

The younger generation also shared recommendations for things to do during lockdown, such as keeping a dream journal and using Skype or FaceTime to stay connected with people.

Mariyana Nesheva, Senior Care Officer, Whitgift Care, said: "The letters we have received from the children are wonderful and have really brought a smile to our residents' faces at this very difficult time. Actually, I told them beforehand that we were expecting letters from the children and everyone got very excited! Thank you so much for sending them, our residents are so grateful and happy when they receive their letters. You and your students are amazing!"

Martin Corney, Chief Executive, John Whitgift Foundation, said: "The pen pal project is a fantastic initiative which has brought a true sense of joy to our residents' lives during this period of uncertainty. It is wonderful to see the younger and older generations coming together and sharing stories, which really brings together two strands of what we do as a charity so well. I would like to thank the teachers and pupils for reaching out to our residents during these difficult times."

As well as funny anecdotes and fond memories being shared on both sides, extracts from the letters show both generations united in the shared hope that normality will return soon:

"We are all well and being looked after. Now the sun is shining we can go for a walk around the grounds. The spring flowers are so pretty and the leaves are coming out on the trees. I have lived in

**john
whitgift
foundation**

Croydon since I was a little girl, it has changed so much. I used to watch Crystal Palace football. It is a strange time but it will get better soon and we can see you all again." Pat, Whitgift Care resident.

Staff are helping residents harness the power of technology to communicate with family and friends, using iPads to connect with loved ones through a screen. However, there is still something very special about receiving a letter through the post, and this more traditional means of communication can bring a sense of comfort and familiarity to the older generation.

NEWS FROM THE HOCKEY CLUB

The second half of the season saw Tom Norris take over the reins as player coach for our Men's section, which resulted in noticeable changes in form for both the 1st and 2nd teams in their respective leagues.

On Wednesday 12th February, after a hard day at the office, the Men's 1st team also managed to squeeze in a training match against the Whitgift School 1st Team, which was a great opportunity to work on fitness, trial some new tactics and strengthen relationships with the school.

A very experienced school team, with younger and fitter legs plus a number of national league players came out the victors. Many thanks to Karl Stagno and Stuart Litchfield for organising the game and we look

WINNING RACE CAR OWNER RETURNS TO WHITGIFT



2013 Indy 500 winner, Kevin Kalkhoven OW (1955-62) returned to Whitgift to share his success by showcasing two of his race cars.

A Whitgift student in 1962 with 'no

idea what I wanted to do with my life', he explained to current students how his first job out of school developing computers became a passion and

with hard work and determination he was able to work his way up to being a venture capitalist at Silicon Valley.

Kevin reflected on the process of prepping the winning car and wanted

to leave the students with the message that racing is a series of ups and downs. "You must try and learn to fail in order to succeed."

Kevin displayed his two race cars at Whitgift for the day and kindly allowed the pupils to sit in them and take photographs while he answered their questions about careers in Engineering.

The retired CEO, who owns the Long Beach Grand Prix Association, Cosworth Racing and Cosworth Electronics, kindly donated his Indy 500 trophy to the Headmaster which will be showcased proudly in the School's Design Technology Department.

FROM WWW.WHITGIFT.CO.UK

forward to future games both inside and out.

The ladies section has continued to flourish with 3 teams playing most weekends. We do need some more female members to enable us to enter our ladies 3rd team into a league, no experience is necessary!

With the 2019/20 season ended prematurely and the concept of summer hockey being unlikely, our focus has now switched to preparation for the new season hopefully starting in September.

We are always looking for new members of all standards to join us. If you, or any OWs that you know, friends or family are interested in playing hockey then look no further! Old/young, male/female, experienced player or just want to try something new - we pride ourselves on offering hockey for all as well as a great social scene.

Running 5 Men's, 3 Ladies and a Mixed team there really is something



Mens 1st XI Squad

Front Row: Coe-O'Brien, Fatodu (OW), Norris, Bernard (OW), Kumar-Shaw (OW), Ellis (OW)

Back Row: Foley (OW), Houghton, Henthorne (OW), S Thompson, Leuenberger, Simpson, Armstrong (OW), C Thompson, Dalman (OW), Baker, Roche

for everyone. If you are interested in becoming involved, please contact join@cowhc.co.uk. Training will hopefully commence in August, but we would welcome anyone interested in joining us for the next season to get in touch ASAP!

Our current membership includes nearly 40 OWs from over the last 5 decades (and also a number of OMWs)! So there is a high chance that you will remember someone.

SCOTT NETHERWAY OW (1990-97)

NEWS FROM THE GOLF SOCIETY

The news is of course dominated by Covid-19 and understandably so. For the moment, we are in lockdown and the authorities hit the 'pause button' just when the golf season was about to begin in earnest.

In particular, one of the casualties has been the Halford Hewitt, the 64-school event which has the highest profile in our calendar. This was due to take place at the beginning of April but was cancelled for the first time in peacetime since it started back in 1924. And just when Whitgift had the chance to record its 100th victory in the competition.

But we did complete a couple of events, which are recorded below. Whether there will be more to report in due course remains uncertain.

It was a field of seventeen who travelled down to Deal for the Scratch Cup at the beginning of March – illness, family and business circumstances took a toll on some. This was the third competition of its type. It is essentially a trial for the Halford Hewitt Cup team and for the Cyril Gray team (the over-50s version of the 'Hewitt').

The weather was good, certainly by comparison to that in 2019, but there was still a strong westerly wind that challenged the golfers, more especially on the back nine, when it was mostly into their faces. The vast majority found that second half very tricky.

Different weather: same result. Is there no stopping Neill Williams? Neill went out in 34, two under par, and although, like most of the field, he suffered on the back nine, he bounced back from a double bogey on 16 to record a birdie, birdie finish and a gross 74. This was his third win, so no one else yet has their name on the Cup. Mind you, he needed that finish

to his round, because Toby Kemp, looking impressive throughout, shot a 76 to take second place, and the other guaranteed Hewitt places went to Carl Hills, 77, Jack Raison, 78, and Chris Blundell, 80, who edged out Matt Webster and Joe Firth on countback.

Martin Hayes won the Silver Medal for the over-50s, also the same result as last year; Martin was the only one in the field to score better against par on the back nine than on the front, grossing 81. Both Neill and Martin are shown below receiving their trophies from society Captain, Alan Blok, and President, Dudley Thompson, who initially donated the Scratch Cup back in 2018.

Well done to all those who participated and commiserations to those who qualified to play in the Hewitt but were denied their chance to play in the event.

We also held our AGM in early March. Bumping elbows was thought at the time to be hugely in vogue but little did we know that even greater social distancing was around the corner. 30 people attended the meeting and the dinner which followed in the Old Library.

Pip Burley is the new society President and Jeremy Stanyard the new vice-captain. Ian Chicken was awarded the Challenge Cup for his victory in this annual knockout competition, and Aidan Millham the Walker Cup, for his achievement in school golf and in particular for winning the Desert Springs European Schools Individual Gross. Both received their trophies at the dinner (see right).

Best wishes to all readers. Stay well.

PETER GALE (HON SEC)
OW (1963-69)



REPORT FROM THE RIFLES CLUB

Greetings from the WVRC in these unusual times. We hope you're all well and safely inside. As you might imagine shooting has been rather quiet over the last month or so as we do our part to reduce the impact of Covid-19 on our communities. During these quiet moments, we've taken the time to reflect on the past. Our Chairman, Jack Furtado OW (1951-56, Masons House), has this year stepped down so we took the opportunity to talk to him about his past with Whitgift and what it means to him.

Who was your favourite master?

I believe my "favourites" were those, in hindsight, whom I respected the most. The Headmaster, E.A.G. Marlar probably tops the list. If I ever meet him in the hereafter, I'm sure I'll not be able to address him as anything but "Sir"....

Lieut-Comd E.F.Hall DSC, RN (room 19) was my English Language master. He had that magic mix of strictness combined with humour. NEVER any mucking about in his classes. The fear that Horace, a large cane-sized wooden blackboard compass he kept in his middle drawer, might be employed, also ensured no mucking about! It was never used. He was also OC Navy Section of the CCF.

Doug Hussey was our History master whose humour we enjoyed a lot. Similarly, Mike Scott our Geography master was a man we all "got along with" very well. He was ex-Army, I believe, and was also an officer in the Army section of the CCF.

Bob Schad our Maths master, was a younger master than most and again, earned our respect.

What was your first memory of Whitgift?

The day after the weekly evening Goon Show on the radio, our "gang" would get together, about 6 of us, in the Junior playground and go through the whole show; each of us mimicking a character. We were rated according to how well we

mimicked the characters. This mimicry helped me greatly when learning French and Spanish – my accent, particularly in Spanish has always been very good – all due to mimicry.

How did Whitgift prepare you for the real world?

I believe that might be wrapped up in one word – confidence. My success in school gymnastics, thanks to the weekly brilliance of Mr Harry Bennett leading to my winning the Senior School Gymnastics Medal (which I still treasure!) My success in the School Swimming team, winning most of the diving versus all our opponents, and success with butterfly stroke. I was too small for School team rugby but was scrum 1/2 for Masons Senior League! Stood me in good stead for when I left school and played in OWRFC.

I really enjoyed the Army section of the CCF (with plenty of full/small bore shooting), followed by my joining the Honourable Artillery Company, Infantry Bn on leaving School all of which contributed so much to the privilege of my being accepted by the Brigade of Gurkhas (6GR) for my National Service, after successfully completing the Officer Cadet Training at Mons OCS in 1960. Without confidence none of this would have been possible.

What was your most memorable moment at School?

Big School – prize day in 1956, having NEVER been up there for ANY prize – went up there to be presented with my Senior Gymnastics medal, wearing for the first time my blazer with the swimming colours badge (top breast pocket) sewn on by my mother the night before!

Do you have any favourite humorous stories?

After my pathetic four O Level results, ex 9 subjects, the 2nd Head, Mr (Percy) Ewen "invited" my father and me to see



him. Turned out both of them had been students at the School at the same time. My father was advised that if he harboured any intentions for me to stay on to take A Levels, to forget them as Jack was not capable of ANY success.

Father wanted me to stay on and at least get Maths at O Level, so all agreed to stay on until the end of the year to retake Maths at Christmas. 10 days before the exam I was laid low with chicken pox!! Thus stayed on until the end of 1956 Summer Term, to take Maths again – success with a grade 5!

Our biggest thanks to Jack for the interview, and our best wishes for him and his future pursuits in Golf, Shooting and his numerous other activities!

Finally, a big thank you to Bob Jackson who has been taking the time to offer local beer deliveries from his Brewery. "Since all the pubs closed they have diverted all our energies into doorstep deliveries of all important ale within our community. As Churchill ensured in the darkest days of WWII, beer supplies must be maintained. The fighting spirit must be maintained and amazingly we have hardly had time to draw breath. The most popular order is for a 10L or 20L beer in a box, just like the 3L wine boxes from supermarkets." Please go to www.cellarheadbrewing.com where you can order a huge selection of wine, cider and ales to within a 15 mile radius of Flimwell.

We wish you all the best for everyone and their families, hopefully we can see some of you down at the range soon! Until then, stay safe!

HENRY PARRITT OW (2009-16)

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Due to Covid-19 all events are currently cancelled or postponed.

OW5s CLUB REPORT



Richard with some of our touring players and supporters

Although unable to play at the time of writing, the OW5s Club was fortunate in holding our annual South West tour just before the Covid-19 'lockdown'. A fuller report will be available for the next newsletter, but in the meantime here's a very brief summary and photo as a taster...

The tour included games at Sherborne and – as a new addition – Marlborough. In addition to a good range of touring players and supporters, it was also a pleasure to have the company of WA President Richard Blundell watching the Sherborne match and post-match socialising.

It was good to play against many familiar faces at Sherborne, and to make new friends during a mix-and-match game at Marlborough.

We wish well to all involved in the OW5s Club and the Whitgift Association during these unprecedented times; and we look forward to when we can return to the school courts to play again.

HON. SEC. NICK WOOLFENDEN OW (1986-94)
NICKW5S@HOTMAIL.COM

RECENT DEATHS

GRAHAM 'PADDY' CRISP

OW (1953-56)

D. 18TH FEBRUARY 2019, AGED 79

CONGRATULATIONS ON
HIS NEW PEERAGE TO SIR
GERRY GRIMSTONE, OW
(1960-67) NOW KNOWN
AS BARON GRIMSTONE
OF BOSCOBEL OF
BELGRAVIA IN THE CITY
OF WESTMINSTER.

WHITGIFTIAN ASSOCIATION 500 Club

SPRING 2020 DRAW

1st prize £100

John Straw, Ticket 201

2nd prize £50

David S Straw, Ticket 4

3rd Prize £50

Tony P Mitchell, Ticket 55

4th Prize £50

Michael H Percy, Ticket 67

Cheques have been drawn accordingly and will be sent out as soon as possible.

Independent Scrutineer:
Mrs Susan Hooker MA
(Staff 1985 – 2015)

To join the 500 Club and be in for a chance to win a quarterly prize, please contact

treasurer@whitgiftianassociation.co.uk

Submissions for NEWSLETTER 390 covering July/August 2020 closes Saturday 20th June 2020.

All news and photographs should be sent to editor@whitgiftianassociation.co.uk