



Westcliff High School for Boys

Alumni Network Newsletter

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Issue 4 - Autumn 2017

WELCOME FROM THE HEADMASTER, MIKE SKELLY

Welcome to the Autumn Term edition of the WHSB Alumni Network Newsletter. It is now a year since the School's Community Development Office launched the first edition of the termly-issued Alumni Network Newsletter. I am pleased to report that the number of connections we have now made with members of our Alumni community continues to grow. We are also extremely grateful to all those alumni who have made contact with us and for their contributions over the last year.

As reported in previous editions of the Alumni Network Newsletter, in 2020 the School will celebrate its Centenary. The School, originally established in 1920 as 'The Commercial School', was co-educational and located in Victoria Avenue, Southend-on-Sea. It eventually separated into Westcliff

High School for Boys and Westcliff High School for Girls, with WHSB moving to its present site in 1926. We have just over two years until we reach our Centenary year and a planning committee is now in place. We look forward to working with the entire School community to create a memorable and fitting year of events to celebrate our first 100 years. We anticipate that pupils, staff, parents, alumni and our wider community will be involved in planning for the Centenary over the coming months. Later this year the School will launch a Centenary appeal with the aim of raising funds to improve the School's sports facilities.

I should like to encourage you to refer to the School's website, as these pages provide details of the many activities and successes enjoyed by the School



over the course of the academic year. The School's own termly magazine, The Westcliff Diary, is also available to read on the website. This publication lists all of the School's forthcoming events in detail and we would be very pleased to see you at any of these. Please contact our Community Development Office Team for further information about our events or to arrange to visit the School.

ALUMNI PROFILE: KEVIN O'NEILL



Kevin O'Neill is Head of Neurosurgery at Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust in London, and an Old Westcliffian (1974 to 1981). Mr O'Neill qualified in medicine from St Mary's Hospital Medical School and Imperial College London in 1989, having obtained a BSc (intercalated) in Neuroscience in 1986. He embarked on basic surgical training, obtaining his FRCS in 1994, subsequently pursuing a career in neurosurgery, obtaining his final fellowship in 1998 and becoming a consultant in 1999.

Mr O'Neill is now Head of Neurosurgery at Imperial College NHS Healthcare Trust (Charing Cross, Hammersmith and St Mary's Hospitals). Specialising in neurovascular and neuro-oncology, his main research interest lies in developing new technologies and treatments focusing on brain tumour research. He heads up the brain tumour clinical service at Imperial College and a centre of excellence translation research programme aimed at developing and testing new

treatment strategies. Mr O'Neill particularly enjoys the application of science and technology to medicine, utilising new technologies and approaches to solving the complexity of disease states, of which brain tumours are one of the most complex. Earlier this year, Mr O'Neill

appeared in the documentary series 'Hospital' broadcast on BBC Two. The programme recorded Mr O'Neill and his colleagues dealing with some of the country's most difficult and challenging neurological cases.

We look forward to Mr O'Neill joining

us as Guest of Honour for WHSB's Annual Speech Day in November when the achievements of students throughout the School during the past academic year are celebrated. It is anticipated that over 900 pupils, staff and guests will attend.

PUBLIC EXAMINATION RESULTS 2017

This year, WHSB has enjoyed its best ever set of A Level results. Over 22% of our entries were graded A* and 53% of all entries were graded A*/A. Thirty one students gained two or more A* grades and 16 students achieved at least three A* grades. The majority of students achieved or exceeded their University offers, including ten students who secured places at Oxford and Cambridge. The School also had outstanding GCSE results, with 45% of entries graded A* and 69% of entries graded A*-A (or 7-9). Ninety pupils achieved eight or more A*-A (or 7-9) grades and 19 pupils achieved ten or more A* (or 8-9) grades. We congratulate all our students and give them our best wishes for the future.



ALUMNI NETWORK SOCIAL - AUTUMN 2017

Following the success of last year's London event we have arranged our Autumn 2017 Alumni Social on Thursday 19 October, from 5.30pm until 8.00pm. This year we will be meeting up in the Mahogany Bar at Wilton's Music Hall (www.wiltons.org.uk).

Wapping and Whitechapel, close to the historic Tower of London and St Katherine Docks, Wilton's is in the heart of London's East End and within 10 minutes walking distance of Fenchurch Street Station at 1 Graces Alley (pedestrian access only), London, E1 8JB.

For those of you who have not been to Wilton's before, you will have the opportunity to experience the world's oldest and last-surviving grand music hall. Located between

For further information, please contact Mrs Clarke or Mrs Weller in the Community Development Office on 01702 475443 or community@whsb.essex.sch.co.uk.



OWA ANNUAL REUNION DINNER 2017

On Friday 8 September the Old Westcliffian Association (OWA) Annual Reunion Dinner was held in the School Hall.

Over 100 people, collaboratively spanning eight decades, joined together to celebrate the event. The guest speaker was celebrated Alumni Neal Martin, wine critic and author and an internationally-respected

expert on wine.

Having travelled extensively throughout his career, he joined the Wine Advocate in 2006 and contributes to The Wine Journal, Parker's 7th Wine Buyers Guide, The Times and The Daily Telegraph.

Alumni are requested to save the date for next year's OWA Annual Reunion

Dinner to be held in the School Hall on Friday 7 September 2018. Further details will follow in future editions of the Alumni Network Newsletter.

Photos from the evening follow on the facing page.



ALUMNI INVOLVEMENT IN CAREERS & WORK-RELATED LEARNING

Each year, the School holds a number of successful, industry sector specific careers evenings. Past students have spoken about the paths their careers have taken, how best to tackle university courses, the world of work and the benefits of hindsight!

We would be very interested to hear from members of our Alumni Community who would be prepared to come and talk to present students about what they have studied at university, and their jobs or professions (across all sectors). The dates scheduled for the Careers Evenings to be held during the current academic year are:

- Engineering, Wednesday 22 November 2017 from 7.00pm to 8.30pm
- Law, Politics and Finance, Wednesday 10 January 2018 from 7.00pm to 9.00pm
- Medicine, Wednesday 7 February 2018 from 7.00pm to 9.00pm
- STEM, Wednesday 21 March 2018 from 7.00pm to 9.00pm

In addition, our students in years 11 and 12 are instructed to actively seek periods of work experience during the summer break. They would benefit greatly from any work experience placements that our Alumni may be able to offer in their own companies or facilitate with their employers. The employment sectors we particularly wish to target for our students include those where the STEM subjects are most relevant together with Banking and Finance, IT, Law and Medicine.

If you can help, please contact our Community Development Office on 01702 475443 or email community@whsb.essex.sch.uk.

FORTHCOMING SCHOOL EVENTS FOR ALUMNI

Autumn Chamber Recital

Thursday 5 October 2017 - 7:30pm

As always, the WHSB Chamber Recital will feature a variety of music from all sorts of styles, from popular to classical. Performers will be selected from all age groups, showcasing some of the best musical talent that the School has to offer. Tickets are priced at £5 for adults.

"Copenhagen" by Michael Frayn

Wednesday 11 October 2017 - 5:00pm; Thursday 12 October 2017 - 7.30pm

This play explores the meeting which took place at Copenhagen in 1941, between leading physicists Niels Bohr and Werner Heisenberg. Bohr and Heisenberg initially come together to develop the Copenhagen Interpretation in the 1920s and 1930s, reflecting their innovative work on quantum mechanics. However, the two become increasingly divided by the nuclear ambitions of the Nazi German and American governments. The Jewish Bohr, living in Nazi occupied Denmark, now inhabits a very different world to leading German scientist Heisenberg, and the strain of their once father-son relationship plays out as they meet again in Copenhagen. A production for scientists, historians, all students of human relationship, and those who enjoy excellent drama. Tickets are priced at £7 for adults.

Annual Service of Remembrance

Friday 10 November 2017 - 8:45am

The Annual Service of Remembrance for the whole School will take place on Friday 10 November at 8.45am. The Service will run until approximately 9.40am and will include hymns, readings, prayers and music to remember the fallen. A wreath is laid in memory of those from the School who gave their lives in both World Wars and in other conflicts. The School's Combined Cadet Force (CCF) will also participate in the arrangements for the Service. Alumni are warmly invited to join us for the occasion, and for coffee in the Conference Room after the Service. Tickets are free but

places must be reserved in advance.

Autumn Sinfonia Concert

Thursday 16 November 2017 - 7:30pm

The Westcliff Sinfonia returns with another challenging programme sure to delight and excite. The evening begins with Balakirev's Overture on Three Russian Themes, a call to arms for Russian nationalist composers in the 19th century from a man who believed that the western European styles were dominating his country's music. Niam Chauhan will perform as the soloist in Mozart's Violin Concerto No.3 in G Major. In anticipation of the festive season, Tchaikovsky's, Nutcracker Suite will be performed by the Sinfonia in the second half. Tickets are priced at £5 for adults.

Christmas with the Big Band

Friday 8 December 2017 - 7.30pm

We look forward to welcoming you to our ever popular, seasonal spectacular with all the festive favourites being played by WHSB's own Big Band and Junior Jazz Band. A night full of Christmas crackers, sure to get you into the festive spirit with a variety of Jazz, Swing and Blues, in addition to some traditional Christmas melodies. This is a "Bring Your Own" drinks and nibbles event. Tickets are priced at £8 for adults and £5 for students and concessions.

Annual Festival of Lessons and Carols

Monday 18 December 2017 - 7.30pm

You are warmly invited to the School's traditional service of Lessons and Carols, an opportunity for our School and Alumni Community to come together in what promises to be a rousing evening. Mince pies and coffee will be served afterwards. Tickets are free.

Tickets for all events are available to purchase at <http://whsb.ticketsource.co.uk/> or via the TicketSource Box Office on 0333 666 3366 (please note that a booking fee of £1.50 will be charged for telephone bookings).

LAST WORD

If you or someone you know would like to join the WHSB Alumni Network and/or join the OWA, please take a few minutes to register your details via the WHSB School website. Select 'Community' from the Main Menu followed by 'Alumni & Old Westcliffian Association'. You will then receive password information enabling access to the secure 'Alumni' area of the School website. For further information, contact Mrs Clarke or Mrs Weller in the Community Development Office on 01702 475443 or via email (community@whsb.essex.sch.uk). The WHSB Alumni Network is completely free to join and we very much look forward to hearing from you.

In addition, you can follow Westcliff High School for Boys on Facebook and Twitter where you can find out about the latest developments and events taking place at the School. We would be delighted to welcome members of our Alumni Community back to the School to see what is going on. You can also network and keep in touch with other members of the WHSB Alumni Community on LinkedIn and the Old Westcliffian Association (OWA) Facebook and Twitter accounts.

We welcome your comments and contributions for future editions of the Alumni Network Newsletter which will be published termly, with the next scheduled for Spring 2018. Please contact Jemima or Nicki in the Community Development Office on 01702 475443 or via email at community@whsb.essex.sch.uk. We look forward to hearing from you.



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