

# OLD WESTCLIFFIAN ASSOCIATION

(formed 1926)



## NEWSLETTER 2016

### 1. OFFICERS & COMMITTEE 2015 - 2016

<p><b>PRESIDENT</b> - D A Norman, MBE, <i>MA</i> (<i>Oxon</i>), <i>M. Univ (Open)</i></p> <p><b>VICE PRESIDENTS:</b> R. Arnold T.W. Birdseye, <i>JP</i> H.P. Briggs H.W. Browne <i>C.B.E.</i> A.J. Burroughs R.T. Darvell, <i>BA (Hons)</i> D.A. Day J. Harrison A.A. Hurst, <i>BA (Hons)</i> N.C. Kelleway M. Wren</p>	<p><b>CHAIRMAN</b> - M.A. Skelly, <i>MA</i></p> <p><b>HON. SECRETARY</b> - T.W. Birdseye, <i>JP</i> <b>HON. TREASURER</b> - C.R.N. Taylor, <i>FCA</i> <b>HON. ASST. SEC.</b> - R. Arnold</p> <p><b>COMMITTEE MEMBERS:</b> A.J. Burroughs R.T. Darvell, <i>BA (Hons)</i> J. Harrison A.A. Hurst, <i>BA (Hons)</i> Father J. McCollough School Head Boy, or his Deputy</p> <p><b>HON. AUDITOR</b> - A.R. Millman, <i>FCA</i></p> <p><b>NEWSLETTER EDITOR</b> - S.V. White <i>email: terry.birdseye@gmail.com</i></p>
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Hon. Sec - Terry Birdseye, *JP*  
810 London Road, Leigh on Sea, Essex, SS9 3NH  
Telephone - 01702 714241, Mobile - 07752 192164  
Email: terry.birdseye@gmail.com

### 2. AGM 18TH JULY 2016 AT 8 PM AT THE SCHOOL

3. ANNUAL REUNION DINNER - FRIDAY 9TH SEPTEMBER 2016  
6: 15 PM FOR 7:00 PM AT THE SCHOOL  
DETAILS ON PAGE 3.

## CONTENTS

1. Officers & Committee 2015 - 2016.
2. Annual General Meeting, 18th July, 8 pm at the School
3. O.W.A. Annual Reunion Dinner, Friday 9th September 2016 - 6:15 pm for 7 pm at the School, Kenilworth Gardens, Westcliff on Sea, Essex, SS0 0BP. If you would like to look round the School, please be there by 5:30 pm. Details and reply slip on page 3.
  
4. (i) Honorary Secretary - Careers Guidance Support Form  
(ii) Honorary Secretary's Report  
(iii) New Members  
(iv) Member Donations
  
5. Honorary Treasurer:  
Income and Expenditure Accounts for year ended 31st March 2015.
  
6. President.
  
7. Chairman.
  
8. In Memoriam.
  
9. Obituaries.
  
10. News of and from Old Westcliffians.
  
11. Old Westcliffian Lodge No. 5456.
  
12. Editor.
  
13. (i) The Old Westcliffian Association  
(ii) OWA application form

**3. OWA ANNUAL REUNION DINNER - FRIDAY 9TH SEPTEMBER 2016**

**At the School: WHSB, Kenilworth Gardens, Westcliff on Sea, Essex, SS0 0BP  
 6:15 PM FOR 7 PM OR 5:30 PM SHOULD YOU WISH TO LOOK ROUND THE SCHOOL  
 COST 28.00 (£16 FOR STUDENTS IN FULL TIME EDUCATION)  
 TICKETS WILL NOT BE ISSUED**

**DRESS - LOUNGE SUIT, ASSOCIATION TIE (£8, Available from Asst. Sec. - see page 39)**

**MENU**

Pot of course pâté with a cranberry dressing  
 with side salad & onion chutney and toast

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Sirloin steak béarnaise with mushrooms,  
 roast vine tomatoes & spinach

\*\*\*

Raspberry torte with mixed fruits & clotted cream

\*\*\*

Cheese Board with celery, grapes and biscuits

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Tea or Coffee with Chocolates

*(Vegetarian Meal available on request)*

- No bookings will be taken after the deadline of noon on Wednesday 7th September.
- All cancellations after this time must be paid for.

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**REPLY SLIP: O.W.A. ANNUAL REUNION DINNER - FRIDAY 9TH SEPTEMBER 2016**

**FROM: Name:** .....

**Address:** .....

.....

**Postcode:** ..... **Phone:** .....

**TO: TERRY BIRDSEYE - 810 LONDON ROAD, LEIGH ON SEA, ESSEX, SS9 3NH  
 TELEPHONE: 01702 714241/terry.birdseye@gmail.com**

**PLEASE RESERVE ..... PLACE(S) FOR:**

<u>NAME</u>	<u>* YEAR DATES AT SCHOOL</u>	<u>COST</u>
.....	(.....)	.....
.....	(.....)	.....
.....	(.....)	.....
.....	(.....)	.....

**TOTAL: £ \_\_\_\_\_**

**\* PLEASE COMPLETE YOUR YEARS AT SCHOOL. THIS IS IMPORTANT.**

**CHEQUE PAYABLE TO "OLD WESTCLIFFIAN ASSOCIATION"**



4. (i) TO: HONORARY SECRETARY O.W.A. - TERRY BIRDSEYE

**OLD WESTCLIFFIAN ASSOCIATION**

**Careers Guidance Support Form**

As in previous years, we are continuing with our careers advice network. The intention is that both current pupils and Old Boys can tap into the wealth of knowledge about careers and universities held by us, the membership of the OWA. Those seeking advice will be able to search anonymised data and then submit pertinent questions for direction to the appropriate alumni by an intermediary at the School. In order to set up and sustain the network we are asking willing Old Boys to supply a brief resume of their career history below:

Name: .....

Years at WHSB: .....

University, Subject, Degree Level, Dates 1: .....

.....  
.....

University, Subject, Degree Level, Dates 2: .....

.....  
.....

Profession(s)

.....

Email Address:

.....

By signing below I consent for this data to be kept on record and to be used solely to match those seeking careers advice with those offering it.

Signed: ..... Date: .....

#### 4. (ii) HONORARY SECRETARY'S REPORT

Well another year has passed and it is time to pen my report. The Association is in good shape with 48 new members, of whom 30 are recent school leavers. We desperately need new committee members, so if you can spare a little time, your help would be greatly appreciated. During the year, we welcomed Andrew Ashman Jones to the committee. Andrew is a former organ scholar at York University and a trainee teacher.

Thank you to those who have given donations. Apart from the modest membership fees, this is the only money we receive, so your generosity is always welcome.

Since the publication of the last newsletter, we have been notified of 11 OWs who have passed on. Among these were Doug Mason and Jeffrey Winslow, both former maths masters. It is worth mentioning that Doug did so much to nurture and promote rugby at the school. Jeffrey's funeral was held locally and some of us were fortunate to hear Fr. John McCollough's outstanding and moving tribute to him reproduced in this newsletter. Our thoughts go out to their families and loved ones.

Last year's annual dinner was another tremendous success, with 97 attendees. Our guest speaker was Nigel Holdcroft, local solicitor, former leader of Southend Borough Council and an OW. On the night we made him an honorary member.

This year the dinner will be on Friday 9th September. It will be in the school hall and the catering will again be by Affinity. The application form is on page 3. The guest speaker will be Martin Townsend, editor of the Sunday Express. It promises to be a jolly occasion. We are getting an increasing number of school leavers, including ladies attending, which is great. If you have not been before, why not make the effort, you will not be disappointed!

Our AGM will be at 8pm on 18th July at the school. It would be great to see some new faces in addition to our old stalwarts. Please come along and support. There is always a very interesting report on school activities by the Headmaster.

Our close association with the Parents' Association continues. Jemima Clarke, their Chair, has now joined the new Community Development Office at the school. The role of this new department will be explained by the Chairman in his report. As an employee of the school, Jemima has joined the OWA, and we welcome her as a member. Jemima is a great supporter of the OWA and has been a great help to me for which I thank her.

Please visit the website, where you will find some interesting material including back numbers of the newsletter.

I offer my thanks to Michael Skelly, our chairman, for his continuing support and to my committee. I also thank Shanie White, our newsletter editor, who somehow manages miraculously to pull it all together!

Lastly, I thank you, the members. Please keep the articles coming. All articles that did not make it this time will be published next year. My apologies for your disappointment. I wish you all good health and happiness always.

Terry Birdseye  
Honorary Secretary

#### 4. (iii) NEW MEMBERS

George Ablett	(08-15)	Emma Jarvis	(13-15)
David Argent	(13-15)	Alex Johnson	(05-12)
Rodney C Allen	(55-59)	Owen Jones	(13-15)
Ian Barnett	(82-87)	Robyn Jones (Miss)	(13-15)
Anthony Bendkowski	(71-77)	James Lee	(08-15)
Samuel Bird	(08-15)	Thomas Miller	(08-15)
Philip Broomhead	Ex-Master	Michael Newstead	(56-62)
Charles Cable	(08-15)	David Pearce	(13-15)
Mrs Jemima Clarke	Employee	Alexander Read	(08-15)
Harry Coday	(08-15)	David Rees	(55-62)
Zachary Collins	(08-15)	Christian Roberts	(08-15)
Joel Collins	(08-15)	Mark Roberts	(90-97)
Andrew Cooper	(07-14)	Andrew Saville	Ex Governor
Owen Davies	(08-15)	Paul Solomans	(75-82)
Richard Dyton	(75-82)	Kevin Thomas	(78-80)
Alex Earle-Sodai	(13-15)	John Tothill	(08-15)
Joshua French	(06-13)	Sam Turnbull	(08-15)
Dylan Galligan	(08-15)	Conor John Tyler	(13-15)
Joseph Gamage	(08-15)	Christopher Vickers	(08-15)
Ben Gershinson	(04-11)	Michael Vose	(08-15)
Chris Hardy	(05-12)	Blaine Webber	(08-15)
William Hawkins	(08-15)	Jake Weeks	(13-15)
Javen Heales	(08-15)	James Williams	(05-12)
Nigel Holdcroft	(70-77)	Rebecca Williams	(13-15)
(Honorary Member)			

#### 4. (iv) MEMBERS DONATIONS

Members who have given donations over the last year, which are received with grateful thanks:

Pete Johnson  
Frank James  
Father John McCollough  
John Western  
Alan Burroughs  
Ian Whitfield  
A Ashman Jones  
Michael Dawson  
Howard Briggs  
Derek Rowe in memory of his grandson Rory William Kent  
Robin Hughes in memory of his cousin Michael John Hughes

## 5. HONORARY TREASURER

### INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

#### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2015

	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>
INCOME		
Life subscriptions	350	225
Profit on ties etc	94	78
Donations/raffle	344	516
	-----	-----
	788	819
EXPENDITURE		
Deficit on function	9	131
Printing, postage & stationery	580	609
Sundry expenses	80	30
	-----	-----
	669	770
SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR		
	-----	-----
	<u>£119</u>	<u>£49</u>

### BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2015

	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>
ASSETS		
Stock of ties etc	792	605
Cash at bank	4,982	5,050
Cash at building society	2	2
	-----	-----
NET ASSETS	<u>£5,776</u>	<u>£5,657</u>
FINANCED BY		
General fund brought forward	5,657	10,608
Surplus for the year	119	49
	-----	-----
	5,776	10,657
Donation to WHSB for CCF	-	5,000
	-----	-----
General fund carried forward	<u>£5,776</u>	<u>£5,657</u>

-----  
C R N TAYLOR FCA  
HONORARY TREASURER

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A R MILLMAN FCA  
INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

## 6. PRESIDENT

Last September I celebrated the 60th Anniversary of my arrival at the school. Sixty years on I still remember that it was with some trepidation I parked my bike in the huge array of cycle racks which were then at the western end of the school. I marvelled at how everything looked so big compared with Leigh North Street Primary from whence I had come together with about a dozen other boys from my primary class in that year. I am pleased to say that several have remained lifelong friends.

I know that there are a number of members of the Association who started at the school several decades before me. What unites us all is the affection in which we hold our old Alma Mater and the lifelong friendships that were forged in our years at WHSB. One of the most important roles of the Association will always be to provide an opportunity for us to maintain contact with old friends and acquaintances from our years at the school.

But as I made clear when I first had the honour of being elected President, I believe that the OWA gives members the opportunity to contribute to the life and work of the school to which we owe so much. I speak very much from the heart on this. I was far from being a star pupil, always being drawn to distractions outside the school much to the frustration of the then Headmaster, Henry Cloke. I eventually made it to Oxford University as a mature student age 25 and it was only then that I realised that Westcliff had managed to educate me in spite of myself! As a Governor of the school today I have been known to tell the present generation of Westcliffians that they should recognise that they enjoy a superior education to many whose parents pay many thousands of pounds per year to educate their offspring in the private sector.

It was good to welcome so many OWs (spanning seven decades) to our Annual Dinner last year. It was the largest and generally regarded as the most successful for many years. Let's hope we can repeat this in 2016.

I have been proud to serve as President and thank the Committee and the Headmaster for their support.

Best Wishes

Councillor David Norman MBE  
President

## **7. CHAIRMAN & HEADMASTER**

### **A Message from the Headmaster**

It is alarming how quickly the request from our devoted Secretary, Terry Birdseye, for my contribution to the OWA Newsletter has come around. It seems no time at all since I last had the pleasure of sharing some thoughts and School news with Old Westcliffians. By any of the standard measures, WHSB is a successful School, however we never rest on our laurels. Each new academic year brings its challenges and this year the School has had to manage significant changes. We have successfully expanded to six forms of entry (185 pupils) in Year 7 and this expansion will be sustained going forward. We have managed significant curriculum changes, capital developments and launched some exciting new initiatives, which I have detailed below.

These measurable things absorb much of our time in education, however as Headmaster one increasingly appreciates that these measureable things such as buildings and results are the less significant parts of what we aim to achieve, and rather the fruits of something else. As G.K Chesterton elegantly put it ‘education is simply the soul of a society as it passes from one generation to another’. Of course, we must deliver results and facilities but more important to me is giving our pupils a true sense of self-worth; helping them to shape their character and core values. In doing so, the rest follows.

Therefore I was encouraged to read fairly recently her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Schools extolling the virtues of a Grammar School ethos. Indeed he was calling for more schools to adopt this Grammar School ethos. Perhaps he and his political masters might one day admit to the mistakes of the past and simply increase the number of selective schools. As OWs know, central to our ethos are the values we promote and the attitudes and habits we encourage. At WHSB we do not infantilize young people, rather we believe if you have high expectations, young people will respond to the challenge. Twenty-two years in teaching has taught me that young people are capable of extraordinary things.

As a Grammar School we need to do all we can to encourage and enable pupils to compete for entry to the best universities so that they can have access to the very best opportunities in our society. To that end we continue to run our Westcliff Centre for Gifted Children programme to encourage more local children, and particularly those from disadvantaged areas, to join us. We are working with local primary schools to create a culture that celebrates children taking the 11+ and not worrying that a failure will irreparably damage self-esteem. As I have noted on a previous occasion, we should not worry about those who aim high and risk failing but we should concern ourselves with those who aim low and achieve it.

In an increasingly competitive world, in this regard, I believe we cannot afford to sacrifice the benefits of a healthy competitive ethos to the high priests of political correctness.

## **Community Development Office**

The School has enjoyed considerable success in building links with local primary schools, business and voluntary sector organizations through initiatives such as the Westcliff Centre for Gifted Children, Charity Week and our Work Experience programme. We also have a dedicated Parents' Association and loyal Old Westcliffian Association (OWA). The growth of these areas has encouraged us to consider a more centralized approach to the School's interaction with the extended Westcliff Community. In 2020, the School will celebrate its Centenary and it will wish to fully involve its extended community in the preparations.

As the degree of state funding for the School continues to decline, increasingly we shall be required to rely upon our own resources and to identify funding streams which can be accessed to support the continuing development of the School. We have established a Community Development Office to support our existing work with the community and to focus on extending our links with a view to enhancing the many benefits of being part of a strong and supportive community. The Community Development Office has drawn existing resources into a central hub to enable more effective communication with other organisations. It is envisaged that ultimately the Community Development Office will be self-sustaining.

One key objective of the Community Development Office, working alongside the Old Westcliffian Association (OWA), is to develop a strong alumni community. WHSB Alumni include all former students and past and present staff. We are looking to contact alumni who presently have no link with the School or the OWA and who would like to make contact, keep up-to-date with School news, and possibly attend future School events. 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 (or encourage others to do so) via the WHSB School website. Select the "Community" tab on the home page followed by "Alumni" Network. You will then receive password information enabling access to the secure "Alumni" area of the School website. Further information can be obtained by contacting the Community Development Office via email ([community@whsb.essex.sch.uk](mailto:community@whsb.essex.sch.uk)). The WHSB Alumni Network is completely free to join and we very much look forward to hearing from you.

## **Scholarships Programme**

Our Scholarships programme was launched in 2014 and this has been established to fund lessons, attendance at masterclasses, and engagement in high level enrichment activities for talented pupils. Our first Scholarships are in Music, but we anticipate making provision in a number of curricular areas including Sports, Art, Literature, Public Speaking and Drama.

The Scholarships are open to all pupils and the award is based on competitive selection involving submissions and auditions. The award of Scholarships will be made at our annual Speech Day from 2016 and the benefactors will be acknowledged in the programme. We believe that this is a valuable means of nurturing talent and making a positive difference for the next generation of Westcliffians. This is a new initiative, for which we will be accepting donations, and those wishing to make a contribution or offer their support should contact Mr Partridge, Director of Resources and Support Services, at the School ([community@whsb.essex.sch.uk](mailto:community@whsb.essex.sch.uk)).

### **Rod Croucher CBE at Speech Day**

We were delighted to welcome Old Westcliffian, Brigadier (Rtd) Rod Croucher CBE as our Guest of Honour at our annual Speech Day in November 2015.

Rod Croucher was commissioned into the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (REME) in 1969, having taken his O-levels at Westcliff High School for Boys (1960 – 1965) and A-levels at Welbeck College (1965 – 1967). After reading Engineering at Cambridge University, he spent the early part of his career in Field Army appointments across the globe. He commanded the REME Workshop in Berlin and 7 Armoured Workshop in Germany from which he deployed to the Gulf War and was mentioned in Despatches. This was followed by staff appointments in UK including Director of Studies at the Royal Military College of Science/Cranfield University. His final Army appointment was as Director Electrical and Mechanical Engineering (Army), Head of REME. He was awarded the CBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours List 2002.

Rod's speech to the pupils and their parents had a particular resonance as he shared his thoughts on the value of pursuing one's passions and the importance of hard work and commitment in order to achieve personal fulfilment. He was a tremendous Guest of Honour who took time to engage the pupils and commend them on their individual and collective achievements.

### **Curriculum Reform**

At GCSE Level, Year 10 pupils are studying new and more demanding GCSE specifications which will be graded on a 1 to 9 scale. This year also marks the beginning of national changes to the A Level Qualification. The main thrust of the reform is to decouple the AS qualification, taken in May and June of Year 12, and the A2 qualification taken at the end of Year 13. In short, the Government has taken the decision to return to a traditional two-year A Level course. At WHSB, it is our intention to dispense with AS qualifications from September 2016. We believe that the removal of the AS examination will allow a more enriching and educationally fulfilling curriculum.

## Capital Development

It seems a long time since I received the good news from the Education Funding Agency that our capital bid for £2.4 million to improve the Science Building and to build a new Sixth Form Building had been accepted. Once we had the funding in place, the School moved quickly to draw up plans with our architect, Mr Tim Coel of Barton Wilmore, and to apply for planning permission. Our new Sixth Form Building opened in January. The building project had fallen behind our original schedule but it was worth the wait. The Sixth Form now enjoy outstanding facilities which include two state-of-the-art Science laboratories, four new Sixth Form classrooms, an ICT Suite and Study Room and a large open plan café and social space with a multi-purpose double-height Forum area.

In addition, the Sixth Form Pastoral Team led by Dr Machacek, Director of Sixth Form Studies, has relocated to new office accommodation located within the new Sixth Form Building.

The Sixth Form students and the Sixth Form Pastoral Team were involved in the design and furnishing of the new building. Working together, we have sought to create a space which is akin to a modern university building and in order to provide our students with an experience which should ease their transition to the Higher Education environment. The building is managed by a Sixth Form Student Committee and the Sixth Form Pastoral Team.

I anticipate the official opening will take place in the Autumn Term 2016. The new accommodation has freed up space elsewhere in the School and this will be converted to classrooms and other accommodation in due course. We are most grateful to all those involved in the Capital Development Project, particularly Mr Jon Gershinson, Vice-Chairman of Governors, Mr Mike Westwick, Project Manager, and Mr David Partridge, Director of Resources and Support Services.

We have completed the refurbishment to the roof and external elevations of the Science Building. Recently, we have also been successful in securing a further substantial grant of £1.7million following a successful bid to the Education Funding Agency's Capital Improvement Fund. This will enable the School to completely refurbish the interior of the building, installing new laboratories and state-of-the-art equipment, updated technology and services. This two-phase project will have achieved what will amount to a brand new Science Building for less than half the cost of a new-build facility of a similar specification. The School performs well in the Sciences and a significant number of our students go on to further scientific study, including Medicine. Therefore, we are delighted that we can now provide them with improved facilities and superb preparation for study at university. It is anticipated that the works will commence at the end of the summer term in 2016.

## **Final Thoughts**

*'Miss not the discourse of the elders: for they are learned of their fathers, and of them thou shalt learn understanding, and to give answers as need requireth.'* (Ecclesiasticus)

It is our School's ethos which fuels our strong sense of community and identity. It has helped to shape the lives of generations of Westcliffians. It is, ultimately, this that we shall celebrate when we reach our fast approaching Centenary in 2020. To do this effectively we need a strong OW presence. Of course I preach to the converted, however I do so in the hope that you will, were possible, reach out to those Old Westcliffians who have lost touch with the School and encourage them to join the OWA and make contact with the School's Community Development Office.

It is no accident that the OWA Newsletter contains so many recollections of former teachers. Personally, I subscribe to the view that 'a teacher affects eternity' and we are fortunate to have a dedicated and able group of teachers and support staff at the School. It seems entirely appropriate that I take this opportunity to remember a former Headmaster Dr Peter Clarke who passed away last year aged 90. Dr Clarke served with distinction as Headmaster for 20 years. He was kind enough to telephone me from time to time and I know from my conversations with him that he shared my view that it is such a privilege to serve as Headmaster of Westcliff High School for Boys.

As a School we are fortunate to have remarkable boys and girls to teach. This is the reason I look forward to walking along Eastwood Boulevard to School each morning. If I didn't, I'd probably go fishing.

Michael A Skelly

## 8. IN MEMORIAM

Geoffrey J Bentley	23/06/15
Norman Bowler	August 2013
John A Bristier	20/12/15
David Buttimore	25/11/14
Dr Peter Clark	26/08/15
Colin George	13/07/15
Edward Greenfield	July 15
Sydney Haywood	September 14
Alan Henry	03/03/16
Michael J Hughes	13/11/15
Rory William Kent	06/11/15
Doug Mason	June 15
Dr David Morley	29/02/16
John Kendal Wade	08/06/15
Robert F Wilkins	22/04/15
Jeffrey Winslow	30/01/2016

*All will be sadly missed*

## 9. OBITUARIES

<i>Geoffrey J Bentley</i>	<i>23/06/15</i>
<i>Norman Bowler</i>	<i>August 2013</i>
<i>David Buttimore</i>	<i>25/11/14</i>
<i>Colin George</i>	<i>13/07/15</i>
<i>Edward Greenfield</i>	<i>July 15</i>
<i>Sydney Haywood</i>	<i>September 14</i>
<i>Alan Henry</i>	<i>03/03/16</i>
<i>Michael J Hughes</i>	<i>13/11/15</i>
<i>Rory William Kent</i>	<i>2003 - 2010</i>
<i>Doug Mason</i>	<i>June 15</i>
<i>Dr David Morley</i>	<i>29/02/16</i>
<i>John Kendal Wade</i>	<i>08/06/15</i>
<i>Robert F Wilkins</i>	<i>22/04/15</i>
<i>Jeffrey Winslow</i>	<i>30/01/16</i>

### **GEOFFREY J BENTLEY**

Geoffrey sadly passed away on 23rd June 2015, aged 85 years. He was a much loved husband, father and grandfather.

## **NORMAN BOWLER**

A message from Graham Bowler (1962-1969) about his father Norman...

Norman passed away in August 2013 and his wife Doreen passed away in March 2015. I have found a number of items in his house relating to his school days. The first is a reference from the headmaster dated Jan 23<sup>rd</sup> 1939 when he was applying for his first job...

“Norman J. Bowler has been a pupil at this school since September 1932.

During that time he has been regular and punctual in his attendance and has made such progress in his work as to enable him to pass the General School Examination of the University of London with exemption from Matriculation.

He has taken a full share in school games and has played for the 2<sup>nd</sup> XV in Rugby Football.

His conduct throughout has been excellent and I can recommend him as a sound, reliable lad.”

He was offered a job on £80pa salary at the Industrial and General Trust Limited commencing 1<sup>st</sup> Feb 1939. He remained at that company (enlarged and renamed a few times due to mergers, acquisitions etc.) until his retirement as General Manager of Touche Remnant on 31st January 1982 after 43 years of service.

The second is a printed announcement from H.S. “Daddy” Smith M.Sc. dated 29<sup>th</sup> June 1936 giving Standing Orders for the school camp of July 25<sup>th</sup> – August 8<sup>th</sup> 1936 at Eastbourne.

The third is my father’s school camp diary of July 24<sup>th</sup>-August 7<sup>th</sup> 1937. It is bound in a leather case. The camp that year was in Swanage. The diary lists what he did from before breakfast through to the evening, and what meals he had. Also a “visit from the head and his wife”.

The fourth are a set of matriculation papers dated 1938.

In the war he commanded a Motor Anti-Submarine Boat based at Ramsgate and was Senior Officer of the 123rd Harbour Defence Motor Launch Flotilla based in Freetown, Sierra Leone.

He had a very active and happy retirement, enjoying golf, sailing, bowls, travelling, and painting.

## **DAVID BUTTIMORE**

David died on the 25th November 2014 and a few details of his life are as below:

He and I entered WHSB on the same day at the commencement of the Autumn term in September 1943, moving through Forms 2a, 3a, 4, 5 and 6 Science together. For much of that time we sat in our Form room in the same alphabetical group, namely Boys, Buckland, Burroughs and Buttimore.

David was the only one of this “quartet” to continue on to University, gaining a place at Exeter, where over the years many Old Westcliffians have extended their education.

Prior to Westcliff his early education took place at Netherfield School which was situated in Westminster Drive, Westcliff on Sea. This school had a high reputation and many of its pupils were successful in qualifying for entry into Westcliff High School. It is worthy of record that there have been some Reunions of Netherfieldians organised by Nina Singer (née Ashley), daughter of the late Harry Ashley.

David spent a year at the Nuclear establishment at Sellafield before commencing a lifelong career at the May & Baker Chemical plant in London where he specialised mainly in the pharmaceutical side of the business and latterly also being connected with agricultural chemicals.

For National Service he served in the Royal Corps of Signals.

He was a Chartered Chemist (CCHEM) and a Member of the Royal Society of Chemists (MRSC).

Alan Burroughs

## **COLIN GEORGE**



THE man who was the driving force behind £3.7million of fundraising projects at Southend Hospital has died. Colin George, chairman of the Southend Hospital Charitable Foundation, died peacefully in his sleep yesterday morning at the age of 77.

Mr George, who was also general secretary at Southend Guild of Help and Citizens Advice Bureau from March 5, 1973 to May 23, 2003, died in the hospital he had done so much for after a short illness. He leaves behind a wife, Pamela, son Stephen and daughter Christine Chisholm.

In a statement, Colin's son Stephen said: "Southend as a town has lost one of its greatest contributors. He helped thousands of people during his time at the Citizens Advice Bureau and at the hospital.

"He was a great man, giving much to others. He worked tirelessly for those who needed help and gave his life to his beloved Southend. He was a kind, thoughtful and loving husband, dad and grandad and will be sorely missed."

The veteran fundraiser, who was diagnosed with pulmonary fibrosis earlier this year, launched a number of highly successful fundraisers including the Bosom Pals and Pin Point cancer appeal.

Alan Tobias, chairman of Southend Hospital Trust, said: "We are deeply saddened by the death of Colin George.

He was not only an amazing ambassador for our hospital charity, but also a hospital governor for whom the care and respect of our patients was paramount.

"Colin selflessly dedicated so much of his life to serving the whole community in a variety of guises and roles. We will be forever in his debt for the time he devoted to championing the hospital and in helping to raise extraordinary sums of money for new equipment which have helped so many. Our thoughts and condolences are with Colin's wife Pam and their family at this very sad time."

Lucy Thomas-Clayton, associate director of fundraising at the hospital, added: "Colin was always kind, unflappable, calm and courteous, a true gentleman.

"He was always very supportive of the hospital and of its staff. We are all deeply saddened by his death. He was a wonderful chairman, leading the charity through a number of successful campaigns. We pass on our condolences to Colin's wife Pam and their family who are in our thoughts at this time of sadness. He will be greatly missed by all that knew him."

Mr George was a Southend Labour councillor and also stood against Sir Teddy Taylor in a general election in 1980, polling a very respectable 12,687 votes against Sir Teddy's 13,117 votes.

### **Tributes paid to Colin George**

THE manager of Southend Citizen's Advice Bureau, Trish Carpenter, said: "Colin's long and distinguished service was recognised in a visit to the bureau by Her Royal Highness the Princess Royal on April 11, 2003, a memorable day for Colin and the bureau. Colin will be greatly missed by everyone who knew him through the bureau. Our thoughts are with his widow, Pam, and the rest of the family at this sad time."

Sir Teddy Taylor, former Conservative MP for Rochford and Southend East, said: "I am very sorry to hear this. He was the first person who fought against me in the election in 1980. I always regarded him highly from that moment as he could have won if he had played dirty but he always played straight.

"He was involved in many good causes. I've always had a high regard for him. We were very lucky to have him in Southend. Everything he did was straight and honest. He was a credit to the Labour Party. Everything he did was aimed at trying to help people and in politics he was a credit to all his colleagues. He was one of the best people I have ever come across."

Jim Worsdale, former Echo editor, said: "He was a truly lovely man. I remember him from his days on Southend Council. He became chairman of the finance committee at a very young age, in his twenties. He was always very approachable and cheerful and someone who was very fond of Southend."

Mick Thwaites former Southend District Police Commander and vice chairman of the Southend Hospital charitable trust, said: "It's difficult to sum up what he was and who he was. He was a tremendous character. I knew him before his hospital days from the Citizens Advice Bureau and various other bits he did over the years. For the last 15 years he was chairman of the hospital charity fund and provided real leadership. He was a real character. He would walk into a room and there was a real presence about him. With his leadership the charity raised £3.5million on some amazing projects.

The last one was the breast cancer appeal "Bosom Pal's On the Road Appeal". It had a huge impact. My wife was diagnosed with breast cancer so I have first hand knowledge of the huge impact of the appeal. Through his leadership we got the community behind these fantastic causes. People had huge respect for him. The Keyhole Surgery appeal has already raised £350,000 which is a tremendous effort in such early stages of the appeal. He was a true leader, he had true community spirit. He cared so much about the hospital and Southend Borough. It is a real loss and real shock. It is a loss to the hospital and to Southend but his legacy will live on."

Labour veteran councillor Reg Copley, said: "Myself and David Norman were councillors with Colin back in the Sixties. He and I got on very well. He was always a very progressive politician who worked hard. He became chairman of the finance committee at the age of 21 and some councillors were a bit taken aback by that. He was always involved in the progressive side of politics and will be remembered for that."

Labour councillor David Norman said: "I was extremely sorry to hear about the passing of Colin George. We had known each other from our teens. By the time I was elected in 1965 he was well established and became a very young chairman of the powerful finance committee. We served on the council together. He contested the Chelmsford seat against Norman St John-Stevas and only lost the Rochford and Southend East election by a narrow margin. He would have made a brilliant local MP had he been successful. He did great work for the Citizens Advice Bureau and for Southend Hospital. He was a great Southender and will be greatly missed. He was a man of outstanding ability."

## Charitable Foundation's successes

COLIN George became a trustee of Southend Hospital Charitable Foundation when it was founded in 1998 and served as chairman for the last 15 years.

To date the foundation has raised £3.7 million for major hospital projects through a series of hospital appeals. The current one is the £600,000 Keyhole Cancer Appeal for a new state-of-the-art keyhole theatre. Other projects include the Pinpoint Cancer Appeal which was launched in 2005. It raised more than £480,000 for an image-guided radiotherapy system.

The StrokeBusters Appeal was launched in 2007 and contributed £750,000 towards a stroke unit at Southend Hospital with a 14-bed acute stroke unit. The Bosom Pals Appeal was launched in May 2009 to raise £750,000 for the breast unit at Southend University Hospital. The appeal helped fund two digital mammography machines, IT equipment and helped improve patient amenities including a new breast care counselling room.

## EDWARD HARRY GREENFIELD 30 July 1928 to 1 July 2015



Classical music critic at the Guardian for almost 30 years, who sought to 'appreciate' rather than let nitpicking spoil enjoyment.

The kindest and most considerate of critics, the conductor Sir Antonio Pappano said of him – and few who read Edward Greenfield, who has died aged 86, in his almost 30 years as a Guardian music critic, or who followed his reviews in Gramophone magazine, or who listened week by week to The Greenfield Collection, his long-running series on the BBC World Service, would have disagreed.

Yet this accolade was in a sense controversial. There were those who read him, who sat alongside him as critics, or among those who oversaw his copy at the Guardian, who found him too kind, too considerate; who wanted more of a cutting edge. They were not going to get that from Greenfield. He was against that approach temperamentally, but also on principle, as he explained in a statement he called his credo, which he wrote on his retirement as chief music critic in July 1993. Critics, he wrote, are "expected to be sour. I would much prefer it if, instead of 'critic', we could find a crisp word meaning 'one who appreciates' ... My own consistent belief is that the music critic must aim at appreciation above all, trying never to let the obvious need for analysis in nitpicking detail get in the way of enjoyment ... My aim always is to go to a concert, or put on a CD, wanting to like."

That is not to say there weren't occasions he railed at, especially when he felt a director had subjugated some favourite opera to his own inappropriate whims. "Greeted with vociferous booing", he recalled a performance of Die Walküre at Bayreuth, "in which I enthusiastically joined."

Yet Greenfield was always the sum of his many enthusiasms: for the society of friends, whom he loved to entertain at lavish lunch parties; for good food and good wine on these and other occasions; for the house he bought and rescued from near dereliction in a street in Spitalfields, east London, far less smart when he found it than it is now; and above all for music and for musicians.

Greenfield was born in Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex, to a father named Percy and a mother called Mabel – names that, as he used wryly to observe, dated him. The Greenfields came from Yorkshire, but his father's work, once he had switched from solicitor's clerk to running labour exchanges, had taken him to Lincolnshire and then to Essex. Ted's brother, Peter, was six years older. Their parents were ambitious for them, their mother particularly, and music soon became an essential part of Ted's life, with piano and singing lessons and a place in a percussion band. There were also elocution lessons, which was why as a familiar radio voice he verged on the plummy.

From the local primary school he moved in the month the second world war was declared to Westcliff high school for boys, before being briefly evacuated with his brother to Belper in Derbyshire. Back at Westcliff, his passion for music developed, though, fearing music might for too much of the time cover ground with which he was familiar, he chose to read modern languages at Trinity Hall, Cambridge. First, though, in 1947, there was national service: and here – appropriately, for he was no natural soldier – he was posted to the Royal Army Educational Corps, where he was promoted to sergeant, had a spell with the British army of the Rhine in Germany and, characteristically, made friends with whom he stayed in regular touch thereafter.

At Cambridge, he soon decided to drop modern languages and read law instead, going on to take bar finals. This was not out of any conviction that he would become a lawyer; indeed, he had no settled notion of what he wanted to do with his life, except that music would be an essential part of it.

But his time at Cambridge also included activity in the Cambridge Union and in the Labour Club, of which he was elected chairman.

At the university appointments board, discussing potential careers, he was asked: what about journalism? He responded with his habitual enthusiasm, especially when it occurred to him that this might open the way to becoming a music critic. Accordingly he wrote to the editor of his favourite paper, the Manchester Guardian, AP Wadsworth, who replied that, though the paper had no vacancies, "you might send me some of your stuff".

His reward was a summons to Manchester, where the editor told him, in what he would later describe as the most joyous statement he could ever remember hearing: "I suppose we'd better have you." That moment settled the course of his life. He began as an assistant to Wadsworth, though increasingly with opportunities to write for the paper, including coverage of byelections. That led to an offer from Wadsworth of a place on the political staff in London. His first instinct was to say no; he had only just acquired his own flat in Manchester.

Listening to great music, he said, was for an agnostic like him the spiritual equivalent of a full religious experience. What clinched his decision to move was his hopes of starting a record column. If he went to Westminster, he asked the editor, could he do that as well? "I suppose so," said Wadsworth. So off he went, becoming an all-purpose deputy to Harry Boardman, the sketchwriter, and the kindly but irascible political correspondent, Francis Boyd.

In 1964, just after he had trailed Alec Douglas-Home on his doomed election campaign, Greenfield was offered a post as assistant to Neville Cardus, the celebrated Guardian writer on cricket and music. Once again, life had worked out exactly as he had hoped. True, Cardus got first choice of concert reviewing and the Guardian also had, in Philip Hope-Wallace, a notable opera critic, but here he was working for the paper which, as he once said, had become his religion, in the territory he had always most coveted. By 1977 he was established as chief music critic of the Guardian, a regular contributor to Gramophone and a familiar radio voice, to which he would add the co-editorship of what later became the Penguin Record Guide.

In all these roles, the kindness and consideration that Pappano would later celebrate were there in abundance. Opera was one of his chief delights, especially Puccini, about whom he wrote a book, *Puccini: Keeper of the Seal* (1958). But his greatest musical god, from the time he first heard the *Eroica* symphony, was Beethoven. Listening to such great music, he said in his credo, was for an agnostic like him the spiritual equivalent of a full religious experience. It also introduced him to prominent musicians, a great number of whom would become his friends.

His house in Spitalfields, to which he moved from a Hampstead flat too small to accommodate all his records, was a kind of visual summary of Greenfield's life. On the bottom floor were the old LPs – about 40,000, he reckoned. The floors above were thronged with CDs, mostly sent for review, some neatly stacked and others accumulating on every available table and shelf.

The walls of his sitting room were full of pictures, many based on photographs, commissioned from his friend Jeffrey Spedding, of visitors to his drawing room, including William Walton, Yehudi Menuhin and Michael Tippett; of other musicians he came to know well, such as Leonard Bernstein and André Previn; and of past heroes, Sibelius, Elgar, Mahler, Puccini and Beethoven. Ted in Spedding's pictures is sometimes in the old-fashioned garb he favoured: knee breeches, riding boots.

His 2014 memoir, *Portrait Gallery: A Life in Classical Music*, celebrated too his associations with such great figures as Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, Joan Sutherland, Mstislav Rostropovich and Jacqueline du Pré, whose company he so much enjoyed and would later recall with what he somewhere describes as the "boyish enthusiasm" that lasted throughout his life.

### **In praise of ... Edward Greenfield**

**Editorial:** The music critic has preserved a zest for all forms of music and all kinds of musician

Besides his book on Puccini, he published studies of Previn (1973) and Sutherland (1972) – after three decades, as he wrote in the Guardian in the late 1980s, "still the voice of the century". He was appointed OBE for services to music and journalism in 1994. In 2002 there came another honour he cherished, installation for a year as master of the Art Workers' Guild.

In his final years a condition that was never fully explained deprived him of his balance and made him immobile. Though his condition suggested that this would no longer be possible, he remained in his high house in Spitalfields, helped by carers from Tower Hamlets council and by devoted friends. His mobility had gone, but his optimistic spirit had not.

On the score of his second symphony, Edward Elgar – another of Greenfield’s most admired composers – inscribed a line from Shelley: “Rarely, rarely comest thou, spirit of delight.” Despite his frustrating afflictions, that was never remotely true of Greenfield. The spirit of delight, kindled by the visits of friends, by morning drinks in the sitting room and music on radio or CD, or simply by living in Spitalfields, remained with him until the end.

In 2010, he entered into a civil partnership with Paul Westcott, who survives him.

Meirion Bowen writes: I met Edward Greenfield for the first time after I’d spent six months or so of a bleak postgraduate year at Cambridge. My former Birmingham University tutor, Nigel Fortune, suggested that I work as a music critic and put me in touch with Ted. He was a lovely man, helpful in all kinds of ways.

Our interests dovetailed very well: he was delighted that I had a passion for contemporary music, so gave me as much work as possible, writing about new music concerts, festivals and operas. He focused mainly on recorded music, was steeped in everything that had been recorded and had a huge record collection, reflecting his love of opera, star singers and instrumental virtuosi.

To work with him was generally easy: he didn’t like arguments. Possessed of a great sense of fun, he encouraged my satirical streak. Stories of his exuberant partygoing certainly fit with the entertaining side of his personality. I shall miss his generosity and kindness.

That is not to say there weren’t occasions he railed at, especially when he felt a director had subjugated some favourite opera to his own inappropriate whims. “Greeted with vociferous booing”, he recalled of a performance of Die Walküre at Bayreuth, “in which I enthusiastically joined.” Yet Greenfield was always the sum of his many enthusiasms: for the society of friends, whom he loved to entertain at lavish lunch parties; for good food and good wine on these and other occasions; for the house he bought and rescued from near dereliction in a street in Spitalfields, east London, far less smart when he found it than it is now; and above all for music and for musicians.

## **SYDNEY HAYWOOD**

I am writing to let you know that my partner, Sydney Haywood, who was a pupil at Westcliff High School for boys in the early 1940s and also was evacuated to Derbyshire during his time at the school, died in hospital here in Bath last September at the age of 87.

Many thanks and best wishes to you all for the future.

Denise Urbahn

## ALAN HENRY

9 June 1947 to 3 March 2016

I suspect there will be many OWs who will recall Alan and his fanatical interest in all things motoring!

He was one of the 1958 intake having previously attended Hamlet Court Primary school, the site of which is now a large car park.

Alan was always obsessed with things that moved and my first and enduring memory of him is when I visited the family home. His father was the Bank Manager of Barclays Bank Hamlet Court Road South...back when there was both a north and a south branch! Hardly imaginable in this day and age...and home was the massive two story flat which sat above that branch (happily the building survives.) On the top floor Alan's model railway layout was breathtakingly complex and I marvelled at the sight.

As he recounts in his recent Kindle biography "Last train from Yokkaichi (2014)" his academic career left something to be desired but despite that, HC's prediction that "you will never make a living out of cars" proved reassuringly wide of the mark!

I remember our many visits to Snetterton Racetrack for F2 where he bashed out his copy of the day's events on an ancient portable typewriter as well as his constant companionship most evenings and weekends where our total sophistication was clearly evidenced both by chain-smoking and the gramophone set on repeat for Pet Sounds!

His career was pretty spectacular as described in this obituary and is a fine example of yet another Old Westcliffian to leave an indelible mark on his passion.

**Trevor N Cass**

Motor racing writer who reported on more than 650 grands prix

Alan Henry, left, with Jackie Stewart in 2000 as he prepares for a few laps of the Melbourne circuit in a two-seater McLaren.



Alan Henry, one of the most respected and prolific of motor racing writers, delighted in telling stories from his early years in the sport, such as the one about the time he spotted Mike Hailwood tucking a paperback book inside his overalls before a qualifying session for the Italian Grand Prix at Monza in the early 1970s. Hailwood explained to Henry that he expected his car to break down and wanted to have some way of passing the time while stranded out on the circuit.

Henry, who has died at the age of 68 after a long illness, provided informed and incisive commentary on the sport as the Guardian's Formula One correspondent from 1988 to 2009. In that capacity, and previously on behalf of the weekly newspaper *Motoring News*, he attended more than 650 grands prix and became a familiar figure to a galaxy of champions.

A shrewd assessor of driving talent, he considered Stirling Moss to have been the greatest of all time, and relished the arguments with colleagues provoked by his choice. He was never sycophantic and tried to look beneath the surface of success or failure. Of John Watson, the gifted but complex Ulsterman who won races but never the world championship, he wrote: "Perhaps he thought too much."

Sometimes the accuracy of his scoops could annoy the great and good, as when Ayrton Senna approached him in the paddock one day in 1987, upset by a story in which Henry had predicted his move from Lotus to McLaren for the following season. The two had known each other since the Brazilian's apprenticeship in Formula Ford. "What do I have to do," Senna demanded brusquely, "to get a half-sensible relationship with you?" The story turned out to be true, of course.

Senna was the last of those he knew well to die at the wheel. In the early days there had been several others, in particular Ronnie Peterson, the brilliant Swede, who often entertained him at his home in Maidenhead, and Tom Pryce, the Welsh ace, at whose funeral in Ruthin in 1977 he delivered the address.

Born in Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex, Henry attended his first British Grand Prix in 1964, at Brands Hatch, driving there on L-plates in the car that belonged to his mother, Margaret. He left Westcliff high school for boys – where a teacher advised him that he would never make a living from his obsession with motor sport – to study law, at his parents' behest, but soon followed his father, Clifford, into the overseas department of Barclays Bank in the City, where he spent four unrewarding years.

In 1968 he contributed his first freelance report to *Autosport*, the weekly magazine. Regular appearances in print led in 1971 to an invitation to join the staff of *Motoring News*, a rival weekly, whose proprietor confessed that the best he could offer was an annual salary of £1,500 and a well-used Lotus Cortina as a company car. Henry was then earning £998 a year from the bank and driving his mother's Mini. "Life is full of difficult decisions," he remembered, "and this was not one of them."

Two years later he graduated to covering the grand prix circuit, often accompanying his journalistic hero, Denis Jenkinson of *Motor Sport*. In the 1970s he test-drove the Formula One cars of the Shadow, Benetton, Arrows and Renault teams, a privilege of which no journalist today could dream.

He went freelance in 1988, joining the Guardian while contributing columns to a variety of magazines, including *F1 Racing* and *Autocar*, and editing *Autocourse*, the annual summary of the Formula One season. He was awarded membership of the British Racing Drivers' Club, a rare honour for a journalist, and sat on the club's board from 2004 to 2006, helping to secure the future of the British Grand Prix at Silverstone.

## MICHAEL J HUGHES

The depth of Henry's knowledge enabled him to produce a string of first-rate books blending factual detail with a deep feeling for the romance of the sport. They included *Ferrari: The Grand Prix Cars* and *Stirling Moss: All My Races*, biographies of numerous drivers from Niki Lauda – a close friend – to Jenson Button, histories of the Williams and McLaren teams, and *The Powerbrokers*, in which he analysed Bernie Ecclestone's takeover of Formula One.

In later years he travelled the world in the company of two kindred spirits, Nigel Roebuck of Autosport and Maurice Hamilton of the Observer. With the veteran French journalist Jabby Crombac as a fourth member (until his death in 2005), they were known to their Fleet Street colleagues as the Cartel: often teased for their anorak-level expertise but also admired for their readiness to share insights and historical knowledge.

Blessed with a wit that veered from the whimsical to the gently sardonic, Henry was amused but never seduced by the celebrity side of motor racing. Contact with the real people behind the action – the designers, engineers and mechanics – was always part of the allure, as was the constant travel. "F1 people like to complain about the getting there and the coming back; the time spent in airports, the delays, the security, the overcrowding, the overbooking," he wrote. "It's true, this is one negative side of the job. But look where it takes you."

In 1980, he married Ann Fowler. She survives him, along with their children, Nick, Emma and Charlotte.



### **Michael – My Memories 4 December 2015 by Robin Hughes**

Michael was born on 10 May 1927 in Rochford Essex. He was an only child. We were very close and saw a lot of each other because our Fathers were brothers and our Mothers were sisters. In any case it would be difficult not to be close when one has shared many apprehensive hours in an Anderson Shelter. The shelter was built by Michael's father Jack. He adored his parents and was very proud of his father who had fought, and been wounded at Gallipoli. Because we lived close to each other, Michael in Westcliff-on-Sea and we in Leigh-on-sea my brother and I spent many hours at Michael's home which was great fun as he had a large collection of lead soldiers, with French, English, Dutch, Belgium and German uniforms, and we played out battles supervised by Michael who, five years older, was already showing his interest in history.

The result was that he never lost a battle because we were always Napoleon and he was the Duke of Wellington.

There were also days of play at the Old Town Leigh cockle sheds sliding down the heaps of cockleshells. Mothers were never happy following these visits because they often included close inspection of cockleboats, moored on the banks of the Leigh creek, one of the muddiest places possibly to be found anywhere, unintentional samples of which were taken to our homes. Play times, however, were not always possible because Michael was studying under the eagle eye of his Mother who was determined her son would succeed in life. She was tough but Michael was a great worker and after Chalkwell Hall Elementary School, Westcliff High School with a short period at Keswick High School during evacuation during the war, he pleased his parents by obtaining a scholarship to Cambridge where he gained a BA and MA at St Catherines. He then completed his National Service as a Pilot Officer in the RAF Education Branch. I came across his flying equipment requisition book to be used if he was required to fly. We visited his old station in Suffolk, now not operational, and the local village pub afterwards where locals remembered those pesky airmen who drank all their beer during shortages but accepted they were really ‘Good Old Boys’ and Michael loved the stories and the chance to buy a beer..

Michael was a very good teacher and one that could not only convey information but also inspire ambition. This I can testify to, having spent a week going through his papers. He had kept the many hundreds of letters from colleagues and pupils who had written to him when changing schools or when he retired. He was inspirational and I feel we would all be justifiably proud to have this said about us.

Michael had all the qualities of a very intelligent and interesting person. He played golf with a handicap of 3, cricket for his College. I shared the love of cricket and for many years we were Members of the Essex County Cricket Club.

Sitting in the Members Enclosure one day we shared an experience, which made us smile whenever it was recalled. Sitting by the entrance to the Enclosure we witnessed a steward refusing to allow Graham Gooch entry because he did not have identification. He was at the time Captain of England and Essex. Michael was a Member of Middlesex CCC until his death. He loved a flutter on the horses. The last interest was backed by a very considerable knowledge, which often proved profitable. He taught me about Ponies and Yankees. He loved travelling and was very knowledgeable about France, Italy, Sicily and Portugal their history, architecture food and wine. He was generous to a fault, and altogether will leave a gap in our lives, which can only be partly offset by our memories of the good times spent with him over his long and full life.

On behalf of our family including our son Peter who is Michael’s Godson who cannot be with us for medical reasons, thank you for being here today. We take it as a tribute to Michael.

### **RORY WILLIAM KENT - 2003/2010**

It is with great sadness that I have to report that our Grandson died on 6th November after a long illness borne bravely, with dignity and cheerfulness.

After leaving Westcliff, Rory went up to University of Kent to read for a Masters in Physics/Astro Physics with the intention of going on for a PhD and a career in Academia. After completing nearly four years of the course, gaining a First in his Bsc he became ill and had to defer his remaining studies with a hope of resuming them when able.

Unfortunately this was not to be.

Rory was much loved and will be greatly missed by his family and friends.

### **Derek Row 1946/1951**

## DOUG MASON

We are sorry to announce the recent death of Doug Mason at the age of 81 after a long illness, bravely borne. Doug was an influential member of the Westcliff High School staff for over thirty years and heavily instrumental in the development of rugby for many generations of Old Westcliffians from the early sixties until the late eighties. He was in addition a more than useful member of the senior OWRFC fifteens for over a decade. His wife Vanessa and daughter Hannah survive him.

Nick Crowe

## DR DAVID MORLEY

David qualified at St Bartholomews Hospital and before entering private practice he was a Medical Officer on the Orient Line, his ship was "Orion".

He was at Belper and left school before it returned to Westcliff.

David passed away peacefully on 29th February 2016.

## JOHN KENDALL WADE, LDS,RCS Eng

John passed away peacefully on 8th June 2015 after a long illness.

## ROBERT FREDERICK WILKINS

Robert passed away on 22nd April 2015.

I am one of Bob's nephews, and one of his executors, and in his Will he has left the OWA the sum of £200.

Christopher Press

## JEFFREY WINSLOW



### Jeffrey Leonard Brian Winslow 8<sup>th</sup> January 1934 – 30<sup>th</sup> January 2016 Maths and Drama teacher at WHSB 1957 – 1989

$$(a+b)^2 = a^2+2ab+b^2$$

Nigel Stevens, a pupil at Westcliff High School for Boys during the 1960's, wrote the following in the 2015 edition of the Old Westcliffian Newsletter:

"As well as being my form master Jeffrey Winslow taught me maths, and a better maths teacher one would have to go a long way to find....the number of us in that class who achieved good passes in our maths G.C.E. 'O' level taken a year early was amazing. I would bet that most in that class could still recite the outcome of a plus b all squared."

I would most certainly agree. Although having that equation firmly implanted in my mind, I don't think that I have had any use for it in almost 50 years of ordained ministry. But crop up it has done. For when at my desk and speaking on the telephone, there is usually a pen and paper to hand and, irrespective of the topic of conversation, I start writing – not doodling – and, over and over again, I write  $(a+b)^2=a^2+2ab+b^2$ . Sometimes, in deference to three years of battling with New Testament Greek and to introduce a little poshness, I substitute the a and b with alpha and beta.

$(a+b)^2$  could almost be regarded as Jeffrey's leitmotif but that's a musical term. But, as the late Anna Russell in her celebrated analysis of Wagner's Ring Cycle explained, a leitmotif is simply a signature tune. Leave off the word tune and we get Jeffrey's signature  $-(a+b)^2$  imprinted on the minds of former pupils – indelibly, permanently. "Winslow was here!" Kilroy could forget it!

Jeffrey Leonard Brian Winslow, the second child of Hector David and Elsie Winslow, was born on 8<sup>th</sup> January 1934. In 1945, he went to Southend High School for Boys and thence to King's College, London, to read Mathematics. Having gained his B.Sc., he remained at King's to obtain the Post Graduate Certificate in Education. Because of a nationwide dearth of mathematics teachers, he was exempted from National Service. Consequently, in September 1957, aged just 23, he arrived at Westcliff High School for Boys in order to teach Mathematics. There he was to remain until 1989 – 32 years.

I was in the second year (Year 8 in the vulgar tongue) when Jeffrey arrived. I first encountered him in that period euphemistically called 'Games' – I thought 'Enforced Misery' a more suitable name for games to me meant snakes and ladders, draughts and chess- and these were nothing like them. Now anyone tempted to trawl the Sea of Memory in the hope of catching images of Jeffrey running up and down a rugby pitch, intermittently blowing a whistle, would catch nothing. No image, no fish, no frying tonight. For Jeffrey was given charge of 'the walking wounded' – that group of pupils who were excused games and I found myself, thanks to regular attacks of bronchitis, in that number quite often. Jeffrey would take us for a walk – along Manchester Drive –up Elmsleigh Drive past St James's Church where I learned the Catholic Faith as expressed in the Church of England and then back along Blenheim Chase to the School.

Not a walk which would be included in 100 Lovely Walks in Essex but it wasn't the scenery that was important, it was the getting to know the young Mr Winslow that figured high in our minds, we little orphans of the storm. For this small group of 12/13 year olds realised that they were in the presence of someone approachable, someone with a sense of humour, someone who cared. Someone who listened to what we had to say and replied accordingly. We realised that here was a master whom we could trust. Those walks and conversations were every bit as character-forming as anything gleaned on the games field.

September 1959 saw me in the fourth year – we were the first class who took O Levels in one year – as described by Nigel Stevens. This meant choosing between Chemistry, Physics and Additional Maths as one choice and Latin, History and Pure Mathematics with Jeffrey as the other. We were taught basic Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry and Trigonometry – thoroughly.  $(a+b)^2$ . It wasn't our favourite subject but Jeffrey made it bearable and did an excellent job ensuring that the rudiments went in to our brains. There were times when we were especially unreceptive – if not downright dense. These were the occasions which elicited the famous Winslow cry of "you'll all fail!" But one day, one Lionel Barst, an intelligent, knowledgeable eccentric boy, chose to respond to the Winslow outpouring with the question, "Sir, have you ever eaten a banana sideways?" This was the point at which Jeffrey's greatness as a teacher was demonstrated. He could take the temperature of a class, as it were and he realised that Lionel's question was indicative of the fact that we'd had enough of his rotten old Maths.

He responded to Lionel's question as if it belonged to the normal sequence of events. There is more of Lionel. A few years later Lionel, I think he was still at school, appeared on the Quiz Programme "Double Your Money" with Hughie Green, answering questions, rather surprisingly, on Mental Arithmetic. He reached the £500 question. He went into the primitive soundproof box and put on the enormous earphones – a somewhat bizarre sight. The question was all about curtain material and how many square yards were necessary to cover a window of certain proportions. Lionel gave his answer. Hughie Green adopted his pained expression used for his "I'm sorry" speech and announced that Lionel's answer was incorrect. The correct answer was exactly half of what Lionel had given as his answer. Lionel then challenged the correct answer, much to the consternation of Hughie Green who probably got an earful from the producer. Lionel explained that curtain material needed to be in sufficient quantity to allow for gathering. By this time, the studio audience were all on the side of Lionel, applauded and cheered, rebellion threatened, ITV hoisted the white flag of surrender and Lionel got the £500 prize. It doesn't sound much today but it was two years grant for a university student and more than a year's salary for many in 1962. Jeffrey spoke very proudly of Lionel and of his showing on TV and the immeasurable common sense in his arguments.

So we completed our 'O' levels and went straight into the 6<sup>th</sup> form, starting our 'A' level work for the last four weeks of the summer term 1960.

Just before Christmas I helped Jeffrey and his Mother on their stall at the Bazaar in aid of the Blind in St Clement's Hall. Each year they ran a toiletry stall. It was good fun and I recall Jeffrey cajoling the multitude, in his inimitable fashion to "Come and smell nice". I mention this because that Christmas 1960 was the last Christmas I should spend in Leigh for 35 years. It was decided that my family should exchange the north bank of the Thames Estuary for the north bank of the Tyne Estuary – with the inevitable change of school and change in the syllabus in three 'A' level subjects, and a fairly hefty change of dialect. Tiresome but not unconquerable. The period in my life I refer to as the Northumbrian Captivity. But it meant that for a few years I lost sight of Jeffrey.

But in the meantime there was another string to Jeffrey's bow. Drama. In the early 1960's Jeffrey was asked to take over the responsibility for the annual School Play. And he addressed this challenge with the same meticulousness as he had when teaching Maths. Over the years he directed many plays of a variety of sorts: "Androcles and the Lion", "Charley's Aunt", "Oh what a lovely war" to name a few. Also Aristophanes "The Frogs" which brought him into disagreement with certain parents who objected to language used in the play. Jeffrey refused to alter anything, saying that a play written 2,400 years ago was a bit late for censorship. He should have put it on in the original Greek! Needless to say the poor Headmaster was stuck in the middle over all this – where poor Headmasters are usually stuck. But, like most school crises, it all died down.

In October 1963 I began studying for the Anglican ministry at King's College, London. It wasn't too long before I returned to Westcliff, my College scarf of red and blue (scarlet and navy) around my neck as students in the 1960s wore them - we wore ties too. So I rebuilt my friendship with Jeffrey which lasted. Obviously being at his old College was a common bond. But there was another bond.

In my final year I met and became good friends with Fr Michael Barney, the assistant priest at the very fashionable church of St Paul's, Knightsbridge, and a great, fun-loving eccentric. He would come out with conversation stoppers such as "Imogen Holst once told me that her father never dreamed that his "Planets Suite" would fill the Albert Hall". It transpired that he came from Southend, and had been educated at Southend High School for Boys at the same time as Jeffrey, to whom he referred as "The Winslow Boy". So on 24<sup>th</sup> June 1966, the day of my final examination at King's, Michael and I travelled to Westcliff where we found the Brown Sports in full flood and the entire school on the top field. The reunion between Jeffrey and Michael was good to behold. We went back to Jeffrey's home in Arundel Gardens for tea with his Mother. Michael later played the piano, Mrs Winslow, wonderful lady, sang "Give me your smile, I'll love you all the while" and it was truly one of the happiest, unforgettable evenings of my life.

A few years later Michael joined me in coming to what was regarded as the greatest of Jeffrey's dramatic triumphs - his production of Peter Shaffer's play "The Royal Hunt of the Sun" - made more spectacular as Jeffrey had managed to obtain the costumes from the West End production. Another night to remember.

Jeffrey was always supportive of me. He was present at my First Mass at St Augustine's, Kilburn, - a church at which he had worshipped when he was at King's and lived in Maida Vale. He came also to the church where I did my second curacy-St Alban's, Holborn, and to my third curacy at St Mary the Virgin, Kenton, having also been present on the occasion when I first preached here, at the invitation of Fr Raymond Smith, on St Clement's Day, 1973. He supported me and showed an interest in me and in some ways, as I grew older, I began to be able to demonstrate my appreciation of what he had done for me.

In 1974 Mrs Winslow died and Jeffrey found himself alone for the first time in his life. But God was good and Jeffrey found the companionship of Christopher Naylor, the head of Music at Cecil Jones School and the organist at St Clement's. Christopher moved in and life became simpler.

Of supreme importance in his life was his religion and in particular the encounter with the Living Lord in Holy Communion. His links with the churches where he worshipped was strong. Holy Trinity, Southchurch, St Peter's, Westcliff, where he put his Maths aptitude to good use as the Church Treasurer. With Christopher's position as organist at St Clement's, Jeffrey joined the congregation here and again became Treasurer for many years. He also sat on the Hadleigh Deanery Synod, and, I believe the Chelmsford Diocesan Synod, not as a passive member but fully involved.

In 1989 Jeffrey left Westcliff High and took up an appointment at Eton House School in Thorpe Bay.

But he was there only two years as he had the first indications of physical frailty and consequently took early retirement, aged 57. And the walking stick arrived.

But retirement did not mean inactivity. Far from it. At the invitation of the new Headmaster at Westcliff High, Andrew Baker, he staged another production of Richard Rodney-Bennett's "All the King's Men", and he was also appointed a Foundation Governor of the School. He assisted with financial matters for the Friends of Southend Hospital. He organised coaches to take groups to the Players Theatre near Charing Cross, providing refreshments for those on board. Taking suitable care and recognising his disability, he continued to travel extensively, visiting many parts of Europe but having north east Italy as his favourite destination. He demurred, however, at the prospect of crossing the Atlantic. "Go East" was the option-never "Go West".

Jeffrey and Christopher decided to make St Mary's, Bourne Street, in London their spiritual home. Christopher resigned as organist at St Clement's and so began several years of Sunday travelling in addition to many expeditions to the theatre. C2c did very well out of them. St Mary's was in the traditional Anglo-Catholic mould, God was addressed as "Thou", the Book of Common Prayer was used for resources and where that book was somewhat deficient a generous nod, if not a profound bow, was made to the Vatican for matters of ceremonial. An excellent musical tradition coupled with a welcoming and kind church community made for happiness and contentment.

Anyone who was a guest at Jeffrey's table will know that he was an extremely able cook. For many years he put his hand into the hand of Delia Smith for culinary delights.

But the problem with Delia was that when one chose a new recipe the ingredients necessary were seldom to be found in the kitchen store cupboards. Jeffrey told me, at length (something which Jeffrey did very well – on a good night he could put Scheherazade out of a job) how he needed chestnut puree. I think Delia's recipe demanded two tins of Crème de marrons de l' Ardeche, items certainly not to be found in Jeffrey's pantry, nor probably anybody else's for that matter. So to Sainsbury's in Southend to obtain them. Now Jeffrey had a rather stormy relationship with Sainsbury's. Rather misguidedly the management had decided to make a complaints book available to customers and Jeffrey had made good use of it. The account of the search for that chestnut puree was reminiscent of those wonderful cameos in the writings of Jerome K Jerome – chaos with everyone getting involved. I can't remember if the search was successful and it was many years after the event that Jeffrey told me about it. "What happened to the complaints book?" I asked. "They took it away" replied Jeffrey, rather wistfully I thought. "I probably over-used it." And so Jeffrey went to Waitrose.

Which of us did not hear at some time or another Jeffrey starting a tirade with the words "I get very cross when....."? Someone once said, "Jeffrey, you seem to get cross about so many things, there must be few occasions when you're not cross". Actually the sort of things that made Jeffrey cross were the things that irritate most of us. Telephoning the bank, typing in the account no, then the sort code and then the personal code number, then faced with options to choose from and eventually when you get a representative to speak to, you get cut off and have to start the rigmarole all over again.

That made Jeffrey cross – incandescent with rage – but then it usually cheeses everybody off when it happens to us.

After several years of commuting to London for church and theatre, it was decided to move there and a flat in Fulham was found – mercifully with an 0207 telephone number. An 0208 number would have been *infra dignitatem*. All went well at first. There was lots of commuting back to Southend for things it was easier to keep there – like dentists and the like. But then sickness struck – horrendously. Amazingly, Jeffrey made a good recovery but, at the same time, he became increasingly frail. Access to the flat was not the easiest of things and so, eventually, Jeffrey decided to return to Westcliff.

Negotiations over the purchase of the flat in Tower Court and the disposal of the Fulham flat made for tales the length of which rivalled one of Geoffrey Chaucer's. As indeed did Jeffrey's account of how he had disembarassed himself of a redundant Christmas tree – an account which quite mesmerized Andrew Baker and myself and covered the journey from Westcliff to Thorpe Bay and more.

Christopher had remained in London due to commitments at Bourne Street and St Matthew's, Westminster but he visited Jeffrey whenever he could. I don't think Jeffrey enjoyed being on his own – the silence of solitude was not for him. He had mobility problems and was very unsteady on his feet. Mercifully, Malcolm and Elizabeth Slater, Brian Mountier and Peter Findlay were bountiful in their care and attention – shopping trips, visits to Southend Hospital and little outings were all arranged. And Jeffrey was profoundly grateful for their loving care and assistance.

John Mortimer's comment: "The aging process is not gradual or gentle. It rushes up, pushes you over and runs off laughing" was echoed in Jeffrey's many conversations with me on the telephone, upon which we had to rely for communication. "Getting old", he said, "is awful".

In recent years there have been many references to Jeffrey in the Old Westcliffian Newsletter. Indeed, I began with one. Many spoke very favourably of time spent under Jeffrey's tutelage. But it was not the case with everyone. Some former pupils harbour deep resentment as a result of the treatment Jeffrey dished out to them, and have said so. For this I am truly sorry. I think possibly there were times when Jeffrey relied too heavily on sarcasm as a vehicle to get his point across and sometimes this caused hurt. Jeffrey was not a cruel man and he would be mortified to learn that he had hurt someone by what he had said. Looking back to my class his challenging "You'll all fail" could just as easily have been refuted by our shouting "Oh no we won't" in the spirit of an altercation between the pantomime dame and the audience. We didn't do so – what we did do was pass the GCE O Level in Maths and that was thanks to Jeffrey. But not everyone had our brazen yet respectful cheek and, on behalf of Jeffrey, I apologise to those who do not look back with pleasure but with pain.

I remember arriving one evening to find Jeffrey emerging from the garage, having rummaged through the boxes of memorabilia, holding a Christmas card which he gave me to look at. Inside were the words: "Mr Winslow. Thank you. Happy Christmas. Love. Gary Brooker".

We had been talking about Gary a few weeks previously and Jeffrey had remembered getting the card. I had sat next to Gary in Class 1C for the Spring and Summer terms of 1957. He was a kind, gentle soul, who didn't talk a great deal. Ten years later Gary's voice echoed around the world as the singer in Procul Harum's record of "A Whiter Shade of Pale" which he had co-written – a song which has been described as the iconic single of the Summer of Love of 1967. In the summer of 1967 you were either going to San Francisco, with Scott McKenzie, wearing flowers in your hair or you were turning a whiter shade of pale with Gary Brooker. Apparently, according to those who know about such things, it has been broadcast more than any other record, featured in numerous films and it is reckoned that more than 14 million records of it have been sold.

I didn't ask Jeffrey for what Gary was grateful – it was none of my business. But surely here is another example of a pupil realising that he owed a debt of gratitude to Mr JLBW, and saying so.

Jeffrey had a great respect and liking for the works of Alan Bennett. When I told him that the Westcliff School Play was to be "The History Boys" he became more than usually dogmatic, expressing the view that it was absolutely beyond the capability of any boy to give a credible performance as Hector, the main character in the play and the teacher of the History Boys. Well, those of you who saw that production a few years ago will recall the startling performance of Richard Wells (17 – possibly only 16 at the time – and now studying drama at The University of Warwick). Richard was brilliant – as were the rest of the cast. Surely that play will go down in the annals of the School as one of the greatest.

I told Jeffrey that he had been 100% incorrect in his opinions and that the whole thing had been a triumph. And Jeffrey capitulated and said that he was glad that it had gone so well. Because pontificating about something, even with Jeffrey doing the pontificating, does not guarantee that it will come to pass.

"The History Boys" is a very funny play, tinged with not a little sadness; so typical of Bennett's work. It ends with Hector speaking from the grave, having been killed in a road accident.

"Pass the parcel.

That's sometimes all you can do.

Take it, feel it and pass it on.

Not for me, not for you, but for someone, somewhere, one day.

Pass it on, boys.

That's the game I wanted you to learn.

Pass it on".

Jeffrey spent his life passing it on – and he passed on more than  $(a+b)^2$ . So much more. And we are the beneficiaries of what he passed.

So we come to the time, here at his Funeral Mass, when we must pass Jeffrey on - on into the hands of the Lord, with a lot of thanks for kindness and generosity, but also with a lot of sorrow because Jeffrey leaves a gap that cannot be filled with anything except with the joys of memory. He leaves membership of the Church on earth and, with his passport of the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, takes up his membership of the Church beyond the grave – that greater part of the Church – and continues on his journey which leads to the Beatific Vision of Almighty God. Fare well on that journey, Jeffrey.

Lord Jesus, have mercy upon Jeffrey.

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for Jeffrey.

May Jeffrey's immortal soul, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

Delivered by Fr John McCollough at Jeffrey's Funeral Mass – St Clement's Church, Leigh-on-Sea, 26 February 2016

## 10. NEWS OF AND FROM OLD WESTCLIFFIANS

### TONY AXE

After I left School, I joined the Army (no great difference) and spent the next five years here and there, before going home to Thorpe Bay. I hadn't been home for two years, my choice (I preferred skiing) and though that a long rest in civilised surroundings would be nice (there were carpets and things, and milk in jugs instead of condensed in tins, even flowers) but after a week or so my Father insisted that I must be bored and said he would see me up at his office next Monday, 09.00 hours, buy a suit. I duly went, not knowing that I was to spend the next 40 years or so there, practising law. After a while, some lads I knew around Southend asked me to join them in a Flat they were renting in Kensington – apparently the floor in their previous Flat had collapsed, and they thought it better to move out.

The new Flat had been more less passed on to them by a bloke they'd met in a pub, one of the chorus line in the musical Camelot, and the place was full of prompt-scripts and sheet music. The Landlords were actually a group of South African dentists in Earls Court – don't ask, it was the 60's – and the Flat upstairs was full of nurses working at a hospital in Marloes Road. So far, so good. I spent far too long living there, but it was never dull. There were no other OWs in the group. The living wasn't elegant. I was eating a Fray Bentos meat pie one evening, still in its flat tin, obviously, but I still had a glass of red wine with it, stuff called "Plonque" sold by a shop that filled your own bottles from a barrel. One of the others came in, looked at my meal and said quite seriously, without a trace of irony "You live well, don't you", which more or less rates our style of living. That was just before a plastic tile fell off the ceiling into his scrambled eggs.

That man was Tony Baker, who got beaten up regularly, playing rugby for a Rhodesian team at the Overseas Visitors Club in Earls Court.

I would come down to Thorpe Bay most summer weekends to sail in the freezing Estuary, and we would go out in the evenings to any of the many pubs around, often in Old Leigh and occasionally ending up in the Nosh Bar in Westcliff where I found a taste for roll-mops. I rarely if ever saw any OWs I knew, other than once, strangely, Harry Harden by the TB Yacht Club. I was proud to meet him, I remember only a good teacher and a decent man. I don't sail any more; we only have rivers in Twickenham, and it's a bit like sailing in the bath, but I've seen Fray Bentos pies – I wonder if I feel strong enough .....

### FRED GRISLEY - (WHSB 1945 - 1949)

#### "Good Trip?": An Everyday Story of Flying Folk

Have you noticed sometimes, when you are thoroughly enjoying yourself, how the sky can suddenly fall on you; after which, things get worse?! This is the story of such a day. Are you sitting comfortably? Then I'll begin.

#### Prologue

I relaxed in the rear seat of the HARVARD, feeling pretty smug. I had just flown a near perfect "PATTERN B" on instruments under the blind flying hood. I was brought back to hard reality with a bump. "From now on", said Paul my instructor, "you fly it limited panel". PATTERN B was basically a square flying pattern connected by 270° or 450° turns at the corners. At the beginning and end of each straight leg, or each turn, you had to be on the right heading at the right height at the right time.

Errors cost you points. No part of the course was level; you were always climbing or descending at set rates.

Until now I had used the full blind-flying instrument panel, which included the artificial horizon. This was by far the most useful instrument as it gave a direct indication of the aircraft attitude in space. Without it you had to mentally construct your altitude from the readings of the airspeed indicator, altimeter, compass, vertical speed indicator, and the turn-and-bank indicator. You cross-checked continuously. If you concentrated on any one instrument for more than two seconds the others would start to get away from you. Those of you who have gazed at the limited panel with amazement and incredulity, not to say incomprehension, will remember why this regime was known as “flying Popeye”! After ten minutes your eyes felt as if they were on stalks. “Cage the horizon!, said Paul sharply. “Settle on a northerly heading at 8,000 feet and start when you are ready”. After many days of perfecting a really good PATTERN B I was back to square one. “What did you say?” said Paul sharply. “Just clearing my throat” I replied, and did as I was told. It was awful!

Back on the ground Paul explained. “First, when you take your Instrument Test, you’ll be using the full panel. If you’re used to doing it on a limited panel, you’ll find the test is a piece of cake. Secondly, one day you’ll find yourself on instruments in very rough weather which could topple the horizon. Don’t wait to find out. Cage it immediately and fly limited panel; otherwise you might not live to tell the tale. Meanwhile, I’m going to make sure you know how to”. Somewhat to my surprise I did eventually manage it. It was to stand me in good stead.

## THEATRE OF THE GODS.

The clatter of the guns ceased as I ran out of ammunition. A steady pull on the stick lifted me up and over the flag. I quickly safetied the guns, lowered the gun-sight, and pressed the R/T button. “Kenway Four to Tug. That’s all, going home”. “Roger Four, see you anon”.

The tug turned off 90° starboard over the Gunfleet Sands towards Colne Point. Under the sun the sandbanks were yellow and the water was blue-green. Over the land, up the Thames Valley, it was a different story, where thunderstorms covered the sky. The Mid Barrow Light-Vessel passed astern as I checked the fuel gauges; 100 gallons remaining in each tank. Plenty. Let’s see what this particular bird would do. I advanced the throttles to 14,500 RPM, pushed the stick, and wound the trim forward. The Meteor put her head down and stretched into her stride.

We went over the Knock John Gun-Tower at 1,000 feet and 400 knots as I lined up on the Red Sand Forts. They came and went in a flash as I hauled round to starboard towards Southend Pier. Fifty feet, 460 knots and still rising. The howl of the engines, the famous Meteor “Blue note”, trailed away astern, obliterated by the roar of the slipstream over the canopy. At this speed the windscreen, which was proof against cannon shells, would not stand the inertia of a seven-pound seagull; so I trimmed tail heavy until I was holding level with a two pound push on the stick. As an extra precaution I raised the gun-sight, pulled my sun-visor down, and lowered the seat all the way. If a bird strike got through that lot and it incapacitated me the plane would go into a climb and give me a chance to recover or bale out.

I had edged the throttles forward to their maximum 14,700 RPM and a glance at the ASI showed 495 knots. Not bad although on a good day, at full chat, you could wind the F.8 up to 505 knots low-level.

The view ahead was spectacular! I've not seen the like before or since. The Thames Valley was covered by a layer of high stratus cloud; the combined anvils of the thunder-heads. Over the land tall, dark, narrow columns of cloud supported this roof like the pillars of a gigantic hall. Far to the west the sky lightened over London. This light shone horizontally towards me, reflected off the sea, and illuminated the clouds from below, it was incredibly beautiful.

Normally flying over flat-calm water is dangerous as you can't judge your height; but a scattering of fishing boats and pleasure craft gave me enough perspective to do so. The roar of the wind past the cockpit was reaching a peak as shock-waves started to form, and the canopy was warm to the touch. This contrasted with the rock-like steadiness of the Meteor. The air was so smooth it was like running on rails. Being strapped into seven tons of the finest machinery, pounding across a sea like polished sliver at 30 feet is beyond compare. I was on a pinnacle of exhilaration. I was god-like! This was living!

Hubris begets Nemesis. I was riding for a fall.

Southend Pier came and went and I dipped a wing to leave Canvey Point to starboard. 500 knots: with increasing Mach number the right wing was trying to go down. I braced my arm to hold it: no problem. Egypt Bay flashed by to port. I spared a thought for Geoffrey De Havilland who had lost his life there ten years before in the DH 108.

Right ahead at 3000 feet a horizontal band of cloud stretched between the Essex and Kent shores. Suddenly to left and right, about two miles apart, bolts of lightning struck vertically from cloud to ground. Simultaneously another bolt, in a hanging loop, struck across from near the tops of the first two. It looked like a gigantic goal-mouth with a sagging cross-bar, and I was heading straight for the centre. It was absolutely spectacular and, in my exaltation I thought of it instead as the proscenium arch to the Theatre of the Gods. Curtains of rain hanging like drapes to left and right completed the illusion. All I lacked was Wagner's "Ride of the Valkyries" blasting in the head-set.

Recovering from the dazzle I pulled up over East Tilbury as the river turned south. Immediately ahead I saw a large hole in the overcast. On a whim I gave an almighty two-handed heave on the stick. 6 G's crushed me into the seat but I was going too fast. Instead of entering the hole I went into the cloud on the far side, but not before glancing up and seeing a vast vertical cavern of clear air, roughly circular, going up for many thousands of feet and beautifully lit by blue sky at the top. If I held the wings level and continued upwards in a loop I should find it again. So I concentrated on the instruments, kept the stick back, and that's what happened. I was past the vertical when I broke back into the cavern but, holding the back-pressure, a quick half-roll had me going straight up the centre. Having started with 500 knots and full throttle, the Meteor soared a long way but, eventually, we were down to 200 knots with the controls getting slack.

I eased the stick back and to the right, and continued the roll to settle into a gentle dive wings level at 120 knots as we entered cloud. Meanwhile my hands had been flashing round the cockpit: gun-sight ... down; visor ... up; cockpit lights ... on; throttles ... 12,000 RPM. I was just in time. All hell broke loose!

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I had broken a cardinal rule of flying: always keep ahead of the aircraft. For lack of practice my blind flying skills were rusty. A fighter's mission is to search and destroy. You don't hone those rusty skills by tacking about in cloud. I was OK at night or in smooth conditions, but I wasn't ready for the mayhem that followed. Secondly, when I got to the top of the climb I should have stall-turned or hammer-headed, and gone straight back down, throttles closed and air-brakes out. By flying off the top in such confined space I could not avoid entering cloud, and this was no ordinary cloud. It was the most dangerous type in the sky; the dreaded cumulo-nimbus, or thunder-cloud.

Without warning the aircraft flew into extreme turbulence. As the controls snatched I grabbed the stick with both hands and clamped my feet on the rudder-bar. The shaking was so violent that, had I not already lowered the seat, my head would have been bouncing off the canopy. I concentrated desperately on the blind-flying panel which told me that I was rising at thousands of feet per minute or falling even faster, usually ending with a jolt as if I'd hit something, followed by more violent shaking.

I was trying to keep level at 200-250 knots but sometimes the controls were completely slack as I dropped nearly to stalling speed. At others they required all my strength as the speed went over 400 knots. One advantage I started with was plenty of height so, on the first excursion beyond 300 knots, I completely closed the throttles and left them there. I could always trade height for airspeed and, that way, all my left hand had to do was snatch at the air-brake lever ... "IN" or "OUT" ... when it could be spared from helping with the stick.

Flashes of lightning dazzled me. At times St. Elmo's Fire flickered eerily over the canopy and round the instrument panel. Now and again there was an added roar and vibration as we hit precipitation. My arms ached as I fought the stick: left, right, forward, back. Even my legs were working like pistons as I kicked left or right rudder; something normally never done in a Meteor! I remember being crushed in the seat by G-Forces; hanging in the straps as the map floated out of my knee-pocket and stuck to the canopy above my head; dust rising from the floor getting into my eyes. Jesus Christ! Whatever next?

I was falling further and further behind the aircraft. The departures were getting greater and greater. The bang-seat was not an option. People who bale out in thunderstorms can be carried up instead of down, and die of hypothermia or anoxia before they reach the ground.

I was fighting for my life. I was losing. I was ... rescued.

TO BE CONTINUED .....

## IAN WHITFIELD (1949 – 1956)

A request ....

I am a member of the OWA and really enjoy reading the annual Newsletter. Sadly I feel a trip back to Westcliff from Bude, where I have lived for 45 years, is rather too far for me now, but I regret not doing so in earlier times.

I attended WHSB from 1949 to 1956, skipping the 5th form and taking English and Maths at O level in September 1953. I took the year I had missed in upper 6 Arts, as I needed three years to get my A levels. I believe the group of 5 pupils, of which I was one, was perhaps the first group to try this ploy, which for me was not entirely successful, but ended up much better than I had feared.

Some of my greatest pleasures at school were when I was involved in sport: initially rugby and then hockey in the winter, and athletics and a little cricket in the summer. Attending Sports Day and competing was a highlight of the year for me, and I recall the hours spent pouring over the Sports Day Programme which included a table inside the back cover of all the current school records in all the various events. I regret hugely now that I did not manage to retain some of these relating to my attendances at the school Sports Day.

I would dearly like to get hold of a few copies, be they originals or digital copies by e-mail, preferably from the years 1949 to 1956, but any others would be most acceptable too. I would be more than happy to give a donation to somebody's chosen charity for this kindness.

Ian – [ian.jarviswhitfield@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ian.jarviswhitfield@hotmail.co.uk)

## VAL WEST

I'm beginning to feel like the last person in the story! The more I try to find former classmates and ex RAF people the more I meet with a blank.

Nearly found one person who served with me in Malaya, only to find he'd died a few years back! It was the author, Alan Sillitoe, whose service overlapped mine at Butterworth by a few weeks. I doubt we would have had anything in common. His book, Key To The Door, speaks of his time at that camp, but he always said it was not autobiographical. Most reviewers believe it was. Certainly there were so many references that anybody who had been there at the time would recognise the place.

Perhaps my ex schoolmates don't remember me or don't care to.

Today is Canada Day a National holiday. Fetes, Fireworks and, regrettably, possible rain here and wildfires across the prairies. Can't have everything I suppose. At least summer has arrived, attested by the sudden proliferation of weeds in my garden!

Soon my eldest Grandson will get married, for the second time(!) so I shall be a great-grandfather again, since his wife-to-be has two children. It's difficult to realise that we have had three sons who, collectively, gave us four grandchildren, and, by marriage two more, who, in turn, have added to the total! Families are not as simple these days as when I was young. Or at least in my befuddled state they don't seem to be.

Various doctors, who have been trying to find things wrong, have, more or less, come to the conclusion that the principle problem is I'm getting rather old, and I have Arthritis, both facts were clear to me before they started !

Should anyone of the remaining Old Westcliffians who might be interested in a chat, who recall the time 1939-1944, I'd be glad to hear.

An odd thing, I feel little or no nostalgia(?) for the UK, but would like to know what became of those people who shared my life way back then.

My regards Val

### **KENNETH ZUCKER (1946-1953)**

In the last edition of our Newsletter there was an erroneous account as to how Henry Cloke acquired the nickname of "The Boot".

The true facts follow .....

I joined the School in September 1946. Henry Cloke arrived in January 1948, if my memory is accurate. At that time cinemas were showing "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty" starring Danny Kaye. The villain in the film was known as "The Boot". That epithet was transferred effortlessly to Henry Cloke. It stuck. QED.

It would be a pity if Henry Cloke's eccentricities highlighted a short while ago by Keith Warren obscured the fact that he was a truly great Headmaster. I would refer to two aspects of his long reign.

The previous Headmaster Eric Ayres ran the school as if it were a minor Public School. All teachers and prefects were permitted to use the cane and frequently did so. There was a culture of bullying, with new boys on their first day being thrown down the bank onto the playing field. Henry Cloke immediately abolished all caning save for an ample reservation to himself. Though he used it himself he was not a bully and did not tolerate bullying in the school.

Secondly he went to great lengths to guide and secure places at universities for departing sixth formers. I personally owe him a great deal. I remember him with affection and gratitude.

Kenneth

### **GORDON SAINS (1945 – 1950)**

It was a picture of my younger brother Colin in a recent OW newsletter, as a member of a school junior 15 that started me to search for similar photographs of myself some twelve years before. The search, plus a certain amount of procrastination, has taken some time to bear fruit. I did in fact find two photographs, one for 1946/47 and the other for 1947/48. What did surprise me were the number of changes that appeared to have been made over this short period; only four players appear in both!

That I was one of those may have been more to do with my being in South House, where Claude Webber was its house master, than my ability on the rugby field!

In that period 70 years ago at the end of World War 2, we had a team representing Westcliff for every year we were at school, from two games versus Billericay school in the first year to the first fifteen's full season of games.

Returning to the two teams in this newsletter, how young we all look and would anyone recognize an eighty four year old from a photograph of a teenager some seventy years ago? There is one character that I am sure did play for both teams and I have marked him as Mr X. This is the challenge that I put to you... CAN YOU NAME HIM?

Gordon

### **Note from Secretary...**

For a bit of fun and, yes, to bring in some money to the Association, if you think you know who Mr X is, write in to me naming him and enclosing £5. Please make cheques payable to Old Westcliffian Association. The Association relies on donations to supplement the modest income from entrance subscriptions and regularly makes donations to the school. All successful entrants will go in the hat and the draw will be performed by Mr X at the annual dinner on 9th September. The winner will receive £50, put up by Gordon and myself.

Please note EMAIL REPLIES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Gordon would be pleased to hear from anybody who is in the photographs - [sainsgh9@mail2world.com](mailto:sainsgh9@mail2world.com)

### **1946/7 Team**

Back Row: Mansell, Sains, Barrel, Kemp, Shepherd, Pilgrim, Pope, Fides, Macfarlane, Flack

Seated: Webber, Laurence, Smith, H.M. Mr Ayres, Mr "X". Last two not known

Ground: Henley, Haylock



### **1948/49 team**

Back Row: Gillman, Hammond, Lawrence, Crittenden, Joiner, Sains, Clarke, Sayers

Seated: Webber, Thornton, Smith, HM, Mr Cloke, MacFarlane, Price, Miens

Ground: Bridger, Haylock



## 11. OLD WESTCLIFFIAN LODGE NO. 5456

The Lodge has had a busy programme of work and interesting lectures during the current year. The Master of the Lodge for this year has been Martin Smith, who despite suffering a stroke just after the start of his term of office, has carried on regardless and done a superb job in both performing Masonic ceremonies and in visiting other Lodges.

The Lodge entirely consists of former pupils and staff at the school and any potential new member is almost certain to come across someone he knows, either a fellow former pupil or former master. The Lodge is open to all former pupils, staff and governors of the school and anyone who wishes to join will receive a warm welcome.

Many people have preconceived ideas about Freemasons and Masonry in general. Despite rumours to the contrary, we can assure readers of the Association newsletter that no animals were harmed (or involved!) in our Masonic ceremonies. If you would like to know more about the Lodge or Freemasonry in general, please contact any of the three members listed below.

Terry Birdseye (1957-1962) 01702 714241  
Arthur Millman (1967-1973) 07973 145978  
Greg Bermon (1988-1995) 07772 296230

## 12. EDITOR

Thanks to everyone who contributed to the Newsletter, again this year, and I hate to repeat myself! but again, sadly there was not room for all of the articles, however, I will endeavour to include these next year.

I found it really sad that there are so many OW's who have passed away during the year, but having lost my beloved Father John James White on 10 March, I extend my sincere condolences to the families & friends they left behind ... and it is true, life (and the heart) does go on.

My Father wasn't an OW, in fact he was educated in Shoreditch in London until he was 14, later going on to be a Sgt in No 3 Commando in WW11. Rest in peace brave old Soldier.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank Terry for his help and advice.

As previously, should you know of anyone not receiving their Newsletter, please ask them to get in touch. They can either email their details to [terry.birdseye@gmail.com](mailto:terry.birdseye@gmail.com) or contact the Hon. Secretary by post. Please also keep us informed of email and postal address changes.

With best wishes to all OWs.

Shanie White



**13. (i) THE OLD WESTCLIFFIAN ASSOCIATION**

The Association was formed in 1926 to enable pupils to have a means of keeping in touch with staff and colleagues.

The Annual Newsletter forms a good link between members at home and abroad.

The AGM is usually held in June or July.

Our Annual Reunion Dinner is held in September.

We welcome a growing membership and our Honorary Secretary will be pleased to welcome new members on receipt of an application.

✂.....

**13. (ii) The Old Westcliffian Association**

**\*\*\* Please make ALL cheques payable to “Old Westcliffian Association” \*\*\***

Application for Life Membership Subscription	£10
Life Members’ Tie	£8
Cufflinks in Presentation Box	£15

**NAME:** .....

**YEARS DATES AT SCHOOL:** .....

**ADDRESS:** .....

.....

**POSTCODE:** .....

**TELEPHONE NUMBER:** .....

**EMAIL ADDRESS:** .....

*PLEASE NOTE THAT IF YOU DO NOT PROVIDE AN EMAIL ADDRESS, AN ADDITIONAL £5 SHOULD BE SENT FOR FUTURE NEWSLETTER MAILINGS.*

**Send membership cheques to:**

Terry Birdseye  
810 London Road  
LEIGH ON SEA, Essex, SS9 3NH  
Tel: 01702 714241  
Mobile: 07752 192164  
Email: terry.birdseye@gmail.com

**Send cheques for ties and cufflinks to:**

R. Arnold  
8 Orchard Grove  
LEIGH ON SEA, Essex, SS9 5TR  
Tel: 01702 521877  
Email: dick.arnold@virgin.net

