

The Old Paludians Newsletter



Founded 1915

Website: www.oldpaludians.org

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EDITORIAL

Greetings to all Old Paludians in this, my seventh and final Newsletter, for after this issue I shall be handing over the editorial reins to an as yet unidentified successor. If the position is still unfilled at the time of publication, let me assure anyone interested that it is a rewarding and not particularly onerous job, and one which can be done on a predominantly standalone basis; by which I mean via electronic and postal communications with OPA Committee members and the broader membership, without the need (for someone like me in darkest Gloucestershire) to travel considerable distances to attend meetings.

The chief interest in the job has undoubtedly been the contact with OPA members, some of whom I am never likely to meet. The contributions which members send in provide a fascinating overview of the many different directions taken by those who enjoyed the privilege of attending one of our two schools. The differences between the generations are also quite striking: I thought I had a hard time of it on occasion, having to cycle three miles to school and back every day, especially in the bitter winter of 1962-63 (when there was never any mention of "school cancelled"). However, when I read the memories sent in by Ian Bryant (SGS 1937-42) - see his letter in this issue - including the fact that it was sometimes 7 pm before he arrived home from school and then had to begin his homework, I appreciated that I hadn't fared so badly after all.

Anyway, a big "thank you" from me is due to all who have contributed over the years to the Newsletter; and if you haven't been a contributor in the past, please consider becoming one in future. For some reason most of the articles (as distinct from news updates) I receive are penned by men; so ladies, please do something to restore the balance. Your memories may prove of more interest to readers than you think! I say this in the hope that the OPA will continue to flourish, though at the time of writing prospects don't look particularly encouraging. A number of Committee members have resigned over the past couple of years and new recruits are scarce. Also, the average age of the OPA membership is 73 and there is not much evidence of younger blood. Please see the chairman's report for more detailed thoughts on this subject.

Bob Moss, Editor

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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

This has been another year of hard work by the Old Paludians Association and the Committee. As I said last year, in order to ensure the longevity of the OPA, the Committee is adopting a two-pronged approach:

1) Keeping in contact with existing members and giving them what they want - news about old friends, through the popular Newsletter, and a chance to meet at the annual Reunion. To those we have added an enhanced interactive website with much more information, current not just historical. The Association is also building a presence across the social media. We need your news and views to make it more interesting.

2) Attracting new young members: I said it would be difficult and it is! We have been criticised for spending too much time and money on building a stronger relationship with Upton Court Grammar School. Without doing this, how will current students know anything about the OPA? We have made good progress by attending school functions, funding grants for school projects, introducing new prizes for student achievements and maintaining a constant dialogue with school staff. Two of our members gave speeches at the School's annual Remembrance ceremony marking the 100th anniversary of the end of WWI; this included memories from our archives and an examination of ways in which the two World Wars affected the school community.

Do bear in mind that we started from a position whereby the school governors did not know anything about the Old Paludians - we now have two Old Paludian governors, including the chair! It is still however "Work in Progress".

Again, I must thank all of you who have so generously made donations to the Association. These have been used to cover our small running costs (the Reunion is self-funding) and provide the resources for the initiatives I mentioned above that are so important in building our increasing relationship with the school and in turn creating the interest of current students to join the OPA when they leave.

Now I come to the most serious and concerning part of my report. During the year Committee members Marie Hughes, Patrick Donachy and Michael Frankl (Treasurer) resigned, mainly due to other commitments. On your behalf I thank them for all the time and effort they have spent in supporting the Association. Newsletter Editor, Bob Moss, indicated at the last Reunion that 2019 would be his final year. We need a new volunteer so that the Newsletter can provide a vital means of communication for members who are unable to attend the Reunion.

Jane Brown, Alan Forbes, Ian Cairns, Rajesh Sharma, David Rogers and Kav Benepal have worked tirelessly in the interests of the OPA this last year, for which I thank them. However, their contribution must be shared by other members. Every year at the AGM we ask for volunteers to join the Committee but very few members come forward. The roles of Editor and Treasurer need to be filled. I said I would act as Chairman for one year. This is my third AGM. If asked, I will continue for just one more year.

With active help and support from members the OPA will survive, although changes will necessarily evolve in the future, as in the past.

I look forward to speaking to you at the Reunion and if you have any suggestions, however small, or wish to help in any way, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Ronald H. Fidler

FROM THE PRINCIPAL OF UPTON COURT GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Dear All,

I am very proud of Upton Court Grammar School's long history and, in particular, the positive impact the school has had on so many people's lives. Our core mission at the school can be summarised in one sentence:

Upton Court Grammar School ensured all students fulfilled their academic and personal aspirations and became successful and engaged citizens.

This mission aims to reflect the balance that needs to be struck between deepening our students' knowledge in a broad area of academic domains, as well as developing the attitudes that will be necessary for future success as a 21st century world citizen. Our mission drives all that we do today and I firmly believe that the Old Paludians Association is an artefact of this same endeavour. In our alumni we see a great many who have fulfilled their aspirations and who, due to the values instilled in them as a child, have gone on to become successful and engaged citizens. Your continued support of Upton Court Grammar School is an example of this engagement.

Last term we officially re-opened our now aptly named "legacy building", following extensive improvement works. Ron Fidler and Rajesh Sharma were in attendance to represent the Old Pals and the school's archive inspired the speech I made on the steps of the 1930s building. In terms of classrooms and facilities, the school is the biggest it has been in its history, meaning that we can provide students with the very best learning resources available. This summer should see the completion of the multi-million pound investment in our site, with the opening of a new sports hall and outdoor multi-use games area. We look forward to inviting alumni to the opening of this new facility in the autumn term.

Although we are almost again into exam season, our results from summer 2018 have now been officially published by the Department of Education, alongside all schools nationally. Our exam

outcomes, once again, put us in the top 1% of all schools in the country and top of all those in Slough. Most pleasingly, our progress score for disadvantaged students ranks UCGS as 5th best school in the country. I am very proud of our students' progress and academic successes and we continue to work every day to ensure all students receive the best learning possible in a broad range of subjects.

As I have previously written, academic success is only one part of what we believe makes a good education. It is for this reason that we have planned and are planning a variety of experiences and opportunities that go beyond learning in subject areas, to ensure students also develop their personal aspirations and become successful and engaged citizens.

So far this academic year, students have debated with other schools on the topic of Brexit; they have engaged in a variety of enrichment and extra-curricular activities, from rugby to mindfulness, yoga to choir, film-making to journalism; they have had the opportunity to meet with a holocaust survivor, to learn about this important period of history and to commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day; students have met with doctors, lawyers and opticians to learn about careers and pathways; and have been involved in a good many visits, including trips to the theatre, a computing conference, Duke of Edinburgh expeditions, biology visits to the zoo, and students participating in a trial at a magistrates' court.

Also this term, I am particularly proud that the new student leadership team has been appointed, led by Nidhi and Pratik as Head Girl and Head Boy. In addition, our students have been given voice and agency through our Pioneer Parliament, which has met to make an active contribution to the development and growth of our school. Moreover, we have hosted the launch of a cross-Trust girls' project on the theme of "Rebel Women", which has also included a visit to Westminster.

Our school values of Unity, Curiosity, Growth and Service permeate all our work and the activities and opportunities we provide to our students. I want to take this opportunity to thank all former students of this school for their ongoing support and encouragement. Your commitment to helping us to grow and develop is a source of inspiration to me as Headteacher, but also provides our young people with relatable role models. Thank you for all you do for our school community.

With all good wishes,

Mark Pritchard,
Headteacher

ARTICLES

"LEGACY" BUILDING OPEN IN TIME FOR THE NEW TERM AT UCGS

The following article appeared in "The Slough Observer" of 17th/18th January 2019:

Upton Court Grammar School's multi-million pound upgrade has seen the "legacy building" reopened. The "legacy" building, as it is known by staff and students, was built in 1936. In 2015 the school was awarded funding from the Education and Skill Funding Agency (ESFA) to refurbish it and to build a new three-storey teaching block. The reopening happened in time for students this term to enjoy the ten new science laboratories, an immense new science prep room, as well as new classrooms, new windows and flooring. The opening ceremony at the school in Lascelles Road, Slough, was attended by governors, trustees, staff and local head teachers from Slough, including St. Bernard's, Langley Grammar, and Langley Academy. Students from the school's pioneer parliament, as well as the student leadership team, were there; also present was Ron Fidler, chairman of the Old Paludians Association, the school's alumni network that was set up in 1915. Mr Fidler attended the grammar school in the 1940s, when the legacy building was new. Edward

Neighbour, co-CEO of the Pioneer Educational Trust, to which Upton Court Grammar School belongs, cut the ribbon and declared the building officially open. Mr Neighbour thanked both the ESFA for the grant and the building company, B & K Building Services, for their hard work and dedication to improving the school's site. The third phase of the building work is currently underway. The school will benefit from a new sports hall, changing rooms and outside a four-court multi-use games area. This is due for completion in September this year.

OLD PALS CHAIRMAN BECOMES ARTIST'S MODEL

That must be one of the more unlikely headlines of 2019. All is explained in the following article contributed by **UCGS Year 13 art student Sehar Ahmad**:

As part of my personal investigation for my A Level Fine Art course, I wanted to explore the "Passage of Time". Initially I drew clocks, experimented with different media to represent decay and researched Vanitas paintings that contained allegorical symbols of time. As I developed my ideas further, I decided I wanted to observe people with reference to life journeys. As Upton Court Grammar school has a long history, I decided that my project could involve a biographical account of an ex-student. Ron Fidler was contacted and kindly agreed to come in so that I could speak to him about his life with reference to his time at school and where this led. As a starting point, I took some photographs of Ron using chiaroscuro technique and developed some small studies, which then resulted in a large-scale portrait painting in oils. I am currently working on some mixed media collages that show Ron's career with the use of cuttings, news articles and photographs that he has given me. I am also developing a final response of Ron on the steps of the school in conversation with two current Year 7 pupils; again, I have decided to work on a large canvas. It is going well so far!

At the end of the year, A level Fine Art, Photography and GCSE Art and Design will be presented in an exhibition where my art work can be seen. (Date TBA). You are all welcome to attend.



"TRAIN-SPOTTING" - A SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY

Bob has asked me to write a few words about "train-spotting", a pastime akin to smoking in that it was tried by most boys in the 1950s and 60s, with both having levels of addiction ranging from minor to serious. To be truthful, the term "train-spotting" was not one we would have recognised, since the train itself was not of huge interest - it was the locomotive we wanted to see. Trains back then were largely locomotive-hauled, very much different from today's railway. Thus we were really loco-spotters, the current term (usually presented in a rather derogatory manner) seemingly having crept in over the ensuing years.

So what was loco-spotting all about? Well, it generally started with a group of lads (with just occasionally a girl) meeting somewhere line-side, armed with notebooks and pencils, jotting down locomotive (engine) numbers to take home and underline in their "Ian Allen ABC books of British Railway Locomotives". As time progressed, more and more of each type of locomotive would be underlined, with the object of seeing all the representatives in each class. It soon became apparent that trips further afield were necessary to speed up the process; hence every Saturday we would head off to all the London termini, where we were exposed to locomotives from the other British Rail regions which could never be seen at Slough. Then, in pursuit of even greater numbers and variety, one had to visit the servicing depots, or engine sheds as we knew them. Amazingly, some sheds would turn a blind eye to the hordes of youngsters who descended on them each weekend, though others were much less welcoming. (*The Editor recalls being summarily ejected from Willesden depot*). Each locomotive was based at a particular depot, working on the rail traffic of that area, so to see those which only worked locally one had to set one's sights even more ambitiously; it helped then to join an organised society which arranged visits nationally and obtained all the official documents (shed permits) to allow visits to take place. Going on one of these trips inevitably produced huge numbers of "cops", the term used to denote a loco seen for the first time, and huge bragging rights back at school the following Monday - loco-spotting being hugely competitive.

And was this all a whimsical waste of time? I believe not. We developed great camaraderie and rapidly learnt how to travel long distances on our own by bike or public transport at a much younger age than would be acceptable today, given that in those pre-mobile phone days we were totally out of contact with parents. Pre-Beeching, no significant settlement was without its rail line; and in the extremities of the system lurked the most elusive locomotives. We could therefore locate Bodmin on a map where non-spotters might struggle with Birmingham; and when the subject of the Geography lesson was the South Wales Coalfields, it immediately came to life because we had visited its many sheds. Likewise, all important passenger locomotives carried names: Kings, Castles, Counties, wild birds, Walter Scott characters, Commonwealth Countries, etc., which definitely stimulated an interest in the subject behind the name. For example, I was the least musical member of the school, so much so that it was suggested I did my homework at the back of the class; but suddenly, and uniquely, I came top in one written music exam simply because we were asked to write about Sir Edward Elgar. An engine had been recently named after him, I had followed it up, and knew more about Elgar than had even been mentioned in class!

Many happy hours were spent at my local railway bridge in Taplow with Bob, of course, Roger Webb, Dick (and occasionally Anne) Connor, Keith Turner, Walter Merritt and others. Would be nice to meet them all again! (*Anyone have any news of these trackside stalwarts? Ed.*)

Tony Mayo, 1956-64

MEMORIES OF SGS, by Ian Bryant (aged 93)

The following article was received last year in a letter to the Editor from Ian:

In 1937 I was the only pupil from Iver Heath Council School to pass the 11+ and it opened up opportunities to a different world from the 3 R's, which were all that was taught at Council School. The only trouble was, how to get to SGS? It was too far to cycle, especially in inclement weather. A 3/4 mile walk to the end of my road, followed by catching the double-decker 457 bus, left a long walk from Slough High St to Lascelles Road and vice versa when school ended. So I cycled 2 miles to my aunt's in Iver, where the single-decker 458 stopped virtually outside. This had to be a single-decker to get under Langley railway bridge. It stopped outside the girls' convent school both ways, with good crossings of the main road and a short walk to school. There were other advantages too, in that I met pupils from Iver School on their way to SGS - the Moore brothers (Gordon and Vincent), Jeffs and Reed, on the same and only route for them. However, there were also disadvantages: the bus would be nearly full on arrival at the school stop. In that case I would walk to Middle Green Road and wait for the next one; and if that was full, I would catch the double-decker to Langley Harrow and wait. On three occasions I walked to Iver, through the cherry orchards and the 90 degree bend roads, to a footpath which led me to the bottom of Iver. Then I would walk to my aunt's, pick up my bike and arrive home about 7 pm to start homework - quite often two subjects.

The trees in the orchards were Whiteheart Cherries and in spring a trip to view them was said to be Queen Victoria's favourite drive. When the fruit was ripe, they provided some SGS lads with income from picking. I believe the rate was one shilling per bushel. The bends have now all gone along with most of the trees and there is now just a straight road, though the footpath I took remains and is now designated a bridleway.

I remember my first encounter on going to SGS was with Mr Barnes. He asked me whether I played football and where did I play? I answered, "Right wing, Sir!" "Ah, just the person the school will need for left back - you know the tricks of a winger," he responded. "But I don't kick with my left foot, Sir." "You will soon learn," he said. That determined my position throughout school and the Old Pals, but in the latter I would play anywhere to get a game. My first match for the school was as a member of a hastily formed 3rd XI, played on Lascelles Playing Field against Swiss College. The Swiss lads were up to 18 years old, giants compared with us. It was a very bruising affair, ending in a 3-3 draw. Next time on stage Mr Clarke was fulsome in his praise and it made for good positions in the 1st and 2nd elevens later.

I am horrified to hear of students' huge debts and enclose a copy (*I have this - Ed.*) of the fee paid by my father to Bucks CC in respect of my first term at SGS - 18 shillings and fourpence, a lot of money in those days (1937).

I remember my first term, with its difficulties in getting there (already explained) and arrival in Form 2B, where we were arranged alphabetically: Biggs, Borwell, Bryant, Christie, Cope, Cox, Crannigan, Cullimore - where are they now? Mr Clarke took R.I. with a geographical journey through the Middle East, and Mr Evans taught me woodwork, where I made and French polished a teapot stand. In October there was cross-country, 3 miles for juniors and 5 miles for seniors (avoidable with a parent's or doctor's note) across Lascelles Playing Field and across the road to "The Bumps" and the stream. I lost my slipper in the silt/mud of the stream but retrieved and washed it in time to finish strongly outside the school with slipper still in hand.

Wartime with all its restrictions was not easy, with gas-mask in satchel along with homework. Food and clothing were rationed and petrol was allowed only for essential duties. Even water was in short supply and we were asked to use no more than a given amount - I can't remember the amount as we had no bathroom. This featured in a saucy "Giles-type" cartoon of a lady cowering in her bath while an ARP warden with a dipstick asked, "Can I measure the depth of your bath water, Madam?". White

flour and white bread disappeared, as did coal (still relied on for cooking), and anthracite was required for arms production. We had "nutty slack" straight off the Welsh slag heaps, layers of slate and coal which didn't burn but heated. Most of the things we had we grew - we all had large gardens. The school partook of some gardening during term-time - one of the forms was sent up to Bledlow Ridge to collect potatoes (Bucks vernacular "spud-ucking", not SGS). Wonder what lessons that came under? Biology, I guess, although chemistry might also have been involved, as the Land Army Girls were present! Later in the war we had some US spam and South African snoek (fish) occasionally. Life was full, with constant learning and at 15 I and some local lads joined the ARP as messenger boys, ready to carry messages between posts in case of German invasion and bombing. There was a complete blackout, street names and signposts were removed, and my bicycle lights were masked downwards, as were all car lights (if allowed by petrol rationing). I spent one night a week on duty at post but was only called out once when a "Jerry" plane was caught in searchlights and attracted a barrage from the ATS girls' AA battery on top of Chandlers Hill. Iver Heath was hit. A string of 4 (bombs) was released before London but did little damage, apart from a house near the school and the school itself. The ATS girls were later credited with shooting down a HE-111 - this achievement was proudly displayed on a board outside camp. After duty it was back home for a quick wash and change and off to SGS, with homework having been done at post.

We had 3 student teachers at SGS - they were given a rough time by 5B and the only one I remember who survived the course was a Mr Leftvich (*well, that's what it looks like - Ed*). When the nightly raids on London ceased and there were only (!) daylight activities, life returned to ABNORMAL and local teams played in the wartime league. I played for the Old Pals while still at school and the only name I can remember is Kent. I recognised lots of the prefects etc from the 1937 photo, though I would not have known them.

In spite of (or perhaps because of) everything being against it, I enjoyed school and its teachers. I was pleased to gain my colours for football, cricket and hockey and represent the Old Pals at all three sports in later years. My academic achievement was "Oxford School Certificate with Matric. Exemptions" and to this day I don't really know what it entitled me to. I used it once when I was called up and being interviewed by the Army. Someone pointed out the possibilities I could enjoy in the Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry. I replied that I wanted to join the Navy - I know that hurt him because I saw his moustache twitch. He informed me that, unless I had relatives or qualifications, it was the Army for me. At this point I produced my Certificate and entry to the RN was assured!

I hope you can edit this for the next Newsletter - get the typewriters clacking and the Heidelbergers (*printing machines - Ed*) rolling, although they don't do that any more. But no 100 lines for bad spelling etc. I feel sorry for the present generation, they have no end product (not even a teapot stand), it's all smoke, mirrors and twitter (what an apt name!). I'm afraid we have lost both our identity and our sense of humour and at the moment England looks like losing its democracy.

Trust all is well, keep up the good work. God Bless.

Ian "Bronc" Bryant, 1937-42

****STAFF AND PUPILS SECTION****

PLEASE NOTE: The paragraphs below are divided as follows:

- 1) **STAFF** - news followed by "**In Memoriam**" section (none of the latter this year)
- 2) **PUPILS** - listed by decade, with the key date being when each pupil **started** their SSS/SHS/SGS education. Each decade is subdivided into "**GIRLS**" and "**BOYS**", followed by a similar "**In Memoriam**" section.

****STAFF NEWS****

Georgie Baker (1952-89) - explained that she would be unable to attend reunions because "I find it difficult to walk too much on concrete or hard surfaces for fear of falling."

****NEWS OF FORMER PUPILS****

****1930s****

GIRLS

Betty Britten (Boys, 1939-42) - In April 2018 Betty wrote: "Thank you very much for sending me the latest Newsletter. As a life member I have enjoyed very much receiving news of the Old Pals and now there are very few of my generation still with us. In 1939 my sister and I came to SHS from Yorkshire. Afterwards I became a student at the Royal Academy of Music and since then have been in the musical world in Suffolk. After retirement I had a few wonderful years travelling with Eric my husband, an historian. My congratulations to all your team for the splendid work you do continually to keep the Association flourishing."

BOYS

Jack Ivall (1935-40) - explained that he was unable to respond to last year's reunion invitation due to a fairly severe heart attack, from which he had recovered well thanks to staff at the John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford. He added that his nephew, John, still lives in Slough. Jack also supplied several photographs of the 1949 SHS First XI Hockey Team, in which his wife Jean (née Fowler) featured. The opponents in the photo were the school staff.

Ian Bryant (1937-42) - In July 2018 Ian (aka "Bronc") Bryant wrote an interesting letter to the editor, beginning as follows: "Forgive me for sending this letter to you but you are the only one with an address other than email. I know the modern world thinks everyone is 'online' but in this neck of the woods (Andalucia) it is not so. Many of my locals cannot read or write and as for computers, there are no lines and you need to travel to the nearest town (Marbella) to find a shop with computers, which you can use for a fee. We do have water and electrics, unlike some of our very rural villages, but natural gas has only reached the other side of Marbella and is not imminent. We still rely on the classic orange-coloured bottles of Spain and Butane Gas." Ian enclosed a copy of the 1937 school photograph (*available on the Old Pals website - Ed.*) and a cutting from the "Slough Observer" given him by the daughter of Bert Charman, the school caretaker. The cutting shows Mr David Luck, the gym master, performing the feat of lifting a board on which were placed a piano, a chair and Mr Harries, the music master, playing "John Brown's Body". (*This photo can be seen on page 63 of "Ad Astra" - Ed.*) Apparently, the 60-year-old Mr Luck weighed 154 lbs (11 stones), while the combined weight of piano/chair/Mr Harries amounted to 580 pounds. Ian concludes: "Keep the Newsletter coming. I was sorry to hear of the demise of John Alder, my neighbour for 17 years, and Clive Toogood and John Pallett, both of whom I knew through Old Pals sporting activities. I gained school colours for hockey, cricket and football." (*NB. Subsequently, Ian wrote me a longer letter describing his time at SGS - I have included an abbreviated version as a separate article, which appears above. Ed.*)

****IN MEMORIAM******GIRLS**

Elinor Gates (Anderson, 1936-42) - just before Christmas we received the sad news that Elinor, who lived in Burnham, had passed away in September. After leaving the school at Twinches Lane she went to work at Westminster Bank. She went on to raise two daughters, Elizabeth and Hilary. Hilary followed in her mother's footsteps by attending SHS and now lives happily in Cornwall. Elinor's husband John adds: "Ella often spoke of the days when she played hockey with the Windsor Ladies team for a few seasons after leaving school. Before being taken ill, she spent many happy hours researching her family history with record offices around the country, including Scotland - hence the Anderson connection."

Hilda Slaughter (Hollis, 1936-42) - Hilda was born in Erith, Kent, the youngest of four children. Four years later they all moved to Bradley Road, Slough, where there would be more work. Within two weeks of arriving, Hilda's mother, sister and brother all contracted diphtheria. The local GP was furious with the family for bringing such a bad disease into his area! Fortunately, they all recovered. Hilda went to Thomas Gray School and then to Slough High School. On leaving school, she did a secretarial course and worked her way up to become secretary to the managing director of a local company. She met her husband Roy (see below) at a dance, remembering him as "the boy with glasses" from when they were both at Thomas Gray. They were married in 1950 and lived with Roy's parents for two years before buying their first house in Salt Hill Drive. Hilda left work in 1956 to start a family - first a daughter, then in 1958 a son. However, she continued to work from home for Roy's business for the next 25 years. On becoming a mum she joined Slough Mothers Club and became chairman. In 1964 the family moved to Hempson Avenue. Hilda was an active member of Slough Conservative Association. She enjoyed ballroom dancing, yoga, gardening, walking and tennis. She was a patron of Slough Operatic Society and loved the theatre. In 2015 Hilda and Roy, aged 90, left Hempson Avenue to be looked after in a care home in Beaconsfield. They leave a daughter, a son, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Their home in Hempson Avenue is still in the family.

BOYS

Royston Slaughter (1935-41) - Margaret Paine writes: "Roy started school at Thomas Gray in Slough before going to Slough Secondary and Slough Grammar. He enjoyed chess and became Chess Captain in his third year. In 1942 he joined the RAF and became a fitter working on plane engines. At 21 he joined the Freemasons and some years later with George Lucas became a founder member of the Old Paludians Lodge. He started work at "The Station Garage" opposite the station, which he later bought (*presumably, the garage - Ed.*). He then bought the garage in Petersfield Avenue, selling Volvos. In 1950 he married Hilda Hollis (see section above). Many thanks to Roy's sister Audrey Higgins (see section below) for this information."

****1940s******GIRLS**

Margaret Paine (Paine, 1943-48) - As for myself, I am still getting around but arthritis inhibits my walking - joined the "Stick Brigade" but still cheerful (most of the time). Daughter **Judy (Farrow, 1976-80)** visits most weeks. Her daughter Zoe graduates this year in Music and Drama, while another grandchild graduates in Medicine at Aberdeen; so now have a doctor in the family. We

have a monthly lunch in Farnham Common, where **Margaret Galloway (Joel, 1949-57)**, **Alan Mabbott (1942-50)** and myself are always talking about School and the Old Pals. **Olive Craddock (Wallis, 1939-47)** is also there. I am still in touch with **George (1938-43)** and **Joan Power (Williams, 1944-48)**, mostly at Christmas; all in our later 80s and I believe George is 90 now.

Audrey Higgins (1943-50) - Margaret Paine (see above) writes: "Audrey has downsized to an apartment in Ilkley, where she can walk to the shops. She still keeps very active, though sadly has lost her brother, sister-in-law and a friend over the past year."

Audrey Gamester (Lines, 1943-48) - Margaret Paine writes: "I met Audrey at a friend's funeral - a surprise, as she lives near Bognor. We managed to have a good chat."

Mary Haydock (File, 1944-51) - An eventful twelve months since the reunion in 2018. After putting it off for many years, I had a much needed knee replacement in June 2018. The operation went well but I got an infection in the wound and had three further operations plus many visits to the physiotherapist. All is progressing fairly well now and I am back playing bowls. Not quite as energetic as the hockey I enjoyed at Slough High School but very enjoyable. I see Judy (Hawes) and Elizabeth (Brown) frequently, and have very welcome cards from Eunice (Hernaman). I am also in contact with Joe Armstrong. We were all in the same year. I would like to hear from any others who were at the High School from 1944-1951. I hope you will have a very successful day. Sorry I can't make it this year.

BOYS

Barry Serjent (1943-49) - Barry wrote in April 2018 to say he would be leaving the Old Paludians. He explained: "I am a little sad to have ticked the "exit box", but as I reach my 85th birthday today, it seems that I really should stop using up reams of paper when I have no contacts left; my best friend **David Jewell (1943-51)**, whom I had known since the second form, passed away about eighteen months ago. We shared a love of the theatre, he on the technical side (lighting) and myself on-stage. We were both involved with the first SGS full length programmes of one act plays, eg. "Arsenic & Old Lace", which the school presented in December 1949. I played Dr Einstein - wouldn't need the bald wig these days. Many happy memories, and best wishes for the continued success of the Old Pals. P.S. If you check out eastlanetheatre.co.uk you'll see I'm still treading the boards."

Derek Page (1946-52) - Derek wrote a letter recording his memories, of which the following represent a chronological selection:

"My grandparents lived in Queens Rd and another relative owned the hardware store on the corner of Queens and Stoke. I was born in Chalvey and attended Montem Elementary School. My parents' house literally backed onto the school, so I had no excuse for being late.

At the Grammar School I joined the Army Cadet Force under Major Wharmby - he was my History teacher and attempted to volunteer everyone. I think I was the only one to cave in, although I've no regrets. It gave me the opportunity to fire a rifle at an early age and, along with others, the chance to shoot a few rooks in the elm trees in Lascelles Playing fields (they happened to be located just above the target). The Cadet Force was the only extra-curricular activity in which I participated but it did facilitate interaction with older students.

I did my National Service in the Army, including basic training with the Royal Hampshire Regt. Eventually I finished up in Bicester, where I met my future wife of 58 years.

I worked for EMI in Hayes for 20 years as a chemist formulating magnetic tape dispersions and developing new processes. When the plant closed I was laid off but luckily, having travelled around a bit, I met people who offered me two jobs in the USA. One was in Connecticut and the other in Owings Mills, Maryland. I accepted the one in Maryland, which was fortunate, as the plant in Connecticut folded a few years later. I spent 5 months looking for a job in England and didn't receive a single offer. The principal reason seemed to be that I was too "old". I was only 46! I guess I exemplified the old adage that "it's not what you know, it's who you know".

I am currently living in Reisterstown. It's about 15 miles NW of Baltimore City and I have lived here since 1982. My daughter got her Masters at Towson University (in Maryland) and has been a Spanish/French Teacher at Dumbarton Middle School (near Baltimore) for the last 27 years.

My memory isn't getting any better. I seem to remember what happened 50-70 years ago, just not what happened 50-70 seconds ago (or so my wife keeps reminding me)."

(Derek would be happy to hear from anyone who remembers him - I can provide an email address. Ed)

IN MEMORIAM

GIRLS

June Ginger (Hunt, 1941-47) - Gwen Gale (Knight, 1941-47) writes: "I met June in September 1941 at SHS, where our form mistress was Miss Rita Millns. The term had started late due to an outbreak of polio. At our first Speech and Prize-Giving night June (as the youngest girl in the school) had to present a bouquet to the formidable Lady Astor. She admitted later to being terrified. June was very good at sports, winning many points for her house. We had quite an unusual education during WWII, as we sometimes had to adjourn to the air raid shelters. The science teacher used the time to teach us about prisms. However, we all survived and passed our exams. June started work in the laboratory at Cliveden Hospital, which was then the Royal Canadian Hospital. She met and married John Ginger and moved to California, where she helped him to manage an avocado grove. I next met June in the 1990s through the Old Paludians. In 1994 she came over to England and we met up with Pam Maisey and Jean Lunn for lunch. The lunch then became an annual event, with numbers growing to eight or nine, with much hilarity being provided by Pam and Yvonne Hutchins. Unfortunately, June was already suffering from multiple sclerosis, which she endured bravely for many years. She and John adopted a daughter, Sylvia, who married in 2006. John died in 2017 and June entered a small nursing home near Sylvia's home. She passed away peacefully in 2018. June was a very good and loyal friend and she valued both her education and membership of the Old Pals. Sadly missed by all."

Valerie de Kort (Jones, 1944-50?) - Margaret Paine reports that Valerie de Kort (*not an OPA member, as far as I can ascertain - Ed*) died suddenly in February 2019. She had moved last October from Southampton to be near her daughter in Huddersfield. Audrey Higgins (see Girls 1940s section above) was due to attend her funeral on March 6th.

Janet Boyd-Livingston (Adamson, 1949-54) - In May 2018 Janet's daughter Fiona wrote to let us know that her mother had passed away on March 27th after a short illness. She lived in Southampton and had just celebrated her 80th birthday. Fiona kindly supplied the following brief obituary: "My mother was born in 1938, the middle of three sisters; the eldest, Betty, and Mary, also attended SHS. Janet's interest in science played an important part in her life. Her career started at the I.C.I. Research Station in Jealotts Hill, Bracknell, where she spent eight years working on weedkiller formulations, some of which are still in use today. Then came a move to King Edward 7th Hospital in Windsor, as a dispensing assistant. In those days they manufactured their own ointments and drops. Janet learned to ring church bells at St Mary's, Slough, where she met

David, who was to become her husband of 48 years. She loved needlework, won prizes for patchwork and embroidery, and ran a craft group for twenty years. Among her papers she had retained her school reports and the badge from her blazer. She is much missed by all her family and friends."

BOYS

John Tebbit (1941-47) - John died in June 2018. He was a former Old Pals committee member. The following obituary is a précis (*remember them? - Ed*) of one which appeared online:

"John dedicated much of his life to his family and his beloved Slough Town FC, which he supported through good times and bad from 1937, also serving as the club press officer and programme editor. He was a staunch member of St Mary's Church, Slough, where he sang bass in the choir and acted as both server and reader. John spent much of his working life as a business travel consultant for Hogg Robinson, where he made many friends and was a member of their successful travel quiz team. Once retired he began studies with the Open University, graduating with BA Hons in History and Music. He loved classical music (especially Vaughan Williams and Bruckner) but was also interested in jazz, folk and even steam engine recordings, which he sometimes shared at full volume with his neighbours. He enjoyed walking in the Chilterns, often finishing with a plate of ham, egg and chips washed down by a pint, shared with lifelong friends **Ron Harris (1941-47)** and Brian Sayers. In his younger years John played left-back for the Old Pals, where he earned a reputation for his "enthusiastic" tackling with bony elbows and knees. After Slough Town his second club was Fulham, while in cricket he followed Worcestershire and England. On a slightly lower level, he was also an enthusiastic participant with his sons and their friends in "Subbuteo" tournaments. John was an amiable and kindly man, as testified by the many lasting friendships he developed over the years."

Ron Harris delivered the eulogy at John's funeral and adds: "John had a long and happy life, always smiling, and I believe he lit up the lives of many of us with his friendship and stories. Above all he was a family man. He married Christine Cooper in 1961 and they had two boys, Andrew and Nicholas, and two grandchildren. Apart from football, John represented Slough AC at cricket and athletics. He spent 2 years National Service in the RAF from 1948-50."

Ian Bryant (1937-42) also adds a personal memory: "Tebb was my left-side partner for many years, particularly in the Old Pals 2nd XI football team. He was a fearless tackler and always seemed to have more legs than anyone else. If you could get by Tebb, you were lucky - made my job at left-back much easier. He was also Old Pals fixture secretary in the "after war" league construction, the London Old Boys League, and an integral part of the Old Pals Football Committee. He will be sadly and fondly missed both by those of us who had the pleasure of working with him (not many of us left) in his playing times, but also by his many other friends in football and activities outside the Old Pals, and by his wife Christine. RIP Tebb."

****1950s****

GIRLS

Carolyn Mason (King, 1952-58) - Not much going for me these days, as mobility is a problem, so I can't enjoy the Isle of Wight as I used to do. However, I'm still enjoying success with my poetry - just a shame I can't make it to mainland events. Have a great Reunion!

Debbie Wright (Bishop, 1955-62) - Last year I became a step-great-grandmother! Oliver is 10 months old and 3/4 Danish. My eldest grandson (Isaac, 19) decided to go to university last July and is at Brighton. We were all rather worried as he did not work for his A levels or GCSEs but he got marks in the 70s and 80s in his end of term exams, which is great. He is catching up on maths at the

moment so that he can do a degree in data analysis, which he did previously as a job but then realised he could get no further without any qualifications. Sam (17) is doing 4 A levels, mostly sciences, and he plays the bass guitar in a band - not famous yet! My daughters (Naomi 50) and Eleanor (48) are both well and working hard. Ellie lives in Harrogate, not far from York, so we meet up fairly regularly. I go on holiday with my sister Rosemary, mostly to Italy, and Barbara is looking after her husband, who has frontal lobe dementia and is struggling a bit. We are all up North now: Rosemary in Todmorden (near Halifax); Barbara in Northallerton (north of York); and I am in York. I attend my local Quaker Meeting, for which I am a co-treasurer and overseer, and still do lots of music - play 5 recorders and am in about 6 different groups; I also play my violin in a trio sonata group (which takes in any instrument) and sing tenor in the local musical society choir. We are rehearsing for Bach's St John Passion in the Minster on April 6th, if anybody is nearby and would like to attend. Pilates and Zumba every week keep me fit. I am very slowly losing my sight, so do as much reading, crosswords, music while I still can. And I am a volunteer litter picker, for which I wear a yellow tabard provided by the council. Recently I was asked by two young lads if I was doing community service, which amused me greatly!

BOYS

Charles Tyrie (1953-60) - I regret that I am unable to attend this year's Old Pals Reunion due to a clash with the wedding arrangements for my eldest granddaughter; however, I wish everyone an enjoyable day to rekindle old friendships. This year I completed the third book of my Guy Manners thrillers, "Nine Lives Are Not Enough" (see www.TheLangleyBoy.com); but of much greater importance was the rediscovery of old school friends generated by the first book of my autobiography, "The Langley Boy", part 1 of a trilogy, which dealt with my life at Slough Grammar School in the fifties, school plays, sports events, and our masters, as well as wartime and post-war Britain. My contacts included Henry Steen and John Whipps, who were a year above me, and Clive Toogood, who sadly has now passed away but had helped me identify where the Langley Lions track-bike racing circuit had been built. I also learnt that Henry Steen was in contact with Michael (Mick) Brett of my year, although William (Bill) Turner had died of Aids in Africa. I have also been in contact with Norman Page, who shared the same year as me and fulfilled his ambition to become a veterinary surgeon. I am happy to pass on email addresses, if anyone wishes to communicate with the surviving members of the above year groups.

Robin Hannigan (1956-61) - Robin kindly sent me a short history of Slough Town FC, who began life in the 19th century as simply Slough. There is a link between SGS and the club in that Bob Gibbs, our PE teacher in the 1950s, was also for a time the club manager. Indeed, under him Slough Town were reckoned to be one of the strongest clubs in the south of England. Many SGS lads progressed to playing for the Slough Town, eg. Micky Bell, Bobby Breen, Bobby Dearlove, John Delaney, Martin Elguezabel, Teddy Foster, John Ford, Michael Holiday, Rod Lister, Ken Messenger, Dave Roberts, Bobby Stevens and Ken Wallis. Many boys will also remember Mr Gibbs in his PE teaching role. At the end of a gym session in PE strip we were "encouraged" to change back quickly and whoever was last would receive a dose of the slipper! This always seemed rather unfair and unfortunately the same (slowest) boy tended to be the recipient each time. It did however ensure that the changing room was clear well in time for the next lesson.

****IN MEMORIAM******GIRLS**

Ann Harris (Salter, 1953-57) - Ann died in June 2018. **Avril Sutton (Esson, 1953-58)** writes: "I met Ann on our first day at SHS. In assembly, Miss Crawford welcomed all us new girls, mentioning in particular Ann, whose three sisters were former pupils. (Another sister followed four years later.) Ann and I always sat together in class and we remained firm friends until her death."

BOYS

John Pickering (1951-58) - or more formally, Professor John Frederick Pickering FRSA PhD DSc Econ. Former classmate **Andrew Hudson (1951-59)** writes:

John and I entered SGS in September 1951 and remained friends for 67 years. We had probably met earlier through our membership of the Boys Brigade - John was a member of the 4th Slough Company based at St Paul's Church in Stoke Road, while I was a member of the 1st Slough based at the Methodist Central Hall. Our mothers knew each other from when they attended the Tonman Mosley School during the First World War. John studied Economics, English and History at A-level. The last time we met, he mentioned that Dr Long had refused to let him study Maths at A-level, but was grateful that Mr Dickinson had given him some tuition in calculus. John read Economics at UCL, where he obtained his BSc, PhD and DSc. He started his academic career at Durham. Then in 1966 we were both appointed to lectureships at the University of Sussex and shared a cottage for 6 months. By this time John had met Jane and they married in April 1967. Their daughters Rachel and Catherine were both born in Lewes. In 1973 John was a very efficient best man at my wedding. The details of John's career after he left Sussex are detailed in Wikipedia

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Frederick_Pickering - I will confine this account to more personal aspects of John's life.

Interests which were to provide a major influence outside John's professional career were apparent during his time at SGS. The Swan 1953 contains a poem by John, *The Village Cricket Match*:

The sun shines o'er the village green,
And not a cloud could e'er be seen,
Around the ground the people sit,
Applauding every single hit.

And now alas a wicket falls,
Six runs to win and just three balls
Are left to play with the last man in,
And the kids are making such a din!

And now the winning hit is made,
Revenge's toll has now been paid,
Uproarious cheers do rend the sky,
The victor's flag now flies on high.

John was a very keen supporter of Sussex; the last time we met was at a lunch at the County Ground in March 2018. He spent the last week of his life watching Sussex play at Arundel. My first visit to Lords was in June 1955, when I went with John and his father to watch England play South Africa. In the England second innings Peter May scored 122 in partnerships with Tom Graveney and

Denis Compton. In the South African second innings Brian Statham bowled throughout, taking the first seven wickets to fall and finishing with seven for 39. Many years later in June 2011 we met David Harding at the Lords Test against Sri Lanka. I was privileged to be John's guest at the 1993 NatWest Trophy final, when Warwickshire (322 for 5) beat Sussex (321 for 6) on the last ball of the match, described in Wisden 1994 as "*the greatest final*".

The Swan 1958, has a report on The Choral Society by J. F. Pickering and R. Pleace. The 1959 magazine records "At the end of last year we lost J. F. Pickering, who was our *Group Leader* during the first hard months of our existence. We would like to express our gratitude to him for his work in the society".

The Pickerings were a musical family. John's Aunt Winifred and his father William played leading roles in performances by the Horlicks Operatic Society at the Slough Public Hall in the 1930s. In our 4th year at SGS Mr Wharmby devoted a term to Church history and architecture. John gave a piano-based presentation on Church Music; I talked about campanology, as my father was a bell-ringer at St Mary's.

There were also strong family links with St Paul's Church. John became a member of the General Synod of the Church of England as well as a church commissioner and president of the Bible Churchmen's Missionary Society (BCMS)-Crosslinks. Tributes to these contributions were made at a Service of Thanksgiving in Chichester Cathedral. This was appropriately followed by a cricket tea at the home where John and Jane had celebrated their Golden Wedding in 2017.

David Hannigan (1958-1963) - David's brother Robin supplied the following obituary:

"David Stuart Hannigan passed away on Friday 25th January 2019 at home, where he had requested to be. A bed was organised by Gloucester Hospital to be placed downstairs at home. David had been ill for some time and was visited by his five remaining brothers and sisters. His eldest brother died in 2008. David had been on oxygen 24/7 for two years and was extremely frail, losing a lot of weight, and he and his wife Jan had signed a PDR form [no resuscitation]. He leaves his wife Jan and two children, Lisa and Ashley, as well as one grandchild, Mackenzie. David very much liked sport and was a very good footballer in a year full of exceptional footballers. He will be sorely missed."

****1960s - IN MEMORIAM****

BOYS

Andrew Morton (1960-68) - I (the editor) was surprised and saddened to hear in June 2018 of Andrew's sudden and unexpected death. I had known him as a tenor in the small Old Pals choir, which performed for several years on reunion days. A couple of years ago Andrew was the first person I met at a reunion, before even entering the school building, and we had quite a long, interesting chat. The first word that comes to mind for Andrew is "affability".

WEBMASTER'S REPORT

It is a truth universally acknowledged that reports such as this must begin with a claim to the effect that it has been a "busy year" for the Association as far as internet and IT issues are concerned. MANY hours spent squinting at a screen convinces me that this is highly appropriate, if unoriginal. The committee decided some time ago that it was imperative for us to overhaul our web presence to engage with younger Old Paludians whilst providing a greater degree of interaction and information for existing members. There are several elements to our strategy:

Email. The ability of the Association to send bulk email to all of our members was limited. Sending bulk email to members is a surprisingly difficult task (as you will discover if you ever try to send several hundred emails from your personal email address). The vast majority of email passing across servers is "junk" mail and as a result there are layers of anti-spam measures which often catch legitimate emails. We tried a couple of commercial solutions but results and reliability were unsatisfactory. As a result, we set up our own bulk email sending solution which appears to be working well.

Website. The previous WikiSpaces website, ahead of its time when launched, had served us very well for a number of years. It was however of limited utility, essentially an extensive repository for information and not much else. We knew we needed a modern website, with the ability to interact with members and for members to interact between themselves. As it happens, the announcement of the final closure of WikiSpaces in June 2018 accelerated development of the new website. The new website hosts all of the material from the previous WikiSpaces Site and will remain an important repository for our extensive archival material. Additionally, the format is that of a News Site. There will be frequent updates of stories of interest to Old Paludians and we shall encourage all members to contribute items of interest. There will also be the ability to comment under articles and engage in discussions with other members. The website will also host Member Forums. There will be forums where members can discuss issues of interest, reminisce, arrange informal get-togethers and share experience and give advice. One somewhat overlooked aspect of the Old Paludians Association is that as a diverse group of largely high-achieving people we have a large body of expertise to call on if we ever need advice or information. There will also be the opportunity to submit items for the archives and look for long-lost friends. Use of the interactive features of the website will require registering with the website. Details will be announced at the Annual AGM and Reunion.

Social Media. The Association also has a burgeoning social media presence on Facebook and Instagram and will integrate this with our website.

Conclusion. There has been a great deal of work done this year, with more to do, but significant progress has been made. The strategy is not to change what the Old Paludians Association does but to enhance it; to make it easier for people to keep in touch, easier for the Association to be relevant to younger generations of Old Paludians and more useful to all of us. As was the case under Ian and Colin Cairns, who worked tirelessly for a number of years maintaining and enhancing our previous website, all development work (worth thousands of pounds) has been done voluntarily and free of charge. We are conscious of the kind donations of members. While the website is a new expenditure item for the Association, the annual budget in the order of £300 is especially good value as we obtain a considerable increase in usefulness and functionality.

Best wishes, Rajesh Sharma, Webmaster.

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR YEAR ENDING 31/12/18

After taking into account £500 paid in respect of the 2017 grant towards the cost of the water fountain, the Association made a profit in 2018 of £205 (2017: £600 adjusted).

The Reunion Day income and expenditure showed a surplus of £45 (2017: £140). So, effectively, we break even each year on the Reunion. In addition, the raffle at the Reunion raised £414 (2017: £305) and a further £350 (2017: £377) was raised from the sale of books. This money was substantially used to fund printing and postage.

The Association received donations of £1,942 (2017: £1,830). Most of this was received around the time of the Reunion, but £655 (2017: £701) of this was received in the autumn. £500 (2017: £448) was actually spent during the year as the Association's contribution to a drinking fountain. A

further £1,500 was allocated by the Committee in November for projects proposed by the School, but the money could not be granted before the year end. As a result, the Committee has included the allocation of the £1,500 as a provision in the accounts.

It is the intention of the Committee to allocate approximately £1,500 each year to donations to the School.

Following the announcement of the closure of the Wikispaces service in 2018, it became necessary for the Association to develop and host a new website. Computer costs shown in the accounts are a mix of necessary one-off and periodic expenditures relating to this. For 2018 these expenditures covered an initial one-off investment of £154 in necessary framework software to build the new website and £271 for hosting the website and bulk email server. Additionally, in order to take advantage of significantly discounted pricing, £121 was paid in advance for website hosting in 2019 and another £113 for 2020. Ongoing IT spending is expected to be around £300. Allowing for initial costs, 2018 was in line with this expectation. This new design holds out huge potential for additional features and functionality.

All development and management of the website has been done voluntarily and without any cost to the Association. It would otherwise have cost several thousand pounds. We are mindful that any activity conducted by the Old Paludians Association is possible only through the generous donations made by Old Paludians. Every possible effort is made to minimise expenditure and ensure value for money.

Since early 2017 the archives have been stored at the School at no cost to the Association in space generously allocated by the School. The cost of commercial storage in early 2017 was £258. The balance of the Old Paludians Association's funds at 31 December 2018 was £2,441 (2017: £2,735), after deducting the £1,500 that has been provided for 2018 projects not yet granted. The bank balance was £3,648 (2017: £2,713).

Michael Frankl, 1964-72

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDING 31/12/2018

INCOME

EXPENDITURE

	2018	2017		2018	2017
Reunion Day Income	£1,608.08	£1,172.60	Reunion Day Expenditure	£1,562.93	£1,032.37
Donations	£1,942.00	£1,829.50	Donations to UCGS	£0.00	£448.33
			Grant towards water fountain 2017	£500.00	£0.00
			Provision for 2018 grants	£1,500.00	£0.00
Subscriptions	£140.00	£140.00	Flowers & Gifts	£131.00	£150.00
Raffle	£413.61	£305.00	Stationery	£77.90	£19.19
Books	£350.00	£377.00	Books	£0.00	£287.00
			Printing	£224.56	£220.03
Other	£0.00	£20.00	Postage	£302.27	£329.01
			Computer Costs	£449.83	£0.00
			Storage	£0.00	£258.34
TOTAL	£4,453.69	£3,844.10	TOTAL	£4,748.49	£2,744.27

	2018	2017
Brought forward from previous year	£2,735.33	1,635.50
Income for year	£4,453.69	£3,844.10
Expenditure for year	-£4,748.49	-£2,744.27
Income for year	-£294.80	£1,099.83
Carried forward to next year	£2,440.53	£2,735.33

Represented by:

Balance per bank statement 31/12/18	£3,647.83
Cheques not credited	£ 55.00
Provision for 2018 grants	-£1,500.00
Prepayment (stamps and IT)	£ 237.70

£2,440.53

I hereby certify that the above shows a true record of the finances of the Old Paludians Association as at 31 December 2018: **Michael Frankl, 2/3/2019**

I have examined the books and vouchers produced to me and certify, as far as I am able, that this is a true statement of the financial affairs of the Old Paludians Association: **Celia Johns, 4/3/2019**

AGM OF THE OLD PALUDIANS ASSOCIATION, MARCH 24TH 2018

(SUMMARY)

1. The meeting was held at Upton Court Grammar School, Slough. Apart from OPA Committee members, the meeting was attended by the Mayor of Slough (Councillor Ishrat Shah), the Head of UCGS (Mark Pritchard) and the CEO of the Educational Trust (Mercedes Hernandez Estrada).

2. **Welcome:** Ron Fidler, OPA chairman, opened proceedings by welcoming those present. He was pleased to note an increase in the number attending this year's event, 130. He outlined the fundamental aims of the OPA and stressed the need to attract new members by building relations with recent students. The OPA had supported a number of projects (eg, the drinking fountain, wireless headsets) of benefit to the School and it was hoped that the Association's new website might facilitate improved links with students. These initiatives were strongly supported by the School. Finally, Ron thanked members for their generous donations.

3. **Approval of the 2017 AGM Minutes:** proposed by Celia Johns, seconded by Alan Forbes and Gloria Dean; approved unanimously.

4. **Roll of Honour:** the names of 3 former staff and 20 alumni were read by Bob Moss.

5. **Treasurer's Report:** Michael Frankl presented his report. Key points were:

a) the Committee's stated aim to maintain a reserve of £1,500 in OPA funds;; b) a sum of £1,000 had been donated to the school; c) Archive storage costs had been reduced from £940 to £260; d) £900 had been received in donations for the 2018 reunion. e) The balance of OPA funds being carried forward was £2,736.

Michael also added some statistics on members' responses to the 2018 Reunion invitations. It was noted that responses by email users were more forthcoming than for written invitations. Acceptance of the 2017 Accounts was proposed by Neil Hines and seconded by George Lucas.

6. **Website Development:** Ian Cairns provided a short history of the Association's website. It was felt that this had now served its purpose and that a more modern version was required to engage the next generation of students. This was being developed by Rajesh Sharma, who proceeded to describe key aspects of the new site. While retaining much of the historical data held by its predecessor, the new site would need to be more dynamic, providing a forum for interaction between users. Membership should be available via the site, as should the facility for donations to be made. Members were invited to provide feedback on the new site.

7. **UCGS Activities Update:** the new School Head, Mark Pritchard, introduced himself and thanked three individuals associated with the School who, he felt, had helped him to achieve his position: Mike Brown (ex-Deputy Head), Sue Richards (Latin/French teacher) and his predecessor, Mercedes Hernandez Estrada. He emphasised the importance of producing future leaders and stressed the School's key values: Unity, Curiosity, Growth and Service (UCGS). UCGS was the best attaining school in Slough and had achieved the position of 10th best school in England.

The Head Girl, Rana Galgal, described a number of opportunities which the School had provided outside the curriculum.

The Head Boy, Ali Chaudry, described his status as the first "External Head Boy" (ie. having joined the school recently) and expressed his appreciation of the welcome he had received.

Mark Pritchard rounded off by mentioning a recent meeting between students and the Prime Minister, plus a visit by the MP for Slough, Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi.

8. Promotion of the OPA within UCGS: Senior Assistant Principal Naveed Hussain thanked OPA members for keeping the Association going. He stressed the importance of bridging the gap between the OPA and students and raising the profile of the Association in the school. Other ways in which this might be achieved were talks to students by OPA members and professional net-working. (The Mayor departed to attend another engagement and was presented with a bouquet.)

9. Election of Officers: Ron Fidler offered to serve another year as OPA Chairman. The nomination was proposed by Mark Pritchard and seconded by Gloria Dean - accepted unanimously. It was announced that Robin Hannigan and Colin Cairns would be retiring from the Committee but that the remaining members were all willing to stand for re-election. Ron Fidler proposed that they should be elected en bloc. The proposal was supported by Alan Mabbott and carried unanimously. Volunteers to join the Committee were invited. Bob Moss said he would like to stand down as Newsletter editor in 2019 and Kathleen Evans said she would be willing to take on this role. Kav Benepal had agreed to take over from Michael Frankl as membership secretary, while Celia Johns agreed to take on the duty of accounts examiner.

10. Open Forum: A number of members raised concerns. In brief, these concerned: the excellent results achieved by the school in the past as well as the present; the proven value of a SHS education; concern that Data Protection rules were being observed by the new website; whether students were being adequately prepared for disappearing jobs; whether students received personal finance instruction, and if so, at what stage; the Newsletter editor role; regret that the UCGS website and letterheads made no mention of Slough. Ron Fidler thanked Mercedes Hernandez Estrada for her support to the OPA. A bouquet and an inscribed silver picture frame were presented, in recognition of her contribution as OPA President for the years 2010- 2018.

11. Next Reunion: March 23rd 2019.

THE OLD PALS COMMITTEE 2019

President: Mr Mark Pritchard, Head, Upton Court Grammar School, Lascelles Rd, Slough, Berks, SL3 7PR Tel: 01753 522892 Email: MPRITCHARD@uptoncourtgrammar.org.uk

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Minutes Secretary: Vacant

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