

# The Hardyans' Club

TO STAY IN TOUCH WITH YOUR FRIENDS

*Hardye's School, Dorchester, Dorset*

*Newsletter*

**Spring 2009 : Issue 108**

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Opinions expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the Editor

## FROM THE PRESS OFFICER

### THE OLD HARDYEANS ANNUAL DINNER 2009

"A lot of my life has been tied up with entertainments, journalism and broadcasting," guest speaker Tony Biles told the annual dinner of the Old Hardyans at Dorchester. At Dorchester Grammar School during wartime, he would join the Portland branch train at Rodwell station, then change at Melcombe Regis for Weymouth Town station, to catch the school train to Dorchester. "Much of our homework in those days was done in the air raid shelter - us Weymouth boys often wondered whether the Dorchester lads realised there was a war on!" Tony Biles went on to talk about some of the famous people he had met during his career. "I was lucky to be in the right place at the right time," he told the old boys of Dorchester Grammar School and Hardy's School. He had replaced the legendary John Arlott on "Sport in the West" and went on to report from sporting venues all over England, including Old Trafford. As a Weymouth borough councillor, he became a successful Chairman of the Entertainments Committee and recounted anecdotes from the stars that had appeared on stage in Weymouth. Now retired and living in Owermoigne, Tony Biles became the youngest Mayor of Weymouth in 1971, later elected an Honorary Alderman and revealed he had once been a Governor of Hardy's School.

Professor Hugh Griffiths, President of the Hardyans Club, highlighted some of the key events of the past year: the 50th anniversary of the school Combined Cadet Force, with a celebration at Lulworth and the presentation of the commemorative sword to Dr. Iain Melvin OBE, Headmaster of Thomas Hardy School. The superb London Dinner had been hosted at the House of Commons by Old Hardyean Roger Gale MP. Professor Griffiths expressed delight at his own appointment as a Governor of Thomas Hardy School.

Dr. Iain Melvin OBE, Headmaster of the Thomas Hardy School, confirmed he has been asked by the Governors to stay on until at least September 2010. He spoke of the recent royal visit, by the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall, as being "a wonderful day, all our students were marvellous." Dr. Melvin went on to thank the Old Hardyans for their remarkable support for the school and the Hardyans Club Charitable Trust for their bursaries, "which certainly improve the life chances of many students." One new bursary is financed by a grant from the Prince of Wales.

Past President Captain John Pearson RN proposed the traditional toast to absent friends. Colin Lucas was again the excellent Master of Ceremonies. In the modern Sixth Form Centre of Thomas Hardy School and served by sixth-formers, the annual Old Hardyans dinner was again a great success. Beginning with oxtail soup, followed by chicken fricassee and as always, strawberry & sherry trifle.

Earlier in the day, the Hardyans Club held their annual general meeting with Professor Hugh Griffiths in the chair. Membership Secretary Bob Rench reported the membership is steady at 1,213 and he was thanked for his work on getting the records into good order. The London Dinner will be held on Friday 6 November at the Rugby Football Union President's suite at Twickenham. All officers were re-elected including Professor Hugh Griffiths as President, Bob Rench as Chairman, Tony Day as Secretary and Colin Lucas as Treasurer.

Founded in 1905 as the Old Grammarians, the Old Hardyans - also known as the Hardyans Club - is one of the most successful old school associations in the county, bringing together the old boys of Dorchester Grammar School and Hardy's School, plus ex-students of the modern Thomas Hardy School. In the times of Queen Elizabeth I, it was Thomas Hardy [with a final "e"] described as an yeoman of Frampton, who endowed Dorchester Grammar School in 1569. Hardy's [shopping] Arcade today stands on the site. The Grammar School moved to Culliford Road in 1928, renamed Hardy's School from 1954. The new Thomas Hardy School in Queens Avenue opened in 1992, encompassing the best traditions of the two previous schools, but admitting girls for the first time since 1569 ! Writer Thomas Hardy OM, who lived at nearby Max Gate, laid the foundation stone of Hardy's School in 1925. He was no relation to Thomas Hardy, founder of the school, nor of Admiral Thomas Masterman Hardy !

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[Left to right:] Dr Iain Melvin OBE, Headmaster of the Thomas Hardy School; Colin Lucas, Old Hardyans Dinner Organiser; Tony Biles, guest speaker; Professor Hugh Griffiths, President of the Hardyans Club; Bob Rench, Chairman of the Hardyans Club. Photograph by Michel Hooper-Immins.

Our illustrious editorial team of Peter & Heather Foster at the Annual Dinner, with Joan Hooper-Immins [left.]

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**Hardyans' Club Information**

**Hardyans' Club Newsletter**

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*Hardyans' Club Website and E-mail* [www.hardyansclub.com](http://www.hardyansclub.com)

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Also have a look at the school website: <http://www.thomas-hardye.dorset.sch.uk/>

**MONTHLY LUNCHEONS:** Last Thursday of the month, except December, 12.30pm for 1pm at the Conservative Club, South Walks, Dorchester. Please contact Colin LUCAS if you intend to come (Tel: 01305 265446)

NB April and October luncheons feature a Gourmet Menu at £15 per head. ALWAYS EXCELLENT VALUE !!

**LONDON DINNER** - . Please see Dinner Booking details at the end of this newsletter.

**CRICKET MATCH - CLUB v THE SCHOOL** ? In July. Please contact Tony Foot for more information(01305-250137)

**A bumper issue this time ! Do keep material coming in but please note the closing date for the next issue, as above.**

**From The Treasurer - Colin Lucas**

**The Hardyens Club Charitable Association**

**Minutes of the ninth Annual General Meeting held in the VI Form Centre, The Thomas Hardy School, Queens Avenue, Dorchester, Saturday 21st March 2009.**

**Present**

Professor Hugh Griffiths(President) J.Pearson.. C..Lucas, C. Gordon Crocker, A. R. Rench, J.A.Stephenson, M.Hooper-Immins, A.C.Day, R. Pickersgill, N.Baker, A.Barrett, J.Pullen.

**Apologies**

Mrs J. Salt, Mrs M. Keats, D. Lacey, I. Brown, G.Lancashire, D.Pinnell

**Chairman**

The Club President Professor H. Griffiths took the chair for this Annual Meeting as is usual custom and practise. He welcomed the members present

**Minutes**

The minutes of the previous meeting having been previously circulated with the May 2008 Newsletter, were proposed for adoption by J.A.Stephenson and seconded by C.Gordon Crocker. And agreed nem con.

**Matters Arising**

There were none

**Treasurer's Report.**

Copies of the Annual Accounts were distributed to members having been prepared by the Treasurer Stephen Gould and examined by Paul Beer of Kennedy Legg, Accountants. N. Baker moved their formal adoption and this was seconded by J. A. Stephenson. Agreed nem con.

**Annual report by the Chairman**

The Chairman of the Trustees informed the members that the Trustees met three times during the past year and the interview day was in May. Mrs Pat Pollard was co-opted as a Trustee at this meeting and welcomed by the Chairman. The new Bursaries were awarded in addition to the four existing bursaries and awarding a new Prince of Wales Bursary. So that at this moment eight students were in receipt of bursaries which would continue this year. So this must be regarded as a most satisfying year. To date £18,000 has been forthcoming from the Charitable Association in the eight years since its inception. Funds continue to trickle in despite the economic problems of the country but with our Treasury Bonds policy for investment we remain confident to continue to be able to provide a bursary for a number of students to help them face the prospect of the rising costs of further education at an important stage of their lives. The Chairman thanked the Trustees for their support and particularly Ian Brown of Charles Stanley for his invaluable advice on investment and Stephen Gould, who shoulders the responsibility of accounting the fund and leading on the not inconsiderable task of The Charity Commissioners Report each year.

**Report to The Charity Commissioners.**

This was agreed to be dealt with by the Treasurer.

**Election of Officers**

The Chairman John Pearson, Secretary Colin Lucas, Investment Advisor Ian Brown and Treasurer Stephen Gould were all re-elected.

**Election of Trustees.**

All the Trustees were re-elected with the exception of C.Gordon Crocker who had previously indicated his intention to retire and Mrs Pat Pollard appointed to the permanent board of Trustees. The Chairman thanked Mr Crocker for his contributions as founder and past chairman.

They are : Mrs June Salt, Mrs Maureen Keats, Mrs Pat Pollard, Mr David Lacey, Professor Hugh Griffiths.

**Dates of Future Meetings**

18th May 2009 10.30.am; 28th September 4.30pm; 25th January 2010 4.30pm; 20th March 2010 6.45pm tbc

*You still have the chance to contribute: - contact Colin Lucas, Secretary, HCCA, 4 Fir Tree Close Dorchester DT1 2PY*

\* \* \* \* \*

## Obituaries via the Membership Secretary

**Paul Hadley** (42-48) who died at home in British Columbia on 7<sup>th</sup> April.

**DGS 1st XV 1947-8**



EDWARDS, MAINWARING, BROWN, **HADLEY**, WARD, [?], FORBES  
CLARK, WILBEY, SAMS, TREWHELLA, BISHOP  
DEAN, FOOKS, CARR

*Ian Carr* wrote in memory of Paul:-

Paul Hadley was one of my original school-mates.

I will always remember: - Paul playing "Louise" on our piano; the Weymouth Train; the Rugby Games we won and lost; the bloody nose at Yeovil; the Running; the 1948 Wembley Olympics; "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty" [ "Put young Rawlins to bed, sir. I'll do his mission." & " Fawt Sumptah has bin fahd-upon. Ah must re-join mah Regiment." ]; Paul's 'cycling exploits; the beer-sodden pocket at Ron's party in Woolwich! [sorry, Ron]; the reunion 50+ years later.

This is the last e-mail Paul sent me, on 11/29/2008 :

*Dear Ian: I see it's almost 2 years since our last emails. We've been pretty busy since then, how about yourselves? We spent 5-1/2 months in Europe this past summer, visiting family and friends and had a super time. You probably saw in the Old Hardyans Newsletter for this fall, of the small reunion we had at Sherborne. It was a great day, meeting up with 4 old school pals which I had not seen in 50-55 years!!*

*Hope all is well with you and your family. Drop me a line when you have time.*

*Kindest regards, Paul*

I never heard from Paul again. Colin Lucas' e-mail was my first indication that Paul had died.

The knees have gone and the heart precludes their replacement; I want to, but cannot, attend Paul's Memorial Service. I would be very grateful if you would enter this note into the Memorial Book, on my behalf:

*We were players-together, back then. The memories live on. Goodbye, for now; we love ya' Syd,  
from Ian*

Thanks, Ian Carr

### **Robert W. Hatcher**

Mrs. M.C. Carter of Dorchester notified us of the death in January, of her uncle Mr. Robert W Hatcher. Mrs Carter found a copy of the newsletter when going through his papers.

Robert was at the School from 1936 to 1941 and lived at 12 Hive Close, Burton Bradstock.

**David Nickell** 1947-1955. Suddenly at his house in Devon on the 30th of March 2009. Aged 73. Sportsman, actor, bon vivant, humorist and with a great capacity for enjoying life. Brother of Andrew 1952-1959, Ann and Shirley. Husband to Gay and father of Tiffany and Jake. Will be remembered with affection.

From Andrew Nickell

### **Geoff Ryall** Former Classics master, died on New Year's Eve.

*Jonathan Pullen sent in this appreciation:*

I, along with so many others, was saddened to learn of Geoffrey Ryall's death. He never actually taught me (at least he was spared that!) and I recall that his first year at Hardy's coincided with my last. However, I got to know him well in later years especially after my return to Dorset in 1988, and, on a personal level, was deeply grateful for his wise counsel and practical help. A compassionate and conscientious schoolmaster, whose esteem and popularity was reflected in the large attendance at his funeral on January 15<sup>th</sup> 2009.

**Don R Wightman**

Mrs Rosie Craig wrote:-

I write with great sadness to inform you of the death of my father Mr Don R Wightman born 18.09.1925 formally of 24 Dick O'th Banks Crossways. He passed away peacefully at the Danmor Lodge in Weymouth on the 30 December. He was the younger brother of Joseph and Thomas Wightman who also attended Thomas Hardye before him.

He loved football and thanks to the head master at Milton Abbey enjoyed many visits to Wembley stadium as attending stewards with his two elder brothers to the many cup matches. He was married to Pat and they were both retired teachers who in later years enjoyed many Saga Cruises to different parts of the world.

*Condolences are offered by the Club to all relatives and friends of the above.*

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**You Write** *Thanks to Chairman & Membership Secretary Bob Rench for forwarding some of these*

**Concerning the late Jon Adams**

From Peter Grundy, 54 Manor House Road, Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne NE2 2LX [grundypeter@btinternet.com](mailto:grundypeter@btinternet.com)

Peter Grundy writes: I visited Qatar Academy on 26 April to present a Thomas Hardye School crest in memory of Jon Adams (1963-1970), the teacher at Qatar Academy who was killed in the bomb attack on the Doha Players Theatre in March 2005 during the production of Twelfth Night which he was directing. The photograph shows me handing the crest to Chad Schwaberow, a close friend who was present when the bomb went off. I explained my connection with Jon – that I was resident house tutor in Jon's final year when he was senior prefect at Southfields. I extended our condolences to all those involved, for whom the attack had clearly been immensely traumatic. We then exchanged many very warm memories of Jon. I was struck by the very high regard in which he was held by all who knew him at Qatar Academy - he was charming, witty, erudite, cultured, exceptionally good company, and a brilliant teacher who was loved and admired by the many people who still feel his loss very deeply. We discussed the outrage and concluded that targets for attack are chosen precisely because they are valued. Sometimes the value is of a quantifiable kind, as in the attack on the World Trade Centre in New York. Sometimes, as in this case, the targets symbolizes all that is decent in society, so that terrorists too in an indirect way acknowledge the fundamental values of education, and in particular knowledge and truth, values which Jon upheld in an exemplary way and which are captured in the motto Scientia et Veritas on the Hardye's crest. We went on to discuss the possibility of a link between the School and Qatar Academy, and perhaps an involvement in the project to rebuild a school in Sri Lanka in Jon's memory - Jon taught in Sri Lanka for many years before coming to the UAE and then to Qatar. I was then presented with a very handsome casket for the Thomas Hardye School based on a traditional Arabic design and containing a pen, a memory stick and a device for cleaning keyboards and screens.

**Stuart R Bainbridge**

I was recently forwarded (from Kevin Batchelor) your latest fascinating newsletter and saw that I was listed amongst the 'Lost Legion'. I have not received a newsletter for years and would be grateful if you could rectify this in the future! Please use email for me and save your time, paper and costs. I also noticed that you indicated that I attended from 1962 - 69. I was actually there from **1964 - 71!**

After teaching for over 30 years I took early retirement two years ago and have not had a moment to spare since! I recently moved from Weymouth to Portesham and am still an active member of Weymouth Golf Club where I will be Captain for the Centenary year starting in March 2009. Any Old Hardyans would of course be made welcome, and can feel free to contact me for a game at [bainbridgestuart@hotmail.com](mailto:bainbridgestuart@hotmail.com)

Many thanks in anticipation of my extraction from the 'Lost Legion' and the correction to my period of attendance! I look forward to receiving future newsletters and/or other relevant communications.

*Stuart R Bainbridge*

**Roger Bonfield** 7 Hibberds Field, Cranborne Dorset. BH21 5QL e-mail [rogerbonfield@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:rogerbonfield@hotmail.co.uk)

It was with some shock that a telephone call from Dick Brooks, like me 1959-1966, alerted me to my obituary notice in your last newsletter.

I am pleased to say that I am well having retired 3 years ago from 20 plus years of headship in Hampshire and 37 years in education. (Retirement may have a little to do with my wellbeing) I now live in Cranborne with my wife Angela who has also this year retired from 30 plus years in education. We/she now runs a small ladies boutique in Ringwood called Imagez (Not the best timing) and I also enjoy some regular golf, sailing an old and small boat which I keep in Christchurch, and walking our dog around the countryside surrounding our delightful village. I should be grateful if you would correct my demise in your next newsletter and pass on an update of my details. It would be interesting to know who thought that I had died and from where they gained the information. Please feel free to publish my e-mail address. and should you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

*Roger Bonfield*

*[Editor: We are delighted to hear you are still with us, and apologise for the erroneous entry in the last edition. We rely on contributions being accurate as there is often no way of checking. Glad you're well ]*



**David Gordon** [bd8702@hotmail.com](mailto:bd8702@hotmail.com)

I have recently completed a book of my World War Two experiences as an evacuee from London to Dorchester. I attended Dorchester Grammar School on a scholarship from 1939 to 1945. My book records memories of my school days at DGS together with my stay with foster parents in Dorchester, some of which were pleasant and some not. Through your publication interested ex-pupils and residents of Dorchester who lived through these times will no doubt find my memories and impressions of these days interesting – the book can be viewed and purchased through the following web site: [www.lulu.com](http://www.lulu.com) ("A Child's War " by David L. Gordon). I would appreciate you printing the above information in your next issue. Please contact me if you require any further information.

Sincerely, **David Gordon**

**Professor Peter Garland, CBE MA MB PhD D.Litt (hc) FRSE** [pbgarland@waitrose.com](mailto:pbgarland@waitrose.com)

Dear Editor

I was at DGS/Hardye's from 1944 to 1952. I read with particular interest the letter from David Culver about the two staff members who were convicted of criminal offences against pupils at Hardye's in the 1950's. The one described by David Culver as predatory was indeed that, but it was so obvious to us youngsters that he inevitably became in our view a rather comical and pathetic character. I won't mention the names or comical stories we had for him ; the salacious humour of adolescent schoolboys is not repeatable, least of all 60 years later.

The other staff member was Mr Johnson. It was great surprise for me to learn of his conviction. I was one of several pupils of that period who owed their subsequent athletics blues at Oxford or Cambridge to his coaching and encouragement at the school. No less importantly he inspired plenty of other talented young athletes other than that specific group. He raised the status of Athletics in the school as a whole by introduction of a House Points system whereby each pupil of a given age-group could achieve a standard in each of several events to obtain points for his house. The lists of pupils and their achievements were on each house noticeboard. The indolent were named and shamed. Athletics was not for a few favoured or talented pupils - it was open to be enjoyed by all. He also succeeded in attracting to the school a coaching team from the Achilles Club (Joint Oxford and Cambridge athletics clubs, past & present). Very motivating for a school boy to meet these God-Like visitors, to be coached, and then compete against them on a handicap basis.

He also transformed "Gym" lessons from the set of parade ground drill exercises previously experienced into something more challenging, more fun, an activity with its own beauty and skills, which each and any individual could explore to the best of his ability.

At no time did I have the least cause to feel that Mr Johnson behaved other than impeccably towards his pupils.

I hope that you will publish this note in the News Letter, to assist a better understanding of a valuable staff member who may have been wrongly or too severely judged.

*Peter Garland*

**F John Gillingham, CBE, MBE (Mil), MD, FRCS**

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Dear Editor, It's about time I suppose that I showed that I was still going - just! On occasion! Just wondering if there is anyone left out there whom I know?? Enclosed [Left] is a copy of a photograph which was taken some time ago - in my heyday!

Sixto Obrador, my opposite number in Madrid (I in Edinburgh for 55 years, used to swop our trainee neurological surgeons for a couple of years. These are trainee bulls (6" straight horns!) which we used to sharpen our reflex activity! In the practice bull-ring of a famous retired bullfighter. Our wives were of course sitting round the walls, feet out of reach, counting their life insurance! Sixto had instructed me and my colleagues from Lund, Sweden to hold this red towel tightly so this little "nasty" could rush between us. I am saying "Hold tight Nils, for God's sake". The bull swerved and knocked Sixto down!! No serious damage! - served him right! Of course I've aged a bit since then - so has my writing!

My dear lady, now 87, and I, now nearly 93, still keep going - now near Oxford in an Ancient Creatures Home (independent help!) so have some care. I am loosely linked with the Department of Neurological Surgery and Neuroscience at the University and their staff - keeps the other half of the mind going! Most of my research moved down here from Edinburgh when I retired down here 2 years ago. We were married here 1945 on my return from being O/C no 4 Mobile NeuroSurgical unit with 8th Army (ME & Italy - Nomadic Desert Surgeons for first third of our 3 years, 1000 or so missile wounds of the

brain and spinal cord in the desert and about 4000 in Sicily and Italy - nearly to Venice on the Adriatic side. Found myself with the Highland Division (51st) and Tees & Tyne (50th) who led number of Montgomery's victories, often with mine sweepers and unarmed bagpipers leading the way! Sadly not with the Dorset Regiment which went to Burma. With very early operation (later penicillin from Tripoli) we reduced the death rate from infection (55% in 1st World War) to 1.8% by the time we reached Rimini in the 2nd WW. It helped but of course the effects of injury had to be survived, but often with surprisingly little evidence of damage, sometimes more often than not, proportionate to the size of the missile of course. My fiancée was still there, bless her, when I got back! We were married six weeks later, 61 1/2 years ago. Not bad eh? So if anyone remains that I know please come out of the woodwork! Greetings to all, young and ancient for 2009

*From **Bob Menzies** in Harare, passed on to us by John Stephenson. An edited copy of his Christmas letter [bobajan@zol.co.zw](mailto:bobajan@zol.co.zw)*

We are having to take more than normal precautions in our personal hygiene because of the cholera epidemic around us. This is not made easier by the lack of a regular water supply. I have to cart water in drums in the back of my Nissan pick-up and I suppose I am fortunate to have the equipment to exist in that way.

My disappointment at the moment is the loss of my greatest hobby - growing vegetables. The water authority collapsed about six months ago and the most recent result was a period of five weeks without water in the taps. Therefore gardening in the dry season was out of the question. This was a loss in so many ways.

#### **"Chigwere ce Zimbabwe" A Zimbabwe pensioner's Christmas Carol**

The rains came right on time on 15th November 2008, but after the first week of light showers there was a break of three weeks, and so the crops planted with those early rains showed the stress of insufficient moisture in the soil. It is symptomatic of the circumstances of our daily existence in Zimbabwe. Nothing is easy. Everything is fouled up in one way or another so that the pensioner with his rapidly reducing income is called upon daily to take decisions and actions which should never be required, least of all of the elderly individual with failing mental ability to assimilate the bizarre changes taking place about him. Of these changes the financial predicament provides the wildest scenario. On August 1st 2008 the Reserve Bank dropped TEN NOUGHTS off the currency - the computers could not cope! By the end of October 2008 the banks and a number of financial institutions dropped a further six noughts for the same reason.

Present cash informal exchange rate is US\$1.00 to Zim\$ 230,000,000.00. The housewife shopping in the supermarket has to be a financial wizard to compare prices in Zim\$ and US\$. There are other rates of exchange equally wild.

There are also other currencies - the British £, the South African Rand, the old Zim\$ and US\$ (before the dropping of the ten noughts) and more recently the petrol coupon!

Certain business firms have been authorised to bring in motor fuel supplies for distribution to the public. This means you can go to one of the offices of such suppliers and purchase "petrol coupons" that is a coupon which entitles the holder to draw twenty litres of petrol or diesel from selected service stations. Some firms trade in these coupons.

Other firms have established what is called a "unit". To trade with such firms the customer has to purchase these units and then he may purchase or pay his account in such units. The value of the units is calculated on a daily basis in some form of currency, or motor fuel units.

It all makes living very difficult, particularly when the amount of Zim\$ an individual or company can draw from his account on a daily or weekly basis is severely limited.

Against all this turmoil in the financial calculations which have to be made daily by the individual, annualised inflation is running at well over the 2,000,000%. For example over a period of about ten days the price of a standard loaf of bread increased from Zim\$ 1.5 million to Zim\$ 25 million.

Electricity supply is subject to "outages" because there is insufficient generating capacity to meet the nation's needs, insufficient funds to import power supplies from neighbouring countries with a surplus generating capacity, and lack of funds coupled with lack of skills to maintain the power reticulation system.

And so the catechism of woes which exemplify the "Chigwere ce Zimbabwe" (the sickness or malaise of Zimbabwe) could be continued ad nauseam. These are physical, tangible difficulties with which we wrestle every day - like the forever increasing number of potholes in the main streets, getting wider and deeper with every shower and every unwary driver who fails to avoid them.

In respect of cholera the admitted death toll so far is over 1,100 with actual cases running at over 20,000. Open sewers running in the townships (where the poorer elements of the population live) materially accelerate the spread of the disease, which has now extended beyond our borders. Yesterday an elderly lady living in a flat in an average middle class suburb said she had complained of the stench but did not know the source. A gardener employed by the flat committee told her that the block of flats over the garden wall was over-crowded and the sewers were overflowing. No good complaining to the municipality - their answer would be that there are other more pressing cases of the same problem and the flat occupiers should do something about it themselves.

*Bob concludes his letter to John Stephenson by saying sadly that he and Jean may be forced to leave Zimbabwe and move to Western Australia where their son Duncan lives*

Below is the text of an email from Jenny Paxman wife of **Denis Paxman** (1932-41).

Dear Mr. Rench

I have been taking note for some time of the letters sent out online to the members of the Society, which come to me as I am the one who deals with emails for the family, on my husband Denis's behalf.

I think the time has come for me to notify you that Denis is now in a nursing home, with no possibility of his coming out, having been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease some three months ago, and matters to do with meetings to which he would once have gone are now a thing of the past. At the age now of nearly 85, this is not surprising, nor something to complain about, and I and our children are managing to cope, with excellent medical help.

Denis has never lost his feeling that Dorchester is home - indeed, one of the most difficult things for me to cope with of late has been his obsession that he still has a home in Dorchester and his parents are still there, so that he ought to go down there and see if they are all right (they are quite all right, asleep in the Cemetery these many years). He still remembers vividly the years of his childhood and boyhood, still has his Prefect's badge from the school, and the badge he had as a 'runner' in the ARP during the first year or so of the '39 War, before he went off aged 17 to be, initially, in the Meteorological Service as a civilian, stationed on Poole Quay, and then in the RAF as a Met. Observer flying on Met. flights in Coastal Command. The Grammar School is where he belonged, and when the new gateway on the old buildings was installed some years back he was very pleased to be asked to be present at the opening ceremony and, as a clergyman, to bless the occasion. After the end of the war he went to Oxford and then to Theological College, became as an Anglican priest a school chaplain, the headmaster of a choir school and then for a few years a parish priest until he retired. We have lived for the last eighteen months in Derbyshire, but the distance from all the places where we have lived has never prevented us from going down to Dorset regularly over the years.

During the recent year or so he has been anxious to go down to Dorchester yet again, because he told me he has 'many friends' down there and would only have to walk down South Street to find them. He has over the years kept in constant touch with four of his generation, only two of whom (Bryan Barnes and Brian Freake) are still to be found walking down any street on this earth, but, as you see, Dorchester is still where his heart is.

On our walks round this Derbyshire village we used often to pass a small cul-de-sac called Hazel Grove, and it became a joke with us that on each occasion Denis would say "We used to have a physics master at school whose name was Hazelgrove". His memories of more recent events now are getting very dodgy, but his memories of his schooldays are still very clear. He and his great friend James Parsons spent endless hours watching railway movements on the two lines so admirably visible in Dorchester. James died untimely in 1978, and we then took his daughter and only child who was then aged twelve into our family, her mother having died in 1977, and Felicity is still part of our family and a great credit to her parents' upbringing. I mention this because if anyone still remembers Denis, they will probably remember James too.

So I do not exactly want him to 'sign off' as an Old Boy of the school, but since his generation is now getting so thin on the ground and you must have a good deal to do with your work for the Society, it seems fair that you should know that he will not, alas, be able to be present at annual dinners, or meetings, or recognise the names of those who appear in your newsletters.

Please do continue to send us the newsletters. If I can interest Denis in them I will do so. And also, I will keep you posted. I think the Club is very fortunate to have you doing all this; it must entail quite a lot of work.

Jenny Paxman

**From Ken (Steve) Stephens Class of '58 news** ken\_stephens\_1947@yahoo.co.uk

On 5th December Clive Dickinson, Nigel Drew, Jeremy Hall, John Hanna, Stuart Hargreaves, Peter Harris, Mike Horsington, Hugh Slavin, Richard Sonley, Colin Squibb and myself from the class of 1958 plus Graham Lush of 1957 vintage met with Simon Frampton, John Sibley and Colin Smith to help them celebrate their birthdays properly. Great fun was had by all, especially those involved in reconciling the bill :-). I think it is safe to say that the FIRST FRIDAY in DECEMBER at Tom Brown's and then on to the Sun Inn will be a regular fixture. Thanks to the birthday boys for sharing, especially Colin for organising.

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*An Old Grammarian from Victorian times*

**Ernest Saunders Porter (1862 – 1937)**

Ernest Saunders Porter attended Dorchester Grammar School for two and a half years between 1873 and 1876. He was born on the edge of the Australian outback at *Koonoona* sheep station near Burra, ninety miles north of Adelaide in South Australia.



Ernest's father, Thomas Saunders Porter left Dorset for Australia in 1850, when he was twenty. He was the youngest of three sons and the eighth of thirteen children of a Dorset farmer, John Gore Porter and his wife Ann, née Saunders. The family lived in succession at *Throop Farm*, *Affpuddle*, *Clyffe Farm*, *Tinleton* and *Didlington Farm*, *Chalbury*. Thomas's brothers both became Dorset farmers – John at *Monkton* near *Cranborne* and *George* at *Crichel Farm*, *Moor Crichel*. On his arrival in Australia, Thomas banked money his father had given him and worked as a shepherd, for experience. He soon rose to become station manager at *Princess Royal* sheep station, near *Burra* and in 1857 married *Jane Elizabeth Rhead*.

In about 1860 Thomas Porter withdrew his purposely banked money and bought into a partnership with *Walter Duffield* at *Koonoona*, a property of twenty two square miles adjoining *Princess Royal*. *Duffield* had come to South Australia in 1839. After starting as a wood carter he became a very successful miller, pastoralist and politician. The partners initiated the first merino sheep stud in the mid north of South Australia and in 1863 forty thousand sheep were shorn at *Koonoona*. Heavy losses resulting from a three year drought followed this initial success. Once the losses were made up, Porter sold his half share to *Duffield* and returned to England in 1873. *Jane* wrote in her shipboard journal, 'May we have as happy a home in the land of our birth, as that we have had in the land of our adoption'.

Thomas and *Jane* Porter had three children. *Hedley* and *Isabel* were born at *Princess Royal* and *Ernest* at *Koonoona*. One reason for the family's return to England was the children's education. In 1864 Thomas had been a prime mover in establishing the *Burra Grammar School*, but it had survived for only nine years and closed in 1873. On arrival in England, eleven year old *Ernest* and fifteen year old *Hedley* were enrolled at *Dorchester Grammar School*. It must have made an extraordinary contrast to outback schooling. *Ernest* really appreciated his two and a half years at the school but his father changed his mind about staying in England. Thomas was 'an entirely out-of-doors man [who] now found English life very dull except in the hunting season, and the English weather very trying at all times.' The family returned to South Australia in 1876 and *Ernest* completed his schooling at *Prince Alfred College*.

Thomas bought a thousand acre sheep property at *O'Halloran Hill*, in undulating country nine miles south of *Adelaide*. The family had the existing homestead rebuilt and renamed it *Glenthorne*, after a romantic glen and its mansion in *Exmoor*. Thomas bred *Dorset Down Sheep*.

Neither of the Porter sons became farmers. On leaving school *Hedley* trained with the *Wiltshire and Dorset Bank*. After returning to South Australia he continued as a banker and later became a sharebroker - with an English office in *Bishopsgate Street*, *London*.

*Ernest* became an architect. In 1890, during the mining boom, he went to *Broken Hill*. He went into partnership with New South Wales architect *Esmond Thomas* and the two followed the gold mining boom to *Coolgardie* and *Kalgoorlie* in Western Australia and the subsequent building boom in *Perth*. They designed hotels on classical lines and their *Palace Hotel* in *Perth's St George's Terrace*, built in 1895, was once described as 'the finest example of a gold boom hotel'. Sadly only its façade remains. In 1897 the partners won a competition to design a *Palace Hotel* for *Kalgoorlie* which is there to this day.

*Ernest* Porter married *Helena Newnham Miller* and they had four children. Interestingly, like his Dorset born father, several of his descendants have become Australian farmers.

*Jane Brummitt, née Porter* (granddaughter)

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Further Notes from earlier days

We received, via the Press Officer, wearing his *Society of Dorset Men* hat, a letter from Mr *Stephen Poulter* of *Dorchester* enclosing photocopies of extracts from reports in the *Dorset County Chronicle* of the fifth (1909) and sixth (1910) Annual Dinners of the *Old Grammarians*, held respectively at the School in *South Street* and the 'King's Arms'. The 1909 report is particularly interesting as it refers to the presence of *Sir Frederick Treves* and *Thomas Hardy*. More of this in a later edition.

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**:HARDYEANS' CLUB  
THE DORCHESTER THOMAS HARDYE SCHOOL**

Minutes of the *Hardyceans' Club* Annual General Meeting on Saturday 21 March 2009 at 7.30 pm in the School 6<sup>th</sup> Form Centre.

**Members Present:**

*Hugh Griffiths* (President), *Colin Lucas*, *Bob Rench*, *John Stephenson*, *Gordon Crocker*, *Michel Hooper-Immins*, *John Pearson*, *Tony Day*, *Peter and Heather Foster*, *Alf Barrett*, *Bob Pickersgill*, *Jonathan Pullen* and *Norman Baker*.

1. **Apologies for Absence** were received from *Tony Foot*, *Pat Pollard*, *David Lacey*, *Godfrey Lancashire* and *David Pinnell*.
2. **The minutes** of the last Annual General Meeting of 15 March 2008 were formally adopted.

3. **Matters arising** - the president reported that it was hoped to hold the London Dinner in November at Twickenham, with UCL as a fall-back. The secretary reported that the President's Suite at Twickenham had been provisionally booked for Friday 6 November 2009, and that the cost for a three-course meal, including wine, and a guided tour of the stadium would be in the order of £50, the tour fee having been negotiated at £5 below the standard price. It was agreed that the Twickenham arrangements should be pursued.
4. **President's Report** – Hugh spoke of highlights during the past year including the excellent occasion of the CCF Centenary Dinner and celebration at the Lulworth Camp Mess, the London Dinner at the Palace of Westminster which was greatly enjoyed, and the appointments of the President and Tony Foot as Trustees and Foundation Governors of the school.
5. **Chairman's Report** – in his capacity as Membership Secretary, Bob updated members in respect of the current membership totals. The number of members receiving newsletters by email had risen by 12.5% to 540. The newsletters being sent by post had fallen 52% to 157. The email lost legion was down to 33, but 123 people who had been receiving newsletters by post were now considered lost as they had either moved away or not bothered to contact us. Some had probably passed away.

The details were announced of eight new members during the past year (Pete Worrall, Stuart Brownlee, Jeremy Hall, Martin Curry, Neil MacDonald, David Aird, Paul Eyres, and Joe Gibson) and the passing of ten members (JM Keeping, Stanley Harris, JG Hodder, AH Phipps, Doug Read, Charles Slade, DR Barnett, Ian Ellis, Doug Forman, and Don R Wightman).

Bob thanked those members who had helped decrease the 'lost legion' by looking through the list in the Christmas newsletter and providing useful information. Other members had provided other clues.

The chairman mentioned the excellent progress of the Charitable Trust, the unfortunate abandonment of sport fixtures due to inclement weather, the hope to resurrect the hockey match, and the success of the London Dinner at the Houses of Parliament. He thanked the Treasurer and Secretary for their work, and his wife, Helen, for her support and efforts in respect of the evening's draw.

6. **Treasurer's Report** – Colin circulated the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2008 which showed the club to be in a healthy financial state. There were no questions respecting the accounts which were formally adopted. The treasurer recommended that the club should make a donation to the Dorchester Cricket Club's Scoreboard Fund in memory of Doug Read, a Hardyean and former president of the Cricket Club. It was agreed that the club would donate £200 towards this memorial.
7. **HCCA** – John Pearson tendered the chairman's report on the work of the Association over the past year. Three new bursaries had been awarded in addition to the four existing bursaries, and a new Prince of Wales bursary had been established. To date, a total of almost £18,000 had been provided by the Association in the eight years since its inception.

Pat Pollard had been appointed as a new trustee of the Association.

8. **Election of Officers** – Officers of the club were formally re-elected en bloc:

Chairman & Membership Secretary – Bob Rench  
Secretary – Tony Day  
Treasurer – Colin Lucas  
Editor – Peter & Heather Foster  
Press Officer – Michel Hooper-Immins

Council Members:

Alf Barrett, Gordon Crocker, Tony Day, Tony Foot, Peter & Heather Foster, Andrew Gillett, Michel Hooper-Immins, Colin Lucas, John Pearson, Pat Pollard, Peter Powell, Bob Rench, John Stephenson

**Date of next meetings – AGM** 20 March 2010 at 7:15 pm (HCCA 7:00 pm). The Council meetings will be held on 18th May (probably), 28 September and 25th January.

**From the MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY**

In the last issue we published the list of the postal lost legion. Thanks to the efforts of some members we managed to locate a few. Many of the others will have moved and some will have passed away.

The same applies to our email lost legion. The list is published below. We have tried contacting them all by post, but the majority of letters were returned – ‘moved away’ or ‘not known’. One is even still paying his membership subs! You will see that we do not have a postal address for some, so unless you can help we have to rely on them coming back of their own accord. Please let Bob Rench know if you can help with information you may have that will assist in reducing the 30 named below.

<i>FName</i>	<i>Sname</i>	<i>Town</i>	<i>County</i>	<i>Yrs</i>	<i>Fname</i>	<i>Sname</i>	<i>Town</i>	<i>County</i>	<i>Yrs</i>
Peter	Andrews	Willingham	Cambs	65-72	Charlie	Kelly	-		
Michael W.	Betts	Edinburgh	Scotland	51-55	Jack	Lanning			40-41
J.T	Brown	Bournemouth	Dorset	84-84	Luke	Lovegrove	Dunedin	New Zealand	82-88
Darrin	Carpenter				Andrew.J.K.	Mackenzie	Aldershot	Hants	59-64
David A.	Cheeseman			96-99	Emma	Mitchell	London		-
Roy	Craddock	Aylesbury	Bucks	41-45	Anthony (Tony)	W. Nicklen			79-84
Frederick	V.Dean	Weybridge	Surrey	45-54	Raymond	Roberts	Reading	Berks	64-64
John	Dean	Dep LIS, UCD	Dun Laoghaire	Co Dublin	35-43	Brian M.T.	Rousell	Hove	East Sussex -
Anthony R.	Dodgson	Weymouth		52-59	J.R.	Sage	Wool	Dorset	65-72
G.E.	Elwin	Stanford in the Vale,	Oxon	79-85	Roger	Smith	High Prairie	Alberta	51-57
Peter D.	Hancock			69-76	Robbie D.	Stevens			85-87
Simon	Hardman	Effingham	Surrey	67-74	Robert	Sutherland	Cambridge	N Z	77-81
Martin	Harries	Lincoln	Lincs	80-83	Mark T.	Williams	-		
Terence	RHolland			53-59	R.J.S.	Woods	Wimbledon	Surrey	79-79
Nick	Jalie	Wimborne	Dorset	75-80	Steven	Yates	Gloucester	Glos	73-81

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**LONDON DINNER 6th November 2009**

A provisional booking has been made at the Presidential Suite, RFU Stadium, Twickenham. Cost £60.00\* per person. Dinner will be 7 for 7.30pm. Please intimate your requirements.

Name.....

Dinner (including stadium tour) £60.00.....Transport required.....

Please forward booking form and cheque to:

Colin Lucas, Treasurer  
 4 Fir Tree Close  
 Dorchester  
 DT1 2 PY

Phone no for further details:01305 265446  
 Please enclose stamped addressed envelope

**\* NB Price amended in this email edition**

*From the Headteacher*

*Through reasons that are commonly called 'technical', I had sight of the spring newsletter before going to print. As ever I found it both interesting and salutary in equal measure.*

*One can only be amazed by the level of achievements of so many past students of the school; this edition boasts at least two CBE's and correspondence from around the globe. I am always impressed by the level of recall of so many and the fondness with which they remember their peers and teachers. Perhaps it is a slightly vain hope that one day it will be the same for me and my colleagues. At the same time the obituaries (even if in this edition we are notified that one was somewhat exaggerated!) are of course salutary and reading of those who are now as one correspondent states in places for 'ancient creatures' must make all of us look forward with some trepidation. Yet within the Newsletter there is an energy that powers its way through - surely these men as mere boys were difficult to handle if their determination and rigour at this end of their life is indicative.*

*The Club continues to provide the school with both immense tradition and support. The remarkable figure of £18,000 distributed in bursaries in eight years is quite wonderful and as I write I know the trustees are preparing to meet and perhaps make more awards, although sadly the economic conditions may somewhat limit their generosity. I know however that they, like the school, are in it for the 'long game'. The school owes them an immense debt.*

*The school is now well into the examination season, which now lasts seven weeks. Whilst it is easy to feel that young people do not work hard these days I can certainly guarantee they undertake more examinations; whether this is a matter of quantity over quality is open to debate. We continue to have our triumphs with perhaps the most significant recently being a student winning the National Young Chef of the Year. The young lady concerned as part of her prize will be working with Jamie Oliver, the nation's conscience for school meals. This national triumph is a wonderful achievement. We also have a student of my vintage taking a lead role in the work of the hadron collider at CERN and Hardyans continue to spread themselves around and throughout the world. It has been very gratifying for me to receive a number of letters recently thanking me for my work on their behalf as I move, somewhat slowly, towards my departure.*

*You may recall in December we were preparing for the visit of the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall. Whilst the event passed in something of a blur we were honoured to have our guests with us for two hours. It was, quite simply, excellent and the remarks and ease with which they interacted with students was greatly appreciated by the young people. Three students acted as hosts and they did a remarkable job despite very substantial nerves. The Prince's remarks to the school were reported in no less a publication than *The Daily Telegraph* and we have it on very good authority that both enjoyed their time with us. It was a great honour for the school and the link to the last visit by the Prince of Wales in 1927 was not lost on HRH.*

*Dr I E Melvin*