THE STAFFORDIAN

‘Take time to THINK ...
   it is the source of power.
Take time to PLAY ...
   it is the secret of perpetual youth.
Take time to READ ...
   it is the fountain of wisdom.
Take time to PRAY ...
   it is the greatest power on earth.
Take time to LAUGH ...
   it is the music of the soul.
Take time to GIVE ...
   it is too short a day to be selfish.’

Anon

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ISSUE NO. 150 2004
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The magazine of Stafford Old Edwardians’ Association

Issue 150
December 2004

Editorial

Welcome to this significant edition, the 150th since the first was produced in 1914. You may have noticed some major changes to The Staffordian this year. This is due not only to our desire to produce something special but also to enforced changes in the editorial team. Barry Stamp has relinquished co-editing the magazine as he devotes more of his time to the community and pursues the furtherance of his political career.

First and foremost we acknowledge the success of Barry and Peter Jones, our thanks are due to them for ten years of building up the structure of the mag. to one in which we have great pride. We hope that we can continue to build on that success.

So! You have a fresh editorial team. Fortunately The Staffordian has always been well supported by individual Volunteers and we are indebted to them and trust on their continued support. Peter, thankfully, continues to be very much involved as a focal point in ‘persuading’ people to put down their memories and he has the major task of editing the contributions. Pat Jones and Mike Winkle have assisted with the proof reading and as usual Alan and Jean Smith work hard and long to distribute over 300 copies to all our members. We thank them all again on your behalf, particularly those who have contributed to this and previous editions. This year they have again done us proud and we can’t thank them enough for their skill and enthusiasm.

Our editorial policy is to continue along the established lines, bringing you news of the Association and ‘Old Boys’ as well as including reminiscences interspersed with amusing anecdotes, both fact and fiction. At the present time we will also try to carry news of the School site as it is developed by Tesco. As usual we have the anecdotal accounts of the ‘Olden Days’ and some light has been thrown on our history and the mysteries of the 1950s. It saddens us to hear of the deaths of Old Boys and we offer our sympathy and prayers to their relatives and friends. We are grateful for the opportunity to include an obituary if we are informed.

It is our intention to maintain, or try to improve, the high standards already set, (Trevor is an Honorary Life member of BSI so has nominal credentials) so we ask that you continue to support our efforts by your contributions to this eagerly anticipated ‘Annual’.

If you wish to contribute an article, photo, sketch, or whatever is printable, then the team can be contacted at the addresses below. Articles about the School, the town, your experiences etc. serious or humorous will always be welcome and constructive comments and feedback on what you like or dislike will also be appreciated.

We hope you get as much pleasure from reading this mag. as we had in putting it together.

Happy reminiscing.

Peter & Trevor

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Stafs ST19 5 DE
LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

I am honoured to be your President again and pleased that the Association is in such good heart - this is in no small measure due to the support of last year’s President, John Cole, and active committee members.

The officers deserve particular thanks especially Peter Jones (Secretary), Alan Smith (Membership Secretary) and Mark Ashton (Vice-President, Treasurer and everything else on occasions). They spend many hours ensuring that everything runs smoothly, keeping the rest of us in order (no easy task!) as well as maintaining links with Old Boys near and far.

The Association continues to enjoy wide-ranging social activities - some e.g. Bowls, Golf and Skittles have already taken place and have been enjoyed as I am sure the rest of the programme will be.

But we are not just a fun-loving organization. This is perhaps best seen in our committee meetings where the important item ‘Welfare’ always appears on the agenda. Here members exchange information about Old Edwardians and their families who have been called to higher service or who are ill or experiencing other difficulties. We try to offer our help or express our feelings of sadness, inadequate though these may be.

On the wider front, we try to show care for others and my named charity for this year is Diabetes UK. Look out for the ways in which you may be called upon to help.

We maintain our close links with the Old School in Newport Road and we have met Phil Cumming who is the new Head of the Chetwynd Centre. Like his predecessors he will make us most welcome on Remembrance Day and on other occasions. We are also very fortunate to have a good friend there in Tony Innamorati, the Site Supervisor, and he is keeping a watchful eye on the building of the Tesco car park on what was the School field.

Our interest in education continues and we support two secondary schools in the town - King Edward VI High School and Stafford Grammar School. Each year we attend some of their functions.

In my earlier letter I asked for a volunteer to succeed Barry Stamp who has ‘retired’ after ten years as co-editor of the Staffordian (a hard act to follow indeed!) Well, as you can see there was an immediate response so our grateful thanks go to Trevor Ashton for stepping forward and joining Peter Jones on the editorial team.

It was hoped that our School War Memorial would have been refurbished by now and updated with Second World War names. Sadly it turns out to be a much more involved job than we first thought. Permission has to be obtained from the Imperial War Museum to change any War Memorial, but it does have the benefit of a grant from the Friends of War Memorials if the right procedure is followed - so it looks like a lengthy process. Alan Smith is leading the way on this important project.

By the time you read this the festive season will be upon us. We will have enjoyed our Old Eds traditional Christmas Party and we will be looking forward to our Annual Dinner, so order your tickets early.

I look forward to meeting you in the coming months.

May I wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a Healthy and Prosperous New Year.

Ray Boyles (1945-50)
LOOKING BACK AT SPECIAL EDITIONS

NUMBER 1  
CHRISTMAS TERM 1914  
PRICE 6d

"...... At last, at long last the cherished ambition of ten generations of the School has been realized and the first number of The Staffordian is ready for the printer. .................

The War has affected the School as well as everything else. The money which is usually spent on prizes we gave, this year, to the Prince of Wales’ Fund and so there was no Speech Day. In giving away our prizes, however, we had no intention of sacrificing the half-holiday. We have not yet had that half-holiday, but we hope that this mistake will be remedied next term.

NUMBER 50  
EASTER TERM 1931  
PRICE 6d

"...... The Annual Dinner of the Association was held at the Station Hotel on Friday 23 January, the President (Mr. Morris Averill) presiding.
Amongst those present were Ald. C W Miller (Chairman of the Governors), Mr. F T Nott, MA, (Headmaster), W J Dean (Hon. Treasurer), J S Horne and F Page and A E Hourd as Joint Hon. Secretaries.

The Chairman proposed ‘The School’ coupled with the name of Mr. Nott. Old Boys of King Edward VI School had, he said, a great heritage. It was a school which had produced men who had made their mark throughout the world and he thought it would continue to do so. Today it was greater than ever in its history and Mr. Nott was to be congratulated.

In reply Mr. Nott thanked the Chairman for his kind remarks about the School and himself. It (the School) had had a great past he believed - it would have a still greater future.
(Ed comment: No one could have foreseen the tragedy of the 1976 closure!)

NUMBER 100  
SUMMER TERM 1954  
FREE*

Incepta Persequor

“To finish well what’s well begun” so the School song translates the old Latin motto of King Edward VI School, Stafford. It might well stand for the motto of Dr. Gilmore’s new and welcome history of the School.

Much of the material for a history of this ancient foundation was collected many years ago by our local antiquarian, Mr. Sidney Horne. His slim volume, duly acknowledged, forms the basis of the present more ambitious work. Dr. Gilmore tells us all that is known of the old history of the School, all that can be gleaned from diaries and records. But he also gives us a full and vivid account of the School’s activities during the present century. The first half of his book may interest the historians; the second half will delight Old Boys.

Dr. Gilmore has indeed ‘finished well what was well begun.’
(Reprinted by kind permission of the Editor, Staffs. Newsletter)

* The Centenary Issue was presented free of printing charge to the School by Ald. A E Hourd.
At the Association’s Annual Dinner at Tillington Hall a large number of Old Edwardians and their guests were delighted to meet together once more and share in an evening of fellowship, good food and splendid company.

Guests of the Association were Mike Darley, Headmaster of Stafford Grammar School and Keith Evans, Head of Burton Manor School and previously Head of Chetwynd Middle School, Newport Road. Joining our President, John Cole, were Ray Boyles our President-elect and two Honorary Life Members, John Weaver and George Maddick.

Harry Harrison, returning as our guest speaker, completed the top table and his entertaining speech followed the meal.

It was no contest really to decide who travelled furthest to attend - once more Mike Caddy made it from Hong Kong. Other Old Edwardians had journeyed from all parts of the United Kingdom with Keith Featherstone appearing from the Isle of Man.

We are indebted to Tillington Hall for the time and trouble taken to ensure that everyone had a night to remember.

For many of us, Friday 28 January 2005 is already marked in our diaries. Be there!

Old Edwardians who attended were:-

K W Ackland 1943-48
M Acocks 1951-58
B Adams 1947-53
M J Ashley 1956-63
A J Ashton 1948-55
M S G Ashton 1969-76
T C Ashton 1945-50
J W Askey 1965-72
N Balfour 1951-56
R F Barker 1948-54
G S Barnett 1944-49
T Bartlett 1943-50
R G Belcher 1949-54
N H Bennett 1965-72
P J Bennett 1969-77
R Bents 1952-57
D Bishop 1965-72
K Boardman 1951-56
R J Boyle 1945-50
J M Bristow 1942-48
W O Brown 1942-47
P J Brown 1975-82
J B Bucknall 1948-53
A J P Butters 1953-58
C Byrne 1964-70
M Caddy 1965-72
S J Cantrill 1960-65
G P Card 1969-76
T B Chackett 1951-56
P Challinor 1953-58
J Cole 1947-53
E F Corfield 1941-47
I R W Cox 1960-67
P F J Craig 1947-53
T Davies 1941-49
P T Dawson 1964-71

A W Deakin 1970-77
A D Desbruslais 1966-72
A L Dobson 1945-54
E A Dobson 1940-49
B G Ecclestone 1950-55
B Edensor 1957-62
D W Edensor 1942-49
S R Elsmore 1942-47
J K Elsworth 1942-52
P Emberton 1948-54
N Embrey 1969-76
R H Fearn 1943-48
K Featherstone 1965-72
E A J Fenn 1943-53
J A Fowlie 1952-58
D R Fussell 1942-49
I R Gilbert 1965-71
D Gough 1975-80
D A Griffin 1951-56
P Griffiths 1969-72
W J Griffiths 1957-64
K A Hackett 1949-54
T B Hales 1944-50
H R Hammerton 1952-60
K G Handley 1945-52
A C Hartley 1944-49
H R Haywood 1946-52
M R Heenan 1964-69
R S Hinton 1962-64
R Hitchener 1960-67
J Holt 1943-48
J R Horne 1952-58
R J Horton 1951-56
R Howard 1966-73
R T Hudson 1944-48
R Jakes 1957-62

R K Jasper 1957-64
A A Johnson 1943-49
G S Johnson 1950-56
P M Jones 1949-55
B Judson 1958-62
A G Jutton 1941-45
D Jutton 1970-77
W T H Keleighan 1957-64
J G Langford 1960-67
J H Law 1948-54
R Lawford 1946-51
J Lightfoot 1946-53
R S Lyckett 1957-63
M G Maddick 1934-39
A Mansfield 1969-76
B Mason 1946-51
D G Medlycott 1953-56
M H Mellonie 1943-47
B Milner 1938-45
M J Mitchell 1944-50
L Morris 1937-43
M J Morris 1958-65
B E Moss 1946-50
R B Nowell 1941-51
R T Owen 1945-53
N Pepper 1965-72
D W Press 1942-47
G Pursehouse 1944-50
G D Randles 1949-54
C C Riley 1946-53
H R Fearn 1943-48
J G Langford 1944-49
J H Law 1944-49
R G L Wetton 1943-47
G F J White 1945-53
A L W Williams 1941-47
R C B Wilton 1941-50
J S Wood 1944-52
R Wood 1953-61
E C Woodcock 1946-56
E J Wright 1962-69

R S Lycett 1949-54
J Lightfoot 1945-52
R Lawford 1946-51
W T H Keleighan 1957-64
J G Langford 1944-49
J H Law 1944-49
R G L Wetton 1943-47
G F J White 1945-53
A L W Williams 1941-47
R C B Wilton 1941-50
J S Wood 1944-52
R Wood 1953-61
E C Woodcock 1946-56
E J Wright 1962-69

R Sandham 1944-53
D H Scholes 1942-47
P Seaborne 1965-72
K Shirley 1945-51
A J Smith 1944-49
P L Smith 1949-54
P J Stead 1944-50
W P Stevenson 1938-45
E Talbot 1946-52
A R Till 1945-51
W Till 1969-71
G L Turner 1942-47
D C Wall 1939-46
T P Watton 1967-74
J L J Weaver 1931-36
B West 1944-49
R G L Wetton 1946-53
G F J White 1947-53
A L W Williams 1941-47
R C B Wilton 1941-50
J S Wood 1944-52
R Wood 1953-61
E C Woodcock 1946-56
E J Wright 1962-69

R S Lycett 1949-54
J Lightfoot 1945-52
R Lawford 1946-51
W T H Keleighan 1957-64
J G Langford 1944-49
J H Law 1944-49
R G L Wetton 1943-47
G F J White 1945-53
A L W Williams 1941-47
R C B Wilton 1941-50
J S Wood 1944-52
R Wood 1953-61
E C Woodcock 1946-56
E J Wright 1962-69
One big question I continually ask myself is: Were my School days more eventful and enjoyable than those experienced by schoolchildren of today?

For me, the answer is a definite ‘Yes’, for my time at KESS was the most magical time of my life, or very nearly, and much of the magic stemmed from a number of extraordinary characters who taught us. We were tutored there by elderly teachers of both sexes, some of whom came out of retirement to replace those who had been ‘called up’ into the Forces. I wonder if today’s teachers are as eccentric as ours were.

Who could emulate ‘Chips’ Carpenter, our form master and maths teacher in a classroom situated in the Cloisters which were ideal for him? ‘Chips’ would set up a problem on the blackboard for us to solve, while he popped outside for a quick ‘drag’.

I was witness to scenes of ‘the morning after the night before’ syndrome when he would order ‘Katsie’ Harding, a fellow pupil, to go and buy a large bottle of Owbridge’s Cough Mixture from a nearby shop, and then consume the entire contents in one go. There were occasions also when ‘Chips’ would run out of cigarettes but ‘Katsie’ was always there to supply him with the necessary Woodbine - and a light if needed.

Yet, for all his eccentricities, ‘Chips’ was a brilliant mathematician from Cork University and we thought the world of him!

Altogether different in character and appearance, as a county cricketer Claude Woodger had few peers, but as a distributor of a ‘right-handed thumper’ on the backs of his class - he had None! Claude’s speciality was geography but over the years he had been known to teach other subjects with equal confidence and authority.

The tales about him are legion (and mostly true ones). Two particular ones - his ability to be easily distracted from the subject matter by artful students and his readiness to swing open his classroom door into the path of any unsuspecting, running pupil - have passed into the KESS folklore.

This larger than life character lived to a ripe old age, still refusing to conform to the seemingly endless irritating and unfair bureaucratic demands in his life, such as paying his Council Tax. The court put in charge of this predicament found it difficult to appoint a Chairman to take the case as so many of them had to declare their interest. Which ex-pupil would have been brave enough to have taken on his old master?

I recall one momentarily embarrassing moment when my girl-friend (the one I married!) and I were illicitly visiting the cinema on a Friday afternoon during School hours. When the lights came up who should be sitting just in front of us but Claude himself. Strangely enough the incident was never mentioned! What a man!

Another of our ‘special’ masters was ‘Bud’ Fisher. He was a retired Officer in the armed forces and he liked to be called Colonel, for goodness sake. His classroom contained an extraordinary range of stuffed animals and birds which certainly provided the right atmosphere for his subject, Biology.

He was a very well organized master but was so busy that while he sat at the head of the class he did not teach, but gave us books to read on Zoology and Botany. In order to check whether we had learned anything he would very occasionally test us. This should have concerned us pupils as very little private reading was ever done, but the organizational skills of Bud were for once outdone by the ingenuity of his pupils. He always used the same fifty or so questions for each year respectively and so it was quite possible to research beforehand the oncoming ‘set of posers’! We had often written the answers before he had even given the questions. Believe me, this was absolutely true!

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**OLD EDWARDIANS’ ASSOCIATION TIES**

Ties will be available at £7.50 each at the Annual Dinner in January, also by contact with any committee member during the year.

The President’s ‘Fine’ of £1 will apply to any member minus his tie at all appropriate functions, including the Annual Dinner. All proceeds will go towards the President’s named Charity, Diabetes UK.
Last year’s event at the Constitutional Club in Stafford was so successful that we asked for a repeat visit. We must have behaved ourselves, otherwise they wouldn’t have agreed to have us back!

Forty-two of us played in teams of six, the usual format, with a break half way for a fish, chips and mushy peas supper.

The winning team, ‘The Jerry Hat Tricks’, each received a bottle of wine for their efforts.

The leading gent’s prize (another bottle, would you believe?) went to Noel Yeates who happened to be a member of the winning team; the ladies’ prize went to an equally worthy winner, Elaine Lonsdale.

The prizes were presented by the Vice-President, Mark Ashton, deputizing for the President, Ray Boyles, who was suffering from a bad bout of sciatica - we all hope to see him back on top form soon.

*Dennis Press (1944-49)*
During a recent holiday in South Africa, I found myself surrounded by penguins on Boulders Beach on the Cape Peninsula reminiscing about King Edward VI School Stafford with someone I had just met. He is George Cameron Smith (1959-66) and I am Roy Trawford (1930-40).

I had visited my daughter in Johannesburg and she had told me that her good friend, Sue, was marrying George in Cape Town in May and George had been to the same school as me. So, when my wife and I flew down to Cape Town, we invited George and Sue to join us for breakfast at our hotel. George and I quickly established that we had been taught by at least four of the same teachers (even though George is a lot younger than me). We even knew them by the same nicknames. “Tank” Averill, “Toby” Beck, “Doc” Gilmore and “Jeg” Langdon-Davies.

We spent most of the day with George and Sue and they gave us a very interesting tour of the Cape Peninsula. George had been in South Africa for 29 years. Initially he worked as an exploration manager with an oil company in Johannesburg and he is now a senior lecturer in Geophysics at Cape Town University.

George’s father was a solicitor with Wallace Copland and Co. I remembered meeting Wallace on one occasion. We exchanged fond memories of the old school; the octagonal hall; the playing fields; the Headmaster’s room with the staff room above it; the cross country runs over the Castle Fields (which he’d enjoyed and I hadn’t’); etc. etc.

So, you see, you never know when or where you might meet Old Edwardians.

POST-SCRIPT TO “TWO OLD EDWARDIANS IN CAPE TOWN”

When I was telling my brother Ralph (1964-69) about the meeting with Roy and Derry Trawford in Cape Town, he reminded me that there must have been a fifth teacher we had in common: “Claude” Woodger. I must say one has to admire these long-serving school masters for their fortitude and supreme powers of endurance.

It was through Roy that I have been able to renew contact with the Old Edwardians’ Association after a hiatus of, I reckon, thirty-seven years (I once attended a dinner shortly after leaving school). I received a very kind letter from Alan Smith, the Membership Secretary, and he enclosed a copy of The Staffordian for 2003. As I paged through it, my eyes lit upon the article “Those You Have Loved – Part 2” by Chris Lee.

My initial thought was that these were obituaries, and that by some chance (or blight or curse?) all my old teachers had managed to expire at the same time. When I realised that this schoolboy dream had not in fact come true, I must confess that I experienced a most delightful feeling of nostalgia as long-buried memories were exhumed and pondered over.

Alan has promised to send me the 2002 edition so that I can read Part 1, and I will have great pleasure in instituting an annual stop order at the bank so that my membership of the Old Edwardians’ Association may be instituted and renewed henceforth.

Greetings from Cape Town. Any Old Edwardians visiting these shores will be welcomed by:

George Smith (1959-66)

SNIPPETS

Our Association is indebted to Hewerd Simpson (1957-64) for his very kind gesture in donating a total of 31 copies of ‘The Staffordian’. They are dated from Edition 1, Christmas Term 1914 through to Spring Term Issue of 1965.

Eric Osborne (1939-47) also deserves our gratitude. Thanks to him we now have the very first edition of the Prep. School magazine dated 1941.
On a sunny Friday afternoon 14 golfers contested for the Paul Butters Trophy at Stafford Castle Golf Club. As I myself was in the thick of things (not the rough!) I only had glimpses of the other groups in play so it wasn’t until the end, when Dennis Press kindly calculated the Stableford points, that I was able to see how keenly competitive the golf had been. In fact much to my surprise and delight a new Old Ed, Jon Barnard, emerged the winner with 40 points, closely followed by Derek Randles and Ian Gilbert.

In the evening our wives and friends joined us for a first-class meal in the Club-house and also in the bar. Marj and Tricia looked after our every need.

Next year I hope that Mike Winkle will organize the Competition which will take place on Friday, 8 July 2005. Tee-off at 2.00 pm, dinner at 8.00 pm.

Please contact Mike on 01785 600997 at least two weeks in advance if you would like to take part.

Ray Boyles (1945-50)

A few observations from the 19th hole:

1. It is rumoured that it was Pat Boyles’ Prayer Mat which ensured good weather for the competition.
2. Ray conveniently forgot to write that both he and Mark Ashton had Birthdays on the day itself. Alas, a cry of “Drinks all round” fell on deaf ears.
3. It was interesting to observe that Mark’s golf balls consistently were to be found on the fairway whilst his father was to be seen in the rough taking a stroll!
4. For some of us Shakespeare’s ‘Comedy of Errors’ at Stafford Castle strayed onto the golf course.

Anon

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Annual Dinner 2005

Friday 28 January

Tillington Hall Hotel - 6.45 pm for 7.30 pm
£26 (including subs & gratuities) - Members
£20 (including gratuities) - Non-members

Cream of Field Mushroom Soup
Medallions of Pork with a Caramelised Apple and Rich Port Sauce *
Jam Roly-Poly with Hot creamy Custard
Coffee and Mints

Speaker: To be Announced

Tickets from: Derek Edensor (01785 660076)
                          or Alan Smith (01785 244169)

Payment must accompany request for tickets, please - cheques made payable to "Stafford Old Edwardians' Association"
Old Eds wishing to stay the night at Tillington Hall must inform the Hotel that they are attending the Dinner, to secure preferential terms (01785 253351)
* Vegetarian option available - contact Derek Randles (01785 249634)
In my time, the bell indicated the end of the schoolday at “four ten”, the year that the Romans left Britain as we were often reminded in both History and Latin classes.

Coincidentally, the bus to Doxey was timed for ten-past-four and, as a result, there was often a sprint from the entrance in Friars Terrace to the bus stop in Newport Road which, on occasions, culminated in a leap onto the platform of a moving vehicle. Buses are a lot less fun than they used to be.

On other days, I caught later buses and, consequently, spent lengthy periods standing outside the school. Sometimes, I would see an erect, elderly, slightly gaunt gentleman boarding the bus to Lichfield from the opposite pavement. This was Sidney Barnes, one of the finest cricketers who ever played the game. He was then in his late eighties and still working as a calligrapher for Staffordshire County Council.

I was first aware of Sidney Barnes when, in 1953, my father took his seven-year-old son to a game to mark the eightieth birthday of the great man. This featured some of the finest players of the day, including Denis Compton and Cyril Washbrook. Barnes initiated the event, attended by 5000 people, by bowling a maiden over.

That was my first visit to The Hough where, in later years, I was to represent both the school and Stafford Cricket Club (but never in front of so many spectators). Who remembers carrying the communal kit, stored in the Cloisters, to and from The Hough on match days? It was one of those character-forming tasks that no-one liked but which had to be done.

Sidney Barnes was the most prolific bowler in the history of Test Matches, averaging 7 wickets per match and taking 189 wickets for England, a figure that was not surpassed until thirty years after his final appearance. To put this achievement into context, only Dennis Lillee, Sir Richard Hadlee and Muttiah Muralitharan have reached 5 wickets per match in modern times. Barnes stands second on the all-time list for wickets per over (nowadays termed Strike Rate).

In an age when cricketers were either Gentlemen (amateurs) or Players, Sidney Barnes was a dedicated (and reportedly forthright) professional, spending most of his career in local leagues. His appearances in County Cricket amounted to a few games for Warwickshire and two seasons at Lancashire, but he took 1441 wickets for Staffordshire in the Minor Counties competition, a record that will never be surpassed. He played competitively until he was well into his sixties and his prowess was undimmed. At the age of 58, he took 115 wickets for Rawtenstall in the Lancashire League at a cost of only 6.3 runs per wicket.

Sidney Barnes joined Staffordshire County Council in 1939 when he was 66 years old, an age by which the majority of Old Edwardians have retired. At the Shire Hall, he was able to exercise his second great gift, a talent for copperplate writing that he developed at school. The County Council marked his ninetieth birthday with a hamper of food and wine.

As a lad, I was aware that Sidney Barnes had been a great cricketer and, even then, I found it remarkable that he could go about his business unharassed and largely unrecognised. That would never happen today. However, it was not until recently, while pontificating about great sportsmen of the past to a young colleague, that I discovered the full extent of his exploits via the internet.

Sidney Barnes was born in Smethwick, which was then part of Staffordshire. Alongside Stanley Matthews, he must rank as one of the county’s greatest sporting heroes and should never be forgotten. Comparisons serve little purpose but, at a time when, in my opinion, the standard of batting in English cricket is extremely low, I suspect that a reincarnated Barnes would be as successful today as he was in the distant past. He played much of his cricket in the days before motor cars, let alone aeroplanes, and yet he toured Australia on a number of occasions and claimed a record 49 victims in only four Test Matches in South Africa in 1913/14.

I have many memories from my schooldays, recalling masters, fellow pupils and occasional transgressions, but none is more vivid than my recollection of seeing Sidney Barnes going quietly about his business. He was a true sporting superstar.

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**Problems to amuse you on a cold evening 1**

You are participating in a race and you overtake the second person. What position are you?

*Answer at end of mag.*
Our luck with the weather finally ran out when, after three sunny June weeks, the forecast for the Bowls Evening was ‘wet and windy’. A wash-out seemed likely - would anyone even turn up? Despite my innermost fears, at 6.00 pm Pat and I arrived to find a car-load of Elsmores waiting at the club gate - David (Dickie’), on a visit from South Australia plus his ‘stay at home’ brothers Jim and Stan to accompany him for the evening; in turn they were joined by a band of Cannockians (is that the collective term?), so I knew that we were in for a good evening whatever the weather.

By 6.45 pm there were enough competitors in wet gear willing to go out and play in the light rain, so the Competition began, albeit under different rules - this year singles 15 up.

Meanwhile the Club house buzzed with animated conversation, no need for indoor competitions or quizzes. Anne, Alma and Carol helped Pat lay out the supper which was taken early as conditions outside deteriorated.

The buffet prepared by my wife was much appreciated by everyone; the bar ably run by John Burrows and Peter Corke was kept very busy and these two along with Ken Price also of Stafford Bowling Club did much to make the occasion so enjoyable.

As always, the evening finished with 'Bowling for the Bottle’ organized by Peter Smith. Mark Ashton threatened for a time and Anne Handley tried hard but this year her efforts came to nought. In fact it was the Elsmore clan in the shape of big brother Jim who claimed the prize. As for Peter Smith it can truly be said to have been a ‘smashing’ ending to a great evening!

### RESULTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>President</th>
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<th>Vice President</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ray Boyles</td>
<td>4 v 15</td>
<td>Mark Ashton</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dennis Press</td>
<td>8 v 15</td>
<td>David Elsmore</td>
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<td>Ken Handley</td>
<td>2 v 15</td>
<td>Jim Elsmore</td>
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<td>Derek Robins</td>
<td>15 v 11</td>
<td>Stan Elsmore</td>
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<td>Peter Jones</td>
<td>8 v 15</td>
<td>Peter Smith</td>
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<td>Roger Barker</td>
<td>15 v 3</td>
<td>Judy Bishop</td>
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<td>Ken Price</td>
<td>9 v 15</td>
<td>Noel Yeates</td>
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<td>Eddie Belcher &amp;</td>
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<td>David Elsmore &amp;</td>
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<td>Stan Elsmore</td>
<td>5 v 10</td>
<td>Jim Elsmore</td>
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**TOTAL SCORE** 66 v 99

_Eddie Dobson (1940-49)_

Thus the Vice President, Mark Ashton, was delighted to receive the Alan Balmforth Trophy from the President who, in his speech, thanked Pat Dobson for the splendid buffet and Eddie for organizing such a super evening. His remarks were echoed by all present.

### SNIPPETS

*John ‘Nimmy’ Wood (1944-52)* is in the news yet again. The Staffs Newsletter, 9 September 2004, printed a full page ‘Profile’ of his life and career. At 71 not out you can’t keep a good man down.

(Autographed copies available on demand)
During a trip to the UK in June 04 to visit my daughter and three grandchildren at Haughton I received a very welcome visit from our Secretary Peter Jones where we reminisced over times gone by including our days at Stafford Cricket Club. I also spoke of our home, Adelaide, in South Australia where Ann and I have lived for the past ten years.

Peter appeared to find it interesting so I thought that it might be worthwhile penning a few lines about South Australia other than that seen in the British press, such as illegal immigrants and the Falconio murder case.

South Australia is the driest state in the driest continent in the world and is four times larger than the British Isles but has a total population of only about two million with one point seven million of those living in Adelaide and its suburbs. The City of Adelaide was designed by Colonel William Light in the 1840’s and is built as a square each side being one mile long and it is the third smallest state capital in Australia after Darwin and Hobart. The City is unique in that it is surrounded on all sides by grassland parks.

Being such a dry state it has a very big problem, availability of water. There are a few small reservoirs but half of the supply is from the River Murray thirty miles away and water is pumped overland through a four foot diameter steel pipe to a treatment works. Unfortunately the river is always very short of water as food and cotton growers in New South Wales and Victoria take large volumes for irrigation. The Federal Government are attempting to pass laws limiting the other states’ extraction which is the only way that Adelaide would survive a further thirty years. Better news is that South Australia had in early 2004 completed its rail link with Darwin, which is on the north coast, a distance of about 2000 miles. Prior to its completion the rail only went to Alice Springs about halfway. The train is pulled by the famous engine The Ghan and this is without doubt one of the world’s great train journeys. The train is made up of both passenger and goods about half a mile long and takes two days to complete the journey. It now opens up an increased trade from South Australia to Asia at a reduced cost compared to the previous sea journey.

The weather here is in my opinion almost perfect, with the sun shining for at least 340 days each year, temperatures ranging from 15 degrees in winter to 40 degrees in summer but the average is around 28 degrees. Our seasons are of course the opposite way round to the UK with July being the wettest and coldest. Property here has increased considerably in value during the last five years but is good value for money. For £160,000 ($400,000) one can buy a large bungalow with four large bedrooms, two bathrooms with showers, a large lounge, a family room (another large lounge), dining room, laundry, double garage, spa and inground pool plus large front and rear gardens. Petrol and food products are considerably cheaper than in the UK and as we live in the centre of a wine-growing state a bottle of good red is a third of the price. We have great beaches all around with good swimming (not many sharks), boating and fishing. One hundred miles north of Adelaide, about one and a half hours driving, one is into the bush with miles of scrubland and red soil as far as one can see and the occasional sight of a kangaroo or emus. This is a very boring drive with straight roads disappearing into the distance as I found when we drove to Roxby Downs twice in a week, a distance of three hundred and fifty miles each way. One has always to be very wary of the road trains, massive trucks pulling three very large trailers travelling at 80 miles per hour with little regard for other road users. The car drivers in South Australia must be some of the civilised world’s worst with speeding, tailgating, constant lane changing from nearside or offside and many cars are not insured or taxed and seldom serviced. Few would survive on the UK roads as little consideration is given to other drivers and many always expect to have the right of way.

The Aussies are in general a friendly, laid-back people with none of the UK’s attitude of “keeping up with the Joneses” (not you Peter). Beards, shaven heads, t-shirts, shorts and bare feet can often be seen in the shopping malls and supermarkets but they will always give you a G’day! Adelaide is having a new international airport reception built, due for completion in November 2005 as the present one was designed for the days of the DC3 Dakotas, so we are moving into the 21st century.

As the Brits. know the Aussies love their sport and excel at most and I haven’t forgotten the 2003 Rugby World Cup or the Socceroos 3-1 defeat of England. The great weather here enables all sports to be played with a minimum interruption from the weather. The Adelaide Oval is a beautiful cricket ground; some rate it as the best in the world. There are many
excellent golf courses here, even the council courses are good and very cheap with our local nine hole course costing only £160 a year.

What don’t we have compared to the UK? As previously mentioned, plenty of good drinking water; personally speaking good pork sausages, pork pies and scampi, MOT tests and the lack of real history. There is nothing else that I can honestly say I miss since leaving the UK ten years ago, except my social and business friends; but most of all my daughter, son-in-law and my three beautiful little grandchildren but I speak to them every week thanks to the cheap phone calls of less than £1 per hour. On the subject of phone calls our local calls are not timed and one could stay on a call all day for ten pence.

As a final note I must say from a personal view that we have a wonderful health service here. Since my illness began eighteen months ago I have received the very best of care and attention from the doctors, nursing staff and all health care workers who are always helpful and friendly no matter the circumstance.

(Ed. note: Since Bryan wrote this article we have received the sad news that he died on 12 November 2004. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends. See Obituaries on page 42)

‘THE SCHOOL’ SEPTEMBER 2004

The School cricket field excavations, preparing for the entrance to the new Tesco store. Expected to be open for Christmas 2004.

SNIPPETS

David ‘Dicky’ Elsmore (1944-49) and his wife Sheila paid a return trip from their home in Adelaide. They emigrated in 1965 with their children. They were delighted to meet many old friends at the Bowling evening and at a Constitutional Club reunion.
Ye Kronikuls of K.E.S.S.

An it didde counter-passe in ye artum of ye yere 2004 thad ye mite tryb of Tesco beegan toad vanison ye pla-in-field of KESS. Fourm unths beef orr, a grayte pyel of irth an swanz adbean lev-tel-ose to ye cell-ebay-tekke Cloystirs. Y wos thiz lett thair four soul-ong? Ye reson, oanle rivhealt resent lee, wos ye disc oveere of ye BOWNS!

Oos bowns ar thay? Pur hapye olde menne of KESS kno, four thay ream emba mene atayl ab owt ye munk ood wel four sent aris in ye Cloystirs.

Olde Eadwardiens canne reck al is prez-ance, eip-osh-ulle atte nite, inth is peat of ye Skulle. Ou mene oft hem, du-erin a Skulle Danz, av ird rus-tl-in, wis-perin an gig-ulnin wivin ye Cloystir warls or ca-minfrom rume 22 ub elf?

Now techos av dhaird to wirk in rume 22. “Chips” Carpenter, allo nn, see nd toh unmoord bi thee-z munk-e tagks an apn-ings. Y im?

Wel, itiz rumered thad ‘Chips’ ad a spesh-ull re-lay-shuns-hip wie ye spir-itz. Sir tanle mene aboi az bean kno-neto trmbul wen e ird ye him-ortal wirls:

“Luk atte ye bord wyl ege gothe-rue it!”

Cud thad ye wirk on ye feydel as dist-hirbld ye olde munk an pr haps hevn ‘Chips’, who, an thad thy spir-itz v abr ord wunce mor?

(The above has been written in the original dialect. A rough translation appears on the last page. Ed.)
SOME OF THE CAST OF ‘TWELFTH NIGHT’ 1950
From left to right: N.L.M. BROADGATE, C.B. COOKE, J.S. WOOD, G. WETTON, AND P.A. OAKLEY

NOWELL MELLER
SOLICITORS
Providing Legal Services to Old Edwardians for Generations
7 & 8 St Mary’s Grove
Stafford ST16 2AT
Telephone: 01785 252377
Fax: 01785 273122
DX: 14557
Internet: www.nowellmeller.co.uk
Driving along the Newport Road the other day, past the old school and playing-field, it occurred to me that the last time large mounds of earth had appeared on the playing field was when they prepared the air-raid shelters at the beginning of World War 2. Several articles have been written about KESS in wartime, but I seem to remember the more light-hearted happenings which, at the time, seemed most significant.

The evacuees arrived in the autumn and, thanks to some excellent organisation by the staff of both schools, Chatham House from Kent and KESS, by Christmas things were running smoothly. Winters in the 30’s and 40’s were often very severe, country lanes remained blocked with snow for sometimes weeks and it was possible to skate from Penkridge to Stafford along the canal, the ice being extremely thick. Imagine our great delight when returning to school after the Christmas holidays, to be met by prefects and masters telling us to return home as the Christmas holiday was to be extended by two weeks due to the fact that the son of the Chatham House headmaster, had, during the Christmas break, dropped a heavy weight on one of the large central heating pipes, smashing it and putting the whole system out of order. I never met the lad but he was acclaimed as the local hero! Another significant winter happening was the first of the big snow fights. We were told by our elders and betters to attend the playing field after school, the playing field being under four inches of snow at the time. As we did as we were told in those days, both schools turned out in force. We assembled in front of the cricket pavilion (which stood in the left-hand corner of the playing field, in front of the railway siding) and the forces of Chatham House lined up with their backs to the Newport Road. After a short parley between the school prefects from both sides in the centre of the field, battle commenced. The early exchanges took the form of long-range artillery with the smaller boys making ammunition for their elders. Then a great shout went up from the Chatham House ranks and they charged en masse across the field towards us. It was quite frightening for some of the younger boys who were quickly ushered to the rear. The charge was repelled and then it was the turn of KESS to charge. Eventually the numerical superiority of KESS became the deciding factor and the whole of Chatham House, apart from those who managed to escape onto the Newport Road, was surrounded and forced to take shelter in the Cloisters - how on earth they all got in there I shall never know. A withering fire was poured into the Cloisters and the walls of the arches were white with spent ammunition. – Eventually a truce was called and we all went home - some of us very wet.

Roughly in the centre of the playing field was the cricket square, which was, of course, out of bounds. The standard punishment meted out by masters and prefects for minor offences was the writing of pages in the Red Book. Two pages was the usual amount which had to be handed in the following day. During the summer term minutes of rolling took the place of pages. Thirty minutes rolling equalling two pages approximately. One reported to the prefect on duty on the playing field after school and joined other criminals pulling the heavy roller up and down the wicket for the amount of time allocated.

One summer morning when most of the school were gathered for the mid-morning break on the top corridor which, in those days, apart from the roof, was open to the elements, a most fascinating scenario took place. A squad of American soldiers, who were billeted in the Technical College, came marching onto the sports field, straight across the cricket pitch and proceeded to commence foot drill. Imagine the huge buzz of excitement as we all knew what was about to happen. Within minutes the spare figure of Corker Cox was seen striding out towards the wicket. The Americans halted and Mr Cox engaged the NCO in charge in a brief conversation, the content of which was unknown to us. Mr Cox turned on his heel and started back towards the school- the Americans did an about-turn, marched off the field and disappeared towards the railway station. As Corker Cox approached the school a tremendous cheer rang out from the assembled boys but, typical of the man, he appeared to be completely oblivious of our presence and disappeared towards the masters’ common room.

Mr Cox was South Housemaster and he taught Maths and Science, he was also in charge of the school cricket. He had the gift of being able to quell the most rebellious miscreant with a few well-chosen words. He was a most accomplished batsman. One day, during Upper School games the fast bowlers were having a field day, wickets were falling like ninepins. Corker Cox, with an air of

**SNOWBALL BATTLES AND GIs ON THE CRICKET SQUARE**

*John Morgan (1938-43)*

*We assembled in front of the cricket pavilion ....... and the forces of Chatham House lined up with their backs to the Newport Road*. 
resignation, walked out to the middle, carefully selected a stump, and proceeded to give a wonderful display of stroke play. If you bowled to him in the nets he would put a shilling on his off stump, sixpence on his middle stump and a penny on his leg stump. What you dislodged you kept, nobody ever became rich at his expense, he was very, very good.

The School Sports Day was a very popular event - three weeks before the day the track was marked out and fresh sand put in the long jump pit. Mr Woodger - Claude as we called him - always acted as starter. One year, to our great delight, he emerged through the door from which Bert and Hiram used to ring the bell, armed with a 303 Lee-Enfield rifle instead of a starting pistol. One wag remarked that if Claude was using live ammunition there were one or two who might not be going home that night. Mr Woodger was one of the most popular masters in the school but if he referred to you as ‘Mister’ you knew you were in deep trouble.

Memories abound; the damaged Me 109 which resided on the steps of the library as part of the Spitfire Fund money-raising activities; two small boys who didn’t know that American convoys didn’t stop at red traffic lights and caused chaos by riding through the middle of them at The Grapes corner leaving shouting GIs in their lorries all over the road (we pedalled away like mad up the Lichfield Road).

We in Stafford, were very fortunate during the War - I shall never forget standing in the garden at night watching the glow in the sky as Birmingham and Coventry burned.

Finally one or two additions to the list of names which appeared in the last issue. Miss Scriven, Mrs Stewart, Mrs Batton, Mr Wimbley, Mr Faulds, Mr Powell-Jones, Mr Cowling, Mr Jones (he was a wow on the piano), Mr McClelland, Mr Howard, Mr Balmforth, Major Barratt, Eggy Neville (Chatham House - music) and, of course, Mr Whitfield who was in charge of the Junior School Ha and Ib - he really was a wonderful man. He always gave a party at his house on the Milford Road at the end of the school year for boys who were going up to the Senior School. He was assisted by Mr Averill (Tank) who was in charge of rugby football - a great guy.

KESS LAKES PARTY 1953 (Courtesy Roger Sandham 1944-53)
Outside Longthwaite Youth Hostel in Borrowdale village.

Left Back Row:
Stuart Bale, Tom Reed, Harley Tavernor, Stan Cartwright, Peter Leach, Colin Clarke, (face only), Bill Richardson, ?, Terry Marriott, Sid Jepson, John Benton, Peter Jones.

Middle Row standing, left to right: Tony Peatfield, Bill Bloomfield, ?, Richards, Mr Wade, Nev Thomas.
Kneeling: Mike Hodgkinson, Charlie Hughes, Rupert Brew
Front Row: Dick Cartwright, Childs, John Law, Alan Dobson, Stokes, John Hancock
Memories of the War Years at K.E.S.S by Bryan Birchall prompted me to put pen to paper. I remember Bryan well. We covered the same time frame and have memories of the same teachers.

I started at the school in 1939 and my form master was Claude Woodger whose prowess with the mapping pole was legendary. From the front of the class he could score a hit on any boy he wished including those on the back row! I have also seen Claude rhythmically thumping a boy on the back with his clenched fist as he chanted “I've told you time and time again...” Claude had the full frontal approach in matters of discipline and I learned quickly not to incur his wrath!

Doctor Gilmore used less energy in disciplinary matters but he always had your undivided attention as he slowly walked up and down the rows in the classroom looking over your shoulder with half a crown between his first and second fingers. This could inflict considerable discomfort on the head of the transgressor.

Corker Cox I found had a different approach which worked well with me. At the end of a maths lesson he would say words to the effect “If you don’t understand anything come and see me. If you don’t do your homework you will be punished.”

As many have said before I do not think this treatment did us any harm but imagine what would happen today if pupils were subject to this regimen. Headline: ‘MAD TEACHER CLUBS PUPILS’ or ‘REIGN OF PSYCHOLOGICAL TERROR IN GRAMMAR SCHOOL’ or ‘HEADMASTER LIKENED TO DR CRIPPEN’.

The war brought a lot of changes. To my knowledge this was the first time that we had women teachers and the two that I remember were Mrs. Batten who taught Religious Studies and Miss Scriven who taught me English Literature.

Not surprisingly we had a number of teachers who had fled from Europe and the Nazis. One I remember with gratitude was Monsieur Rubie who coached me in French after I had left K.E.S.S thus turning my School Certificate into Matriculation and the first step towards a Degree in Pharmacy. Monsieur Rubie once gave an address at the end of a school day in which he described how he had escaped from France with his wife and son and managed to reach England on a boat. After the war he returned to France to his old home but had to evict the people who had been living in it during his enforced absence.

One or two masters came and went quite quickly and I am pleased to say I cannot remember their names. One of them held a class in terror and the lesson was never complete without half a dozen detentions. The other taught very little but gave his group advance knowledge of questions that were to be asked in mock exams!

Jackie Poole was Acting Head for the duration of the war and I remember his courage at a Speech Day ceremony reading out the names of Old Edwardians who had lost their lives in the armed forces. His own son’s name was on the list and although he faltered he carried on speaking.

I think that some of the variations to our routine were welcomed by many pupils. When Chatham House School was evacuated to Stafford we rejoiced at the prospect of part-time school and that is what it was for a while; mornings one week and afternoons the next. One year we were all co-opted to go potato picking in school time which was a pleasant diversion! Presumably the Land Army was not yet organised.

I regret that early in my school life I lost the plot and did not equate learning with effort. When I did eventually have an ‘Ah-Ha’ moment it was almost too late - especially as I had an unfortunate encounter with a rifle grenade in 1944 on Cannock Chase. I am pleased to say that I won as the American rifle grenade was totally destroyed and I merely received near fatal injuries; but it set me back a few months and delayed my taking School Certificate exams by six months.

On that particular day I was accompanied by David Senhenn which brings me back to what inspired me to write about school days. Bryan Birchall asks what has happened to a number of Old Eds and I can say what has happened to two of them. Regrettably David Senhenn died about five years ago in Australia. His wife Rita telephoned me and gave me the sad news. David started working in shoe design at Lotus in Stafford. He then moved to Airborne Shoes in Leicester and finally went to Australia in the same business. Ian Nethery was alive and well when I spoke to him earlier this year and living in Lossiemouth in Morayshire.
The following is a dramatic eye-witness account of England’s progress in the latter stages of the Competition leading to the epic last minute victory over Australia in the Final.

Let me begin with my memories of quarter-final 4 – England v Wales in Brisbane. Firstly, what an incredible stadium and how well we the spectators were marshalled by the local, very congenial Police (a factor that became an example throughout the tournament of how to ‘police’ major sporting events). For this game, my wife and I were separated by eight rows so I had the company of three Wales-supporting Australians!!

Well they were magnificent company and I guess that by the half-time whistle I was pleasantly imbibed by at least three schooners (2/3 rds pint each) provided by them and with the score England 3 Wales 10, did I not need this drug!! The Welsh team were men on a mission just like but better than South Africa and Samoa in the earlier games! Our hopes were hanging by a thread but my new-found sporting friends told me not to worry as Wales would not be able to match the pace nor fitness of the England players. This proved to be the case – all hail the mighty Catt and viva Jonny Wilkinson - as ‘we’ won 28 to 17. What a relief and what celebrations there were in downtown Brisbane that evening (and morning- ugh)!!

The next game was the first semi-final – Australia v New Zealand – but first a comment on the venue – the Telstra Stadium in Sydney – this was built for the last Olympics and is an experience and joy to enter: All the facilities are easily accessible be they food counters, shops or toilets – the latter being very clean indeed compared to most major UK equivalents. The game itself was entertaining but the Australian supporters seemed so nervous that they needed encouragement from the large contingent of England supporters who had plenty of voice with ‘Swing low sweet chariot’ etcetera. As you know, Australia won 22 to 10 but the overriding memory was not so much their victory but the ungracious way in which it was received by both the New Zealand team and their supporters: The bad behaviour and language exhibited later was very sad. Indeed, the following day I saw an Australian news broadcast of how the result was received in Auckland and again it was sad to see such poor sportsmanship indicative of New Zealanders being astoundingly and shockingly bad losers.

So, on to the semi-final which mattered: England v France. ‘Le Crunch’ was its description in the local press. After the England team’s ‘Wales’ trial in Brisbane, prior to the game, the ‘sceptics’ amongst us had wondered whether our team had, so to speak, ‘shot their bolt’ in advance of this game and how pleasingly we were obliged to eat our words. On the day, the weather was atrocious – cold and wind-driven rain – but it didn’t daunt the efforts of we English supporters although it certainly impeded the efforts of France’s acclaimed backs – shame really. We had splendid tickets three seats from the front on the 22 metre line – wow! We saw it all and to make the atmosphere even better, heard the efforts of the players and saw the steam rising from their bodies as they toiled for success. And success it was! Our players were truly fantastic and did not lose heart when Betsen scored a try early in the first half. Our tight forward approach beat the French hands down and Jonny performed his usual magic. Suffice it to say but we English supporters also made our contribution – so it was raining, who cared, no-one – the psychological war had been won 24 to 7 – the Battle of Agincourt all over again!

The next game was the play-off – France v New Zealand. France chose mainly to play those of their squad who hadn’t featured much in the earlier games whilst New Zealand fielded a team which had lost its heart so the game was a bit of a bore with NZ winning 40 to 13 and the French supporters leaving the ground early.

So to the ‘Final’!!! I won’t comment on the referee other than to say that his interpretation of the game in the last 30 minutes merited some questioning particularly if you were on the opposite side of the field to play. Having now seen the UK TV video recordings, some of his comments defy belief. Also, I won’t comment on the rain excepting that it felt good to everyone in the stadium. This was a game to remember and probably the best ‘Final’ to date. The support for both sides was astounding and the camaraderie between both sets of supporters was a treat to experience with each set applauding and appropriately acknowledging both teams successes (and failures). Could anyone believe after Australia opened the scoring with a try after seven minutes that England would fight back so well to be leading at half time. Then, beyond belief, we ‘lost’ the second half with Flatley levelling the scores minutes before full time ( I said that I wouldn’t comment on the referee) ! Extra time followed with the two sets of supporters going berserk in their encouragement. Firstly after three minutes, Jonny scored with a 45 metre penalty for us to take the lead once more. Then, would you believe it, Flatley levelled the score again and again just before the end of the second period of extra time. No fear, however, leave it to the now immortal Jonny: In probably less than a minute before the end of extra time he dropped-kicked a goal right in front of us in our fifth row seat to provide the winning points!!!! Absolute mayhem followed as the referee blew for full time. Unbelievable! Unforgettable! What words were there to describe the exultation of all of us. What an incredible game of rugby and what good sportsmanship was displayed by the nearby Australian supporters. I have watched the video of the last half hour at least five times since my return to the UK and I’m sure that those last 20 minutes will stay in my memory for many a year.
When I left KESS in 1955 I did my National Service in Singapore, Malaya (as it was then) and Hong Kong. Looking back at it I suppose it wasn’t too bad and of course I got to see many parts of the world including The Cape on the way back. I just made it back home to get to College in time for the new term. On my return home for the holidays I met Barbara who became my first wife.

My first teaching post was at Kingston Secondary Modern, Stafford and from there I moved to Trinity Fields, which later merged with Graham Balfour. There I became Head of Department for what is now known as ‘Special Needs’ but in those days it was called The Remedial Department.

After about 15 years I then moved to the newly-formed Chetwynd Middle School housed in the old KESS buildings. It was very strange to work in the old school and even stranger to cane recalcitrant pupils in the Head’s Study where I had actually bent over myself a few years previously. After a few more years, after fighting a strong rearguard action we had to concede defeat and Chetwynd was closed together with most, but not all of the Middle schools in the county. This was a big mistake in my opinion as I am still convinced that they provided a very high standard of education. I retired then, with what I thought at the time was a good pension. Sadly it no longer appears so! I did about eight to ten years of supply teaching after I retired from full-time teaching, in Uttoxeter, Stoke-on-Trent, Brewood and Stafford.

Barbara died of Cancer in my arms about seven years ago and I met and rapidly married my present wife, Annabelle. Both being Midlands we decided that we wanted to live by the sea and so finally settled in Ilfracombe where we both fell in love with our present dwelling, a Georgian four-storey listed house. We bought two Staffordshire Bull Terriers and I was soon walking them on the cliffs round the town. Then disaster struck! I suffered a brain haemorrhage which took the use of my legs and left me with very little control of my bladder or bowels. I now have to wear a catheter and pads all the time. I remained in Barnstaple Hospital for a whole year after I had the haemorrhage and Annabelle visited me every day, a considerable journey.

I suppose I’ve become used to being wheelchair-bound now, but it still infuriates me when even the most well-meaning people talk down to me. I go to a day centre twice a week in Ilfracombe and once a week in Barnstaple and have computer lessons twice a week, so I keep myself busy. I’ve been down to Exeter for a lengthy stay and had intensive and painful physio which got me ‘walking’ a few metres and standing a few minutes, in frames of course. The Ilfracombe hospital physios continued the exercises till a few weeks ago and I was up to 50 metres and 20 minutes standing. Unfortunately they’ve now dropped me from their list, delivered a frame home and said that I must get on with it myself. I’m now down to four or five metres walking!

The summer season is well under way down here and the High Street has been ‘tarted up’ for the annual invasion of you ‘grockles’. It is much more wheelchair-friendly, but now the shops need to catch up. It’s surprising how much you notice from this new perspective on life, even the few shops I can get into have ‘hidden’ obstacles such as displays in the aisles, many of which I’ve knocked over - accidentally of course. Surprisingly when I return to these shops those obstacles have disappeared. I tried a newish wheelchair some time ago but had to send it back as it was too small and uncomfortable after sitting in it for a a day. We were particularly disappointed as it had been reduced in price to £2300.

I recently spent a few days on Exmoor at a Centre, the Calvert Trust, which provides activity holidays for the disabled. I took part in nearly all the activities, but not horse riding to avoid pressure sores. The activities I did were: - Archery, abseiling (in my wheelchair), rock climbing (not in my wheelchair), zip wiring (n.i.m.w.), sailing (n.i.m.w.) and canoeing (n.i.m.w.). We had a great waterfight in the canoes which proved that their waterproofs were a contradiction in terms.

I’m hoping to go on ‘Tall Ships’ sailing round the Canaries at Christmas - there are a couple of specially converted ships for disabled people. Apparently we really have to man the ship as one of the crew, steering, swabbing, up in the crow’s nest and standing watch through the night.

Ed note: The above was received in 2003. Below is a postscript received this year.

I went on the tall ship “Lord Nelson” over Christmas. We sailed round the Canaries and I climbed the mast to the crow’s nest among all the other activities and duties. We are going again in September, if I can shed half a stone in weight. They have warned me that if I don’t reduce my weight to 16 stone or less they may be forced to reject me on the quayside. You may be shocked at my weight, but since I’ve been stuck in this blasted chair I’ve put on 4 stones.

I’m back at physio at the local hospital after a gap of 8 months, and they are very pleased with the progress I’m making. Last week I walked twice as far as I’ve ever walked before and stood independently for a few minutes. I do this exercise on a zipper frame, not the tall one I use at home occasionally. I’ve now had a short zipper delivered to home and have managed to get out onto the patio at the back of the house. Maybe I’ll start gardening again soon.

I’ve finally bought a new wheelchair from a new company, as the old one kept letting me down and I’d lost confidence in it. The final straw was a wheel collapse on the harbour. Fortunately I recognised a young lady walking her young daughter and as I didn’t have the number of the local taxi, she kindly rang up for one for me and stayed with me till it arrived. The old Marriott charm still works apparently!
To say that the previous two years were busy is an understatement in comparison to the year that followed, for in 1970 Manchester City defeated West Bromwich Albion 2-1 at Wembley in the League Cup. More success followed when we reached the Final of the European Cup Winners’ Cup in Vienna and there were a super three days of sight-seeing culminating in our 2-1 win over Gornik of Poland.

Life was very hectic for me as Assistant Secretary at that time for success in both these Cups meant that the administrative staff were working at least 80 hours per week. The Cup Winners’ Cup alone meant organizing trips to Spain, Portugal, Belgium, Germany and Austria. It was indeed a wonderful few years to be involved with so much success and I must say that at times you wondered how it had been achieved.

A group of shareholders began to lobby for Malcolm Allison to take over as Manager with Joe Mercer becoming a Director. This uncertainty continued and in the end it caused the Board to be split; it all ended with Joe Mercer leaving and Malcolm Allison taking over and as a result the Club never recovered and it has taken over 20 years to stabilize it. The mood within the club was not good with all the talk of a takeover. I was being told by certain people that I would be appointed Secretary, but I did not feel at ease with the way things were being done. In fact a couple of months before I was asked if I wanted to go to Derby County as Secretary - it would have been interesting to work with Brian Clough! However I turned it down but if I had had prior knowledge of how things were developing I might well have taken it. Despite this offer and others from Sunderland and Salford Rugby Club, I decided that it was time to move on and enter the commercial world. But even then I could not completely escape when I did a spell as Secretary of the Mid-Cheshire League which I enjoyed until returning to local government with Blackpool Corporation.

Life with Manchester City could never be described as dull and it gave me the opportunity of meeting many personalities such as all the managers of the First Division Clubs, Bobby Robson, Matt Busby, Brian Clough, Bob Paisley, Bill Shankly to name but a few. In addition, Ken Wolstenholme, David Coleman and Barry Davies always popped in to see us when ‘Match of the Day’ visited us.

We were always having stars such as Mike and Bernie Winters, Matt Munro, Freddie Starr and Michael Parkinson pop in; the cast of ‘Coronation Street’ were often in when their schedules allowed.

At Maine Road the clamour for tickets for League matches used to be tremendous. Each home game we issued at least 750 complimentary tickets. I was entitled to a few which went to friends and I was able to provide others with tickets which they paid for.

There are many other stories that could be told but I did give my word when leaving that I would not reveal them, although I did receive a five figure offer to do so from a well-known Sunday paper!

Facts: -

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The following rooms were used for Guests.</th>
<th>Number of Staff required:</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Director Room</td>
<td>100 Gatemen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Board Room - Men only</td>
<td>25 Stewards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ladies Room</td>
<td>2 Commissionaires</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Press Room</td>
<td>5 Cashiers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Players’ Lounge</td>
<td>40 Programme Sellers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managers’ Room</td>
<td>Plus many others manning Bars and Food outlets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Scouts’ Room</td>
<td>100 Police on duty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All these rooms had tea, coffee and alcohol plus food from a well-known Manchester firm.</td>
<td>The club also had two Doctors on duty with St John’s Ambulance Brigade providing back-up.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All a far cry from Marston Road and dear old Stafford Rangers!

FROM MARSTON ROAD TO MAINE ROAD PART 2

Ernie Fenn (1943-53)

when we reached the Final of the European Cup Winners’ Cup in Vienna and there were a super three days of sight-seeing culminating in our 2-1 win over Gornik of Poland.
Gazebos! - Are they like Giraffes?

The Members of a committee were discussing improvements to the local parks and playing fields. One member suggested that the areas could be made more attractive to the local inhabitants if some gazebos were installed - he thought that they would be beneficial for young and old alike. There was general agreement on this apart from one member who seemed a little hesitant about the proposal. It seemed that he was concerned about the cost of the gazebos, especially that of feeding and looking after them.

The Price of a Shirt.

This story comes from the days when the proper dress in local government was a white shirt with a dark suit and sober tie. Our young Committee Assistant had moved with the times and appeared at the office in a ‘mod’ suit and a light pink shirt. The elderly Chief Clerk was a bit taken aback and ordered the miscreant to his office to give him a good talking to. During the ‘dressing down’ the Chief Clerk poked our young man in the chest and said ‘And what’s this? A PINK SHIRT!!!’ How dare you come to work dressed like this?’ The answer was simple, said our young man ‘It’s not a shirt Mr xxxxxx It’s my skin. You don’t pay me enough to buy shirts.’

Well-Supported.

This is one side of a telephone conversation overheard in a Works Depot. The Supervisor is talking to the Foreman of a gang which has arrived on site to find they are short of some equipment.

“What’s up Fred? You’ve not got any shovels? Never mind I’ll get some out to you. In the meantime you’d best lean on one another.”

Who Pays?

The local Engineer had submitted a proposal to improve a particular stretch of road and the plans had been put before the local Council for comment. The Council noted that the scheme included kerbing, whitelining and fitting cats-eyes on a stretch of minor road and this found favour with most of those present. However, one member was a little reluctant to agree until the Council established who was going to meet the cost of lighting up the cats-eyes.

Is it true that…?

Rumours were rife around the Council offices about a supposed affair between Doug and a newly appointed typist. The Chief Officer wished some action to be taken but was advised by his personnel officer that he could only do so if the rumours were proved to be well-founded and the ‘affair’ was affecting the work of the office. As in all such situations the couple eventually became careless and were caught at it in the office (officially they were said to have absented themselves from their place of work without permission). When interviewed as part of the disciplinary procedure which followed, Doug became very aggressive and asked what his personal affairs (well chosen words) had to do with the authority. He was clearly told that it was if it took place during times at which he should be working and was advised that his attitude suggested that he might find it useful to find employment elsewhere. The female was much more apologetic saying that she had no wish to cause trouble or to break up either of the marriages. For her it was just about sex - she found Doug better at it than her husband.

Problems to amuse you on a cold evening 2

If you overtake the last person in the race, then you are ......................?

Answer at end of mag.
Nice to See You.
Tom, who lived in a small village, had been off work for some time with a serious illness. During his convalescence he reached the stage when he was well enough to take a walk to the village shops where he bumped into John. The conversation went something like this.

John: “Nice to see you about again, Tom. I am pleased to see you.” Tom: “Not half as pleased as I am to be able to see you, John.”
Nothing unusual in that - except that John was the local undertaker.

Another Form of Take-away.
It was the practice of the Chairman of the Council to give small luncheon parties for eight to ten local dignitaries, industrialists, etc. On one such occasion, the host called for a ‘good cheese board’ and this was provided - slabs of about one pound of each of seven or eight different cheeses. When the party broke up some twenty or so minutes after the cheese had been taken in, there was not a crumb of cheese in sight. The waitresses had wondered why there had been a sudden demand for extra paper serviettes.

A Postal Packet
Post rooms are well known for the banter which takes place when post is delivered to or collected from the mail room. In one Council there was a particular young lady who was very good at making bullets for others to fire, especially practical jokes on visitors to the room - at least she did until the tables were turned. One day she started to suggest a scheme for a joke when she was seized by the other employees and placed in a mail bag. This was secured at her neck and a label tied to it with her home address. She was then delivered to the post sorting office along with all the other mail. The postal staff joined in the prank and delivered her by parcel post to her home. She was not heard to suggest any other practical jokes.

Meetings can be Tiresome.
Many local authority agenda items require officers to give oral reports and some of them can make a real meal of it. On one occasion the report was lengthy, the tone of presentation monotonous and the room stuffy and very warm. It was just too much for the elderly ex-military member and he dozed off eventually punctuating the meeting with a gentle snore. The Chairman was getting a bit tired of the officer’s monotone report and also noticed the Major’s situation. To cut short the report and to nudge the Major, the Chairman said ‘Just a minute, Chief. What do you think Major?’ No response other than a gentle ‘Zzzzzzz’.
In a louder voice, ‘What do you think, Major?’ It worked. The Major stirred, snorted and said, ‘Move it!’.

Is it Dangerous?
The scene is a very rural county prior to the Thatcher years and the Labour Party had gained control for the first time ever. The allocation of Chairmanships proved a bit of a problem, especially for the committee dealing with smallholdings, diseases of animals and agricultural matters. Eventually it was given to someone who was employed in the parks department of one of the district councils. Wanting to show that he was on the ball and fully in charge of affairs, especially as it was his first meeting, he wanted to raise an appropriate question. The opportunity came during the District Veterinary Officer’s oral report on the numbers of cases reported of various animal diseases. The Chairman intervened to ask, ‘This ‘ere Anthrax, vet, is it dangerous?’

Problems to amuse you on a cold evening 3
Very tricky maths! Note: This must be done in your head only. Do not use paper or pencil or calculator:
Take 1000 and add 40 to it. Now add another 1000. Now add 30. Add another 1000. Now add 20. Now add another 1000, now add 10. What’s the total?
Answer at end of mag.
An individual later discovered to be a public school teacher has been arrested trying to board a flight while in possession of a protractor, a T-square, a slide rule and a calculator.

At a morning press conference, Attorney General John Ashcroft said he believes the man is a member of the notorious Algebra movement. He is being charged by the FBI with carrying weapons of math instruction.

“Algebra is a fearsome cult,” Ashcroft said. “They desire average solutions by means and extremes, and sometimes go off on tangents in a search of absolute value. They use secret code names like “x” and “y” and refer to themselves as “unknowns”, but we have determined they belong to a common denominator of the axis of medieval with co-ordinates in every country.

“As the Greek philanderer Isosceles used to say, there are 3 sides to every triangle,” Ashcroft declared. When asked to comment on the arrest President Bush said, “If God had wanted us to have better weapons of math instruction, he would have given us more fingers and toes. I am gratified that our government has given us a sine that it is intent on protracting us from these math-dogs who are willing to dis-integrate us with calculus disregard. Murky statisticians love to inflict plane on every sphere of influence.” The President said, adding: “Under the circumferences, we must differentiate their root, make our point and draw the line.”

President Bush warned, “These weapons of math instruction have the potential to decimal everything in their math on a scalene never before seen unless we become exponents of a Higher Power and begin to factor-in random facts of vertex.”

Attorney General Ashcroft said, “As our Great Leader would say, read my ellipse. Here is one principle he is uncertainty of: though they continue to multiply, their days are numbered as the hypotenuse tightens around their necks.”

REMEMBRANCE SERVICE
SATURDAY NOV 13TH 2004
Attendance at Newport Road:-

Old Edwardians
Ray Boyles (President) 1945-51
Peter Jones 1949-55
Maurice Downes 1946-51
Alan Hartley 1944-49
Richard Hinton 1962-64
Michael Acocks 1951-58
John Weaver 1931-36
George Maddick 1934-38
Derek Randles 1949-54
Philip Bennett 1969-77
Mike Winkle 1963-70
Rod Hammerton 1952-59
Eddie Wright 1962-69
John Baker 1943-50

John Cole 1948-53
Dennis Wai11939-45
Jack Netherwood 1928-34
Barrie Chackett 1951-56
Alan Smith 1944-49
Derek Robbins 1940-47
Jack Ellsmoor 1927-32
Ken Handley 1945-52
Brian Webb 1925-32
Peter Stevenson 1938-45
Colin Riley 1946-53
Ray Briggs 1944-49
Dennis Press 1944-49
Peter Smith 1949-54
Mark Ashton 1969-76

Ladies and Young People
Pat Boyles
Coralie Netherwood
Megan Smith
Joan Hammerton
Jean Smith
Anne Handley
Chris Winkle
William Ashton

Bugler:
Capt. David J. Keates MBE Staffs. Army Cadet Force

Chetwynd Centre
Phil Cumming (Head of Centre)
Tony Innamorati (Site Supervisor)

In this splendid turn-out of 40, special mention must be made of five Old Eds who began at KESS in the 1920s and early 1930s.
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY’S REPORT

In the Staffordian for the year 2000 I recorded the fact that our Association had 280 or so members and exactly 25 of these were Honorary Members.

Regrettably in the last four years we have lost some of our elder statesmen but others have taken their place. At the present time we are proud to have 30 Honorary Life Members included in our total membership of 319.

Surprisingly, as the facility has not been available for many years, we do still have four Old Eds classified as Ordinary Life Members - they would have paid a small price for the privilege.

As far as subscriptions are concerned, looking back to 1937, the annual payment was a mere 2/6 (12 1/2p) on joining rising to 5/- (25p) after two years membership. Today, the Annual Subscription has remained at £6 for a number of years and this amount is payable by everyone, apart from Honorary Life Members.

Like all organizations our Association has to meet its commitments and although most members are prompt with their payment every January some members do need reminders!

Our Annual Dinner will be at Tillington Hall on 28 January 2005. Tickets should be available in early December 2004 and as has become the practice, the Annual Subscription will be included in the ticket price. For those not attending please forward a cheque to me please for £6 (six pounds) made out in favour of SOEA.

To conclude, our Association is a thriving and caring one and our activities are always well supported.

I hope to see you at Tillington Hall in January.

Alan Smith (1944-49)

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(Chairman: Keith Boardman RIBA)

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Problems to amuse you on a cold evening 4

Mary’s father has five daughters 1. Nana, 2. Nene 3. Nini, 4. Nono. What’s the name of the fifth daughter?

Answer at end of mag.
OBITUARIES (1)

Stanley William Kemmel Marshall (1928-33)

Died 13 March 2004 aged 86 years

As Thomas Tew of Gnosall wrote in the reference provided for Stan in 1935 (see below) “I have had every opportunity of estimating his worth.” It has been both a privilege and a pleasure to have known Stan for over 45 years and Mr Tew had it absolutely right when he said of Stan “He would be, I am sure, thoroughly conscientious, reliable and loyal in the discharge of his duties.” I never knew him to be otherwise. We now learn from that letter that Stan had gained a very high place in the County Free Examination, and as a result, was awarded a “Foundation Scholarship” at Stafford Grammar School but, like all his achievements in life including his War service, the way he dealt with them gave no clue as to the reality. For example, he would talk about the War but only after his death did we discover that when War came he did not hesitate to volunteer despite his father having been killed in France during the First World War. He rose through the ranks and undoubtedly displayed the same level of courage that prompted him to volunteer but always managed to give the impression that he spent his time keeping out of harm’s way. Stan brought those same qualities to his public service as an elected representative of Gnosall on the former Stafford Rural District Council. His understanding of the issues, his Chairmanship, his honesty and his integrity were beyond reproach. Frank Muir who had met Stan and his wife Ross as mine hosts at The Boat Inn whilst on a narrow boat holiday, became great friends and when asked on “Any Questions” who he would suggest as the next Prime Minister he replied that they would not know the man but he would nominate Stan Marshall, the Licensee of The Boat Inn at Gnosall as “he has more common sense than anyone I have ever known”. Wherever Stan was, he was the focus of attention whether indulging his gift for outrageous humour or serious conversation. He was charismatic and his knowledge of Gnosall was encyclopaedic. He lived there all his life apart from a spell in Wolverhampton working for the Goodyear Tyre Company before volunteering for military service and returning there after the War, prior to taking over the Licence of The Boat Inn from his mother. Any memory of Stan would be incomplete without recognition of the enormous benefit he derived from the unfailing support of his wife Ross, whose quiet competence allowed him to be where we all expected to find him – at the centre of life’s stage demonstrating the value of a Grammar School education.

Sam Pickstock (1945-51)
THINKING OF GOING TO EGYPT?
A few facts you might like to know.

The Suez Canal The Suez Canal was designed by Ferdinand de Lesseps and was opened in 1869. The Suez Canal is in Egypt and its length is 100 miles; the width is 197 feet and the depth is 34 feet; at the northern end is the Mediterranean Sea and at the southern end of the Canal is the Red Sea.

Every day there are approximately thirty ships waiting to go through the Suez Canal at Port Said and thirty more ships waiting to go through at Bur Taufiq. The speed of the ship is determined by the revs. per minute of the engine. Full speed is 90 rpm. Half speed is 45 rpm. Slow speed is 30 rpm and Dead slow is 15 rpm.

Each of the ships must have a pilot. The south-bound convoy enters the Canal and anchors in the Bitter Lakes to let the north-bound convoy go through to Port Said. Then the south-bound convoy goes to Bur Taufiq. At night the ships are fitted with a searchlight on the bows of the ship. The beam is trained on the left bank of the Canal and there are millions of flying insects attracted by the light.

THE CASE OF THE MISSING ‘STAFFORDIAN’

This is not a man-hunt, but a mag-hunt. All but the following ‘Staffordians’ are deposited at the County Records Office, Stafford. We would dearly like to complete the set!

1915 No 2
1916 No 5
1917 Nos 8, 9, and 10
1918 No 11
1919 Nos 14 and 15
1920 Nos 17 and 18
1921 No 20
1922 No 24
1924 Nos 30 and 32
1932 No 53
1933 No 58
1939 Nos 74 and 75
1940 No 77
1943 No 84
1944 No 86
1946 No 87

You will remember that for many years ‘The Staffordian’ appeared three times a year. Now thanks to a lot of help from Old Boys only 22 editions are missing.

Please can you help?

Eddie Dobson 1940-49

SNIPPETS

Joe Holford who has lived in Australia for many years in an area not too far from Adelaide has now moved house to the Perth area to be nearer to his daughter and family.

There has been regular contact between Joe and David ‘Dicky’ Elsmore and the extra mileage has not stopped their meetings continuing.

Joe has had cardiac grafts during the past twelve months.
Do I believe in UFO’s? Of course I do.
In the 1950s a group of friends based in Rowley Park, one of them a close colleague of mine, were experimenting, among other things, with taking aerial photographs of the area. The photography was achieved by suspending a camera below a balloon filled with town gas (coal gas which was lighter than air). An elastic link in the top of the tethering string enabled the camera shutter to be operated by a sharp tug on the string.

The town gas proved to be so successful that a larger balloon was tried, this time in the shape and size of a baby elephant, seamed up from black plastic sheet. Unfortunately this animal escaped from its tether and ended up among the high voltage pylon wires that supplied the town’s electricity. The powers that be removed the offending animal and it languished unclaimed for a long time in the cellar of the old Police Station on the corner of Albion St. and Chapel St. (now incorporated into the west end of the Guildhall/Market complex).

At around this time there was a flurry of activity on the UFO front all across the country. In one instance a number of strange flying saucer-like objects were found in fields stretching in a smooth arc from Land’s End to Salisbury Plain. To the cognoscenti these appear to have been the work of pranksters from RAE Farnborough or some similar technical establishment.

A small army of the gullible became UFO spotters and one such enthusiastic believer worked in EECo. Publicity Dept. (then at Browning St.). He talked of Martians visiting the earth disguised as ordinary humans, in fact he had been talking to one on the bus into town one day. With people like this all over the place there was an unfulfilled demand for something tangible to be seen or found and the Rowley Park Team, (I’ll call them RPT for short), decided to try and fill the gap.

Previous to this in 1952 I had been involved in small group of three or four at EECo. who had similar ideas but we were not successful in getting our two UFO’s noticed. I am saying this to show that technical verisimilitude is neither effective or necessary.

We had used a group of very big party balloons obtained for us by one of the stall holders in the market. We filled these with factory hydrogen and lashed them together in a flying saucer shape with metal foil included to give radar echoes and reflect the light. Battery-operated lights were tried and rejected in favour of fluorescent paint markings. The launches were from the top of the EECo., Queensville block, in the late evening. The RPT also tried technical solutions with lights and gadgets with little success.

The big breakthrough was a return to absolute simplicity which had two things in its favour.
First was the psychology of public gullibility and imagination which would fill in the detail which could not be easily provided by technical features on the UFO.
Second was that when the remains came eventually to earth they would be most unlikely to be recognized as parts of a UFO.

Over the years 1959 to 1962 about 20 or more UFO’s of various designs were launched from places in the countryside around Stafford so that the wind at the time would carry them roughly over the town area.

RPT’s proud claim was that 80% of their UFOs were reported in the local papers as sightings by UFO spotters and reliable members of the public such as policemen, postmen etc. These sightings also figure in the definitive American books on UFOs, Stafford being cited as a prime UK target for aliens at that time.

What about our UFO spotter and his friends? Well, another angle of the developing saga was a correspondence which began in the local paper between him and his supporters on the one hand and some who were sceptical on the other.

One of the sceptics was Maurice Smythe, a widely experienced RAF pilot both during the war and afterwards and who wrote under an assumed name pooh-poohing the idea of UFO’s. After one or two literary exchanges the UFO man got a bit nasty and accused Maurice of not knowing the first thing about aeronautics and what goes on in the sky. At this point the editor closed the correspondence!

THE TRUTH ABOUT STAFFORD UFO'S

John Weaver (1931-36)
Early on in this spat Maurice was made aware of RPT’s efforts and played UFO man along.
What brought the UFO launches to an end really was the coming of North Sea Gas (methane).
Methane is heavier than air and is therefore no use for providing lift for balloons, whereas the
old locally made coal gas containing a fair proportion of hydrogen was very good and readily
available in most houses! The town gas works was of course where Sainsbury’s now is on Chell
Rd.

Every year or so the matter raises its head again. Local papers have been giving the details of a
retired policeman who is researching the sightings again and is asking for help and information
from the public. Every few years since the 1950s a lady I know well has appeared in or on the
media describing her UFO experience at that time in a village near Stafford. Originally she said that in the late evening
a strange object had hovered above her house. It had lights in what appeared to be windows and she was sure there were
beings inside.

As time has gone by the detail has grown until the last time she appeared on TV she said that the large saucer-like craft
had landed in her garden and two beings came out of it dressed from head to toe in shimmering blue and a great feeling of
peace fell upon her.

This was one of the scariest launches by the RPT because their contraption was not as buoyant as it should have been
and it hovered about at roof top height before being caught by the wind and swept along over the village street. They
were worried in case the inflammable nature of the beast should set fire to someone’s property. However it got the most
sightings and was widely reported!

You will have noticed that, in deference to my friends and associates, I have not given their names away or told you
exactly how it was done.
AYNUK AND AYLI

Aynuk booked a short singles holiday in France staying at an hotel in Paris. When he arrived, he was met by the manager who showed him to his room. He was then showed photographs of charming young ladies who would be prepared to share a room with him. So Aynuk chose a blonde and had an enjoyable holiday. At the end of his stay he was given a discount of €1000.

Arriving back in Gornal Aynuk was telling Ayli about his holiday and the charming lady who shared it with him, so Ayli decided that he too would take a holiday at the same hotel. When he arrived Ayli was shown photographs of charming young ladies any one of whom would be happy to share his room. Ayli chose a ravishing brunette and he had a most enjoyable holiday. However, when booking out at the end of his holiday, Ayli was only offered a discount of €100 off his bill. Ayli complained to the manager and asked why his discount was only €100 when his friend Aynuk had been given a discount of €1000 on his holiday. The manager replied that while Aynuk was on television, Ayli was only on a postcard.

BACK TO NORMAL

An Old Edwardian living in Stafford had become a hypochondriac in his latter years. He was in and out of the doctor’s surgery three or four times a week. One day it was “Doctor have you got anything for a headache?” Two days later “Doctor, have you got anything for a bad back?” Another day or two, indigestion. Eventually he died and was buried in the local cemetery. Two or three days later, there was another burial next to the hypochondriac. Hardly had the latest burial been completed when there was a tapping on the outside of his coffin. ............ “Have you got anything for worms?”

SNIPPETS

All change at the top (1)
Just over a year ago Colin Elstone succeeded Dr Terry Brown as Head of King Edward VI High School - the latter now having a well-earned retirement after 21 years in charge.

All change at the top (2)
Phil Cumming is the new Head of Centre at Chetwynd Post 16 Centre, Newport Road. He replaces Beverley Langton, a dear friend of the Association, who left to work for Shropshire LEA as 14-19 Adviser.
According to an old literary cliché, the two sure-fire best-selling book subjects are Winston Churchill and Dogs. With either, the author cannot go wrong and the publisher cannot miss. It follows that a book about Churchill’s dog should have a succès fou, though personally I will not be putting my shirt on it. I dislike dog stories. I am impatient with the whole tribe of dogs in literature, including lovable mongrels answering to the name of Rags.

Yet I have a dog story to get out of my system. Everyone, they say, has at least one book in him, and that book may well contain a dog. While dodging the whirlpool of mawkish sentimentality that dogs seem to spin us into, can we keep the story sympathetic yet dispassionate, remembering we are talking about a creature who occupies a lowly position on the evolutionary promotion table?

It took no panel of Cruft’s judges to establish that our dog stood out from the rest of his family in terms of gloss, good nature and personality. And buying a dog seemed different from, say, buying a car. When the deal is closed it is the virtues in one case and the defects in the other which come to the fore.

The dog slept. Slept through a four-hour journey in a draughty sports car. Carried into the house and set down in front of the fire, he slept. We knew what this portended: with the perversity of the young of every species, he was getting ready to make a night of it. On the contrary, at eight next morning he was snoring still. It was twenty-four hours before we learned the colour of his eyes, which were brown, and their expression, which was mournful. A phone call to the shop reassured us that round-the-calendar somnolence was regarded as rational behaviour in Saint Bernard puppies.

A dog owner’s early duty is to give the little chap a name, on the assumption that one day the little chap will stay awake long enough to answer to it. ‘Binkie’ was proposed, in memory of a toy loved and lost by my small son. I vetoed it. It seemed inappropriate for a member of that massive race which takes frozen travellers by the scruff of the neck and drags them miles through snowdrifts. Thor, Siegfried, Kobold . . . the matter was settled when my daughter came home from school and christened him Gelert, after the faithful Welsh hound who saved a child from a marauding wolf and was in turn mistakenly slain by the child’s father. It is a pathetic tale; a typical dog story; guaranteed when the tourist guide tells it at Beddgelert to reduce small children to tears.

We took him to the Cairngorms in January. Snapshots of Gelert at eight weeks, heavy-pawed, mournful-eyed, with flesh already showing signs of hanging in rolls over his infant flanks, may still be decorating the photo-albums of hundreds of winter visitors. Meanwhile he grew and grew. Day by day he brought home more clearly than lengthening daylight how inexorable is the passage of time. It was as though, through the night, a miniature bicycle pump was at work. Any young man or woman who finds it difficult to make friends can solve the problem instantly by obtaining a St Bernard puppy. There is no dog like them for breaking the ice. In hotels you learn that the sign ‘No Dogs’ applies to lesser breeds. No guest, no member of the staff, will allow such an interesting, exclusive and well-mannered animal to be left outside.

The pet shop assistants, I thought, should have known better. A rubber bone, they said, might spoil the shape of a little dog’s mouth. They suggested a teething ring. I took it, ashamed to admit that Gelert was keeping his jaws supple by gnawing through the stump of an apple tree, and crunching blocks of pink granite from the rockery. I bought a feeding chart: at the upper end of the scale, 280 lbs, fantastic figures were laid down. I took them for misprints.

We went to Holy Island for the afternoon. Every dog, they say, has his day, and this was his. The sand dunes were the next best things to snow. Gelert swam and sunbathed. “Isn’t he the sweetest little thing - but he’s still growing. Give him a year, you’ll see,” said my companion. But we were not to see.

That was the spring I began losing things. I lost my wife. I lost my daughter. I lost my house. I lost my job. Gelert seemed to stumble more often, and the vet diagnosed a bone deformity, possibly congenital, possibly the result of having been rolled on at birth. The condition could only worsen. No cure.

I had to make a trip to the far north. We stopped for the night at a Speyside hotel. ‘No Dogs’ - but those liquid brown eyes always melted the hearts of chambermaids and porters. When I went to the kitchen to collect Gelert he was emptying a pail of yesterday’s leftovers: venison, veal, roast potatoes. His expression suggested someone had at last correctly interpreted the dietary requirements of a Saint Bernard puppy.

Torrential rain poured down all the way to Dornoch. By Loch Ness it was coming down in grey sheets. Motoring a long
way in bad conditions induces a reckless state of mind; the hallucinatory effect of sleet versus one’s sense of comfort. Gelert slept on. We skidded over a bank of gravel, and for a while it was unclear whether we were skirting the loch or in it. It occurred to me then that driving into the loch might be as humane away as possible of destroying a pet. He would sink like a lump of lead, dreaming of venison.

The appointment at the vet’s was for the following day, a beautiful day after the storm. My son, age seven, wanted to come. I considered it and agreed. We stopped and bought, a pound of chocolates. Gelert, beside an ancient oak, hollowed out to make a seat, enjoyed every one. Visions of new delights, his eyes seemed to say, opened up for growing dogs with every day that passed. Then at the gates his tail drooped. He had a premonition.

The anaesthetist filled a syringe, held it up to the light, squinted a few drops into the sink, and pushed it into Gelert’s flank. He looked round with an expression hard to describe: irony, faint reproach, but most of all apology, as though he could not understand what had come over him. Then he put his head on his paws and slept. It was over. The dog was not quite six months old. Walking back through the gardens we came to the hollowed-out oak, where my son released my hand and burst into tears.

So, with the death of the dog, the dog story ends. I shall not have another dog. Dogs, for their part, do not consider me anything special either. Can they, with canine intuition and after ten thousand years of cooperation between man and beast, spot a failed dog owner? One would like to know how the Welsh chieftain, the one who slaughtered the original Gelert, felt about it.

(Editor: Leslie died in 2001 and we are again indebted to his son Adrian, for supplying one of his late father’s writings)

‘I’ve fallen in the water!’

Did you hear the tale of a certain 71 year old Goon fan who fell into the canal off his boat in the summer? The water came up to his chest (the waistline of most others) but he made his way round the boat to the canal-side. The problem was how to get out when one has 29” legs. In fact it took three people to haul the old fellow out. He now remembers to change into his deck shoes when on board.

(Guess who! Perhaps he deserves some flowers. Ed.)
One evening in November 1952 I joined a long queue at the Post Office in Newport Road, Stafford, seeking a temporary job delivering the mail at Christmas. As I stood in the queue I noticed several fellow K.E.S.S. pupils and several others who all looked bigger and stronger than me (may–be I should have put more effort into my PE lessons with Mr Balmforth and Mr Hill).

When I finally reached the head of the queue I was confronted by a panel of senior P.0. men who, firstly asked the one question I was dreading. “Can you ride a bike?”, the answer to which was No. At that point I thought my chances had gone, but to my surprise and delight the interview continued. Surveying my puny frame through my school uniform one of the panel then asked if I thought I could carry a heavy sack over a fairly long distance and I assured him that I could. After one or two more questions I was asked if I would be willing to deliver mail in any area and having agreed to do that to my delight they said that I had the job and I would deliver in my own street, Oxford Gardens.

On my first day my father woke me at 3-30 am and I staggered down the stairs, had a quick breakfast, and sallied forth on my new adventure. No buses of course at that time in the morning as I set off to walk down to Newport Road. Finally I reached my destination and I reported my presence to a receptionist, who took me up to the regular employees I’d be working with during my short stay. To my surprise the letters and small parcels that I would be delivering that day had not yet been sorted and so my first task was to sort the letters into the right pigeon holes. Having completed the sorting I placed all the letters and two or three small parcels into a large sack, slung the sack over my shoulder and started off back to Oxford Gardens, a distance of about three miles. When I reached the beginning of my walk (Post Office term for a round) I was already tired out but I thought of all those people in the houses, including my own, waiting for their Christmas cards from their nearest and dearest.

When I’d completed about a half of my walk a Post Office van pulled alongside and I was given another sack of letters and a few more parcels to deliver to addresses on the other half of the walk. Undeterred, I slung the second sack over my other shoulder and as I walked down the street I felt like a beast of burden, and from the back probably looked like one, as I staggered onwards. Finally, after making a few errors, such as assuring one lady that there was no parcel from her son, discovering said parcel in the bottom of the sack, and having to return to the lady and apologise profusely, I finished the walk and returned to the Post Office to sign off and then caught the ‘bus home. That was basically the pattern of events for the next few days, but as Christmas drew nearer the number of letters and parcels increased and soon I was delivering three and sometimes four sacks of mail in a day, and my poor back and feet were killing me! Oh how I wished that I had been able to ride a bike.

After about the third day, when I arrived at the sorting office, I was told to report to the main office. Fearing the sack for some problem on the round I reported to the office and was handed an envelope which had several official-looking stamps on it. It was then told that there was no ordinary stamp on the envelope and that as the postman I must pay, in advance, the required charge (double the normal post rate) and claim the money back from the addressee. When I reached that particular address I informed the lady in question that she would have to pay the double charge as there was no stamp on the envelope. When she saw the handwriting on the envelope she refused to pay the charge and practically accused me of stealing off the stamp in order to make money out of her. Apparently the card was from her sister “who would never send me a Christmas card without a stamp” she informed me. Deaf to my protestations of my paying in advance, as I had unfortunately handed her the envelope, I was forced to concede defeat as she slammed the door in my face.

As Christmas Day approached things became very hectic and I stayed late some nights sorting parcels for distribution around the country. This job involved placing the parcels into sacks suspended on hooks, with towns and city names depicted above each sack. From above the whole set up resembled a giant draught board, but the only problem was that it was almost impossible to gain access to the middle so I and the others had to literally throw the parcels into the sacks in the middle and hope they found the right hole, so, if in 1952 your Christmas parcel arrived late you can probably blame me or my colleagues.

Came Christmas Day, I woke up bright and early to start my final day (Yes, readers, I did work on Christmas Day). Throughout the walk I was lucky enough receive a great deal of monetary tips from my customers, but not from the lady with the missing stamp. The most unusual tip I received was from a lady who answered the door with her hands covered in flour. Anxious to reward me for my efforts during the last week or so she said that she had no change but would I like some mince pies that she had just baked. She then put six mince pies, still hot from the oven, into a greaseproof bag and I went on my way eating my most unusual tip.

These days when I hear the familiar sound of my letter-box being pushed open I think back to those days when I was Postman Paul and I take my hat off to those who do the job today.
My memories of the Castle go back to the 1930’s and 40’s when we went on an occasional visit to look around and also look down on the town.

I have an 1855 watercolour of the west side by a Miss H. Darbyshire, a Staffordshire historian, showing the auxiliary turret behind the south-west tower and which I could never figure out till I knew the Castle better. One climbed the stone steps up the castle mound and knocked on the door of the south-west tower. Mr and Mrs Stokes were the resident caretakers and would charge us a few pence to go round, with a cloakroom-type ticket as receipt and also sold us lemonade and biscuits. The banqueting hall on the first floor spanning the two towers was quite impressive with oak panelled walls into which, rather incongruously I thought, were recessed a complete set of carved Stations of the Cross which looked Italian. The other features which intrigued were the “dungeons” in the basements of both of the incomplete rear towers.

There were two levels and one went down dank, winding spiral stone stairs to the darkness of first the upper and then the lower dungeons. When the castle was excavated in the 1980’s the lower dungeons were re-discovered having been filled with rubble in the 50’s and 60’s.

Newly married, I went to live in Thorneyfields Lane in 1946 and then visited the Castle quite often. It was quite distressing to see the deterioration occurring over the years. In 1949 I went to see Mr Stokes, who was still living in the castle, to ask if I could take some radio equipment up one of the towers for a radio amateur “field day” which was a competition to see how many contacts one could make and how far afield one could communicate with portable equipment on the newly released 420MHz (70cm) UHF band, then little explored for non-military communications. Mr Stokes was very scathing about the deliberate run-down of the castle and showed me where the owners had removed the oak panelling and anything else removable including lead off the roofs of the towers etc. so that the place was no longer weatherproof or indeed really habitable as it had been. He added that the earlier sale of the huge beech trees which had surrounded and shielded the castle had also contributed to the deterioration. In fact it would have been unsafe to operate from either of the towers and he let me set up my gear on the stump of one of the never-finished rear towers. In the event my furthest contact was near Worcester over 40 miles away using a transmitter power of only a few watts.

Shortly after this Mr Stokes must have left and the castle became a target for vandals. It must be said that the superstructure, which could be seen for miles, was a “folly” erected about 200 years ago on the foundations of the original real castle. As such it was shoddily built with thin hollow stone walls with rubble infill so that it was inherently weak.

I went up one sunny weekend to take a few photos and there were quite a few other visitors looking round the ruins. After a short while a gang of youths appeared running round and letting off catapults and air pistols at the walls over the heads of the visitors. They obviously wanted to drive the visitors away and they succeeded. While pretending to photograph bits of the castle I took several photos of them before leaving myself. As I neared the bottom of the castle hill an old van and two cars swept up the lower drive from the Newport direction and out burst another gang of several armed youths.

It looked like, and turned out to be, a pre-arranged battle between a Highfields gang and one from Haughton and Gnosall. I rang the police from the phone box at Thorneyfields Lane and they turned up in two cars in a few minutes. The second gang were taken by surprise from the rear as they climbed the castle hill and they scattered among the trees and bushes. I got my film processed and took it to the police station on the following Tuesday and they were delighted. They had caught a few of the second gang and recognised a number of miscreants of the first on my photos. “He’s on probation, he’s on bail etc.” was the gist of their comments.

Most of the more recent history is well recorded especially the archaeological work under Charles Hill in the 1980’s which revealed much of the buildings that had been in the bailey and of the village of Monteville between the bailey and Castle Church.
EMPLOYEE ASSESSMENT

John Cole (1947-53)

These individual quotes were taken from actual employee performance evaluations or school reports – (allegedly)

- Since his last appraisal this individual has reached rock bottom and started to dig.
- His team would follow him anywhere, but only out of morbid curiosity.
- I would not allow this employee to breed.
- When she opens her mouth it is only to change feet.
- This individual is really not so much of a has been, but more of a definitely won’t be.
- He would be out of his depth in a parking puddle.
- This young lady has delusions of adequacy.
- He sets low personal standards and then consistently fails to achieve them.
- This employee is depriving a village somewhere of its idiot.
- This man will go far, and the sooner he starts the better.
- Got a full six pack, but lacks the plastic thing to hold it all together.
- I would like to go hunting with him sometime.
- He would argue with a sign post.
- He has a knack for making strangers immediately.
- He brings a lot of joy whenever he leaves the room.
A SMALL MATTER OF PRIDE

Little Brucie was in his junior school class when the teacher asked the children what their fathers did for a living. All the typical answers came up: fireman, policeman, salesman, politician. Brucie was being uncharacteristically quiet and so the teacher asked him about his father.

“My father’s an exotic dancer in a gay club and takes off all his clothes in front of other men. Sometimes, if the offer’s really good, he’ll go out with a man, rent a cheap room and let him sleep with him.” The teacher hurriedly set the other children to work on some colouring and then took Little Brucie aside to ask him, “Is that really true about your father?”

“No,” said Brucie, dropping his head in shame............ .. “My father plays rugby for Australia, but I was just too embarrassed to say.”

WHAT HAVE THEY DONE TO OUR VOCABULARY?

H Lloyd-Jones

The world of computers has taken many of our familiar everyday words and given them completely different meanings!

A DISC used to be something that slipped when you hurt your back.
A WEB was what a spider made and was a male sheep.
A NET was for fishing or to hold your hair in place and a MOUSE was a furry little creature with whiskers.
BUGS and VIRUSES were something you caught that made you ill, and CHIPS went with fish.
A HACKER was someone with a bad cough and a CURSOR was someone with bad language.
A LOAD went on a lorry and a BOOT went on your foot.
You found builders or caravans on a SITE and you parked your car on a DRIVE.
A ZIP held your clothes together and FLOPPY meant limp.
You hung your washing ON LINE, you sent a CARD at Christmas, and a DESKTOP was the place for your blotter.
You called a butler or a waitress a SERVER and a religious artefact was an ICON.
WALLPAPER brightened up a room and MOTHERBOARD was mum when she was fed up!
Whatever next?
For as long as I can remember I have always been fascinated by words. I am a keen member of The Dylan Thomas Society of Great Britain and a contemporary heroine of mine is Carol Ann Duffy the multi-award winning poet who grew up in Stafford in the 1970s.

Carol Ann was a member of the local Youth Club where I was the leader for a few years and I have since brought her back to Stafford for some highly successful Poetry and Jazz Concerts at our Gatehouse Theatre (“The Borough Hall” in days of KESS!). Great wordsmiths both. For some years now I have been collecting a particular form of words -Anagrams With Associations. And for no particular reason other than sheer curiosity value and fun they provide.

For example, is it not a truly enormous coincidence that the word SCHOOLMASTER is made up of exactly the same letters as THE CLASSROOM? And whilst on a scholastic theme who’d have thought that the word PUNISHMENT could be re-juggled to NINE THUMPS? Mathematicians amongst you probably hadn’t realised that A DECIMAL POINT can be turned into I’M A DOT IN PLACE (whilst on dots, THE MORSE CODE rearranges to HERE COME DOTS) or that ELEVEN PLUS TWO can equally become TWELVE PLUS ONE. KESS of course was no boarding school therefore not a DORMITORY in sight. Just as well since the same letters make DIRTY ROOM.

Taking now a religious theme, an anagram of SAINTLINESS is LEAST IN SINS, PRESBYTERIAN can be made into BEST IN PRAYER and PARISHIONER into I HIRE PARSON. One sin only is allowed in this section, A SHOPLIFTER is one who HAS TO PILFER! And what about this turn-around - EVANGELIST can be reconfigured to EVIL’S A GENT!

Continuing to turn our eyes to the heavens we find that ASTRONOMER can become MOON STARER and FASTEN YOUR SEAT BELTS can be conveniently shuffled into TRUSS NEATLY TO BE SAFE.

There are also some more sinister examples. The letters PRINCESS DIANA are the same as ASCEND IN PARIS, DESPERATION can be rewritten A ROPE ENDS IT and another formation of MOTHER IN LAW is, dare I say it, (yes I can for I am no longer married!) WOMAN HITLER! Following on from that link, SEPARATION letters poignantly reassembled make ONE IS APART.

Now, knowing all Old Edwardians have a fond liking for good meals, good company and a few drinks to go with it (why else would they annually descend in their hundreds upon Tillington Hall!), here are a few anagrams associated with that pleasurable pastime. WAITRESS can be turned into A STEW SIR, and at the end of a good meal, a PITTANCE is A CENT TIP! Those with any money left over should avoid SLOT MACHINES since that particular combination of words makes CASH LOST IN ‘EM and any TOTAL ABSTAINERS amongst you should SIT NOT AT ALE BARS. All you after dinner raconteurs beware –CONVERSATION has the same letters as VOICES RANT ON!

Now to the world of politics: THE ARISTOCRACY can be lorded as A RICH TORY CASTE, MARGARET THATCHER as MEG THE ARCH TARTAR and GEORGE BUSH, well, it goes without saying, HE BUGS GORE. And I must confess I do like this one - PRESIDENT CLINTON OF THE USA, actually spells out TO COPULATE HE FINDS INTERNS. Who could possibly have worked that one out? Monica?

It’s not too big a leap from politics to blood sports I guess so let’s state the obvious - STAG HOUNDS are, as we all know, A HUNT’S DOGS.

Something of a mixed bag to end with: lovers of naturism should be exposed to the revelation (do I hear groans?) that THE NUDIST COLONY has, by definition, NO UNTIDY CLOTHES; culture vultures should observe THE MONA LISA has NO HAT, A SMILE, and, yes I know, HMS PINAFORE is the NAME FOR A SHIP!

Finally, those of you accused of SOFT HEARTEDNESS will doubtless know that this spells out OFTEN SHEDS TEARS and there’s nothing wrong with that.

If all these anagrams are making you somewhat heavy eyed and you need to sleep in a little tomorrow morning, certainly use your SNOOZE ALARMS but know that will mean ALAS NO MORE Z’S. And to those whose snoring actually registers on the Richter scale (says he sheepishly!), one for you too - THE EARTHQUAKES are THAT QUEER SHAKE.

I started by expressing my love for words, and I’ll finish by mentioning an actor who, for my money, was one of the very greatest deliverers of words this country has ever produced - ALEC GUINNESS. Fittingly an anagram of this great man’s name is GENUINE CLASS! I’ll raise my glass to that! !
An unemployed man went to apply for a job with Microsoft as a caretaker. The manager there arranged for him to take an aptitude test.

After the test, the manager said, “You will be employed as a caretaker at minimum wage, £5 an hour. Let me have your E-mail address so that I can send you a form to complete and tell you where to report for work on your first day.”

Taken aback, the man protests that he has neither a computer nor an E-mail address. To this the Microsoft manager replied, “Well then, that means that you virtually don’t exist and can therefore hardly expect to be employed by Microsoft.”

Stunned the man leaves. Not knowing where to turn and having only a £10 note in his wallet, he bought a 25lb box of tomatoes at the market. In less than two hours, he sold all the tomatoes at 100% profit. Repeating the process several times more that day, he ended up with almost £100 before going to sleep that night. Thus it dawned on him that he could quite easily make a living selling tomatoes.

Getting up early every day and going to bed late, he multiplied his profits quickly. After a short time he acquired a cart to transport several dozen boxes of tomatoes, only to have to trade it in again so that he could buy a pickup truck to support his expanding business. By the end of the second year, he was the owner of a fleet of pickup trucks and managed a staff of a hundred former unemployed people, all selling tomatoes.

Planning for the future of his wife and children, he decided to buy some life insurance. Consulting with an insurance adviser, he chose an insurance plan to fit his new circumstances. At the end of the telephone conversation, the adviser asked him for his E-mail address in order to send him the final documents electronically. When the man replied that he had no E-mail, the adviser is stunned. “What, you have no E-mail? How on earth have you managed to amass such wealth without the Internet, E-mail and E-commerce. ‘Just imagine where you’d be now, if you had been connected to the Internet from the very start!”

“Well,” replied the tomato millionaire, “I would be a caretaker at Microsoft.”

By definition, a fable must have a moral. This one has three:

- The Internet, E-mail and E-commerce do not need to rule your life.
- If you don’t have E-mail, but work hard, you can still become a millionaire.
- If you do have a computer and E-mail, you have already been taken to the cleaners by Microsoft.
If you are not too sure what day of the week it is, don’t be too hard on yourself. And if you can’t remember your best friend’s phone number or find yourself stumped when asked your date of birth it’s hardly your fault.

The sheer number of numbers that feature in modern life have added up to a major memory problem for many of us.

Once you file away your collection of on-line passwords, along with bank PINS and other security codes, there is very little room left in your mind for the basics. That means birthdays, anniversaries and even what you did yesterday can fall into a black hole of forgotten details.

With so much to remember, the average Briton is said to be suffering from information overload.

And, for a generation who already rely on calculators instead of mental arithmetic, any added brain strain could be hard to bear. This makes the advent of ‘Chip and pin’ codes for credit cards – which are meant to offer better security than a signature, even more of a challenge.

Information overload has led to nearly one in four Britons (24 per cent) struggling to remember what day it is, according to a survey published yesterday by the Online bank Egg.

One in three (31 per cent) forget their passwords or codes at least once a month. Over four in ten (41 per cent) admit they have become generally more forgetful in recent years since being weighed down with so much more detail to remember.

The traditional excuse of simply getting older doesn’t wash with most. One in five: (22 per cent) blames their failing memory on the increasing number of passwords or codes they need to know, As many as 38 million Britons use some kind of access code every day, from cash machines to security numbers.

Then there are passwords to access favourite websites and numeric combinations or setting a burglar alarm. Around three in ten (28 percent) use such codes several times a day but remembering so much means other details slip away. Two thirds (66 per cent) forget to buy everything they intended when they set out on a shopping trip.

Forty-five per cent commonly fail to remember birthdays or anniversaries, says the survey.

Similarly, 41 percent get muddled over phone numbers and 39 percent never have any idea where they put their keys.

Memory expert, Professor Evan Heit, of Warwick University, said, “Whether a fact will actually be remembered will depend on other psychological factors such as whether it is personally relevant or meaningful, or whether it will be confused with other information. So, for example, a person would not be able to learn a lot of different passwords because these would be meaningless and easily confused.”

Memory experts do, however have a tip for helping the forgetful remember where they leave things. They suggest declaring loudly what you are doing, for example: “I am putting the keys on the kitchen table.”

It may sound silly but they reckon it works.

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**SNIPPETS**

On 13 November 2004 at the Remembrance Service, Capt. David Keates MBE thanked the Association for its donation of £50 towards a drum for use by his Corps of Drums, in memory of three past members of his Army Cadet Force.
OBITUARIES (2)

It is with sadness and deep regret that we record the following obituaries.

Vincent ‘Bill’ Holland Trawford was a pupil at KESS from 1922 until 1930 and on leaving school he was employed by BT until reaching 60, when he retired and moved to Gloucestershire where he became a golfing buff in a big way.

Bill passed away on 12 December 2003 at the age of 90.

His son, Andrew, also is an Old Boy of the School.

R J ‘Dick’ Collier was at Newport Road from 1932 to 1939 and afterwards he followed in the family tradition of farming, firstly at Tixall near Stafford before moving to North Devon to take a farm near Barnstaple.

In his earlier years Dick had been a well-known playing member of Stafforfd Rugby Club.

When he retired from farming he returned to the Stafford area to live at Weston for the later years of his life. Dick died aged 80 years on 22 December 2003.

Terry Dawson Johnson passed away on 28 December 2003 in Vancouver, Canada.

Born in London in 1936, Terry and his older brother Peter moved to Stafford at the outbreak of the War to live with their grandmother.

As a youngster Terry was a Choir member at St John’s Church, Litttleworth and also a scout. Following National Service he went to Alsager Teacher Training College and there met his future wife, Rhona.

They emigrated to Canada where Terry taught at Manhattan River for two years before moving to Vancouver Island. Here Terry joined the Faculty of Education at the University of Victoria, later being granted a Doctorate. Terry was at KESS from 1947 to 1951.

Dennis Duffin was at Newport Road between 1947 and 1952 and on leaving joined BRC to do a civil engineering apprenticeship. Later he joined the National Coal Board at Cannock where he passed the Institute of Civil Engineering examination to become a Chartered Civil Engineer.

Subsequently Dennis was employed by the Essex Water Board whilst living in Billericay, before ultimately joining the Severn Trent Water Authority as their Works Engineer, a position he held until retirement.

Thereafter Dennis and his wife Matureen moved to Bednall where they became very popular villagers and from there Dennis was able to continue his love of golf at Brocton Hall.

Dennis died on 4 February 2004 aged 67.

Brian Adamson attended Newport Road from 1950 to 1955 and he joined the Police as a cadet on leaving school.

Brian had a wide range of interests throughout his life and in his younger days he was particularly successful on the rugby field at School, for Stafford and in representing the Police.

In his career Brian rose steadily through the ranks to become a Chief Inspector with the Staffordshire force.

Brian passed away on 17 February 2004 aged 66.

William Roderick McMillan attended KESS between 1943 and 1951 and on leaving school went into journalism. Bill started work on the English Electric magazine and following his National Service in the RAF moved to Liverpool. He travelled, whilst working as a journalist, for various newspapers including the Daily Express, Daily Mail, Yorkshire Post, Birmingham Evening Mail, and the Halifax Courier. His final move was to Exeter and the Exeter Express and Echo where he was Technical Adviser and Production Sub-Editor and also Drama Critic. He sang with Exeter Operatic Society. His many interests included swimming, scouting and camping.

After retiring Bill’s health deteriorated and he passed away on 8 March 2004 aged 69.
Stanley William Kemmel Marshall was at KESS from 1928 to 1933. He passed away on 13 March 2004 aged 86.
A separate tribute is printed elsewhere in this edition.

Alan Gripton was at KESS from 1948 until 1952 and on leaving joined the W H Smith organization. Following National Service Alan became a salesman for PAN books until taking over his own newsagent’s business in Penkridge, which he ran with Malcolm Brown for over thirty years before retiring.
Alan was a former President of Penkridge Rotary Club and was a prominent and well-liked member of the community.
Unfortunately a few years ago he developed cardiac problems which required surgery.
Alan died on 1 June 2004 at the age of 67.

Philip Henry Collier, another member of the farming community from Tixall, attended KESS from 1932 until 1937.
In his younger days Philip had been a playing member of Stafford Rugby Club; his other interests included a great love of sailing and music and he could still recite poetry that he had learnt at school.
Philip had a great regard for Tixall Church and he and one or two others successfully opposed the Church of England’s attempts to close it.
Philip died on 16 August 2004 at the age of 82.

Douglas R Harris was at Newport Road from 1931 until 1936.
After leaving school he worked for many years at English Electric before becoming a victim of the late Lord Weinstock’s ‘clear out’.
Douglas was a gifted organist and for a number of years, was the organist at St Paul’s Church, Stafford.
Thereafter, he moved to Blackpool where he engaged in hotel and retail outlets until his retirement.
Douglas’ final move was to Scotland where he was able to enjoy his organ music once more and also make his own CDs.
Douglas died 26 July 2004 aged 83.

Revd. Cyril Brian Cooke attended KESS from 1944 to 1951 and whilst there took leading parts in several School Plays. (See photo of Twelfth Night in this issue)
Brian, as he liked to be known, joined the Association some forty years ago after leaving Newport Road. He attended the Annual Dinner at Tillington Hall last in 1997.
Brian died on 4 August 2004 aged 70.

Bryan Birchall attended KESS between 1939 and 1945 and thereafter did his National Service with the Royal Engineers.
After employment with BRC, Bryan worked as a Senior Sales Representative with Blue Circle, RMC and ultimately Tarmac. His many sporting interests included cricket for Stafford and the Avon Players, but perhaps he was best-known as a goalkeeper for EEC and a winner of many table tennis trophies. In 1994 he emigrated to Australia where he was able to play golf more seriously.
When diagnosed with Cancer 20 months ago, Bryan responded in a typically positive way and he was supported by the love and care of his wife, Ann. In May he made his final visit to England, to see his daughter and her family.
Bryan died aged 76 in Queen Elizabeth’s Hospital, Adelaide on 12th November 2004.

Obituaries for Old Boys of KESS are recorded each year in ‘The Staffordian’.
Some were members of the Association, others were not.
We do our best to pay tribute to all our Old Boys who have passed away, but we do rely on Committee members being kept informed.

Alan Smith (1944-49)
## Dingbats

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Answers on back page

*No.1 Example: I’m missing the point*
I'm missing the point
Jack in the box
One more river to cross
Play on words
Knight in shining armour
Gross injustice
i before e except after c
Hot under the collar
A big let-down
A lot of fuss over nothing
Under the clock
Before c except after c
Cross influence
Knight in shining armour
Play on words
One more record to cross
Jack in the box
I'm missing the point

THE CHRONICLES OF KESS
(Page 15)
And it did come to pass in the autumn of the year 2004 that the mighty tribe of Tesco began to dwell on the playing field of KESS.
For months before, a great pile of earth and stones had been left close to the celebrated Cloisters. Why was this left there for so long? The reason, only revealed recently, was the discovery of the BONES!
Whose bones are they? Perhaps the old men of KESS know, for they remember many a tale about the monk who dwelt for centuries in the Cloisters. How many of them, during a School Dance, have heard rustling, whispering and giggling within the Cloister walls or coming from room 22 itself?
Few teachers have dared to work in room 22. 'Chips' Carpenter, alone, seemed to be unmoved by these monk-ey tales and happenings. Why him? It is rumoured that 'Chips' had a special relationship with the spirits! Certainly many a boy has been known to tremble when he heard the immortal words: "Look at the board while I go through it!"
Could it be that the work on the field has disturbed the old monk and perhaps even 'Chips', too, and their spirits are abroad once more?

ANSWERS TO PROBLEMS FOR A COLD EVENING

1. (Page 11) If you answer that you are first then you are absolutely WRONG! If you overtake the second person, you take his place, you are SECOND.
2. (Page 23) If you answered that you are second to last then you are WRONG again. How is it possible to overtake the last person?
3. (Page 24) Did you get 5000? Me too. The correct answer is actually 4100. Don't believe it? Check it with your calculator.
4. (Page 26) Nunu? NO! Her name is Mary. Read the question again!