

# T.O.G.S. NEWS

**The Newsletter of Torquay Old Grammarians Society**  
Torquay Boys Grammar School, Shiphay Manor Drive, Torquay. TQ2 7EL  
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## P R E S I D E N T ' S L E T T E R

**President David Simmons (1954-'63)**

Dear Member

I was very honoured to be elected as your President for the coming year at our recent AGM. With my predecessor, Barry Hobbs, I was instrumental in re-forming TOGS back in 1985 and, as you may know, combined the posts of Treasurer, Registrar and Editor until last year, so to now lead the Society is a great privilege.

After the huge success of our Centenary in 2004, when around 340 former students of the school met at the Imperial Hotel for the Reunion Dinner, it was inevitable that we should all sit back and have a bit of a rest. Having done that, we must now work hard to ensure there will be a lively and successful Society to assemble at the next Centenary Dinner.

To this end I have set myself three targets. Firstly, to bring our recruitment rate back up. Membership has levelled out at around 350, but given there must be around 7000 former pupils out there somewhere, there is plenty of room for recruitment. We all have friends who are Old Boys of the School, so let's recruit them. Enclosed is a membership application form – please copy it and pass it to your friends.

Secondly, I helped the attendance at the Annual Reunion Dinner slowly climb from around 50 in the 1990s to 136 in 2003 and, of course, well over 300 at the Centenary Dinner. I want to get those figures back. As older members can no longer attend, it is vital that we continue to encourage more recent leavers to attend - they are the future of TOGS.

And thirdly, I would like to set up TOGSNET. My idea here is that, if you register your e-mail address with us, we will be able to keep you in more frequent contact than we are able to afford to by posting Newsletters. For those who wish, we will be able to send your Newsletters by e-mail and thereby save us postage, particularly for overseas members. It will also help us to build for the future by letting us know when you move, so we don't lose touch completely as has so often happened in the past. For younger Old Boys maybe your parents could register on your behalf. Of course, we would not pass your e-mail addresses to anyone without your permission.

I should be grateful if you would complete and return the enclosed Information Sheet and I look forward to meeting you at the forthcoming Reunion and other events.

*David Simmons*

### **The Chris Penford Trophy**

For 10 years, Chris Penford (68-75) has been organising the annual Boxing Day rugby fixture between a team of Old Grammarians and Tics. This year the teams marked the occasion with a special tribute to him. Your committee decided it too would like to honour the work done by Chris, so is sponsoring a cup to be awarded annually to the winning team.

### **From the temporary Editor:**

Graham Bradshaw

The frequency and content of our Newsletters are determined by information which comes to us from Old Boys themselves, from the School and from what we are able to extract from the Herald Express. We would very much like more from members themselves, whether it be in the form of extended career summaries or anecdotes from their time at the School. The more we get, the more frequently we are able to publish a Newsletter.

### **Subscriptions**

Members are reminded that all annual subscriptions not paid by bankers order fell due on 1<sup>st</sup> October. Further, student memberships taken out 3 years ago have now expired and 10 year subscriptions taken out in 1996 also are now due. From the Society's point of view the easiest method for renewal is by Bankers Order, since this avoids the cost of sending out reminders. For members it represents the cheaper option - £5 per annum compared with £6 if paid by cash/cheque. The 10-year membership is now £30. Renewal cheques should be made payable to T.O.G.S. and marked for the attention of the Treasurer.

### **Ties**

The TOGS tie is now available from the Treasurer at £8 and is proving to be very popular with members.

### **Annual General Meeting 2006**

This years AGM was held on November in the School Library. The following Committee Members were elected for 2006/2007.

<i>Patron</i>	Wilfred H. Hore
<i>President</i>	David J. Simmons
<i>Hon. Sec.</i>	John V. Pearce
<i>Treasurer</i>	Peter M. Whatton
<i>Committee</i>	C.R. Angel, D.L.Cavaliere (Auditor), M. Cavanna, B.M.Holmes, C. Madge, S. Margetts, C. Penford,

C.W.Turner, P.G.Willis

*Vice Presidents* R.E.Pike (Headmaster),  
D.J.Reid, D. Brunsdon,  
S.Whittaker, , D.J.Roberts,  
G.K.Bradshaw

### *Honorary Members*

*Current Staff* Roy E. Pike (Headmaster),  
Christopher D. Penford

*Former Staff* Barry Hobbs (Headmaster 1982  
- '86) Peter J. Hewitt, David  
Berry, Gilbert Head-Rapson,  
John B. Hopwood, David  
Johnson, Don J. Roberts, David  
Goulder, Ian Kaye, David  
Kerswell, A.K.Hele

*Governors* Brian Wills-Pope (Chairman of  
Governors)

Old Olavians' who were evacuated to the School  
between 1939 and 1945.

### **2007 Reunion Dinner Saturday 8th July**

**PLEASE NOTE:** In the nature of an  
experiment the 2007 Reunion Dinner will be  
held on a Saturday evening for the first time. It  
will be held on Saturday 7th July at the English  
Riviera Conference Centre in Torquay.  
A Dinner Ticket application form is enclosed.  
Please return to the Dinner Secretary as below -  
also any enquiries regarding this event to the  
Dinner Sec. please.

### **Annual Dinner and Newsletter Contact**

Hon. Sec. Graham K Bradshaw  
The Leas, Nut Bush Lane, Torquay TQ2 6LE  
Tel. No. 01803 - 614204  
E-mail address: gkbradshaw@lineone.net

### **News**

### **Jai Geyer, a member of the School Sixth Form applied for a grant from the Society's Academic(& Sporting) Fund**

Jai ,an excellent Skier, was selected in May 2006  
for the England Ski Team and spent 4 weeks  
during the summer holidays training with the  
England squad in Switzerland. He had been  
invited to go to Norway in December 2006  
during which time he would be competing for

selection to go to the Winter Youth Olympics in the Pyrenees. He had received some sponsorship from the Mike Sangster Sports Foundation and others, and we agreed to help him as the number of sets of equipment required was very expensive. Congratulations are due to him. On 4/1/07 he was selected for the Winter Youth Olympic Festival and on 22/2/2007 took a place in the top 30 (27<sup>th</sup>) in the Men's Giant Slalom held at Jaca, Spain. The other three members of Team GB did not finish their first run.

### **Old Olavians are given Honorary Membership of TOGS**

It is reported from St. Olaves that about 40 of the old boys evacuated to Torquay 1939 - '45 are on their register. Group Chairman Derek Standen says they will be holding a reunion lunch in April 2007 at the Royal Air Force Club in London. Any old boys who were at the Torquay Grammar School 1939 - '45 are welcome to join them. The lunch price is approx. £38 - please contact the editor if you wish to attend.

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#### **New Members**

##### **William James Pullam**

1999 - 2006 Torquay, Devon

##### **Ronald Crayton**

1932 - '39 Hatherleigh, Devon

#### **Revived Membership**

**Lionel Hine** 1948 - '53

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#### **The Centenary Book**

Copies of The Centenary Book are still available from the School. Please contact the School Business Manager Mr Andrew Medhurst for further details on 01803 - 615501 or e-mail address; amedhurst@tbgs.torbay.sch.uk - or write to Andrew at the School.

#### **News of Old Boys**

**Adrian Sanders M.P.** (1970 - '77) met former American President Clinton at a meeting in New York about Diabetes. Adrian, who is a diabetic himself, is Chairman of the All Party Parliamentary group on Diabetes and President Clinton was the keynote speaker at the meeting. Delegates from 18 countries attended. (Herald

Express)

**Owen Nankivell** (1937 - '45) was reported by the "Herald Express" to have published his annual "State of Torbay" report. It stated that Torbay was still suffering from the departure of Nortel and the decline of manufacturing firms such as Bookham. Growth of the Bay's economy in the 10 years to 2005 was only 4.4% compared with a national average of 5.5% and if Inflation was taken into account Torbay has "probably suffered zero real growth" Owen is a former Treasury economist.

**Gordon Tucker** (1925 - '30) who is 92 wrote to us from his home in Essex and is one of our oldest members. He provided us with his "slimmed down" life story which I have published separately. He also had an amusing anecdote regarding himself and the then Headmaster Mr Jackson. Mr Jackson's fetishes were that a) school caps must be worn at all times when walking out - even on non-school days. b) Boys must not be seen out walking with "members of the opposite sex", except family of course. Gordon and his close friend, both Scouts, used to camp at weekends near Kingskerswell. One Sunday morning they were walking on the Downs in Scout uniform - but no caps - with two local girls. They met "J" walking alone and of course they said "Good Morning sir". On the following Monday morning "J" appeared in the playground and said "Tucker, Smith in my study." "You were walking with members of the opposite sex and you were not wearing your school caps". However they were not punished for this heinous crime!

**Christopher Hart** (1974 - '82) who is the Managing Partner at Hooper and Wollen, Solicitors in Torquay has been elected President of The Devon & Exeter Law Society.

**John Haslam** (1963 - 70) has after over 35 years in Local Government taken advantage of early retirement to turn one of his hobbies into a new job. He has been appointed Operating Manager of the South Devon Railway, based at Buckfastleigh.

**Dennis Raines** an Old Olavian and an Honorary member of T.O.G.S. writes from New Zealand and states that within 10 months of joining St Olaves Grammar School in London in January

1939, he was evacuated to Torquay where he shared the Torquay Grammar School Facilities, kindly placed at their disposal, until Easter 1945.

### **“Men of the Cloth” on the move**

**Revd. Dr. Michael Cullinan** (1968 - '75) from Rome to Pinner, Middlesex.

**Revd. Fr. Dylan James** (1980 - '88) from Rome to Dorchester.

### **Gordon Tucker 1925 - '30**

#### **My School Years**

I joined the second year of T.B.G.S in 1925 having gained a “free” place via a national competition organised by the Daily Sketch Newspaper. The next four years were very happy ones as I found most lessons interesting, bar Art which I detested (the art master suggested I did extra woodwork!) I particularly enjoyed Woodwork and Chemistry and I am indebted to Arthur Wheeler who taught me how to produce a finished article from rough wood and metal. Arthur and I corresponded for several years after I left school. Mr Jones kindled a sense of wonder in Chemistry which stood me in good stead in later years. In early 1930s when I was in the Upper Sixth I was given a letter for my father in which he was invited to keep me at school to take the School Certificate and Higher School Certificate exams. My feeling of pride was soon shattered. “You are fifteen and it’s time you earned some money” During the same term the School received a circular inviting 15 year old boys to become Aircraft Apprentices. I and two others applied and we were all accepted and school life ended in July 1930. In conclusion I enjoyed school life and am grateful for my general education.

#### **Post School Years**

Leaving Halton after a fine engineering education I emerged as an Aircraftsman First Class. I served in Iraq, (pre-war and during the war), England, France, England, Canada, England in that order. I had reached the rank of Sergeant; in 1942 following a “Mention in Dispatches” I was advised to apply for a commission. I duly applied and became an Engineering Officer. On my return from Canada in 1944 I was trained to be an Aircraft Investigation (A.I.D.) Officer and finished my service career as Chief Investigation Officer, firstly for Wales and then for Lancashire / Yorkshire. Although offered a permanent

commission, my dear wife and I wanted a more settled existence for our daughter and ourselves, so I applied to the Emergency Training of Teacher’s Course and was trained at Exmouth Training College. Devon Education Committee took me on their permanent Supply Staff. My first job was at Bideford Boys Grammar School, where to my horror, my timetable was filled mainly with Geography. Towards the end of term it was made plain that if I applied for the vacancy I would get it - I declined. A similar event occurred at Homelands, Torquay but this time it was P.E.!! Third time lucky was at Torquay Girls Grammar School where at last I taught Science - mainly Chemistry, which gave me six happy years. I needed promotion to earn more money as we then had two children, but although the Head and Chairman of Governors asked me to stay, it was plain that as a supply teacher, no promotion was possible due to Devon’s policy of graduated staff in grammar schools. To conclude, I obtained a post at Mid-Essex Technical School which became Chelmsford Technical High School. I became Head of Scientific Studies and held the new grade of Senior Teacher with a much increased salary. I retired in 1978.

The only notable event (for me) during the war years was my entry and exit from France. In late 1939 (as a Corporal), myself and eleven airmen and a Warrant Officer were flown in a civilian aircraft to Rheims and subsequently to a large field with a hangar in the Rheims, Chalon, Epernay area. We were to service our squadron aircraft when they arrived from England. When the real war started in 1940 we soon lost all our aircraft and most of our aircrew, so we retired to Nantes.

The same group (why us?) were allocated various transport (mine was an articulated vehicle) and we made a three-day trip to an aerodrome near Marseille where we were supposed to service aircraft which had bombed Italy. The French surrender in Northern France meant we could be interned, so we joined the Army personnel and escaped in S.S. Coultarn, which had just discharged a cargo of coal, and had a four day voyage to Gibraltar. We hid in the hold whenever an aircraft was seen. At Gibraltar we transferred to HMS Patrolus which brought us home to Liverpool.