

Trinity Old Scholars Association

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A VOICE FROM THE PAST

OLD TRINITY SCHOLARS' ASSOCIATION

HON. GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

To those Old Scholars who still receive the School Magazine, may I say that I hope that this edition will prove as interesting as was the first one of the Annual issues-many readers remarked that it contained the best O.T.S.A. section for a long time. Copies were passed to Old Scholars who had lost touch and several asked for extra copies, so if you know of any Trinity folk who have not seen a 'Mag.'~ do please lend them one or, better still, ask them to drop me a line .. As far as the fortunes of the O.T.S.A. are concerned, the mixture is much as before: declining membership and still ~ marked reluctance on the part of the youngsters to keep up contact with their school.

The Annual General Meeting was the most successful for many a year and we had representatives of all ages of Old Scholars-it was a great encouragement to have with us such an excellent complement of Vice-Presidents (Messrs.Dinmore, MacPhee, Tudor Rhys and Langford). The Headmaster kindly suggested that the Meeting be held in his study to make it more comfortable and congenial and we were most appreciative of this-the large room was really full and the whole thing looked so much more like an A.G.M. than in the vast space of the Assembly Hall. All offices were filled by volunteers (some actually did volunteer) and this was the more remarkable in view of the relinquishment by our old friend, Bert France, of the posts of Hon. Treasurer and Membership Secretary. I would like to record the thanks of all Old Trinity people to Bert for the grand job which he so willingly did for so many years and we do regret that his move out of London has denied to the Association his active assistance.

At Christmas the usual Social and Dance was held, but the attendance was most disappointing, despite the extra efforts of the Committee to advertise it as widely as possible. Three local papers carried a notice and reminder cards were posted to you all in the hope of avoiding that familiar bleat-" Nobody told us about it." It was an enjoyable evening and it would be a pity if we had to discontinue these functions, but it is not possible to run social events of this nature without support from members and Sections.

A strong Old Scholars' Association may well be of great assistance to its School-we are not an inconsiderable body and our voice contains many 'tones of influence and knowledge."

Keep up your membership, encourage others to join and let us provide Trinity with an Old Scholars Association worthy of its name and its tradition.

B. S. Langford (where are you now?)

July 1958

Dear Friends,

I hope you enjoyed reading "Voice from the past" Strange how history is repeating itself. We are still having difficulties in encouraging those from the 50's to join us. When they do join, and come to one of the gatherings, they are amazed at what they have been missing.

We are sure that everyone will be delighted to know that the Association is now financially secure, with a paid up membership of over 150, some of whom have paid in advance for 2007. This will enable us to send you a regular newsletter, providing you keep the stories coming.

I am afraid that I will now have to use the 'I' word, because of the numerous letters I have received

People News

personally from many old scholars, and I will mention some of them

by name, just to let everyone know that they are still around.

Eddie Prichard (1942) writes from Colchester, and reminds us of some of the landmarks near the school— Hext's Garage near Myddleton Road (Victor Hext was a Trinity Thespian in the 40's and gave a memorable performance with Jack Good at the October reunion in 2003).

Now, can you believe this, a delightful letter from **Jeff Burke (1941)** who remembers me from Noel Park Infants School. Fortunately, the memory was a good one, my red hair and freckles. He now lives in Clacton-on-Sea and we had our first conversation in over 60 years.

Cecil Webb (1945) lived in Princes Avenue and recalls the Home Guard exercising over the Tunnel in Durnsford Road. One night there was a terrible explosion after which the sirens sounded. Something blew an enormous crater in the allotments and they were not allowed near it as the experts were trying to establish whether it was one of ours or not. He also tells of doing a paper round for what was the local newsagent (Pattersons) for eight shillings a week, slightly less if you did an evening round. With doing a Saturday morning delivery for the grocer next door (Eaves) he managed to do an exchange visit to France with the school. The cost was ten pounds.

Memories from Bernard Chinn

During the couple of years after my demob in 1946, I had been literally scraping a living in the tough world of professional music, so when I was offered the opportunity to join a stage band for a CSE show which was to tour Europe, I jumped at the chance. I was required to play accordion, vibraphone and piano. CSE (Combined Services Entertainment) was the successor to ENSA. Having passed an audition, we prepared for the tour, which was to encompass British bases in Germany, Austria, and Italy. The group consisted of 5 assorted musicians including several who were to make their name in subsequent years. Teddy Taylor was one who later became Musical Advisor to the Benny Hill shows.

In the warm up period, we played a week at Collins Music Hall, one of the few remaining Victorian venues. It was like the clocks had been turned back a hundred years, it really was a run down dump. The idea was that agents came along to view acts, but we never met anyone who was interested in us, in fact audiences were tiny to say the least.

So, in April 48 we set sail for fresh adventures in war torn Europe, as opposed to war torn England. Our base for this tour was one of the few remaining hotels in Hamburg, staffed by very old men. This was near the main station, which was just as well, because the City was still in ruins, just rows of frontages, with nothing behind, it was a very eerie place and easy to get lost, as there didn't seem to be any signposts. There were a very few desolate shops, the majority seemed to be selling jewellery, and I purchased a silver ring, which I wear to this day. It was years later that I came to the unwelcome conclusion that the rings etc. on sale probably came from air raid victims! The currency was cigarettes or chocolates, not money, and one could obtain pretty well anything with a few cigarettes. We had a weekly free ration of 50 cigarettes, and as I didn't smoke, I paid my way with cigs. I had an elderly German craftsman make me a portable chess set, paid for by a packet of cigarettes, and yes, I still have it.

A bar of chocolate would buy the services of practically anything, and I mean anything!

We were playing about four nights per week, and other major centres we visited included Minden, Essen, Dortmund, Iserlohn, and Hanover.

During the next few weeks we played concerts for the British troops in many parts of the British zone of occupied Germany. We travelled around in an old coach, and inflicted ourselves on the unsuspecting troops at a number of beautiful, and luckily undamaged venues, including the Düsseldorf Opera House.

We would occasionally cross paths with another concert party, which consisted mainly of girls, and on the rare nights when this happened and neither group were working, we put on our own entertainment!

After four years in the Army, this period was like absolute bliss to me, I was doing what I wanted to do, and being treated like human beings. (We were given officer status). Still, after around six weeks of this paradise, we had to move on, our contract included a trip to Austria. We travelled by train, oo-hing and aahing at the picturesque Austrian countryside and picture postcard villages, and eventually arrived at our destination, Villach, which was quite close to the borders of Yugoslavia and Italy. We were accommodated in a hotel near the Worthersee Lake, the whole environment was like a Disney film.

We played a few engagements in this area, including the State Theatre, Klagenfurt. It was in this hotel that we met Borra the Austrian pick-pocket, who became quite famous in England, travelling with the Bertram Mill's Circus. He used to boast that his father was a professional pick-pocket, but Borra himself used to confine his talents to show business, although I believe he used to advise the police. He was an absolute master of his craft, I watched him remove a wrist watch in about 5 seconds, with the victim being completely unaware. Our last port of call on this tour was Trieste, and while there we were taken to the Yugoslavia border. Our guide then explained that although there was no-one in sight, if we wandered over the border, we would stand a very good chance of being shot without warning.

It was here in Trieste that I was able to visit the retail premises of the great Italian accordion manufacturers Scandalli. When we arrived at the shop, my eyes must have been like organ stops, I had never seen such an array of magnificent instruments. They had just introduced their new multi-coupler model. I think the price was around the equivalent of £100 which, of course was completely out of the question for me. (I was earning £8 per week on this tour). My plight must have touched the heart of the manager, lovely man that he was, and he insisted that I took not one, but two of

these accordions, insisting that I could pay as and when currency restrictions allowed. I must explain that there were very tight constraints on the movement of currency at the time. When we arrived home, I tried my best to repay his kindness, but these restrictions prevented this for some time. When I finally managed to find an acceptable route for the money, the lire had been devalued so much I got both instruments for a song. This was a rare stroke of good fortune

And so the European tour came to an end, much to everyone's regret. We really enjoyed a fabulous time, and it was just the pick up I needed, after four years in uniform.

Bernard Chinn (1937) 2006

MORE PEOPLE NEWS

Gwen Lee (Chester) 1948 is one of the Skinnerettes on the Frank Skinner Show, playing keyboard. What a what a talented lot YOU all are.

Dennis Croughton (1948) writes by email

Just had a quick look at the TOSA site and came across the photo of Mr Peacock. There weren't teachers I rated at school, but he was one of them. For some reason he grabbed my attention and my interest in history has never waned. I didn't realise his other interests, but thanks for bringing back to me some good memories - there weren't many!

Eric Fry (1949) sends greetings from the sunny side of the world (Perth, Western Australia). "Every few months or so I wander back down "Memory Lane", and visit the web site of Trinity old scholars. For some unknown reason, there were not many photographs taken of the classes or groups that I was part of. Which is a pity, perhaps not, because I was the short scruffy one). So using this medium, I am saying "Hello" to those who might remember me, as I remember Messrs Sparks, Worden, Haskins, and Wheeler. Margaret Knight, Nancy Elms, Audrey Busby, Catherine Samuels, and Margaret Hannuel*. One last thing, I remember Thalia Mansell who is pictured in the 1952 under 15 Rounders team. I have heard a rumour that she was a victim of a murder in the 60s.

*Where are they now?

We are sorry to report the loss of the following friends and old scholars.

Eric Coster 1942—passed away December 2005. Eric will be remembered as an accomplished athlete both at school and after.

Barbara Anne Preece (nee Forney) born 4th October 1920, died peacefully in her sleep on 15th January 2006, Joined Trinity about 1932

JUST FOR FUN

Have you noticed that stairs are getting steeper. Groceries are heavier. And, everything is farther away. Yesterday I walked to the corner and I was dumb-founded to discover how long our street had become!

Are people are less considerate now ?. They speak in whispers all the time! If you ask them to speak up they just keep repeating themselves, endlessly mouthing the same silent message until they're red in the face!

I also think they are much younger than I was at the same age. On the other hand, people my own age are so much older than I am. I ran into an old friend the other day and she has aged so much that she didn't even recognize me.

I got to thinking about the poor dear while I was combing my hair this morning, and in doing so, I glanced at my own reflection.....well, REALLY NOW- even mirrors are not made the way they used to be!

courtesy - The Internet

Well, yes—I must agree ! - Beryl

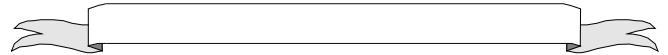
 Send me your stories: **Beryl Skinner**
110 Reading Road, Finchampstead,
Berks, RG40 4RA or email
trinityn22@waitrose.com

REMINDER Bournemouth Reunion—April 29th Contact Vic Manning on 01892 823945 or Mrs Jill Deamer on 01305 832597. There may still be some vacancies.

1946'ers

Annual Reunion at the Ramada Jarvis Hotel, Hatfield on the same day—29th April Contact either John Glyn on 01372 802576 or Margaret Driscoll on 01327 350283

NEW. A re-union for **Ann Meakin** (now Pilling) (1951) Wed. 26 July. Venue still to be confirmed but provisionally at The Harvester Cuffley at 12.00. Contact Kemal Ghafur on 01992 462471 or email johnghafur@hotmail.co.uk



As I put this newsletter to bed, a donation of £500 arrived from Life Member, Sir Ernest Harrison (1937). I know you will all join me in thanking him for this very generous gift



Association Reunion on 14th October 2006 at The Ramada Hotel, Hatfield.

This of course, is the highlight of our social year, organised very ably for the past 11 years by Don Grammer, together with helpers Reg Rogers and Roy and Audrey Augood .

With the retirement of Charles Rolls, and the formal formation of the Association, it has now been left to Your Ad-hoc Committee to take on the organisation of this event. We are very grateful for their continued help.

Your committee met on the 7th February, and this event was discussed in detail. The price of the meal, and the accommodation has been increased by Ramada. In the past, wine was included in the price of the dinner, and we did not feel that it was appropriate to pass on the increase from Ramada and add another £5.00 to cover wine. What we have decided, is to include a welcome drink in the price, and let everyone make their own choice with regard to wine with your meal. You will find that the price of your meal now has reduced. This decision also takes care of those who do not wish to drink, or drink and drive. It was only last year that a reduction was made for those who do not partake of the Bacchus water. (Did you know he was accompanied by Maenads, or wild dancing women.— perish the thought at a TOSA dinner !)

We are now dealing with a new manager at Ramada, and the staff have been extremely helpful. We would ask that you **help us**, by making a early commitment to this event. A booking form is with this Newsletter. Please return to the appropriate Address by the **latest the end of July**, cheques can be post-dated 31st July 2006 if you want to return earlier. Less than 60 and we may have to cancel. Bring your partner/wife/husband—they will be made very welcome.

Of course, the best thing you can do is spread the word. Many people have forgotten that the year we joined Trinity may not be our only link. We played football, netball, cricket, tennis with many from a different year. We also had friends from Trinity that were neighbours, relatives, boy friends and girl friends. We may even have gone to Saturday morning cinema with them. Many have renewed forgotten friendships by attending and made some new ones. If you haven't been before..... take the plunge..... you will not regret it.

Annual General Meeting. In accordance with the constitution, this will take place at 4 pm on Saturday 14th October at the Ramada Hotel.

Please indicate on the Dinner Booking form if you will attend. NOTE You do not have to attend the Dinner. Further details in next newsletter.

