

MAY NEWSLETTER

No.3 – May – 2013



For the Members, Family and Friends of the
OLD WEALDEN ASSOCIATION

Joint Editors:
ALISTAIR McGECHIE (1957)
PETER LUCK (1943)

80th Anniversary Reunion

We thought it was important to mark this Anniversary, if not with a special 'big' event (like the 75th) then with a couple of concessions to its importance, with a glass of Sparkling Wine and a piece of 80th Anniversary Cake, included in the price, for every person who attended.

And it was a good attendance. A little shy of 150 and most of the usual attendees were there, although we were a bit light from my



Two 33er Foundation Students, Wallace Mackenzie (left) and Bill Broadhurst prepare to cut the Anniversary Cake.



The decoration on the giant 80th Anniversary cake

own year – 1943 – only four present, which was well below par.

New Chairman Chris Overson got the day off to a good start, welcoming everyone, before we had the ceremonial cutting of the cake and the popping of the corks to toast the school's 80th birthday.

Then into the ample lunch provided by the caterer. Everyone 'stuffed their faces' and there were doggy-bags to take home afterwards so that nothing was wasted.

Time to depart came all too soon and many good-byes were said with expectations to "See you next year". – PL

YOUR NEWS: Please send to: alistair.mcgechie@btopenworld.com or
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**HOW
SECRETARY,
KAY HAIG,
SAW IT ...**

IT was good to see so many of you at our Reunion on 27 April. I am always delighted by the friendly buzz of conversation that fills the air the moment our guests arrive! This year the address was given by our new Chairman, Chris Overson, who paid tribute to the outgoing Chairman, Graham Kingsley. Graham held the position for 18 years and I would like to add my thanks to him for having done an excellent job. During the address we celebrated the 80th Anniversary of the opening of the School to the popping of corks as glasses of sparkling wine were handed round, and we watched as 1933 founder members, Wallace Mackenzie and Bill Broadhurst came forward to cut the first slice of our specially ordered anniversary cake. We were pleased to find that the School's Italian chef was available to slice and serve the cake. He made serving cake to 140 guests look easy!

It is important for us to know that our guests are happy with the reunion format and the way we do things. We were heartened by informal feedback that indicated that this year's Reunion was as successful as ever. We will now put our minds to planning the next one and look forward to seeing you again in 2014!



Top: Singing "The Weald".

Middle and bottom: Some of the intensely interesting photos and archival material assembled for members' perusal at the Reunion.

WEBSITE

There is another website running now. The address is

brookshillblog.com

For those of you who have access to a computer please have a look, it's in the course of being built and there is the facility to make comments on the pieces which appear.

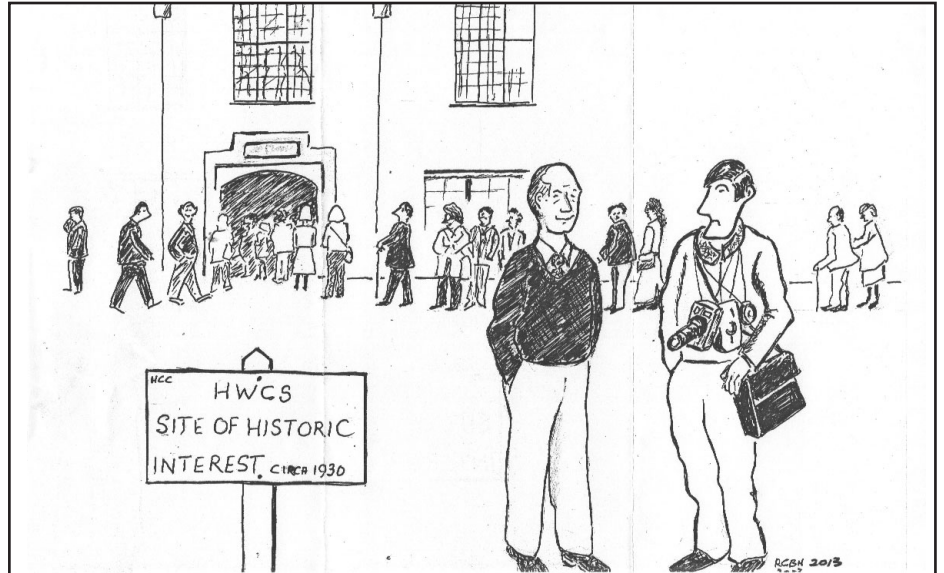
Your News ...

Marian Freedman (Frost) writes ...

I was at Harrow Weald from 1961-68, with Mr Thurston the new headmaster, and an influx of young newly qualified teachers. Do you remember Mr Richards (Maths) on a trip to Hampton Court, Mike Rookesby (Physics) who emigrated to Canada and Peter Willig, who encouraged so many to study German, not forgetting Ian Murray who overwhelmed us in corridors as he swept by in his gown. And the amazing dance drama productions orchestrated by Sheila Fitzgerald. This was the era of the mini-skirt – but we had a strict two inches above the knee rule – Miss Drury would check when we knelt down! But 6th form girls could abandon ties and wear a grey turtle necked sweater.

My brother Tim (now a surveyor living in Amersham) followed two years later and my very young brother Simon (now living in

RON HOLROYD COMMENTS ...



IT'S A REUNION – AND NO, THERE ARE NO ANCIENT ARTEFACTS, JUST OLD WEALDENS ...

Harpenden) attended the 6th form college in 1978. After graduating with a Business Studies degree, I married one of my lecturers and we moved south of the river and have been living in New Malden since 1977 having had a son and daughter. Recently a victim of local government cuts (I worked as an Employment Adviser supporting young people into work and training for over 20 years), I am now able to offer some time to the excellent work being done to keep the Weald spirit alive.

Volunteering in Kingston

An infant school governor for nearly 25 years, I'm also enjoying volunteering at the new Rose Theatre in Kingston. My son is very involved in politics, so I find myself volunteering (again!) to be treasurer of the local party. I much enjoy walking in the Surrey countryside with a group of local friends, as well as playing social poker with an Anglo-French

group of friends every week. For the last 11 years I've travelled around Europe and UK with the Berkhamsted Choral society's summer tour at the invitation of my school friend Jenny née Matthews who, like me, studied French, German and Economics A levels – but she was also a singer – I'm one of the groupies!

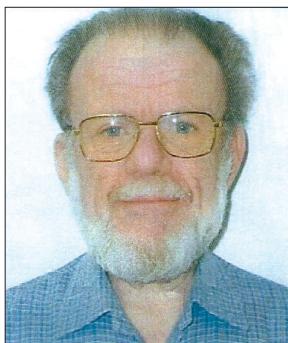
It would be great to hear from any other 60's Old Wealdens.'

(Sincere apologies to Marian for omitting this report from the last printed Newsletter. – PL)

Hilda (Biggerstaff) Halsey writes ...

I was a staff member teaching Mathematics from 1949 to 1954. I very much enjoy the Newsletter but, sadly, I will be unable to come to the Reunion.

OBITUARY



DAVID LUSH

1932 – 2013

This Obit has been put together with material from Dennis Bower (DB), Rex Edwards (RE), Peter Brigginsshaw (PB) and Peter Luck (PL).

DB – I have known David as a good friend for many years, since Primary School days in the late 1930s and early 1940s in fact. Later we were both members of the group who spent holidays together youth hostelling in the Lake District or on the Island of Skye. I have many photographs of the group taken by David as well as many slides that, sadly, I rarely look at these days.

RE – I first came to notice

David when, in the 3rd form, we were billeted in the Art Room with 'Wat' Tyler. David was at the cerebral end of the room with Max Mallam and other swots. I was at the other end with the skivers.

I got to know David better later on, initially by minor parts in the revues he, Max, Dickey Shead and Veronica Humphries and others wrote.

In 6th form chemistry lessons, David repeatedly tried to prise Charlie Holt away from his collection of archaic glasswear and back to teaching us chemistry for HSC, only to be admonished: "Do sit down Lush!"

PL – Being next to David on the register – 'Leach, Lee, Luck, Lush, Mallam' – I first knew David in the first year at Harrow Weald and it was obvious how brilliant he was. Always ready with an answer to the teacher's question, David positively shone and it was clear he was a pupil who would go far.

PB – I remember David Lush originally as he who liked thundering around the East Field at a 100mph practising for the school sports day.

Later of course I remember the 1948 school stage review 'All for Your Delight' with David as one of three talented principal script writers and my being given impossible scene changes to organise as stage manager.

PL – I also recall David's athletic prowess both on the track where he challenged the mighty Jack Grint in the sprints and in the long jump pit as well.

A quick look at athletics results in past Weald Chronicles reveals that in 1946 David won the Intermediate 100 yards and the long jump but came second to Derek Thurley in the 220 yards. In 1947 David had to concede first place to Jack Grint (100) and Derek Thurley (220), although coming second in both events, but retained the long jump title by beating Ron Holroyd and Gordon Brown. Then in 1948, now in the Senior section, David does not figure in the sprints but retained his long jump supremacy by beating Peter Branson and Desmond Hammerton, both a couple of years older than he was.

RE – Later we were part of that happy band of 'scholars' that holidayed together in Scotland and the Lake District staying in Youth Hostels and, later, in cheap hotels. I have photos of up to a dozen of us busily peeling potatoes (picture left),



PEELING POTATOES – Rex Edwards, Dennis Bower (hidden), Mike Millican and David. Carol Bell takes the morning air in the back-ground.

– Picture: Peter Brigginsshaw.

washing up or tramping up and down hills sporting raingear.

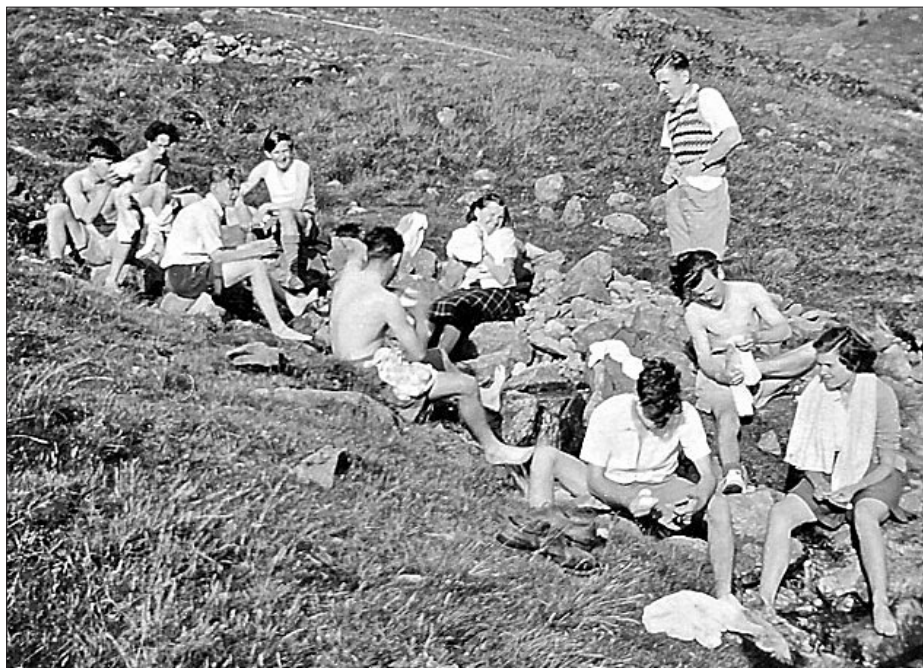
PB – In the early fifties David organised summer trips to the Lake District and the Isle of Skye for a group of us. We all have very happy memories particularly of all of us having an early morning wash in the mountain stream outside the Black Sail Youth Hostel. (pictured right)

Later still David and I, now as poor students, worked a couple of weeks as railway porters at Paddington Station. We had always to work the atmospheric night shift and became involved in moving sacks of mail, ‘escorting’ sleepy drunks out of harm’s way, unloading travelling horses and assisting sometimes with carrying coffins to awaiting cars. For a couple of hours each night we were allowed to help incoming passengers with their luggage. This was known as ‘Culling’ (‘Feathering’ at Euston!). We would wait in anticipation on the platform at the area where the first class passengers would alight.

David would approach a traveller either with a terrible Cockney accent – ‘Carry yer bag mate?’ or in a posh Etonian tone – ‘Welcome madam, would you care for a taxi?’

Inevitably, David would end up earning tips of shillings and half crowns and I would be lucky to be given a sixpence.

Davee, as he signed himself on letters those days, being, of course, David of Harrow



Early morning ablutions for the party at Black Sail.

Photo: Peter Brigginsshaw.

Weald, would insist on sharing the Culling. I shall miss him greatly but he can still make me laugh.

RE – When I came out of the Army in 1956, after National Service, David, Tony Cook, Me and one other went on a jolly trip to Scotland in a hired Vauxhall Velox (or was it a Wyvern?). We reached Durness and had a miserable night in a cheap B&B trying to raise our spirits on Atholl Brose. Then later an uncomfortable night in the car at Gairloch (we arrived on a Saturday) and could not get accommodation as there was “no coming and going on a Sunday”!

RE – University dispersed us initially and then marriage and the wide world finally broke up the happy band of scholars, but I did see David and Eileen from time to time, at Old Wealden Reunions, or at Peter and Mavis Brigginsshaw’s welcoming abode

in Berkhamsted.

DB – David’s passing has stimulated me to get out my photo albums and refresh my memories of those happy times that we all had together.

PL – We should not forget the work that David did for the Old Wealdens, most notably as Archivist. Much of David’s work in that respect was on show on Reunion Day.

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David’s funeral took place at The Counties Crematorium, Milton, near Northampton on the 15th April. There was a good sized congregation with Old Wealdens well represented.

We would all like to offer deepest condolences and sympathies to David’s widow, Eileen, and to let her know that our thoughts are with her and the family at this sad time.

MONTHLY NEWSLETTERS IN PDF FORM BY EMAIL

THOSE Old Wealdens with access to email will, mostly, have seen the two email Newsletter so far sent out (March and April). I say mostly because I do believe there are some OWs who have access to email but are not on our list.

When I started this, our Treasurer, Keith Mayes, supplied me with the information from the annual forms which are sent out and the number of addresses totted up to just in excess of 150. Since then, however, in talking to OWs at different times I have found that not everyone has received the monthly emails and *ergo* they are not on Keith's list. Presumably they did not complete the annual form in full of which email address was one of the items asked for.

I have added a few of those names who I have found out are missing. But I am sure there are others. Could you ask around your OW friends and find out whether they are getting the emails. If not, it is likely that they have never let us know their address. Please get it for us.

That leads on to the Newsletter itself and the majority of members who seem not to have access to email and will still want to receive that annual paper newsletter printed in the normal way.

In some ways doing the monthly bit is going to make the annual one easier. All the material that has been used monthly can be regurgitated for the annual edition. Which leads on to the question: "Will those members who have seen the email newsletters still expect to receive the annual paper edition?" My suspicion is "Yes!". Everyone likes to sit in a comfy chair to do a spell of reading. If you've got a laptop that is still possible but some people just like the feel of the paper copy. There are some savings to be made by printing fewer copies of the annual newsletter but they are not proportional: that is to say assuming all 150 email addressees (roughly a third of the total) did not have the printed version, it would not save a third of the cost of the printed version. There are set-up costs and so it would be more like a saving of between a sixth and an eighth. If, of course, half those members who get the email version still said they wanted the annual printed version the saving would be even less, depending on the numbers.

The intention is to continue with monthly electronic newsletters so long as we have enough material to put into it, although that is a fairly inconsequential variable. If we have only enough material for a single page then we send a pdf containing only a single page. If there is more material, there are more pages. It's simple.

And, most important, there are no printing costs!

– Peter Luck