News and Views Extra

October 2022



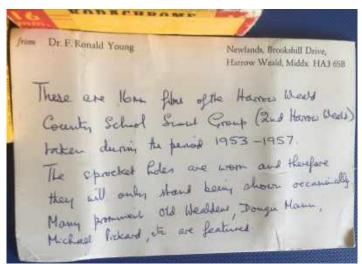
Treasure from our archive.....

but first, a note......

Fortunately, these days, the digitising process doesn't rely on the sprockets, so we now have these films on the website – and hopefully they'll be played on the big screens at the Memorial Hall, next April.

Two of the films show the 2nd Harrow Weald Scout Group on camp during

the '50s; and the first sets it all up,



being an amazing visual story of the building of the Scout Hut from scratch, in 1953. This film features all sorts of people who may or may not have been Scouts, but who were very happy to join in the general fun and be filmed in their lunch break.

Unsure of the exact location of the hut, I (Ed.) asked Pat Moloney 1964, who said:

I was a member of 2nd Harrow Weald in 1964/65 when it merged with 1st Harrow Weald, opposite the Hare. The hut was down from the 'new building', past the tennis courts – so, edge of East field and North field. Hope this helps identify the location for you. I hope to make the reunion next year as Watford are away.

We hope you do, Pat, so that we can thank you properly for all the digitised material you've made so readily available to us.

There's more about both **Guides** and **Scouts** further, on, but meanwhile, some glimpses into that world of youth and possibility.....









It often happens that we receive contributions that tie in beautifully with each other, and **Dorothy Derbyshire née Mayes 1960**, writing in response to Issue 45, connected Scouting and the Young family again. She wrote:

Memories of Mrs Young

Reading Nick Young's article, in the 2022 OW News and Views, about his mother, brought back memories of Nick as a Cub Scout. I joined the Land Rangers after leaving Guides and part of our service was to help out in the local community. I spent many Saturday mornings in a charity shop in Wealdstone. It was dirty, dark, and most disagreeable, not a bit like charity shops today.

I also helped out with a Cub pack which met in a Scout hut somewhere at the bottom of Clamp Hill. Nick was a Cub but I didn't realise who his parents were until Nancy Young arrived one evening to collect him. I was about sixteen at the time, and most embarrassed to meet a teacher outside of school!

The leader of the Land Rangers was 'Mitch' Watson, the mother of Mark and Colin. Mark was in our year (1960) and Colin in my brother Keith's year (1963). Their father was District Commissioner in the Scouts – or similarly prestigious if I've got the title wrong. Does anyone hear from Mark or Colin?

As we were already in touch with **Nick and Diana Young**, because of the films their father took, it seemed only right to let Nick see Dorothy's story in advance of this newsletter, and his response was both funny and memorable!

I do remember Dorothy, and loved her piece. Gosh that brings back some memories! The cub pack was the 6th Stanmore and met on Thursday evenings in the Scout Hut which used to be in the woods at Brockhurst Corner, next to the pond and among the wild dog roses. The formidable Mrs. Grant was Akela, and she was helped by a lady called Jan (Moghri?) as well as Dorothy. Brian "Library" Jones (another HWGS alumnus) was Group Scout Leader and Percy Watson was the District Commissioner.

Dorothy's embarrassment at meeting my Mum out of school must only have been matched by my own mortification at having her publicly pick me up! Mum didn't drive in those days and my dad worked late so she had to walk down from Brookshill Drive to retrieve me (incredibly I was allowed to brave the outward leg under my own steam.) After that first time I forbade her to come anywhere near the hut, so she had to resort to skulking in the shadows at the bottom of Clamp Hill, waiting for me to emerge.

Mum was somewhat ahead of her time in strongly objecting to the explicit Christianity of the then scouting ethos. I tended to get caught in the crossfire between her confirmed atheism and my official obligations to the cub scout motto "I will do my duty to God and to the Queen." Matters finally reached their head when I got promoted to Sixer which meant I had certain responsibilities including my turn at carrying the flag at Church Parade (which I had hitherto managed to avoid.) But on the first occasion I was completely unprepared for the unwieldy weight of the full-size 6th Stanmore flag when it was presented back to me by the vicar, and promptly dropped it on his head! So Mum got the last laugh...

Another excruciating detail is that immediately after the service the four flag bearers (Brownie, Cub, Guide & Scout) were expected to form a guard of honour at the All-Saints lych-gate. As you intimate the vicar took my pratfall in the best of spirits - "He dropped it on my bonce!" -

but I still had to suffer the humiliation of the entire congregation filing somewhat apprehensively under our raised flags as they crocodiled out. It was all the talk of school the next morning and took me quite a while to live down.







More archive treasure

In a summer of great stuff from England's women, we can't sadly offer a girls' football team here - those times were different - but the enthusiasm is just as evident among all these founder members of the school. The photos were taken at the reunion, from a display, and so the names overlapped - hopefully you can work out who's who.

And, what about those Guides and Scouts?

You will notice that the football photo is from the Weald Chronicle, already the third issue to be published, in that founding school year. In fact, both photos are on the same page of that issue, in the sports section, and were said in J.M. Britton's editorial (he of school song words) to be the first team portraits taken at Harrow Weald. The other sports reported on in that first year were tennis, cricket, swimming, and rounders, valiantly played by the first years on an extremely bumpy pitch. And, in searching for these reports, suddenly, there were the Guides and Scouts, whose activities were enthusiastically described by founder members.

The **2nd Harrow Weald Guide Company** came first - just - with their first meeting on May 4th 1934, seventeen Guides in two patrols - Swallow and Snowdrop. It finished - as did all subsequent meetings - with camp fire songs, and 'Taps'. All but one of the meetings were held outdoors, starting with tea made over a camp fire in the corner of the school field. Tenderfoot badges completed, enrolment and uniforms followed; and work on second stage badges began with running a mile uphill to prove their physical fitness. The report, by **Diana Rupp 2B Chaucer House,and Patrol Leader of Snowdrop Patrol**, ended with an appeal:

We very much want a Company flag (Union Jack or World Flag). Tradition says that this should be presented and not bought for the Company. Will anyone be our donor?

If you fancy browsing more Chronicles, maybe we'll find out if someone stepped up!

The **2nd Harrow Weald Scout Troop** had their first meeting on May 26th that year, twelve Scouts in two patrols - Cuckoo and Woodpecker. According to **R. Pocock, Patrol Leader of Cuckoo Patrol**, their Tenderfoot work included 'tracking and stalking on Harrow Weald

Common'; and with camps to look forward to, they were 'busily learning to cook simple meals and make ourselves comfortable under camp conditions'.

So, do have a look at those Scout films on the website: www.oldwealden.org They are short, but packed with memories. It's a shame not to have similar evidence of the Guides, but hopefully members across the decades will send us their own Harrow Weald Guiding memories.

Tributes

Since the last e-News, in June this year, we have heard of the loss of four Old Wealdens: Jack Gregory 1940, Maureen Schollum née Collins 1952, John Youens (staff) 1970s, and David Cheepen 1957.

Jack died on April 15th 2022. He started at Harrow Weald the same year as Heather Bickerton, from whom we heard the news. There will be a full tribute in the next paper magazine. Meanwhile, Jack's memoir of 1939 - 1946 appeared in the April 2016 e-Newsletter, and is well worth a read. You can find all the e-Newsletters on the website.

Maureen also died in April, news given us recently by her brother Terry, 1947.

When **John** died, Simon Stanley 1971 wrote: For those who were around in the seventies when HWGS transitioned into the Sixth Form College, Junior College & Weald College, John Youens (Maths) passed away on 17 June 2022. Simon also said that 'Helen Brooks (Art), who was there at about the same time, had a fall some while back and is now in a care home near to her daughter and suffering from dementia.

David's death prompted an email - which follows - to all 1957 members - and others associated:

We have just heard, from Christine Burch nee Porter 1959, that **David Cheepen 1957** sadly died, June 4th 2022. Christine said that she got to know him as a friend when working at the Harrow District Land Registry, and says that he went on to teach at Watford Grammar School before settling in Cornwall, where he had a renowned career as an artist. My own previous searching had seen him described as having been 'now recognised as a significant Primitive Painter'. There is also an audio file, to be on the website asap, contributed by John Radley, one of your number of course, on which David starred, with other contemporaries, then teenaged Harrow Weald pupils, with impressions of various members of staff.

The announcement of David's death will of course go into News and Views, but as you are such a large contingent - and such a dynamic one, it has to be said - it seemed only right to give you advance info, and to ask if you have your own memories to contribute to a piece to do him justice.

Condolences on the loss of one of your Harrow Weald year group. David didn't use email - except by proxy when essential - or phones, and so memories of him are likely to be from the days of youth - but it seems likely he would have been fondly remembered.

Responses to this message came back quickly and were full of sadness at his loss, and

memories of a person who clearly stood out, from his earliest days at the school:

John Radley 1957

Oh how terribly sad! Just like Chris Overson did, Dave always had me in stitches at school. It's a shame he didn't get the chance to hear himself doing the staff impressions ... I checked out his website a while ago and he was certainly very gifted. I wish I could have met up again with him - but now, sadly too late.

Sandra McMahon 1957

Thank you for letting me know about David Cheepen. I remember him quite well as we were both in the '57A class. I had found his website a few years ago so was aware of his career as an artist.

I remember one incident when we were probably in the fourth or fifth year: David had split the seam of his trousers and was understandably concerned about people noticing. A few of us persuaded him to let me mend them, although we had to agree to be discreet! The offending garment was passed out of a window, sewn up, and passed back during the lunch break. Luckily the repair held and he made it home safely.

I shall certainly look out for the audio file from John Radley, and thank you again for your message.

Chris Overson 1957

A sad loss. David did come to some reunions, probably about twenty years ago so it was nice to catch up. Quite a character, and very talented. I think he subsequently married, or partnered, Edwina Weymouth, who from memory was in our year but was a late intake. Hopefully somebody can provide some memories and correct me if necessary.

Marshall Colman 1957

I have many memories of David, as we remained friends from my first day at Harrow Weald in 1957 until his death last month. Here are just a few.

As befits a man who was to became a schoolteacher, he was always punctual. When he travelled from Cornwall to see me in St Albans, if he was due at three and arrived at ten to, I'd see him sitting outside in the car for ten minutes. When at school we went to Prom concerts together and he was always first in the queue. For decades there was a precise pencil portrait of Wagner by Door 6 and the memo, 'First in the queue 2pm, 26 July 1963, D. Cheepen.' When he was fourteen he arrived first at school too, getting there at 7.30, and was the only pupil ever to be told off for being early.

He combined a surreal and creative imagination with a great eye for detail. He was a plane spotter and had a passion for maps. He could look at a vapour trail and tell you it was a Bristol Britannia taking off from Marham Air Base. He could draw political maps of Europe from memory. He could forge D. Crowle-Ellis's signature on detention exemption forms. He also had a precise musical memory and could whistle a complete movement of Dvorak's 7th symphony and hum passages of Wagner operas.

We did A-level art together and he was better than me, but he knew what he wanted to do and wouldn't follow Mrs Passfield's instructions, so he got a poor mark. But when he studied to be an art teacher he got a first-class degree. He was the hidden treasure at Watford Grammar School for twenty years, educating and enlightening generations of amazed fourth form boys.

He worked hard and had considerable artistic success. For many years he was represented by a West-End gallery and his work was reproduced in books and on the cover of the Sunday Times colour magazine.

He suffered ill-health for much of his life but retained a wonderful wit and a huge, self-deprecating sense of humour. He had a unique and original mind, was an inspiring teacher, was deeply loyal and was committed to making the world a better place. He leaves a big hole in the lives of his family and friends.



Condolences to those who have lost friends and family recently, and grateful thanks to all who let us know of the loss of our Old Wealden friends.

It's never a problem filling these pages - thank you - and it was great to get the following, in response to the request in Issue 45 for memories from 'our younger members'. Here is **Joanne Rowell née Sanderson 1972**.

In the spring of 1972, I was about to take my 11+ exams at Weald Junior School. One of my friends was Diana Young, the daughter of Mrs Nancy Young, the deputy head at HWGS. We both passed. Diana went to Harrow County for Girls because her mother was at HWGS. I had chosen HWGS as my brother Roy was already there, and it was a five-minute walk from our house.

Sadly, in the July, my father passed away suddenly, so my first year at high school was quite difficult and I struggled academically. Nancy Young was so kind to me and took me under her wing, for which I am very grateful.

When I started in September in form 1C Mrs Phillips was our form tutor and also our French teacher. It was a strange situation as we would be the last intake of the grammar school. Harrow had decided to adopt the comprehensive system and abolish the 11+ exam, so HWGS became a Sixth Form College. Consequently, our whole school experience would be as the youngest year group. I'm not sure, but we did sometimes feel a little forgotten, as many of the school traditions were dropped. No more whole school photos and we never sang the school song.

School uniform was radically changed in the third year and girls could wear trousers, and as long as you wore grey and red there were no stipulations on where the items were purchased. I remember several teachers, mainly from subjects I enjoyed – so I can't remember any physics teachers! Mr Youens taught maths, Mr Turnbull English, Mr Clark French, Mr Feast history, Mrs Simpson geography, and Mr Gerry biology. My favourite subjects were history and classical studies, taught by Mrs Young.

The memory which I treasure most was a ten day excursion to the Soviet Union in 1975. All

year groups were able to participate, so it was a real adventure, with students from fourteen to eighteen years old. We spent time in Moscow, and visited the Moscow State Circus, where President Brezhnev was attending. The Bolshoi Ballet was amazing. We then travelled on an overnight sleeper train to Leningrad. We visited the Heritage Museum which was breathtaking. However, as a fourteen year old, I think the highlight for me was when our hotel rooms were searched by the KGB! No fear for us, just excitement.

I have so many other fantastic memories, but will save them for another time.

We owe great thanks to Joanne, because as well as being a rich personal memory, this is a real insight into what it meant to be at the sharp end of one of the great changes to the structure of our school. Please do add to this, as it's long been a gap in the understanding of many of us oldies!

The school song, words and music, were of course sent to Joanne by the next post. Sadly, it seems we took it for granted, and we don't seem to have an 'at the time' recording, of 'our' young voices. If you know different, PLEASE let us know. Meanwhile, we do have our grown up selves singing at OWA events, lustily, and in the Hall; and a best we can find version will be on the **website** asap.

www.oldwealden.org.uk

Our website has recently found us some old friends! In the long hot summer came welcome contact from two non-member OWs from 1962, who had found the website, seen the choir names challenge in the September 2021 e-News, and kindly sent the following:

Hope this will be of some use albeit we can only contribute three names to help fill the blanks: Second row from back - person far right, Lesley Tadd Middle Row - far left Judy Savage; second from left Penny Owen

Judy and Steve Jowers 1962

Of course, we replied to say thank you, with questions, and Judy quickly responded, revealing that back then she was indeed the **Judy Savage** she'd identified in the 1965 photo of the Senior Choir, and that Steve also has an OW brother, **David Jowers**, **1959**. **Judy wrote**:

Yes, you are correct in thinking we are married which is very helpful when we are looking at old school photos and trying to recall the names of people in our year! We are not members of the Old Wealdens as for some reason those who organise our year's get togethers (sporadic) have had separate events. We live in Hull (with a greyhound) so our attendance at London based events is always likely to be patchy, and unfortunately we missed the most recent event which took place in April.

We did, though, attend one year's event held at the school (neither of us can remember the date). It was a time made all the more enjoyable by Mr Becker asking us whether we still managed to keep in touch. He seemed very surprised when we told him our relationship!

However, as we go back as far as our senior school days, we have good memories of our time at Harrow Weald. A memorable occasion was the need for the 1966 school photo to be spliced together from two different shots as our recollection is that someone ran round the back of the

cohort trying to appear twice. Happy days! (Ed. rumour has it, someone from 'my' year, 1960, so I told Judy who, but would be rude to share here, just in case it's wrong!)

Judy had also referred to the story in that e-News about Miss Drury issuing a whole year detention for the field invasion, but didn't remember her – and of course Miss Drury left just as she and Steve were arriving. She went on:

Mrs. Thomas (don't think I ever knew her name was Gwen) was also 'scary' with her eagle-eyed look. Maybe instilling a measure of fear was a prerequisite for a Senior Mistress... Miss Drury sounds as if she was a remarkable lady and clearly dedicated to the school.

I have vague memories of the name ******* being associated with the photo splicing incident! We spent quite a while looking back over the old school photos, trying to recollect names both of fellow pupils and staff. We both remembered Mr Bonny (?) the lab assistant and I could almost smell the whiff of Bunsen burners!

Judy and Steve now have the latest copy of the paper magazine, in thanks for generously allowing us to use their news and memories here. If the 1962 cohort does have its own reunion any time, please do let us have photos! And thank you to Judy and Steve for not minding being pursued after that contact with the choir names.

In the summer e-News, **Alan Middleton 1957** appealed for possible sources of a recording he missed at the time - as his parents didn't have a record player! We had a prompt response, from **Tony Radford**, **also 1957**:

In answer to the person enquiring about the Senior Choir recording of Irene Pyke's arrangement of The Old 100th - I have a copy, but it is, of course, a 78rpm disc which would not travel well. If I can find a way of getting it transferred to a digital format I will.

Thank you Tony, and if you do, it will go on the website so that we can all share it.

Also in reponse to June's edition, **Barbara Summerfield née Penny 1943** probably spoke for many other readers who couldn't be there in person for the April Reunion:

It's always quite moving seeing photos of school. So many happy memories looking at pupils of long ago. Now in my nineties, very treasured. My thoughts often go back to Harrow Weald, so it's thanks to you the committee who keep us together.

And, before our 'long read', and a lovely photo of Elizabeth II taken by its writer, here's a great addition to the 'Creation' back story - page 7, June e-News - plus more on Saturday jobs, and full circle back to Lynda Boesenberg-Bywater née Harrison 1956 - who brought us that 'despairing, cursing rage!' Do read that again if you want to fully enjoy what follows, from Joyce Salter née Reeve, also 1956:

I too was in the choir singing Haydn's Creation, recalled by Linda Boesenberg-Bywater née Harrison, and have also never forgotten the words "Down they sink in the deep abyss" because

we were all balanced on tiers of gym benches and just as we were singing it one of the higher tiers collapsed along with its occupants.

As for Saturday jobs, Yvonne Heftman née Bennett 1956 and myself worked in Woolworths at Belmont Circle on Saturdays for the princely sum of fifteen shillings and tenpence. My job was cutting huge slabs of fruit cake to customers' requirements. Most accepted that the weight was a little over or under what they had asked for but sometimes an awkward customer demanded that the weight was exact which sometimes required cutting several pieces to satisfy them. (Ed. is it only me that's tasting that as I read, and wondering what happened to those 'unwanted' slices....?)

Yvonne, however, drew the short straw and worked on ladies toiletries. I can recall walking home with her one day when she said she had sold one lady a huge quantity of toilet rolls and sanitary towels. When telling my nan when I got home she just remarked that between us we were "caring for both ends"!

How these newsletters conjure up memories and I have one more to make you laugh.

Lynda Harrison and myself wanted to go and see Hound of the Baskervilles which was showing at the Odeon Cinema at Wealdstone. It was classified as only being suitable for over 14s and younger children had to be accompanied by someone over 14, and neither of us was old enough. Lynda was ten months older than me so she dressed in her best royal blue woollen coat and put on some lipstick and I wore my school uniform. We were looked at very suspiciously by the lady at the desk but were allowed in, paying for one adult and one child and then we shared the cost. My overriding memory is of two small girls huddled together in the dark at the back of the cinema in absolute terror at what we were watching on screen.

Thank you, Joyce, and everyone who responded to previous editions, and added to the mix. It seems that both the Creation and Saturday jobs are rich seams......

Meanwhile, some autumn linocuts, one, it's nice to think, by one of those Guides or Scouts, back at school, summer camp still in their head....







Now for our long read - deliberately at the end so you won't 'save it for later' while reading the shorter bits, and then miss out on a treat!

This is from Gordon Taylor 1949, still very much involved in his second career......

To introduce it, a life changing photograph

- and a very early Christmas card to us all!



WHO NEEDS A SECOND CAREER?

I was happily employed within the Public Health Laboratory Service (PHLS) for all of my working life. In 1956, I was appointed to work at the Central Public Heath Laboratory on leaving HWCS. My wife and I moved to Hereford in 1965. I then served as Head Biomedical Scientist (Laboratory Manager) at the Department of Pathology and Public Health Laboratory in Hereford from 1972. Following the opening of a new laboratory building in 1974, a colleague and I had set up a new photography facility in the laboratory, with a fully equipped dark room, to serve our local needs. The hospital had no photographic service of its own and it wasn't long before we began receiving requests for slides for consultants' lectures, clinical photography on the wards and in theatre; and event photography for the hospital newsletter and annual reports, as well as for our own requirements.

In the early 1980s my wife saw a letter in the Hereford Times requesting suitable photos for the Friends of Hereford Cathedral Christmas card and persuaded me to show them a photograph of the cathedral in the snow, taken in the winter of 1980 (above). This was adopted by the Friends for their card at Christmas 1983. I was amazed to see it fly off the shelves and a second print run was needed! In early 1984, the Dean of Hereford Cathedral asked me to come and see him.....

I have to admit it was quite difficult to maintain a quality photographic service for both the laboratory and hospital as well as to manage the laboratory with all its complexities, even with the untiring support of my 'photographic' colleague at that time, but suddenly I was confronted with a new challenge.

One of the cathedral tower buttresses was found to be in a serious condition. It had a vertical split and was in danger of falling. Temporary scaffolding was erected for protection. An urgent appeal for funds to save it was planned for the following Spring. In preparation for this, there was need for a large-scale publicity campaign. Would I, the Dean asked, be able to provide a photographic record, during the next three months, of the cathedral buildings, people, special

services and especially its decaying fabric, for use in the appeal publicity?

Somehow, using lunch breaks, Saturdays and the lighter evenings, I managed to produce over 1000 photographs and transparencies. My relationship with Hereford Cathedral had begun in earnest

HRHs Prince Charles and Princess Diana launched the appeal in April 1985. I was part of the 'press pack' for the occasion and one of my photos won the joint Amateur Martini Royal Award for that year. When the PHLS HQ management got wind of this, they sent me to Ashford Hospital to photograph Princess Diana visiting the Public Health Laboratory there and launching the Rubella vaccination programme for new mothers!

The PHLS hierarchy was already aware of the role of photography at the Hereford laboratory, so were quietly encouraging and supported us when we needed to buy new equipment. They certainly valued our contribution at a national level. The PHLS Annual Scientific Conference, (delegates from our 46 Public Health Laboratories came from all over England and Wales) ran for nearly 25 years and for most of these I provided photographic coverage, working with the PHLS Chief Medical Photographer until his retirement in the 1990s. I continued in this role with the PHLS (subsequently HPA) until 2004, during the early part of my retirement.

Back at the 'coal face', however, every so often, during the 1980s and 1990s, another request would come from the cathedral and I got to know different people there, including the Librarian, resulting in the provision of photographs to illustrate a new Mappa Mundi guide and the new Catalogue of the Manuscripts (Thompson and Mynors) in 1994.

Meanwhile, the photography at the hospital continued to expand until my retirement from the PHLS and hospital at the end of 1998. I was subsequently asked by the hospital to continue to provide photographic services to the Dermatology Department. This I did till 2014.

As my PHLS career came to its conclusion, the Librarian at the cathedral asked me to join the voluntary staff as photographer and to begin cataloguing the photographic archive – and I have been there ever since, working part time as required.

I have made the transition from film to digital during this time resulting in a huge cut in costs. I have been privileged to photograph the wonderful illuminations in many of our 227 mediaeval manuscripts (fig.2), the Mappa Mundi and its mysterious drawings (probably more times than anyone else)(Fig.3), the cathedral buildings inside and out, its treasures, memorials and stained glass (Fig.4), many of its important events, including ten Royal visits (Fig.5) and the four wonderful gardens (on a weekly basis) (Fig.6). (Ed. photos on facing page)

Hereford Cathedral is quite small, in comparison with many other cathedrals, but it is full of interest, including both the Mappa Mundi and the largest chained library in the world. It is a delightful community in which to engage in a second career - and a wonderful place to visit. I look forward to seeing you there!

Gordon W Taylor MBE FIBMS LRPS July 2022



fig.2

fig.3



fig.4



fig.5





And **fig.6**, one of those beautiful gardens photographed weekly by Gordon - and thank you, Gordon, for giving us an idea of both your busy and fulfilling careers - the second unexpectedly extended by a Christmas card - a lovely one! And, as it turns out, how very nice to have a smiling image of the late Elizabeth II in the collection you sent us.

Thank you to all our contributors. Do keep sending your News, Views and Memoirs, as ever, any time, any sort, any length - and if you've never done so, but enjoy reading what others send, do let us have a bit. Your OW friends will love to see your name! For now, the best of wishes to everyone, from all your Committee.

October 2022 Old Wealdens News and Views Extra

e-Newsletter Oct-2022/2

and.....if it's not already in your diary......

Saturday 29th April 2023

The Harrow Weald Memorial Hall

hopefully featuring Old Wealden films to watch while you enjoy your lunch!