



# The New Stocktonian



**2002 - 2003**



# THE NEW STOCKTONIAN

2002 - 2003

## OLD STOCKTONIANS ASSOCIATION

(Founded by Evan Baldwin 24th January 1913)

An Association of Former Pupils of Stockton Sixth Form College and the Grangefield Grammar Schools, formerly known as Stockton Secondary School, and originally as Stockton Higher Grade School: and also to the Former Pupils of the Grangefield School and of the former Sheraton-Grange and the Grange Schools.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION £1.50

(Advance subscriptions for two, five or ten years would be welcomed!)

Cheques and Postal Orders should be crossed and made payable to;

**'Old Stocktonians' Association'**

Communications should be addressed to :

R. Ward Esq., 66 Butterfield Drive, Eaglescliffe, Stockton-on-Tees, TS16 0EZ

Telephone : Eaglescliffe (01642) 651342

Or via website :

[www.oldstocktonians.org.uk](http://www.oldstocktonians.org.uk)

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Well, what has been happening at the Old Stocktonians over the past year or so? Actually, despite the Committee being reduced in numbers, we have been as enthusiastic as ever and usually quite effective. Take note of the following good people:

The Year Book of 40 pages packed with information of events past and present.

Remember that you, the reader, create the future, as our editor is dependent on news from your neck of the woods to entertain and educate. Remember also that next year's Year Book is the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition.

- The 76<sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner was quite a success. Held at the Swallow Hotel, the revelers enjoyed a reasonably priced four-course meal in elegant surroundings plus meeting up with old mates to indulge in a spot of postprandial reminiscing.
- As for the Sports Extravaganza, I am pleased to report that friendly competition between Old Boys and School took place in football, cricket and hockey. In this ultra-safe world that we now live in, I am pleased to report that no slips, strains or splinters have been reported.
- The Association is still solvent, and the Committee is determined that Members derive value from their subscriptions. (Is there a rise in the offing?)

Having served for four years I am stepping down as President having enjoyed a certain cachet that the position endows. I now return to the relative obscurity of the "shop floor" where, as a Committee Member, I can contribute more freely to the management of our illustrious organization. I would like to put on record my thanks to the stalwart Committee Members for their attendance, contribution, initiative, loyalty and advice regarding the affairs of the Association. In particular, I would like to mention Brian Brand, a long-serving member of the Committee. A member for many years, Brian is the mainstay of the committee with his encyclopaedic memory of matters concerning the Association. We should confer on him The Long Service and Good Conduct Medal for his unstinting labour on your behalf. Now that he has moved to Northumberland we shall see less of him. We shall miss him greatly and wish him well.

What of the future of the Association? Last year I made a plea for more people to come forward to lend a hand. We are still soldiering on; JUST !! We do need your support. Write to us and let us know what you are up to. Visit our website and send us an e-mail. You have no excuse!!

Let us look forward to next year.

*Tempus Omnia Revelat*

My very best wishes to you all.

**Roz Prichard**

## COLLEGE NEWS

The college commenced its 30<sup>th</sup> year in September 2002 with a record number of 950 daytime students on roll, with a further 600+ adult part-time students expected to enrol during the year. Staff and students were heartened by an excellent set of public examination results with the GCE Advanced Level pass rates improving for a further year, and with students on Advanced Level Vocational courses and GCSE re-sit programmes showing considerable improvement. We comfortably exceeded the targets for examination achievements at all levels. Once again the college's performance in the national value-added surveys, which measure student progress at A Level based upon their GCSE results, placed Stockton within 10% of schools and colleges participating in the survey.

A large number of students continue to participate successfully across a range of sports and the college fields teams in most disciplines competing locally and regionally. 40 students reached the British Colleges' National finals in Swansea in early April — our best ever achievement in terms of the individuals and teams (football, hockey, rugby 7s, netball) who have qualified to represent the North East in this national competition.

The rugby team had a very successful season in 2001/2002 reaching the Quarter-final of the British Colleges' Rugby Cup. The 2002/2003 season has started well with our football, hockey, rugby and netball teams busy competing in local and regional competitions but with no trophies at the time of writing.

There have been some notable individual achievements. Philip Milburn got through a series of trials for the British Colleges' National football team. He got through to the finals but was pipped at the post for the national team. Stacey and Janine Brown and Lucy Dale have all qualified for the British Colleges' finals in table tennis. They will be travelling to Loughborough for the final competition in the Spring Term.

Gareth John has won a prized scholarship to study engineering at Loughborough — with one catch. He has to be among the top 20 badminton players in the country. Currently ranked at 25, Gareth is training extra hard to improve his position — a difficult, but not impossible, task and we wish him every success.

This year we have been fortunate to secure a grant of lottery funding of £3 200, which has enabled us to introduce basketball (equip a team and pay for professional coaching from the Teesside Mohawks). It is early days yet but the team are making good progress.

Despite the heavy commitment of examination programmes students find time to participate in a wide range of college activities and participate in visits, both in the UK and abroad, in the furtherance of their studies. As in previous years, these are well documented in the enclosed extracts from "College News".

Particular congratulations go to Year 11 Maths students who won awards in the UK Senior Maths Challenge and to Martin Taylor and Chris Tompkinson who also took part in the British Informatics Olympiad and came through with flying colours.

Jenny Chambers and Sean Cooney were successful in obtaining 2 of the 35 places available to state schools nationwide, to attend a prestigious inaugural residential school at University College, London, which included the opportunity to handle state documents at the British Library.

Last summer was virtually free from building work although we undertook some minor improvements to our library facilities and inevitably more computers have been added in a number of areas of the building. Investment in IT has been an annual feature and the college again has well exceeded its targets, with a ratio of 1 workstation to 3.5 full-time students for the academic year 2002/2003.

Projectors connected to the college IT network will soon be in place in the majority of classrooms and progress has also been made on the development of a college intranet. This enables the teaching departments to devise and install learning materials, which can be accessed by students in private study time and can also be used by teaching staff within the classroom.

We are working continuously to improve and extend ICT applications and have been particularly fortunate to be able to draw in students from the University of Teesside, who have been contracted to work with our staff on the development of learning materials. It is not an exaggeration to say

that IT is having a radical impact upon the teaching and delivery of learning at the college, with only a few dinosaurs, such as myself, struggling to keep pace with these developments.

A popular and successful college must always look to its position in the learning market, as students on Teesside have a very wide choice of post-16 providers. In addition to ensuring that we maintain our excellent record of examination success and provide students with the support and guidance which they need at the college, we have to ensure that we have buildings that are adequate and fit-for-purpose. The increase in student numbers in September 2002 was accommodated with difficulty using the classrooms and extra facilities constructed in 2000/2001.

Work is now well advanced for the construction of a new teaching block of 10 classrooms and with some extension to the student social areas, will be ready in time for the start of the academic year in September 2003. This new build will be an extension to the south of the college and will enable us to re-locate the English and Mathematics Departments from their present cramped and inadequate teaching areas. It will provide extra departmental workrooms and student study areas associated with these subjects. The re-location of these departments will free up areas in the main building and will provide an opportunity to re-design teaching and private study facilities across a range of subject areas in 2004/2005.

The start of the academic year in September 2002 saw my completion of 16 years as Principal and a period of considerable growth and development at the college. In 1986 I inherited a college of some 550 students following a curriculum of GCE Advanced and GCE Ordinary Level subjects, which had changed little since the college opened in 1973. Not only have full-time student numbers grown and a small but successful programme of part-time students has been introduced, but we now offer a broader range of subjects and courses which enable students to combine academic and general vocational subjects according to their interests and career ambitions.

Prior to 1993 the college was maintained and in most respects directly managed by the Local Authority. The college was only allowed to draw students from a fixed catchment area in the town and our staffing establishment was fixed each year. I only had a small allocation of money to spend at my discretion on books, consumables and the college office. Principals were not trusted with a cheque book and we only had a small amount of petty cash for everyday use. Requests for additional equipment had to be made to the Local Authority and the processes for securing an additional typewriter, a photocopying machine or one of the early desktop computers involved a long process of exchange of letters and discussions with the appropriate officer or adviser before a decision was made.

The incorporation of the college in 1993 provided freedom from this detailed control and enabled us to manage all aspects of the college business. This freedom has enabled us to be responsive to changes in teaching and learning and to expand our curriculum in order to meet the changing needs of our students. Independence and the greater freedom it has brought carries with it additional accountabilities. We now have to respond directly to Government circulars and have all aspects of our finances and teaching subjects to regular audit and inspection, and now are fully responsible for all our shortcomings at the same time as claiming credit for our successes.

I have very much enjoyed my time as Principal at the college and have relished the challenge and the opportunities. I look back with pride on the successes and achievements of students and staff over the years.

It is now time to hand over the leadership of the college and I shall be retiring at the end of the Christmas Term 2002. My successor, Martin Clinton, has been the Principal of Woking Sixth Form College. He has a firm commitment to the values of sixth form colleges and the many opportunities which they can offer to young people. He is in fact returning to the college where he started his career as a teacher of economics and history in the late 1970s. We share the same ambitions for young people and I have no doubt at all that he will take the college on to further achievements in the years ahead.

I wish all Stocktonians old and new every happiness and success.

**Howard R. Clarke**

## **A welcome from Martin Clinton**

Born and bred in Manchester and hence a life-long Manchester United fan (including the 25 years when the team did not win the then First Division) and keen spectator of many sports. In my younger days a participant in a range of sports but in particular completed 12 marathons, one in (for me) the pleasing time of 2hrs 50 minutes. I have a wide variety of other interests including music, theatre, current affairs, gardening and d.i.y.

I attended the London School of Economics and then teacher training at Manchester University. Started, my teaching career at Stockton Sixth Form College and fell in love with the area. Got married while at Stockton and both my children were born in Stockton. They are now 20 and 21 one studying History of Art in London and one studying Medicine in Manchester.

I look forward to the College's continued links with the Old Stocktonians' Association and their involvement with our 30th Anniversary celebrations in October 2003.

## **COLLEGE ACTIVITIES 2002/3**

### **Autumn Term 2002**

#### **Travel and Tourism take to the road**

First Year Travel and Tourism students travelled to Docklands, London to visit the World Travel Market. This is the opportunity for countries all over the world to promote their travel and tourism industry to tour operators and travel agents. Every country was represented and the students were able to get a sense of the scale of the industry and also pick up valuable information, produced for tour operators, about various countries. Highlights included the Netherlands who created the atmosphere of an Amsterdam nightclub complete with music, DJs and dancers, and the gigantic traditional Kenyan building with straw roof and tree-top restaurant.

Our second year Travel and Tourism students visited Sellafeld in Cumbria to investigate the tourism marketing of an industrial attraction. The visitor centre has recently been re-designed by the Science Museum and provides information about energy sources so that people can come to an informed opinion about nuclear energy. Travel and Tourism students studying Spanish travelled to Barcelona to investigate cultural tourism in one of Europe's most beautiful cities. Visits included a tour of the Gothic Quarter to see the mediaeval architecture, a trip to the famous Barcelona football stadium and the students' favourite - an afternoon at Mount Tibidabo a historic mountain top funfair.

#### **Curtain up on Drama**

Theatre Studies students went to see 'Vinegar Tom' by Carol Churchill at the Theatre Upstairs, Billingham. The following day the director came to talk to the students about stage direction and in particular focused on Brecht's ideas that theatre can be a force for social change in society. AS students also went to Darlington Civic Theatre to see 'A View from the Bridge' by Arthur Miller. They were able to see the influence of Greek tragedy on a modern playwright.

Some AS Literature students travelled to Newcastle to see the RSC production of 'Anthony and Cleopatra.'

#### **Sport**

Our football, hockey, rugby and netball teams are busy competing in local and regional competitions but no trophies as yet.

There have been some notable individual achievements. Philip Milburn got through a series of trials for the British Colleges National football team. He got through to the finals but was pipped at the post for the national team. Stacey and Janine Brown, and Lucy Dale have all qualified for the

British Colleges finals in table tennis. They will be travelling to Loughborough for the final competition next term. Gareth John has won a prized scholarship to study engineering at Loughborough — with one catch; he has to be among the top 20 badminton players in the country. Currently ranked at 25, Gareth is training extra hard to improve his position — a difficult but not impossible task and we wish him every success.

The college has a basketball team for the first time. We have been granted Lottery funding of £3,200 to equip the teams with kit and to pay for professional coaching from the Teesside Mohawks. It is early days yet but the team is making good progress.

### **British Informatics Olympiad**

Martyn Taylor and Chris Tompkinson took part in the British Informatics Olympiad and came through with flying colours. They sat an intensive and challenging three hour exam which aimed to discover 'genius programmers'. Chris was one of only 70 students nationwide to gain a distinction, and Martin also passed, narrowly missing a merit award. The competition is sponsored by Lionhead Studios, widely regarded as the leading video games developer in the UK. Chris has also been awarded the University of Teesside Maths Prize for outstanding results in AS Maths and Further Maths. He scored full marks in three out of six external units - a fantastic achievement.

### **In addition . . .**

11 maths students also won awards in the UK Senior Maths Challenge, which tests the creative use of mathematical skills and covers lateral thinking and the solving of mathematical problems. Four students Chris Douglas, Matthew Lambert, Martyn Taylor and Chris Tompkinson scooped silver medals, which put them in the top 20 per cent of all entries. The seven others, who were in the top 40 per cent of the entries and won bronze awards, were Steven Ashcroft, David Robinson, Angela Pacitto, Jennifer Stones, Iain Ross and Matthew Yeaman.

### **Construction in Industry Day**

Six Design and Technology students from College - Phil Harding, Sarah Kennedy, Sarah Robson, Mark Lumsden, Kelly McGrath and Stuart Fear scooped first prize at the annual Construction Industry Day at Hartlepool College of Further Education. The team presented their proposals for modifications to Heathrow Terminal 4 to improve facilities for disabled travellers, beating off competition from all other local sixth-form colleges and further education colleges. They had to work within the constraints of a budget, timescale and materials, and the judges were impressed by their teamwork and their presentation of plans for renovation and refurbishment.

Our design teams are building up a reputation locally - this is the second year running our college has won this competition.

### **Outward Bound**

Thirty-two BTEC Sports Science students spent a week at Askrigg Outward Bound Centre. The students coach a group of special needs students from Abbey Hill every Friday afternoon as part of their Higher Sports Leaders Award. It was decided this year to invite them along for the week which helped to cement the close relationships which have developed over the years. The packed programme of sporting activities was not for the faint-hearted; it included caving, mountaineering, canoeing and abseiling down a waterfall. The week forms part of a practical assessment for their BTEC qualifications and all passed with flying colours.

## **French Trip**

Our A-level French students travelled to Aix-en-Provence in the South of France at the end of November as guests of the Lycee Georges Duby at Luynes, a purpose-built international college on the outskirts of town. The British Council provided our students with a grant to subsidise the undertaking of a research project into leisure activities for young people, which involved some interesting discussions with their French counterparts. The exchange gave our students a flavour of French culture and also, of course, the opportunity to put their language skills into practice. As part of a packed itinerary they also visited the old port of Marseilles, the Roman town of Arles and a Provence-style Christmas Fair.

## **Learning from history**

Roseanne Clarke and Laura Hancock, two of our A-level history students, took part in a visit to Auschwitz organised by the Holocaust Educational Trust, and saw for themselves evidence of the horrors perpetrated by the Nazis. They visited the gas chambers and also saw cabinets filled with personal items (such as the human hair, artificial limbs and shoes), which brought home the fact that the victims of Nazi atrocities were not just statistics but real human beings. Following the visit, they returned to London to see the Holocaust exhibition at the Imperial War Museum. The students videoed their experiences and plan to use this footage as part of a presentation for local secondary schools to coincide with Holocaust Memorial Day.

## **Spring & Summer Terms 2003**

### **A message from the new Principal - Martin Clinton**

You might imagine that as the new Principal of the College I have some ideas for new developments.

Since my appointment, I have listened to the views of many students, parents, staff, Headteachers, Governors and others.

Almost universally, they have been full of praise for the achievements of the College, the dedication of the staff and the excellent relationships between staff and students.

However, even the very best college can get better, and so I am suggesting some changes to enhance the very good experience the students get now. These include an expanded enrichment programme so there are opportunities for useful and fun activities. Two highlights of the enrichment programme will be the visit to the College of the Russian Cosmonauts on 7th October 2003 and, a week later, Teesside folk-singer Vin Garbutt, singing songs about environmental issues. The tutorial system will be delivered by a small team of tutors, who are specialists in supporting and guiding students. A new electronic registration system will enable tutors to track student attendance and keep parents informed on a regular basis.

Ten new classrooms and an extended common room will be ready in September. Most classrooms will be fitted with multi-media projectors to enable staff to use all the facilities of the internet and the College's outstanding intranet. The College is also investing in a digital language lab and video-conferencing equipment. We have appointed, for the first time, a fully qualified Librarian who will help students with their research skills.

I hope you're as excited as I am by these developments. Their aim is to raise the student experience from excellent to outstanding.

**Martin Clinton**

### **Spotted for success . . . and a 'site' to behold!**

Two outstanding projects - one involving research into the habit of an unusual spotted moth, and the other at relating to the design of a website have earned six of our students awards with distinction from the prestigious British Association for the Advancement of Science.

The students spent a week at the University of Durham where they were asked to present the results of their research to experts in the field and then answer questions. The moths came under the microscope last summer when our students were studying the behaviour of the Five and Six Spotted Burnet Moths'. The moths seek out clean environment and are very sensitive to pollution, and so the increase in their population here is good news for Teesside.

Biology students, Michelle Kennedy, James Storey, Alan Fairlamb and Daniel Hornby carried on research started by Stockton students in the previous year.

Computing students Chris Tompkinson and Michael Hughes also gained a distinction for their work, which involved designing a website for the North East Schools Industry Project, so that teachers can access information about the opportunities available.

### **Insight into university life adds up to apply its own residential course**

Five Maths and Further Maths students attended a residential course at the University of Leeds during the Easter holidays. Andrew Dalkin, Kayleigh Husband, Cheryl Midgley, Carl Wright and Matthew Yeaman joined students from round the country. The course provided an insight into how mathematics develops at degree level, as well as giving a taste of life to the University student.

### **Keying in to the high-tech world of Disneyland**

Forty students from the College spent three days at Disneyland Paris looking at the use of technology in the world of entertainment.

As well as enjoying the rides, the students took a look at advertising, marketing through the internet, computer-aided design, and computer artwork and animation. They found out how computers aid the design of roller coasters and how software is used to test G forces, speed and suitability of building materials.

Disney is always looking for something new, and IT has helped engineers to build coasters which are even higher, faster and steeper. The students were then able to experience for themselves how the human body copes with the speed of the roller-coaster during a ride on Space Mountain. A lot of our IT students go on to study computer graphics, and the visit helped them decide on the right university course.

### **The Big Apple is in education!**

Twenty-eight Geography, Travel and Tourism and Art students took part in our annual visit to New York to study urban geography, travel destinations and to visit some art galleries. Head of Geography, Steve Rickerby, gave his now well-rehearsed lesson in the sky from the top of the Empire State Building. One of the highlights for the Geography and Leisure and Tourism students was a visit to Harlem. Local guide, Neal Shoemaker, has become something of an old friend over the last four years and always provides a fascinating insight into this vibrant and fast-changing ethnic neighbourhood. The Art students also took in the Museum of Modern Art and the Guggenheim.

Despite a busy schedule, there was an opportunity to relax. Evening entertainment included a dinner on Broadway with singing waiters, a view of the lights of Manhattan from the Brooklyn Bridge and there was also an opportunity for a spot of retail therapy on the last afternoon!

Travel and Tourism students have organised trips for fellow students to Belfast, Liverpool and Alton Towers this term. They had to do all the organising as part of their final assessment including budgeting, planning the itinerary and marketing the trips at a student 'Travel Fair'. Over 40 students took advantage of the offers and the trips all ran smoothly. Now that our Travel students have shown that they can be successful tour operators it is hoped that they will be able to extend the offer next year.

### **The international language of friendship**

Our language students have again entered into the spirit of Europe this year. We have already welcomed students from France and Spain and given them a taste of Northern hospitality. This



hospitality has been returned: College French students have visited Aix-en-Provence, and our Spanish students went to Avila, near Madrid. German A-level students stayed with families in Troisdorf and we are looking forward to hosting a return visit in July.

## **From politics to prayers**

90 Business, Politics, Media, Religious Studies and Sociology students took part in the College's annual visit to London. Our Politics students were greeted at Westminster by the familiar face of MP Dari Taylor, who took them on a tour of Parliament. Religious Studies students joined Hindu prayers at the Shree Swaminarayan Hindu Temple and witnessed the god's being woken, fed and put to back to sleep again. Media Studies students were able to quiz the film censors about their decisions at the British Board of Film Classification. Business and Economics students toured the Bank of England while Sociology students visited Harrow, one of the UK's most famous public schools, and were given a guided tour by their sixth-formers. Unfortunately, they didn't have time for a game on the school's golf course!

Sightseeing was also fitted into the packed programme, with a visit to the London Eye and the Imax 3D cinema on the South Bank.

## **Dr David Dodds wins top national award**

Head of Physics, Dr David Dodds, is one of only four people across the country to be selected for the Institute of Physics "Teacher of Physics 2003 Award". This was in recognition of his excellent physics results - 100 per cent pass rate at A-level for the last six years, and also his enthusiasm for his subject. As part of his mission to encourage interest in Physics, Dr Dodds has worked in partnership with local industry, arranged a lecture tour by members of the Russian Space programme and conducted live remote control sessions from the classroom with the radio telescope in California.

## **Red Nose Day nets £1,000**

Students arriving at College on March 14<sup>th</sup> were confronted by staff dressed in their old school uniform, demanding £1 from those in fancy dress and £2 from those not. Most students had entered into the spirit of the occasion and only had to 'cough up' £1. Big Hair and fancy dress was the order of the day. Over £1,000 was raised by students through sponsored activities, including leg and nipple waxing!

The highlight of the day was a 'slave auction' in which several students and a few brave staff offered themselves to the highest bidders. All were quickly snapped up and set tasks ranging from baking a cake to giving a manicure.

## **A touch of drama**

Theatre Studies students travelled to Newcastle to see the Theatre Royal's production of 'Noises Off' the hilarious farce written by Michael Frayn. Later in the year, Theatre and A2 Literature students went to the West Yorkshire Playhouse to see Peter Whelan's play 'Accrington Pals' about the First World War. In May, the AS and A2 Theatre students performed on the stage themselves. The AS students starred and directed in plays they had written themselves. One group staged 'Happily Ever After', a continuation of the Snow White story, while another produced 'Mrs Dickinson's Theatre' in the style of nineteenth-century music hall.

The A2 students directed and starred in their own version of 'Vinegar Tom' using Brecht's techniques of accompanying music and back projection to bring the script alive.

## **Achievement at sport**

A good set of results for our football teams this season. The 'C' Team made it to the final of the Eric Bell trophy but lost to Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College in a nail-biting final. The 'B' team won their league, and the 'A' team came third in theirs. We are facing stiff competition from the

local sports academies, but our football teams continued to be the best non-Academy teams in the area.

The girls' football team are going from strength to strength. They have been awarded a grant from the F.A., and now have a professional coach. His motivational and skills training paid off when the girls reached the semi-finals of the North-East Region 7-a-side Tournament, seeing off Huddersfield, Grimsby and Hull and narrowly losing to Gateshead.

This is the furthest any girls' team from College has progressed to date and are looking for further success next season

The girls have excelled in other areas as well. The netball team won the Jill Bainbridge Plate, and the girls hockey team made it to the last eight of the British Colleges' Knock-Out Cup.

We have also had some strong individual performances this year. Several students competed in the British Colleges' finals in Loughborough. Stacey Brown won a bronze medal for table tennis, Lucy Dale and Janine Brown came 4th in the table tennis doubles, and Gareth John came 4th in badminton.

Sarah Loughran was crowned national junior wheelchair athlete of the year after a very successful season, in which she beat all her personal best times – from the 100 metres right through to the half marathon. The judges were most impressed with her performance in distance events – Sarah finished 8th on her senior debut in the Great North Run and second in the Great Scottish Run.

At the College sports awards, Dr Amit Banerjee presented the Banerjee Awards in memory of his son Arijit who was a student at the College. The award for football went to Jamie Peacock for his grit and determination, and David Messham won the award for hockey for his playing and organisational skills. Sports personalities of the Year were Michael Wascoe (football) and Kelly Dunn (netball) – both captained their respective teams and showed excellent qualities of leadership.

### C.W. KING MEMORIAL PRIZE

Founded by the Old Stocktonians to perpetuate the memory of C.W. King, M.A. Jesus College, Oxford and London; Assistant Master 1908 - 46 and Senior English Master for 23 years at the Secondary School. The Prize, now valued at £20, is awarded for excellence in English at Grangefield School.

### G.G. ARMSTRONG MEMORIAL PRIZE

Founded by the Old Stocktonians to perpetuate the memory of G.G. Armstrong, M.A., M. Litt., Armstrong College, University of Durham; Senior History Master 1921 - 48 at the Secondary School. The Prize is awarded annually, in the sum of £20, for excellence in History at Grangefield School.

### J.G. RATTENBURY MEMORIAL PRIZE

Founded by Old Stocktonians to perpetuate the memory of J.G. Rattenbury, B.A., AKC, PGCE [Kings College, London] Senior French Master and Deputy Head (during the period 1931-73) at the Secondary School and Grangefield Grammar School for Boys. The Prize is awarded annually, in the sum of £20, for excellence in Modern Languages at Grangefield School.

2002	History Prize	Sean Routledge
	English Prize	Emma Oglesby
	Modern Languages	Rebecca Parley

The prizes are currently £20.00 each.

## DEGREE RESULTS 2002-3

Name		Subject	Degree		University
Helen	Coverdale	History & Politics	BA Hons		York
Richard	Curtis	Physics	BSc	2.2	Durham
Anthony	Hill	Mathematics	BSc	1	Durham
Kate	McCready	Modern Languages	BA	2.1	Durham
Chris	Pilbin	Law	LL.B	2.1	
Andrew	Sharp	Geophysics (Geology)	BSc	2.1	Liverpool
Jillian M.	Smith	Maths with Business Admin.	BSc	2.1	Northumbria
Anthony	Swinbank	Physics	BSc	1	Durham
Michael	Wilkinson	Physics	BSc	2.2	Durham

### FRONT COVER

The photograph this year shows the new leisure complex, 'Splash'. It is situated next to the old Police Station on Church Road, opposite to the 'new' library and Municipal Buildings. The facilities include a wave machine, flume slide, whirl pool, cafeteria, crèche and large swimming pool. There is also a well-equipped fitness suite and aerobics centre.

The leisure complex is built on the site of the former swimming pool, which, in turn, had been built to replace the old 25 yard pool in Bath Lane, where many of you reading this will have learned to swim (at least your first few strokes).

[For those of you who have not visited the town for a long time the library and Municipal Buildings are on the site of the former cattle market behind the Parish Church.]

## J.G. RATTENBURY APPEAL

The appeal, last year raised, raised just £43.50. This may have been due to the Year Book going out later than usual and it was decided to repeat the appeal.

The committee wondered how to commemorate Gordon, who died in March 2000 aged 89 years. Our deliberations were prompted by a letter from a former pupil who has spent a great deal of his working life in the United States. He sent a cheque for £1000 and a suggestion that a prize be created in Gordon's memory and that current prizes be increased to a realistic value to cover a decent "hard back". He pointed out that Former Students in the USA made donations to their former educational institutions and he felt it appropriate to make a donation to the Old Stocktonians.

As you will realise we added the very generous donation to our Prize Fund, inaugurated a prize at Grangefield School for Modern Languages in memory of Gordon and have increased the value of the three prizes to £20.00.

We feel it appropriate to invite donations from you, to be added to the prize fund, in memory of Gordon Rattenbury who taught most of us over his 42 years at the school.

**Donations can be sent to our Correspondence Secretary :**

**Bob Ward, 66 Butterfield Drive, Eaglescliffe, Stockton-on-Tees. TS16 0EZ..**

Please make the donation payable to "*The Old Stocktonians' Association*" and indicate that is for the **GORDON RATTENBURY Fund**. The donation can be sent as part of other payments and we will apportion it as required

## REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE

The service was held on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> November at Grangefield School. Ken Whitfield and Brian Brand attended on behalf of the OSA. Although Ken was our senior representative, he asked that Brian lay the wreath at the 1914 – 1918 First World War Memorial. Brian, an ex serviceman by virtue of National Service, duly started the service by laying our wreath and the assembly observed a one minute's silence.

As it is every year the moving service of readings and hymns did credit to the School's Year 9 who had organised the occasion.

As always we thank Mick Hill, his staff and the pupils for looking after our memorials and making us so welcome.

**Brian Brand**

NOTE : Remembrance Sunday commemorates the dead of both world wars. It occurs on the second Sunday in November, that closest to November 11th, Armistice Day, the date in 1918 when the Armistice was signed to end World War I - "The war to end all wars"!

## **OLD STOCKTONIANS' ASSOCIATION**

(founded by Evan Baldwin 24th January 1913)

### **LIST OF OFFICIALS for 2001-2002**

#### **PRESIDENTS :-**

Mr. R. Prichard (Association President)  
Mr. E. Baldwin (deceased) (Founder President)  
Mr. H. R. Clarke (Principal)

#### **VICE-PRESIDENTS:-**

Miss L. Waring\*  
Mr. B. P. Brand  
Mr. P. Graham

Mr. J. Ingham  
Mr. R. Ward

(\* denotes Senior Vice-President)

#### **OFFICE BEARERS :-**

*Minutes Secretary* : Dr K.Turner  
*Hon. Treasurer* : Mr B.P. Brand  
*Members' Correspondence Secretary* : Mr R. Ward  
*Membership Records' Secretary* : Mr. P. Graham  
*Dinner Secretary* : Mr R. Prichard  
*Year Book Editor* : Mr. P. Graham  
*Advertising Manager* : Mr. D. Harris  
*Sports Extravaganza Co-ordinator* : Mr. T. Ripley

#### **COMMITTEE (with above)**

Mrs M. Bradley  
Miss J. Farnaby

Mr P. B. Braney  
Mr. M. Gillespie

#### **HON. AUDITOR :-**

Mr. P. Fleck F.C.A.

#### **STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES**

None

#### **THE OLD STOCKTONIANS BENEVOLENT FUND :-**

Convenor : Mr. B.P. Brand

Trustees : Mr H. R. Clarke, Revd. Mrs J.M. Thomas, Mr P. Graham

Hon. Auditor : Mr. J. Ingham

## **2001 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE OLD STOCKTONIANS' ASSOCIATION**

The meeting was held on Monday the 15<sup>th</sup> April 2002 in the Staffroom of Stockton Sixth Form College with the Association President Mr R L Pritchard in the Chair.

Present: Mr R L Pritchard (Chairman – President), Mr B P Brand, Mr P B Braney, Mr D Harris, Mr P Graham, Mr R Ward, Miss L Waring, Mr K Turner

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mr W Dobson and Mr M Gillespie.

### **2. MINUTES OF THE 2000 AGM**

The minutes of the 200 AGM held on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2001 were read and confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

### **3. MATTERS ARISING**

The item regarding the Benevolent Fund Report had indicated that a sum of £300 had been received but it was pointed out that this sum had in fact been paid out.

### **4. MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT**

Mr Graham reported that the membership of the Association comprised the following Life Members 167 (Same as previous year), yearly members 89 (83 last year). Of the annual members 20 were in arrears and 59 had paid in advance. Part of the increase in the membership had been via the web site of the Association on Internet.

### **5. YEAR BOOK EDITOR'S REPORT**

The editor, Mr Graham, reported that as previously 400 copies were to be printed and distributed. Some copies were given to the Sixth Form College and also to Grangefield School. Quotes for printing had ranged from £318 to £585.

Other expenses for producing the year book were:

Envelopes	£15
Labels	£3
Ink cartridge	£15
Postage	£70 (some overseas postage >1£)
Total costs were between £421 and £450.	

Mr Graham thanked Mr Harris for his efforts in securing advertising.

The President thanked Mr Graham for his own efforts in the production of the Year Book.

### **6. HON. TREASURER'S REPORT**

The Hon Treasurer, Mr Brand, reported that Mr P Fleck had now audited the accounts. Mr Brand pointed out some key aspects of the accounts for the meeting.

1. The amount of £380.27 on page 2 relating to creditors had now been paid
2. The income for the Year Book on page 3 was down from £330 to £114.77
3. In the next accounts there would be an amount of £45 for three prizes of £15 each
4. A donation of £1000 received from an overseas member was deposited in the bank account in July and would be shown in the accounts of the next year.

The President checked the balance of the account shown in the bank book.

Mr Ward reported that he had in his possession 106 copies of the History of the Association. He also had several OSA stick pins. Mr Turner proposed that both the book and the pins should be offered for sale at £1 instead of £2.50. This was seconded by Mr Harris and approved by the meeting. The President was going to include this in the next Year Book.

## **7. BENEVOLENT FUND REPORT**

Mr Brand, the Convener of the fund, reported that these accounts had been audited. He stated that the current low bank interest rates mean that income on deposits had been reduced. This was a problem common to all types of associations and current rules by the Inland Revenue meant that higher rate accounts could not easily be used.

## **8. ELECTION OF PRESIDENT**

Mr R L Pritchard reluctantly agreed to continue for a further year since no other proposals or offers were forthcoming.

## **9. ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Members agreed the following responsibilities:

Treasurer	–	Mr B P Brand
Membership Correspondence	–	Mr R Ward
Membership Records	–	Mr P Graham
Meetings and Minutes	–	Mr K Turner
Dinner Arrangements	–	Mr R L Pritchard
Yearbook Editor	–	Mr P Graham
Yearbook advertising and publicity	–	Mr D Harris
Sports Activities	–	Mr T Ripley

Mr Brand pointed out to the meeting that he and his wife were shortly due to move to Northumberland and hence he would be unable to continue in the same manner in the coming year. He was willing to do the job of Treasurer by post for the next year. Mr Ward proposed that this offer should be accepted and reviewed in a year's time. This was accepted.

The President thanked Mr Brand for his work.

## **10. ELECTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

The following members were elected to the committee:

Mrs M Bradley, Mr P B Braney.

Mr P B Braney was welcomed back to the committee and enquiries were made about the general health and well being of Miss J Farnaby. No definite news of Miss Farnaby was available and it was suggested that a letter be sent to her on behalf of the committee.

## **11. APPOINTMENT OF HON. AUDITOR**

The meeting approved the re-appointment of Mr P Fleck and thanked him for his efforts in the previous year.

## **12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

1. There was a general discussion about the timing of the Yearbook and the fact that it must be issued in good time for the AGM and the Annual Dinner. It is suggested that the book should be published about 6 weeks before the dinner.

2. Mr Harris proposed that all office bearers should have a specific opportunity to speak at the AGM or all meetings of the OSA. This was seconded by Mr Ward and approved by the meeting.
3. Mr Harris apologised for the apparent lack of progress in collecting money for the advertising. A total of £330 had been invoiced. He talked about new advertising and said that the initial cover had been booked.
4. Miss Waring mentioned that the Old Girls had had a dinner the previous Saturday that was attended by 52 people and was a successful evening. There was a general discussion about ties with the Old Girls. It was suggested that the secretary of the Old Girls Association, Elizabeth Buckley, she should be contacted for any further details or help on possible collective activities. It was pointed out that the Old Girls were not in favour of joint events and were keen to maintain their independence.

*There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.01 p.m.*

### **THE OLD STOCKTONIANS' BENEVOLENT FUND**

The funds have been audited for the year ended 31st December 2001.

On 1st January 2001 the credit balance at the Darlington Building Society was £2 015.07. One grant was made during the year, £100, to a student who was to visit Zambia to work on a scheme organised by REAP International Ministries. A report of the trip was received when the student returned.

No donations were received and interest of £16.65 net [tax paid £4.16] was earned. This gave a credit balance of £1 931.72 at the Building Society on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2001. Thanks once again to John Ingham for auditing the accounts.

It is noted with deep regret the death of Arthur Carr one of our Trustees and currently Chairman. After consultations with the other Trustees the Rev. June Thomas was asked to take the chair and Paul Graham was approached to join the Trustees. Paul accepted the invitation and we welcome him to the Trustees.

Donations to the Benevolent Fund are always welcome and can be sent to Bob Ward with other money or direct to Brian Brand at the address below.

Appeals for assistance may be made in the strictest confidence to : Martin Clinton, Principal of the Stockton Sixth Form College or Mick Hill, Headteacher of Grangefield School or direct to Brian Brand, Convenor to the Trustees, 2 The Sidings, Christon Bank, Alnwick, Northumberland. NE66 3HR {Tel: 01665 576273 }.

**Brian Brand**

### **TREASURER'S REPORT 2001-2002**

The funds remain sound and have been audited for the year ended 30th June 2002. Subscriptions remain about the same as last year giving £148.75. The donations have increased from £230.85 to £371.99, but £150.00 was a donation specifically towards the Year Book. This gives an income from members of around £370, as last year. Building Society interest was £49.93 and the balance in the Life Members and General Fund £4 862.39, an increase of £525.97 over the previous year. The Year Book was not produced by 30<sup>th</sup> June and is not shown in the accounts. The costs to be shown next year will indicate a loss of about £175.00 in spite of the £150.00 donation towards it. This is due to a lack of advertising as the current financial climate forces our supporters to withdraw. Once again we had an extra expense because of delays in printing the Year Book, a mailing to members notifying them of the AGM and of the Annual Dinner. This cost £72.09 and once again we must thank Paul Graham for taking on the extra work involved. The Dinner was not



well attended, only 24 managed it, but in the new form, no expense was incurred and the dinner paid for itself. [All the hard work by the organiser is free!]

The King / Armstrong Prize Fund is now the King / Armstrong / Rattenbury fund and the prizes are worth £20 each. A prize for Modern Languages in memory of Gordon Rattenbury was added last year. A very generous donation of £1 000 was received and other donations totalling £43.50 make the prize fund a healthy £1238.09. Stocks of 'History of the Association' are not selling and although the publication costs have been recouped, we need to release the money tied up and therefore the price is now reduced to £1.00.

Finally may I thank Peter Fleck, our Honorary Auditor.

**Brian Brand**  
**Hon. Treasurer**

## **76<sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner**

The 47-54 contingent formed a majority this year ! I had circulated the details of the dinner to the 47-54 brigade at Christmas and as the Year Book wasn't available, the OSA had to rely on a mail shot to publicise the event. Although the number attending was down, it didn't stop us enjoying trips down memory lane and renewal of friendships started 55 years ago! Brian Crocker and Geoff Kenyon have been to several reunions of our year group, but never at the same time! The three of us went cycling on the North Yorks. Moors many moons ago and ended the day coming down Clay Bank in the dark, without lights! I remember vividly how shattered I was and how fit the other two were. I didn't feel so bad in later years when I rode a 12-hour event and covered 215 miles! Paul Frost promised to bring along his former group to the next dinner and reckons we should have a good turnout to welcome the revival. Jack and Barbara Candlin told Pat and me that they visit Newton every year at the end of June. Newton is a mile down the road from our new abode at Christon Bank and we invited them to call for coffee, as we expected to move in at the end of June. As it turned out we didn't move in until the end of July but our first "new home" card was waiting on the mat - from Barbara and Jack! We hope to welcome them properly next time ! The guest book showed those attending as -

Paul & Jan Graham, Derek & Linda Graham, Chas & Joyce Willoughby, Brian & Vivienne Crocker, Geoff Kenyon, Ted & Alison Wood, Jack & Barbara Candlin, Don & Dorothy Moses, Peter & Rosemary Gordon, Brian & Pat Brand, Paul Frost, Paul McGee, Dave Corney, Geoffrey Ward and Keith Turner

The evening ended for us around 23.30 hours and a good evening it was!

**Brian Brand**

## **77<sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner**

This was (successfully) held on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2003 at the Clairville Hotel, Eaglescliffe. Although numbers were small there were some new faces at the event and the meal was of excellent quality and value.

There will be a more extensive report in the next Year Book.

## **OLD STOCKTONIANS' BOULBY POTASH MINE VISIT**

Two visits to the deepest salt mine in Europe at Boulby on the coast near Loftus were organised by Keith Turner in the past year. The visits are limited to 8 people at any one time, are highly sought after and have an extended waiting time. We had to book over a year in advance for the first one and were able to get a second because another group cancelled. Due to the mildly arduous nature of the visit, there is also an age limit of 60 years.

The first experience of this trip is watching the safety video before getting toggged up in the correct equipment which includes steel toe-capped boots, ear plugs, dust mask, overalls and a battery

powered, safety helmet mounted lamp. Fetching it is not, but you soon learn why fashion is not important in the forthcoming hostile working environment!

The descent takes a very long time ..... long enough to study the well worn and somewhat rickety steel basket that takes 10 people standing, ..... just. No luxuries here as only a ragged tarpaulin separates you from the shaft walls whizzing upward as if to escape by some Archimedian principle, while you plunge inexorably into the devil's territory to replace them.

You notice quite early that your guides are wearing very little! Overalls and boots perhaps but nothing else. The reason soon becomes obvious as you hit the bottom of the shaft ..... a stifling heat combined with the rush of forced air movement which have the common aim of dehydrating you very quickly. Already the faint glisten of sweat appears on everyone's brow, not all of it due to fear of the unknown. Licking one's lips is not pleasant after a short while because of the salt in the air and on your face.

Next comes a trip aboard an open backed truck to take you the long journey to the working face. An amusing thing is to see the truck has a steering wheel lock. Even in the bowels of the earth thieves still operate. After perhaps 10 minutes brisk driving, with many corners turned where the tales of Arnie Sachnusson and his system for returning from the centre of the earth spring to mind, your host pulls up to announce that you have reached the point where we are no longer below land and blue sky but there is also the slight matter of the sea between the two! Thoughts immediately turn to questions of leakage and flooding which, slightly disconcertingly, are met with the response that both do occur. It is clear however that it is considered bad luck to dwell upon the few disasters of the past and that the occasional wet patch on the roadway is nothing to worry about.

Another labyrinth or two and perhaps another 10 minutes later, we find ourselves at the extraction face. The first impression is of how few men work here ..... and of the even greater heat that becomes apparent as soon as any physical effort is undertaken. Now we know why each man carries several thermos flasks and cool boxes, laden mostly with frozen drinks (which they are very happy to share with the ill-prepared visitor). The lack of personnel is due to the amazing level of automation. There are two main pieces of giant machinery which gouge a path into the rock seams and extract the salt (used for winter road de-icing and in the chemical processing industries) or potash (a fertiliser manufacturing feedstock). These are the "nibbler/excavator" which cuts a 15 foot square swathe through the friable rock and the drilling machine which quickly anchors the roof with long steel rods embedded in fast setting epoxy resin.

Machinery is mostly remotely controlled to protect operatives from falling debris and the excavated material is very quickly taken away by miles of fast moving conveyors.

Despite the heat and the dust and the cramped and potentially dangerous conditions, there is an obvious camaraderie between colleagues and many have worked underground at Boulby for 20 years or more. Throughout the visits we were treated with great courtesy and humour and enjoyed the feeling that we were not disturbing a bonus earning operation even though we could easily have done so.

Certain vantage points illustrated how there is often only a few feet between corridors both vertically and horizontally. Ultimately, the land below the North Yorkshire coast will have the appearance of bones with osteoporosis, however the skill of the burrowing extraction teams will ensure that the whole network stays in one piece I'm sure.

After a short while it was surprising how the ever adaptable human being became accustomed to this weird new environment of temperatures up to 40 deg C, forced ventilation, darkness immediately outside the small zone of artificial light, dust and noise ..... fading to an eerie quietness away from the working face. However, all good things must come to an end and too soon it was time to return to the more familiar planet. Polite requests for souvenir samples of rock were greeted with a positive but bemused response. Why should anyone want a dirty piece of rock salt they wonder?

On the way out, we asked if it would be possible to stop and turn out all lights to experience the darkness. Well, there is a pitch blackness that can only come from being a mile underground ..... and sure enough, you can't see your own hand in front of your face. In fact it is so disorientating that it becomes difficult to know how close your hand is to your face at all! I wonder how long it takes to find one's way around. I would certainly need a compass and even then I would be unsure as to whether it was working.

One other interesting fact is that there is not a single living creature down there in the bowels of the earth. The salts will not support anything, neither rodents nor flies or insects or plant life of any kind. Spooky.....

Apart from the Boulby staff there are a group of scientists somewhere down there looking for cosmic particles to prove the evidence for the existence of dark matter in the universe. We never saw them and the Boulby staff seem to just take them for granted. If anyone is interested in progress of this quest and to see some photos of the mine have a look at the web site <http://hepwww.rl.ac.uk/ukdmc/boulby/boulby.htm> . The photo of the lift shaft will probably scare anyone who has not been.

Thanks must be extended to the Boulby Potash Mine staff who were very welcoming and hospitable throughout the trip and who were willing to extend the underground visit into their interesting library of minerals and crystals etc. This is a trip not to be missed. If anyone else would relish the experience, book early because it can take up to a year to receive a slot!

**Doug Harris**  
**Keith Turner**

### **Potential 'Trips' for 2003 – 2004**

At a recent Committee Meeting the following suggestions were made for possible future visits. In order to ascertain likely interest amongst members there is a slip inserted in the Magazine. We would be grateful if you could respond with preferences (if any) so that we can make plans asap. Committee members are currently checking on availability and likely cost of such trips.

Boat trip to Teesmouth  
Baltic Museum, Gateshead  
Discovery Museum, Newcastle  
Herriot Museum, Thirsk  
Anwick Castle and Gardens  
Planetarium, Castle Eden Walkway

### **A Short Teach in the Hindu Kush**

So there I was, sitting at a bus park in Kathmandu wondering how I was going to teach English, 'I've never had to teach before, and after one week in London on a course I am suddenly meant to be able to teach English to kids who don't even speak the language', something made me think that I would struggle!

I had arrived in Kathmandu one week before, after a gruelling flight with a ten-hour stop over in Delhi (not the most pleasant of airports). I spent one week in 'the capital living with a Nepalese family. Along with the other thirty 'gappers' I attended a course, learning about the culture, customs and learning some basic Nepalese. Kathmandu is a crazy place, a hubbub of activity made up by loads of narrow, twisting streets. A lively and colourful city it is so easy to become

lost in the maze of alleyways, but that is probably the best way to get to know the place. Although the poverty is clearly evident the people there are always friendly and welcoming.

As I was sitting there in the bus park with Angus and Said (the other two lads who I would be teaching with) I realised that it was probably best just to take it as it comes and not be too worried about things over which I have no control. Unfortunately, I hadn't planned on the eighteen-hour bus journey, which was to follow.

Bus journeys in this country are always an experience and when we first saw the bus, with a 24 pack of San Miguel beer next to the steering wheel, we knew that this would be no exception! As we set off in our big fun bus we soon began to realise that this was not going to be the most comfortable journey that we had ever made. The only way to describe it is, 18 hours of shifting from one uncomfortable position to another, having strange conversations with random Nepalese locals while listening to dodgy Hindi music (which always seems to be distorted no matter what volume the driver decides to play it).

Kathmandu lies in a valley and it takes the best part of two hours to get to the edge of the valley. So while we were getting used to the comfort of the bus, we were trundling through the city and making for the only motorway in Nepal. When we reached the left of the valley we were all amazed. Peering to get a closer look through the window we were confronted with massive valleys and hills that seemed to stretch on forever. It was the one of the most beautiful things that I have ever seen, having just left the bustling and somewhat polluted city of Kathmandu we were struck by the 'freshness' and openness of the surrounding countryside. The road meandered down to the valley floor and then back up the other side, into what seemed like an endless landscape of hills. Once out of the Kathmandu valley, the driver proceeded to slam on the accelerator. Soon we were hurtling down the narrow roads, as the breaks squealed and we all lurched forward to see that, not for the last time, we had narrowly avoided going over the edge of the road and rolling into the valley below! The roads gradually deteriorated and soon it seemed that we were just travelling down dirt tracks. After about 5 hours we seemed to hit the 'terai'. These are the flat plains of Nepal and cover the southern half of the country, the road improved and soon we were racing along 'not so bumpy' roads! After numerous 'toilet stops' we finally stopped at a roadside 'cafe' (using the term generously) for our meal.

We soon realised that there wasn't a menu and set about ordering our dinner, consisting of the usual Dhal Bat. Dhal Bat is the traditional meal of the Nepalese, consisting of a plate of rice with various types of curried vegetables and lentil soup. Sometimes if you were lucky you would also get a tomato pickle and maybe some meat (buffalo or chicken). Throughout my stay in Nepal I tasted Dhal Bat in many forms and altogether I would say that it is very tasty. The great thing about this meal is that you can eat as much as you want. So as we sat there eating away we were surprised that once finished a bloke with a massive bucket of steamed rice, came up to us and refilled our plates. Hotly in pursuit was a young boy carrying a bucket of lentil soup and then came a woman with a bowl containing several different types of curried vegetables. Three plates later we all trooped back onto the bus and once again set off on our journey.

As the night gave way to a bright fresh morning, we soon found ourselves slowly climbing what turned out to be the last 'hill' (more like a mountain) towards our nearest 'bus route' village, Hile. We arrived in Hile feeling incredibly tired and just a little apprehensive, as we had no idea of what to expect. We jumped off and the bus helper climbed onto the roof of the bus to pass our bags down. As we stood around wondering what we were supposed to do, a man came up to us and asked us our names. This turned out to be Gopal TaMang, the head teacher of our school. He took us to a hotel, which was owned by the family of one of our new pupils. After giving us some more dhal bat we set off towards our school. It took us about 45 minutes to reach Budabari, a little village built up around an agricultural centre which was built by the British in the 1970's. The school was situated next to the agricultural centre and Gopal lived right next to the school (which turned out to be very handy). Because it was still the end of the monsoon, it was raining when we got there and the sky was covered in clouds. It seems strange but because we were so high up the clouds were below us as well, it was a really weird feeling, especially when I realised that we were going to be living higher than the height at which I did a sponsored parachute jump!

After being introduced to the household we spent the rest of the day sleeping off the effects of the bus journey. The household consisted of Gopal and his wife, Bishnu, his wife's sister, Bimala, their two children, four young kids from surrounding villages who were studying at the school and Debbie, the serving girl. She was nine years old and had to help out around the house. We all felt really sorry for her as she was not allowed to attend the school and sometimes we would see her just standing looking towards the school.

That night, after dhal bat, Gopal took us to sample the local drink. We walked into the village that has grown up around the agricultural centre, and he knocked on someone's door. As they opened up we realised it was like the local pub. There was a table and a couple of chairs, and as we made ourselves comfortable, Gopal ordered three 'tungbas'. Tungba is the local alcohol and is made from fermented millet seed, it is quite tasty, but leaves you with a bit of nasty hangover in the morning! Another local drink is called 'raksi', this is more of a spirit and tastes horrible, but the locals seemed to love it.

The next day we went into the school and met the teaching staff and pupils. We started by all going around together and seeing all of the classes. For the first three days we went into each class and taught songs and rhymes. Because it was still cloudy all the time it would be so funny when I was stood at the front of the class and see the clouds drifting into the classroom! We got to know the classes and spent quite a lot of time in the playground playing games with the younger kids. After the three days Gopal called us into the office and asked us which of the classes we would like to teach. Gopal also told us that he thought that even though we had come to teach the pupils, he thought that it was also an opportunity for us to teach the other teachers new teaching methods and styles. We couldn't believe it here we are with no teaching qualifications or experience and we are to show the other teachers what to do!

It turned out that Said would teach classes 7 and 9 English and class 6 Maths, Angus would teach classes 6 and 8 English and class 4 Science, while I would teach classes 3 and 5 English and class 6 Health and Physical. Health and Physical was great fun. I taught them twice a week, the first lesson being sport (football, basketball and even kabadi !) and the second teaching them about the body and how to look after it.

After a couple of lessons just getting to know the class we soon settled down into our timetables and started teaching from text books. In order to liven the classes up a bit I used to make up games around the textbook so that I wouldn't just be reading from the book and making them do the exercises. The classrooms were a bare four walls with a blackboard at the front and rows of desks and benches for the children to sit and work at. I got the children to draw pictures about the work we were studying and stuck them up all over the classroom to try and brighten the place up a little bit. Sometimes when I had finished a lesson it would seem like I hadn't taught them anything, and that everything that I was trying to put across wasn't understood. Then there are other lessons when everything goes really well, and you come out thinking 'Wow, I am actually teaching!'

Just before I left the school, the exams started. I had to sit down and write the First Terminal Exam for each of my classes, and then sit in on the exams. All of the students had to sit in mixed classrooms so that they could not cheat, and then they had three hours to complete each exam. After marking them, I was glad to see that most of my pupils had passed, but there were a few who I had to fail. One of those was called Bablu. He was a class six pupil and not one of the brightest, however, when I had given a monthly exam he had easily passed and was over the moon when I told him. It was the only exam that he had passed and he ran up to me and said "Thank you sir for making me pass!" I was over the moon. When I had to tell him that he had failed the, more important, Terminal Exam he was really disappointed.

I was always really nervous when I was in England and thought about the teaching that I was going away to do, and when we first arrived at the school I was petrified of standing up at the front of the class. However as soon as I started teaching I loved it. I have never had so much fun and I really loved all of my time there. It would be great to go back in a few years time and see all

my students and find out what they are doing now (though the younger ones will probably still be at the school!)

I left the school on the 26<sup>th</sup> December. Before I left the school they gave me a presentation at morning assembly. I was presented with flowers and covered in 'tikka'. This is a red powder, which the Nepalese put on their forehead for good luck. Well, normally, they just put a little spot in the middle of your forehead, however because I was leaving they decided to cover me in it. First the teachers came up to me and presented me with flowers before wiping some tikka on my face. Then Gopal asked if any of the children would like to do it, of course, they would love to get me! Loads of kids poured forward grabbing handfuls of the powder and throwing it all over, by the end of the ceremony I was covered! I had to go into Hile to catch the bus to Kathmandu and was walked there by two teachers and one of the ex-pupils that worked around Gopal's house. Once in Hile, I went to the hotel to which I had first been taken when we arrived in Nile. We had since visited there every weekend and had got to know the family very well. The mother, an old Tibetan, couldn't speak a word of English, but always recognised us, sat us down and fed us fabulously! As I said goodbye she presented me with a Tibetan scarf and bowed, it was really touching.

After arriving in Kathmandu, I got another bus to Pokhara to meet up with all of the Gap teachers. Over the next month I went trekking to Annapurna Base Camp, and went to the Royal Chitwan National Park. I was really sad when I finally left Nepal on the 29<sup>th</sup> January. Once I had left Nepal I flew to Thailand and from there travelled around South East Asia for the next three months. So now I'm home. 'Do I want to go back?' well if I could get a flight tomorrow, I would go for it. But seeing as that isn't going to happen, I guess I will keep working and get ready to go to Liverpool University, not quite so exotic, but never mind!

Thanks to everyone who helped me get there, I could never have expected it to be such a rewarding and unbelievable experience and without your help I could never have gone.

**Richard Thompson**

## **The end of 'The Club'**

Elton John, Eric Clapton, Rod Stewart, Jimi Hendrix, Pink Floyd and The Animals are not the usual list of names you would expect to appear in this publication. However there is a real connection with the Association thorough one of our late members **TOM REAY (1926 – 30)**, who passed away in 1988. Tom built a petrol station with a café above in the late 1930s at Kirklevington, which was later to become 'The Kirk', one of the best known nightspots on Teesside. As a saxophonist and violin player Tom was a member of a dance band and he soon began to run dance nights in the space above the petrol station which became so popular that it was necessary to extend the building four times and Tom registered the building as the Kirklevington Country Club. However by the 60s the era of the dance band was almost over and John McCoy persuaded Tom (no lover of rock music !) to allow his band, The Craw Daddies, to take over the Club on Tuesday nights. The popularity of the venue soared and soon John asked if he could hire the place on Sundays for other bands. Initially the venture was a 'disaster' until the week he booked Georgie Fame who, by chance, had just got into the charts with a song called 'Getaway'; after that they were on a roll. As the names got bigger the artistes appearing read like a who's who of the 1960s musical industry. Geno Washington, Long John Baldry, The Spencer Davis Group, Jimmy James & The Vagabonds, The Moody Blues, Jimi Hendrix and a (struggling) young 17 year old called Rod Stewart. John was so impressed with Rod that he used to pay other bands £10 extra to bring him with them. American groups and artistes such as John Lee Hooker, Buddy Guy, Memphis Slim and Louisiana Red started to appear and more big names such as Genesis, Yes, Thin Lizzy, DD Warwick, Ben E. King, The Drifters and Solomon Burke followed in the 70s. By now John McCoy had, with a private mortgage from Tom Reay, bought The Kirk and its reputation continued to grow, with people coming from all over the country; they often started queueing on a Sunday afternoon for the evening performance. However with the increase in equipment and the limitations of the space in the Kirk by the mid-Seventies John had to decide whether The Kirk could change from a club running live music five nights a week to something different. Taking a great leap he changed the venue into a

dance club and disco and proved once again that he had the 'golden touch'. He still adored live music however and continued to book acts on occasions but his intuition was vindicated when 74 people turned up to see The Police and 50 to see Dire Straits. Later groups such as Soft Cell, Haircut 100 and Simple Minds took The Kirk 'by storm' but the big local clubs springing up, such as The Mall, were making life ever more difficult and the 'writing was on the wall'. For John McCoy it was a 'golden age' that lasted 27 years. Having been closed for several years now there was talk of a new improved club on the site but this merely proved to be speculation and, sad to say, the building was bulldozed down in early 2003 to make way for a group of cottages. I'm sure many of our members will have fond memories of what was once 'the' nightspot to visit in Teesside and many others will have visited it but may have no memories of such a visit but will remember the long walk back to Stockton during an era when 'taxis were for cissies' (or the wealthy !!).

## **OUR SPORTING LIFE** **SPORTS EXTRAVAGANZA - 2003**

Thanks are due to our overall co-ordinator **TOM RIPLEY** and all the College staff who give generously of their time to make this such a special day for all former students. Tom is also a former student who is now teaching P.E. at the College and so there should be no problems with organisation.

*Tom can be reached at the College on 01642 612611 during the day. We still need all the support you can give if the events are to survive; they remain our last direct contact with the students at the College.*

### **THE 47 – 54 BRIGADE**

Tel: 01665 576273

2 THE SIDINGS  
CHRISTON BANK  
ALNWICK  
NORTHUMBERLAND  
NE66 3HR

As you can see Pat & I have deserted Stockton ! We sat down in February to discuss the house decoration and Pat, rather mischievously, suggested we move instead ! She should not have been surprised that I agreed and then set off for north Northumberland to see if I could find somewhere.

We always said we would like to retire up here but it went onto the back burner while Pat looked after her mother. As her mother took to her bed over three years ago it was becoming impossible to even manage weekends away. Anyway I spent two days checking what was available from Belford to Amble [where Pat was born] and then we both spent day trips to inspect possible abodes. Having decided we particularly liked this one, which has room for ma-in-law, we put the Ainderby Grove house on the market and had an offer almost immediately. After one or two "hiccups" we made it at the end of July and then the trials and tribulations began ! Those of you who have moved more often than us [32 years in Hartburn!], had a knowing smile and still ask how many boxes are still waiting to be opened ! Yes there are about 12 waiting to be unpacked BUT we have ditched an awful lot. We are getting there and can offer a meal to any weary travellers at the ring of the telephone, which took about six weeks to be installed in working order. The only proviso is you have to accept disorder because each time we tidy up we start looking around and decide to change. I am currently rebuilding our bedroom after Pat saw a fitted bedroom in a showroom and thought she would like it in the Sidings. The garden is three quarters finished but I'm not holding my breath as I know what Spring will conjure up ! Finding reliable workmen should have been easy, as we know the area fairly well and have friends from our days of caravanning in Beadnell. The main 'snag' is that the friends we called upon in the past are retiring and no one is taking over. We had quite a job to have a wood-burning stove connected. Our friend said he might be here one particular Friday but if he didn't manage he would be away to his place in France near Poitiers! A month later he arrived to measure up and a further month on he arrived to join the pipe on the stove to the pipe which was already in the chimney.

I remember laughing over "A year in Provence" and the antics and tactics of French artisans, now I could write a book of my own ! Enough of our amusements ! Young Tom Shield is [was, I hope] having similar problems in Spain but should be taking possession about now and D&D Moses went through something similar when they moved to Cornwall. I believe **EDDIE PINDER** may be joining the "movers" soon. I called in, on a visit to Stockton for the Remembrance Day Service at Grangefield, and Eddie said he was looking at properties near Leamington Spa [Royal L S for the purists].

### NEWS OF OTHERS

**JIM DURRANT** is still living in Middleton-one-Row. His wife Jean died over a year ago and Jim, who is approaching 85, sees his two sons, Peter and Christopher regularly. He was in hospital to have a heart problem treated with electric therapy but it didn't work as hoped so he is on drugs to remedy it - warfarin [alias rat poison] is one of them. He sends his best wishes to everyone and hopes to be at the Old Stocktonians' dinner in 2003.

**DERMOT [JIM] D'ARCY** is still in Hurworth and sounded in good spirits when I spoke to him recently.

**PAUL DEE** is now retired and was in the UK in September / October. He sent me a card, which was redirected but in spite of trying to contact, via USA, I failed and had to resort to pen and paper! Paul replied to my letter and said he had seen **EDDIE PINDER** and learned of my move. Unfortunately the OS Year Book was very late this year, otherwise several people would have learned of my move earlier. Incidentally I am back to not having an e-mail address for the time being - sorry about that for who correspond that way ! Paul asks after **JOHN HUTCHINSON** and **PETER WILLIAMS** and hopes to meet up with them sometime, perhaps at a "Final" year reunion? Paul sent a very generous donation to the Old Stocktonians to start a prize fund in honour of Gordon Rattenbury. The OSA initiated a prize in Modern Languages at Grangefield School in 2001, to be awarded at the same time as the Armstrong prize in History and the King prize in English. The OSA made an appeal in the last year book for donations, and have renewed the appeal in this year's. To date the response has been disappointing but there is still time. [Speaking with my OSA Treasurer's hat on] Paul also gave some interesting facts about his American University. They have a huge endowment from alumni, with a revised [!] target of \$2 billion. They expanded the football stadium from 45 000 to 60 000 seats for \$70 million, a bit of a waste of funds in his opinion. Anyone want to persuade our government to give generous tax advantages to donors to fund students and avoid top up fees?

**TOM SHIELD**, as mentioned, is now ready to move into his casa and he wrote "It should be complete with the exception of the tiling of the pool and the terrace, along with boundary walls and cemented driveway." No telephone in the foreseeable future is another point Tom makes ! **BRIAN CROCKER**, **GEOFF KENYON**, **EDDIE WOOD**, **DON MOSES**, **JACK CANDLIN**, **CHAS. WILLOUGHBY** and I met up at the OSA dinner last April. I believe it was the first meeting for nearly 50 years for Brian and Geoff. We always manage to have a different mix each time there is a meeting.

Another piece of news, which I find exciting, is a meeting in Spain of Tom Shield and **MICK WILKINSON** [The ginger haired one in M in his younger days]. Tom gave him my address and I hope he will contact me. That makes 16 out of 17 from the photograph that aroused my interest. That leaves **DEREK YATES** as the only one missing and Paul Dee is trying to track him down.

Well that's about it for news given to me, so if you have any pass it on !

I suggested a final year get-together for this coming September and most who have been meeting up felt it would be worthwhile to book a venue for a dinner where those of us who travel [!] can stay the night. My suggestion is the last weekend in September at a venue in or near Stockton. If you feel this is OK let me know and I'll investigate further.



Finally - the date of the OSA dinner in 2003 is Saturday 3rd May at the Claireville Hotel, next to Eaglescliffe Golf Club. Anyone interested can get a menu from the OSA Dinner Sec., Roz Prichard, 5 Theakston Grove, Hartburn, Stockton TS15 5PG Tel: 01642 585453.

Pat and I may have to miss it, as we accepted an invitation to visit Ireland with friends and I think that is the weekend we are returning.

I'll close by wishing you all **BEST WISHES FOR THE NEW YEAR.**

**Brian Brand**

### REUNION OF THE 1949/54/56 ers.

Following upon my letter to you of 11 March 2000, which you kindly published, copy attached, I received a "Blast from the Past" from **Dave Wells (49 – 56)**, from which I was relieved to learn that others, apart from we two, of the famous "Science" intake of '49, were still roaming this planet. Dave, having worked in the Far-East and in Germany, where he taught the progeny of the military, has retired to sunny Scotland with his wife Kay where, they enjoy the hills and a peaceful lifestyle.

Dave was Head Prefect in his final year of 1956. Calling upon the talents that he so ably demonstrated at the time, he established, by various means, contact with no less than 10 others of the famous few, and then, in exemplary fashion and, demonstrating that he had lost none of his organisational ability, proceeded to organise a reunion.

The "**golden day**" was arranged for 16 May 2003 and nine of us assembled at the School promptly for a 10.30 am roll call. After a few moments of gazing blankly at the strangers around us, recognition gradually dawned, whereafter, for the next couple of hours, we were entertained most ably by Alan Mansfield, Deputy Head, who generously gave of his time to conduct us around the school. This gave us all time to get used to and accept the ravages that the 47 and 49 years, since we had last seen each other, had wrought upon us.

The tour of the school was fascinating and resurrected many memories, (happy and otherwise) for us. For myself, who has lived in South Africa for 33 years, I was especially intrigued, as a result of the clear insight that I was given during the visit, by the extent of the social, cultural and ethnical changes which have occurred in England during my absence. Despite my frequent visits to UK I, like any other casual visitor to a country, had not previously been given the opportunity, as I was during this visit, to even remotely glean the extent and far reaching effect of these changes.

We all greatly appreciated Alan's entertaining, amusing and instructive guided tour through our former seat of learning.

Fascinating as reunions can be, material needs must be satisfied. Arrangements for this were left in the capable hands of **Jim Jamieson (49 – 54)**, as a consequence of which all were all well fed and watered at his bowling club in Hartburn.

The afternoon was spent on the "Teesside Princess" voyage to Yarm. As the ice had started to thaw a little between us, aided by a pint or two of the local ale, we, regrettably paid little attention to the scenery and the words of the "tour guide". We hardly noticed that it rained the whole time and expended the hours afloat very pleasantly catching up with lost time and filling in the gaps created by some 49 years.

Having been safely returned to shore we repaired once more to Hartburn for a "reviver" before moving on to the Claireville Hotel for an excellent dinner.

Of those who attended:

**Dave Wells** (Captain of School) – I have mentioned.

**Jim Jamieson** – followed a career in Mechanical Engineering that took him to Canada and Europe, and has now retired to a life of leisure and bowls.

**Keith Boddy** – whose knowledge of the forbidden territory of the “Girls School” astounded us all until he explained that, as he was the only one of us considered bright enough to take German at “O” level whilst in Sixth Form, he was “obliged” to attend lessons in that sacred territory. Keith, following a degree in physics, took up a career in Medical Science and has recently retired from the post of Professor of Medical Science at Newcastle University. We all had the same difficulty in understanding exactly what this meant, as was his son who, for his French oral, found it convenient to have Keith employed as a “Postman”. At least he knew the French for it! Notwithstanding our lack of understanding of his activities, of which he was modest, reserved and indeed secretive, they were certainly appreciated by Queen and country who awarded him a CBE and an OBE for his efforts and he still serves on several government committees. (This was gleaned from other unrevealable sources.)

**Dave (Bully) Allison** – although grey of hair looked extremely fit. Enquiry about this condition of fitness yielded the explanation that he spends his spare time “Orienteering”. Subsequent investigation revealed that this is an activity normally reserved for SAS and commando trainees!! Obviously a lifetime of teaching mathematics, including a spell at Grangefield and the Sixth Form College, did not kill him off!!

**Dave (Puffa) Train** – famous, or ‘infamous’, inventor of the “Bell Boat”, of which three hours of explanation left us all more or less in the dark as to what it was and its purpose, took a degree in Mechanical Engineering after departing Grangefield. Dave now lives in Shakespeare country promoting and doing, he assures us, “good things” with his Bell Boat. Modesty prevented him from telling us that he was coach to the British Canoeing Team at four Olympic Games.

**Derek (Farmer) Welford.** – instantly recognisable, despite his increase of girth, has recently retired from a lifetime of agricultural activity in Great Ayton.

**John (Tiger) Neal** – not so instantly recognisable, possibly as a result of grey locks, has now retired to a life of leisure and bowls in Stokesley. On being asked why, if he is a keen bowls player, he has not come across **Jim Jamieson** in the intervening 49 years, both hastened to explain that they belonged to “different leagues”. However, they undertook to make great efforts to dismantle these previously insurmountable barriers and arrange to play together.

**Ian McKinlay** – Ian was the only one of us brave enough to bring along his school report, which was liberally endorsed with “A”s. He hastened to point out that the “A”s were all in the wrong subjects. However, a brief examination reflected that he had possibly been cut out for a brilliant career in the ministry! Despite this natural bent he followed a career in teaching and has now retired. During a discussion on “selection and streaming processes” of which we all survived the eleven plus, Ian explained that the primary school which he attended was one in which, as it was such a rare event, the entire staff went out to “celebrate” when a pupil passed this examination.

**Alan Wrigglesworth** – immediately upon his return from holiday from Majorca, abandoned his unpacking and joined the party for dinner at the Claireville. Again, apart from a slight change of girth, Alan was instantly recognisable. Alan has worked for the ICI and has kept in contact with Norman (Nosh) Harris who unfortunately, because of business commitments, was unable to join the party.

Of those who did not attend:

**Norman Harris** – is semi-retired, does consultancy work for a Japanese company and is presently living near Barnard Castle.

**David Meek** – is thought to be deceased but details are not known.

**Alan Rose** – contactable through “Friends Reunited” lives in Australia where, after many years of working for his living, he has retired.

We all offer our thanks to the officials of the “**Old and New Stocktonians’ Association**” who, by their unstinting efforts, keep it alive and without whom this reunion would not have occurred, or have been possible.

Being gluttons for punishment, as exemplified by our years at Grangefield, we all feel that another reunion would not go amiss and are hoping to meet up again next year – (At our age we can’t put it off for another 50 years!!!) cordially extend an invitation to all other **49ers** who read this and would like to join us.

**Mike Watson**

## **30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Stockton Sixth Form College**

### **Staff and Student Reunion**

As a way of celebrating the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the College we are inviting past and present staff, students and friends of the College to a reunion.

The reunion will take place on Sunday 19 October (12 until 4). The event will be relatively informal, as we know the most important activity will be for old friends to get the chance to meet and catch up with each other and exchange reminiscences of their time at College.

We hope to show an exhibition of students’ work, photographs set-out in year groups and for talented staff and students to perform music in a variety of styles. There will be a bar with drinks and light refreshments on sale.

If you wish to showcase your musical talents or reform that rock band or string quartet of your youth please contact me at the College. Similarly, if you have photographs that could be displayed to jog old memories they would be gratefully received and returned following the event.

Please pass this message on to your friends. I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible in October.

### **FORMER STUDENTS HERE AND THERE**

**Less news than normal this year – last year’s pages were longer than normal due to the late output of the Year Book, but we still thirst after more correspondence !**

**We accept all forms of messages : - ordinary post (to Bob Ward), Email (to any of the Committee), parcel post (if you have that much to say !), pigeon post (if you haven’t), telephone calls and even word of mouth; plus a host of possibilities we haven’t thought of !**

**Paul Graham – Editor**

It’s always a great pleasure to hear from our oldest member **PERCY HUGH BELL (1914 – 18)** who included a donation to funds. Percy’s son-in-law recently sent a short letter to advise us that Percy, who was 100 in January this year, has moved into a nursing home. Although still mentally alert his eyesight has become severely curtailed. Percy still talks fondly of his attendance at the dinner a couple of years ago.

We send him very special greetings for his ‘not out’ century and thank him for his generous support over the many years.

In addition to a handsome top up of subs **STAN CARTER (1974 – 76)** gave a donation to the prize fund and enrolled **KEVIN & DAWN SMITH (nee BURN) (both 1974 – 76)** in the Association. Kevin & Dawn were married in 1981 and live just outside Hull. Kevin works for BP and Dawn works for the City Council. After leaving the University of East Anglia with a degree in Chemistry & Biology in 1979 Stan briefly had a job with Durham Chemicals at Birtley, just south of Newcastle, as Assistant Buyer of Commodities. Although the title was 'grand' Stan quickly worked out that it was not the job for him. Leaving in July 1980 he obtained a trainee position as a Cartographic Draughtsman at the Mapping and Charting Establishment in the London Borough of Hounslow in September 1980. He still works for the same organisation (although it has changed its name several times since he joined) but has been in the Central London Office since July 2002. Stan still keeps in touch with **IAN GORRELL (1974 – 76)** (and Kevin & Dawn Smith of course but does not see them as often as he would wish.)

Together with a donation to the CW King Fund and his address confirmation, **RAYMOND COUNTER (1931 – 36)** adds the following news. In December 2002 he had been retired for 23 years (he's now 83) from the Waterguard Services of H.M. Customs & Excise. Due to wear and tear in WWII Ray has had both hips replaced and is grateful to the NHS for his ability to still get around on his own 'two pins'. Also, in the last 10 years, he has had a cataract removed from each eye, which means he can also see where he's going! The eyesight and mobility are essential factors, which enable him to remain part of the team of (four) organists who play the pipe organ for services at Great Ayton Methodist Church – he is the only male! All in all he feels "life is pretty good".

**PETER DEE (1948 – 50)** included a nice donation together with a subs top up and address confirmation. Sadly, no other news at this stage.

Along with a confirmation of his home address and a donation to subs **GRAEME DEWISON (1947 – 54)** included his email address.

**JENNIE DIXON (1946 – 48)(nee HANDLEY)** thanks us for the magazine and the forwarding of her letter to **HARRY RHODES (1941 – 46)** – we understand that there have been some interesting news exchanges resulting from the correspondence. Jennie, apologising for her "scrawl", adds that she suffers from rheumatoid arthritis and fears that her bones "need a new look". [Believe me Jennie when you see the scribble of some youngsters these days your writing is *Copperplate*! Also they can't spell or write English! – Editor]

We were very saddened to hear from his wife, Eunice, that **JOHN GALE (1928 – 35)** had suffered several strokes and now required a lot of care. John was able to join us at the Dinner some five years ago and through his wife we send our very best wishes.

In enclosing a donation to the J. G. Rattenbury Memorial Prize fund **RAYMOND GEDLING (1929 – 36)** adds that he was a member of the first class 'Rats' taught on his first day at SSS. It was Raymond who informed us of the death (some two years ago) of **DAVID BYERS (1930 – 37?)** When David was living in Kent he had contacted Raymond and they kept in touch when David later moved to Australia, whence his wife wrote with the news of his death.

As with many who write to these pages **DENIS GIBBS (1937 – 42)** enjoys the magazine and hopes to hear more of his 'years' in this issue. Denis still keeps in touch with **DENIS**

**MIDDLETON (1941 – 46)** and his own brother **RON GIBBS (1944 – 49)** (of course), both of whom live in the same village. Denis keeps him up to date with news of his brother **ERIC MIDDLETON (1937 – 42)**, who now lives in Cheshire. Denis (Gibbs) met **DEREK BRAMLEY (9137 – 42)** in Northallerton about a year ago and he seemed in good health. Denis also invested in an (**ALL NEW !**) Association tie and added a nice donation to funds.

In his letter this year **JOHN GREEN (1940 – 46)** lamented the fact that had not been able to find any social Table Tennis in his (relatively) new abode of Perth. Therefore in true Stocktonian spirit he started a TT section for the local 50+ group and now has three tables of doubles playing. John extends a welcome to any 50+ members who want to play and are resident near by or 'passing through'; the group meets on Tuesday mornings. Included with his letter is a very generous donation to split between our Prize funds.

**BOB HEATHCOTE (1934 – 40)** writes to say that he will soon be reaching Shakespeare's last age ("sans everything") as his 'teeth get longer' and his hair gets whiter. Having been assured by **DON SMITH (1933 – 40)** that **BOB SHIELDS (?)** was still alive and kicking in Salisbury Bob added some details about how he regained contact with Don. They met after the War at the first OS get together in 1947 but then lost contact until Bob discovered that his wife's brother was (had been ?) the sports master at Don's 'last school' [before he retired, we assume !] and thence the reunion. A top up of subs accompanied Bob's address confirmation.

As a regular contributor to these pages **RICHARD HUMBLE (1980 – 87)** informs us that he is currently working as a locum G.P. in the Inverness area. He hasn't started looking for a long-term post yet as he has already been booked as a long-term locum until August 2004 ! He still manages to get in some hill walking on occasions but the opportunities have become less frequent since he now has a two-year old daughter, Rebecca, who somewhat limits their social activities.

A donation and brief note from **W. A. 'Wiif' HUME (1924 – 29)** thanking us for our attempts to persuade others of his 'era' to write to us, or him (through us if required). However he sends a warning that, as most of them will be 90 or so by now, they had better hurry up !!

Along with a top up of subs **CHRIS HUTCHINSON (1973 – 80)** sends an address confirmation but we have no news since he wrote to say he was a Management Consultant with Arthur Anderson & Co. We trust he and his wife Fiona are well.

A short note from **ARNOLD MORTON (1937 – 41)** accompanied a nice donation to the Gordon Rattenbury Memorial Prize Fund. Arnold was keen to know the date of the Grangefield Remembrance Service for 2002; we trust he was able to make it.

Along with his regular donation to funds, for which we thank him, **COLIN MUSTARD (1955 – 60)** adds but a brief note this year: "Happily enjoying early retirement !"

At sixty **GEOFFREY NATRASS (1955 – 62)** is "starting to wind down as the Managing Partner in a firm of solicitors in Gloucester" where he has been practising (in Civil Litigation) for 30 years. Not content with 'retirement' he has taken up a new 'career', as a teacher of the Alexander Technique (he qualified in 2001). Geoffrey adds that his father **GEORGE NATRASS (1920 – 25 ?)** is now 94 and moved, with his wife, from Stockton to a flat in Cheltenham some 4 years ago.

A confirmation of address and top up of subs accompanied the short note we received from **ANN OXLEY (Staff: 1961 – 2002 "with some gaps !")**. Ann finally decided to retire fully from teaching in December 2002. Ann started work in the Grangefield Grammar School for Girls in 1961 and transferred to the Sixth Form College in 1973. We wish her a long and happy retirement and thank her for all the 'behind the scenes' work she did at the College on behalf of the Association.

We thank **R. PURNELL (1924 – 29)** for his generous donation to funds and hope that he is still hale and hearty in deepest Hartburn.

It wouldn't be a normal year for us if there was no correspondence from **HARRY RHODES (1942 – 46)**, although it was restricted to one postcard from Oz this year. Returning from a 'winter's retreat' to Coffs Harbour (in August 2002) he was dismayed to find no copy of the OS Magazine awaiting his arrival home and wondered if it had failed to publish or had gone astray. We trust that he has now received the (very !) late edition and found it worth waiting for. Harry added a postscript that he was now a grandfather, for the eleventh time!

Bob Ward passed on an email he received from **DAVE RICHMOND (1960 – 67)**, which gave us the following news. After leaving Grangefield in 1967 he obtained an external BSc and a C Ed Tech from London University. In 1977 he went to Zambia to work in the copper mining industry, returning to London in 1979. By early 1982 he was 'on the move' again, this time to South Africa, where he has lived (in and around Johannesburg) since. Dave is married to Barbara (a Scottish lady) who is a partner in a large accounting firm and they have one daughter, Jessica, aged 16 who is (was?) studying for her Matriculation. Actively involved in Freemasonry, in particular Rose Croix and Knights Templar, Dave is now self-employed and works in IT. He does manage to get back to the UK once a year and hopes to see some old friends in the not too distant future.

If Stockton Borough was 'into blue plaques' they may have considered erecting one outside 'Brierdene', 87 Fairfield Road where **Sir RIDLEY SCOTT (1950 – 54)** spent part of his life. For those who may not know Ridley was elevated to the knighthood in the New Year's Honours list for 2003. He admitted that he "... can't explain why I got a knighthood but I can explain ... I was just like a schoolboy. I don't know what exam I passed but it was such a joyous shock." On leaving school Ridley joined the West Hartlepool School of Art where he was responsible for a number publicity displays illustrating films to be shown locally and he also designed an inn sign for Stokesley High Street. (Is it still there ? If so, do the owners know the designer ? – Editor) He was one of 126 (out of 476 applicants) who secured a place at the Royal College of Art where he studied graphic design. At the end of his first year he was 'Royal Scholar' in the department and won £100 as a prize in a design competition for the cover of a magazine called *Lilliput*. Graduating with First Class Honours in the early 60s he was awarded a £600 Travelling Scholarship which he used to go to the USA to further his studies in TV Production and Design. He began his full-time working career with the BBC; designing sets and directing early episodes of Z-Cars. Early in his career he showed his acumen as a businessman by forming Ridley Scott Associates (at age 30) and was soon making award-winning TV adverts (e.g. the Hovis advert with small boy pushing his bike up the steep hill). He did not get the chance to direct his first film [*The Duellists*] until 1977 but it failed to ignite his career. However *Alien* (1979), *Thelma & Louise* (1991) and, more recently, *Gladiator* (2000), *Hannibal* (2001) and *Black Hawk Down* (2001) have firmly placed him amongst the foremost of today's Hollywood Directors. *Blade Runner* (1982) was not well received in its early runs but has since become a 'cult' movie and launched the 'star' career of Harrison Ford [as, arguably, did *Thelma and Louise* for Brad Pitt]. Between films he 'took time out' to be executive-

producer for the award-winning TV drama *The Gathering Storm*, which stars Albert Finney as Winston Churchill. More recently, together with brother Tony, he was instrumental in saving the Shepperton Studios from closure. With several other films in the pipeline there is no doubt that his career is destined to continue to grow. "you will have to shoot me in the head to stop me now." he says. "I will never retire."

**DON SMITH (1933 – 40)** writes that he was "chuffed" to read in last year's Year Book how much **TONY BARBER (1931 – 37)** had enjoyed his "Cricket-stumps and Sticklebacks" book. Don adds that if Tony has any leanings to visiting Shetland he may also find 'Sojourn in the Land of the Simmer Dim' (also by Don) of interest. Tony's mention of names of the 1939-40 rugby teams brought back a host of memories, especially of **DENNIS 'Tich' ORRISS (?)** who was a fellow team member of Don's. Don reckons that (with Tich) he must have been one of the smallest members of the side and he felt that Raymond 'Gink' Gedling deserved more than a 'passing mention'. Apparently Raymond was the cross-country runner who assured Blue House of success in the race held at 'Field'. Although there is no longer the opportunity to drop by at **BOB HEATHCOTE's (1934 – 40)** house en route to Cardiff Arms Park to watch his team, Wales (Don's Gran' was born in N. Wales !) he keeps in touch with his sister-in-law in Brechin. In closing Don says that he remembers **DENNIS LUDBROOK (1929 – 34)** passing through the '2A room' to the 6<sup>th</sup> form room next door on the top floor at Nelson Terrace.

A substantial top up of subs from **ROY STANLEY (1953 – 61)** who, by chance, is friend of **HOWARD CLARKE (Principal :1986 – 2002)**. We gather that they met at University in the early 60s.

We read with interest on the Internet, via 'Marketing Week', that **HELEN STEVENSON (1976 – 78)** had been appointed by Lloyds TSB as, 'Director of Group Marketing and UK Retail Banking Strategy'. Previously Helen had been a Senior Mars marketer. From past Magazines we understand that Helen obtained her degree in Chemical Engineering from Cambridge University but know little of her 'travels' since then.

A nice letter from **PETER SAWYER (1947 – 49)** with regrets that he will not be able to attend the Dinner this year but wishing all those who do have a good time. On May 28<sup>th</sup> (2003) he will be in the North East for a meal in York with fellow pupils who left the 6<sup>th</sup> form in 1949. A similar event was held in 2002 near Ullswater and a pleasant evening resulted. Amongst those who attended were **JOHN BRUNT (1942 - 49)** and **HARRY WALKER (1943 – 48)**, who made the journeys from their homes in France. [We lost touch with John in 1992 (returned mail from Dromonby Hall) and have Harry living in Warwickshire – can they confirm or renew their addresses please ? – Editor.] Peter concludes his short letter with a thanks to all those who still keep the Association and the Year Book going.

The **Rev. JUNE THOMAS (1954 – 57; Staff :1968 – 1986)** sent us a nice donation together with her subs top up and address confirmation. We are grateful to June for taking over the chair of the Benevolent Fund on behalf of the Association.

## Old Stocktonians'



**Bow ties - £7.80**



**Ordinary ties - £7.80**



**Stick pins - £2.30**

**Back issues of Year Books - £1.50**

All the above prices include postage & packing



## OBITUARIES

In a different era **WALTER DOBSON (1934 – 39)** would probably have been a potential Oxbridge candidate. However, when he left school in 1939 there were other problems to be faced and it would be fair to say his university educational opportunities had to be put 'on hold' for over 30 years. Walter's father, Elijah, had been educated at the Higher Grade School and from there he moved to Messrs. Riley (Boilermakers) Ltd.; where he remained for the whole of his working life of 51 years. Walter joined the Office of the Tees Valley Water board on leaving school but after 11 months he too entered Riley Boilermaking works and was there, save for 5 years in the R.E.M.E., until the mid-Sixties. At first he worked under his father, but was promoted to his position of Chief Clerk in 1957 when his father retired. A studious young man he qualified, by examinations, as an Associate Member of the Chartered Institute of Secretaries, was for many years the Hon. Sec. of the Tees-side Scientific Group and a member of the British Interplanetary Society. After working for over 25 years for Rileys Walter moved on to work for Power Gas as a Cost Assistant. A keen rambler he became Vice Chairman of the Stockton Rambling Club in 1969, and at last started his 'university education' as a Founder Student of the Open University. Walter started by taking the Foundation Course in Humanities in 1971 and gained a BA in December 1974 and a City & Guilds FE Teacher's Certificate in 1975. As the winner of the MENSA competition to choose a competitor for the BBC's "Champion of Champions" in a Mastermind Competition in 1977 he took the overall trophy. The last news we had indicated that he was involved in work with the Spastics Society and had attended a short course in Swansea in September 1978 dealing with communication by symbols. A previous regular attendee at the Dinner we unfortunately 'lost touch' with Walter from the early 1980s until Brian Braney renewed contact last year. Sadly our connection was to be very short for Walter died whilst he was in care in Newland House Residential Home for the Elderly on October 25<sup>th</sup> 2002. Walter was a kind and gentle man and all those who knew him will mourn his passing.

It was somewhat of a shock to read of the untimely death (in February 2003) of **STEVE GRABHAM (1965 – 72?)** who, with his brother Andrew, ran Grabham Man's Shop on Prince Regent Street. The brothers' grandparents had started the business in the 1930s and Steve joined the shop in 1968 when it was located in Parliament Street, Stockton. Relocation to Prince Regent Street in 1971 was followed in 1985 by the opening of a new shop in Linthorpe Road, Middlesbrough. Steve was an affable young man who retained the distinctiveness of the shop during a period when most businesses were failing or falling into line with High Street 'multiples'. He was always able to advise customers on the suitability of matching accessories and won several major national window dressing competitions, including Vyella House, Pringle and Peter England. We understand that his brother Andrew will continue to run the businesses, and to him and his family we send our deepest sympathy.

We were sad to receive a letter in September 2002 from Muriel Trenholm informing us of the death of her husband **ARTHUR TRENHOLM (1933? -?)**. Arthur had just undergone a successful course of treatment for cancer of the cheek at South Tees Hospital when a previous heart problem reappeared and he passed away on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2002. We send our belated condolences to Muriel and her family.

