

KINGSTON DAY COMMERCIAL SCHOOL ASSOCIATION
Incorporating the Commercial Section of Hinchley Wood School
JULY 2010

COMMEMORATIVE REUNION 24th APRIL 2010

Our Special Reunion was certainly one to remember. Thank you all for making it such a great success as we celebrated the establishment of the Kingston Day Commercial School in 1910. Over 130 of you travelled many miles by car, train and bus to attend and one even came across the sea. One lady came by train, all the way from King's Lynn only to have a "hiccup" at Hinchley Wood Station. However, we are pleased to say that she eventually arrived.

It was great to see some Edwardian attire. Cynthia Chandler's "War-time Diaries of a Surrey Schoolgirl" proved very popular and her daughter Rosemary has posted a copy to those of you who requested one. Thank you for your donations. These, together with the monies from our Raffle and Bring and Buy table, and your subscriptions, will enable us to continue to issue three Newsletters per year.

The Committee has decided to increase the subscription to £5 per annum, payable in July. If you have already sent your £3 subscription in advance there is no need to send additional money, just make a note in your diary to pay £5 next time it is due.

With the ever increasing cost of postage we do need your subscriptions and we would like to thank those of you who pay your subs regularly and in some cases, well in advance, because without these subs we would be unable to continue. Please do keep your letters coming as without them there would be no Newsletter.

At this point we have to make an apology. When we took over the accounts we inherited a list from John Crisp, where he had entered, against the member's name, the date the subscription expired and we are finding that, in some cases, the list was not up-to-date. Some of

you did correct us and we are very sorry about any errors we have made and thank you for your understanding. We should be able to get it right in future.

We would like to welcome the following ex students from KDCS and Hinchley Wood School who contacted us as a result of our advertisement in various newspapers, inviting them to attend our Reunion:

Elizabeth Marsh 1945. Denise Knowles 1945. Maureen Noon 1951. Jean MacPhee 1956. Ann Broad 1951. Margaret Boulter 1948. Geoff Caley 1954. Valerie McGee 1948. Hugh Maxwell 1959. Pamela Wedd 1944. Hazel Drake (Ricketts) 1953. Joan Redham (Howells) 1953. Wendy Miller (Pritchard) 1953. Pamela Johns 1953.

Other new members: Ron Granger 1949 who has rejoined and Joan and Colin Joselyn.

Margaret Croft is joining the Association and writes from Australia.....I discovered the Newsletter and photographs of the School in Leigh, Lancashire recently and I do have some more names to add to the pictures. I was one of the evacuees during my first year at KDCS and finished school there in 1946. I was Margaret Day at the school, am now Margaret Croft and have been living in Australia for 56 years.

John has added her letter to the home page of our website with a reference to the correspondence section which holds the Leigh photos.

The answers to examination questions dotted through this Newsletter are by courtesy of Brian Shepherd in Australia, who seems to have an inexhaustible supply of “funnies”. These, of course, are NOT from KDCS exam papers.

Q: What is a nitrate?

A: Much cheaper than a day rate.

GREETINGS from the “other Janet” (Steeple). We do hope you all enjoyed the Reunion on 24th April, I did. I must thank you for making it such a success. We were so grateful for your help with the Raffle and Bring and Buy, and we can now have another three magazines - we hope. Now we are putting up the subscriptions to £5 per year it will help. We are hoping to have another reunion next April, although we have yet to decide on the date and “theme”!

We also wish to thank Rosemary and Cynthia for producing the booklet “War-time Diaries of a Surrey Schoolgirl”, and their contribution to our funds. A special thanks to Christine Haines, who managed the Bring and Buy practically single handed - also the raffle ticket sellers. Thank you also to Harry who helped us decorate the Hall. Next year we will need more help as, like you, we are all getting older and beginning to “feel our age”. It takes a great deal of planning, time and work. A big, big thank you to Janet Creighton-Kelly who is our Secretary, Typist, Bank Paying “in-er”, Hostess and General Dogs Body - Dennis and I help where we can.

I loved being at Hinchley Wood 1949-1951, learned a great deal more than just commercial subjects and have sustained very good friends ever since plus I have made many new friends, meeting them at the Reunions. So please keep in touch with us, send us any snippets you would like to share and we will try to keep the Association going as long as we can.

Enjoy this lovely summer, have a happy Christmas and join us in April!

Sincerely

I WONDER WHAT HAPPENED TO

BOB COLEMAN writes ...Those of us lucky enough to have attended the Grand Commemorative Reunion on the 24th April will know that the Committee intend to continue sending out a Newsletter three times

a year. However, the success of a Newsletter does rather depend on some of those of us who attended KDCS actually contributing copy! In considering this beforehand, it occurred to me that one of the questions we have all probably asked ourselves over the years is “I wonder what happened to old.....when we left”, so I wrote to the Committee and you will have seen my note in the March issue of the Newsletter. The idea is not that contributors should write long boring accounts of career, but in telling the rest of us what happened when you left just let us know what direction you set off on, what was your first job, and how what you learned at KDCS helped in the process of getting started in life. If possible, include a photograph to remind us of what you looked like.

So with all that in mind, here goes.

“I wonder what happened to Bob Coleman when he left”

I was in the 1948 intake, and one of those who stayed on for a year after taking our Diploma in order to take the newly introduced ‘O levels’ – I think it was the first year they were set, and subjects were marked out of a hundred. My decision to do this intrigued Mr Stag, who told me in a rather resigned tone of voice a few months later “You won’t pass French, Coleman”. He was wrong, and what he drilled into me served me well in my career in aviation. Mr Weaver, who apparently had some reservations about me, at least wrote and congratulated me when the results were published.

By the time the third year was complete, National Service loomed, and when I got over the severe shock of going more or less directly from the 6th Form at KDCS into The Royal Air Force, I do not think I was clear if what I had learned at school would be of much use to me for the next two years at least – how wrong I was.

After resisting the offers of tempting jobs provided I signed on for a third year – no chance as far as I was concerned – I became a Wireless Operator, and the photograph shows me at the Wireless Training Unit at RAF Compton Bassett in Wiltshire less than a year after I had left school – probably January 1952. I could not believe how easy I found learning the Morse Code until I realised that it was because I had learned shorthand – in both you responded to a sound and wrote down what the sound said. I spent the following eighteen months at RAF Upwood, in Ramsey, in Huntingdonshire, a Bomber Command Station, which operated on full wartime operational basis.

In the meanwhile, Marian Smith, who joined KDCS shortly after me, and I had become engaged. Less than a year after my demob, we married in August 1954.

Just prior to me leaving the RAF, Marian had spotted a newspaper advertisement which had been placed by BEA looking for staff. I applied and got a job starting on 21st October 1953, and so began a lifetime career in aviation. I have written previously about how what we learned at KDCS was such a benefit to me in my career, so I won't bore you with it again.

BOB COLEMAN 1948/51

MILDRED (Buck) SCHUTZ also writes about her School days.

Congratulations to Cynthia Chandler on her “Diary of a Surrey Schoolgirl”. I did not keep a diary, but many incidents remain in my mind. Unlike most contributors to the magazine, I did NOT enjoy KDCS. I grew up on a farm and a future life in a stuffy office did not appeal but in 1939 you dutifully did as your mother advised. I achieved my Diploma and joined a large shipping company, evacuated to Cobham, Surrey.

Our building in Kingston was, I believe, Edwardian. It had a balcony surrounding the assembly hall. A newer building was attached to it, which housed the Technical College. The canteen was across the playground where we had wartime, plain and economic meals. We went on strike over “Friday Pudding” - the week's leftovers, buried

under watery custard. We poured water over our portions! I believe the class comedian, Boatman, led the protest and everyone was severely reprimanded! I hated the smell of the British Winery and Leather Works nearby, Ugh!

Mr Bray embarrassed me unforgettably. I had curled my fringe and he called me onto the platform in assembly and told me to "Straighten it" as I looked ridiculous. Miss MacIntosh taught typing to a musical rhythm. Miss Adams taught English and how important it was to look tidy. Those ties and gunmetal, thick, lisle stockings!! Mr Overton left to work in the Commercial world, warning us never to become teachers, there was no money in it. Mr Weaver made geography my most interesting subject. Mr Hughes taught History and inspired me to reach the only 90% result in my diploma exam - hardly of use in the secretarial world. Mr Jones, called us "Surrey Cockneys" because we did not pronounce a soft "h" in vehicle, requiring, I believe, a tick 'h' in Pitmans shorthand.

The school in Hinchley Wood was an unfinished building. Our lessons taken in a long trench type, narrow, air raid shelter, cold, dark and damp. Strangely, the showers attached to the gym were fortified by sandbags. It must have been essential to protect our modesty, if bombed.

My friends and I travelled by train to Hinchley Wood. The carriages were slam door type, single carriages - no corridor. Because a girl was assaulted we were advised to travel in the 'Ladies Only' carriage. Transport was frequently stopped or interrupted by night time bombing resulting in us having to walk 3 or 4 miles to School and home again. One winter through thick snow!

My memories are of long periods of homework. A very intensive course. The Scottish schools took 3 years to do the same course, we did in 2 years. No doubt it was very good and enabled many to have successful careers. For me, I was able to join the FANY (First Aid Nursing Yeomanry) and work in Italy for SO(E) in 1944.

Coming in November Newsletter Peggy Picco's resume of her career - *Peggy - do you have a photograph taken shortly after leaving School?* Also an article about Eileen Greenaway and reminiscences from Bernard Grant in Australia.

If you wish to contribute to the "I wonder what happened to" please try to enclose a photograph taken shortly after leaving school, so we can identify you.

Q: What was Sir Walter Raleigh famous for?

A: He is a noted figure in history because he invented cigarettes and started a craze for bicycles.

Reunion Photographs John Frost has put on to a compact disc the photographs of all the Reunions that appear in the KDCSA website. We are trying to work out if we can copy the disc and supply them to members who have a DVD player. However, it is quite complicated and doesn't always work. More news later.

LETTERS

From BETTY SUTTRON in New Zealand by email....I was Betty Murray and was a student at KDCS from January 1942-December 1943 and loved every minute of it. What a wonderful education and school it was.

I came out to New Zealand in 1955, after working in the City of London for several years, and have lived in both the South Island and the North. Whakatane is a small town in the Bay of Plenty with a lovely climate and I've lived here for the last 28 years. Since my husband passed away 7 years ago I drive a Motor Home and have earned the nickname of Mrs Gadabout as I always seem to be going somewhere. I've just come back from a 1300 km trip to Hawkes Bay and further down to Wellington. I was hoping to call in and see Millicent Nicholson in Masterton but I developed a nasty cold and didn't want to give it away. We keep in touch frequently and mostly chat about our schooldays!!

BETTY was able to help VALERIE READ (nee Kingsley) with information regarding her friend Hazel Pike in response to her question in the March magazine "Where are you now?".... HAZEL PIKE is my sister-in-law; she married my brother Leslie so is now Hazel Murray and lives in Wantage. She has 3 daughters, 2 of whom live fairly close. Sadly my brother passed away some 15 years ago. When attending the Reunion Valerie also received news of John Bagge from Rosemary Searle. A very good response to her letter.

ALAN CARTER writes from Somerset...I left KDCS in March 1944 and three months after leaving I was in the Navy. By the end of that year I was in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka). I wrote to several girls in my form whilst away in the Pacific and met one or two when the war was over. In those days we went dancing. In later years, I worked in Basingstoke as an Accounts Manager from 1972 until 1990, when the company I worked for moved to Bridgwater - hence my Somerset address. I retired soon after arriving in Somerset and went into something completely different at Weston College, Weston-super-Mere, a further education establishment. I had another retirement party when I left after 15 years in July 07

PEGGY PARLETT writes... Meeting up again with June Gaywood (in my class 1947-49) and husband Bob and many others - regulars at Reunions, is wonderful - memories come flooding back with much to talk about, never a problem what to talk about! It was an excellent day, including lunch, with all the lovely young people serving us. My daughter Frances accompanied me, as did Ethel's daughter (at our table), so great company all round. Frances said she will come again.

JOHN R BUNDFUSS writes from Devon My elder brother Bernard was at the school circa 1951/4 - I followed in 1953 and I am fascinated by the responses from ex-pupils of much earlier than that. I inaugurated and ran an Assurance/Insurance and Company Management Brokerage for some 35 years before becoming externally too busy not to retire early: I've continued skiing throughout, find my way around golf courses quite well, formally raced (cycling) with the Surrey Road Club, flew a little, and thoroughly enjoyed my work to

retirement - which would have been impossible without the knowledge and standards learned at Hinchley Wood. I've not regretted a minute spent there and look back and grin at the detentions received now and then, all well-earned! Roger Barton (same time at the school) and I remain in fairly regular touch, and a few years back my old class had an isolated reunion with about a third present.

I've four daughters, and moved to the West Country as a safe area in which to bring them up. I've managed to pass on to them some of the expertise developed at Hinchley Wood - a unique establishment for too few years before being absorbed into "the system".

MAUREEN BAMPING (Hutson) e-mails from Tasmania. Would you please pass on my congratulations and best wishes to all those at the KDCS 100th birthday celebrations on 24th April. The 24th April would have been the 84th birthday of Audrey Oakshett (Wood) who was my best friend when we were at KDCS from 1940-1942 and we remained close until her death in 2005. I have many happy memories of the school in spite of the wartime restrictions and travel difficulties we often encountered and am sorry that distance and age make it impossible for me to catch up with former students. I look forward to seeing photos of Saturday's celebrations on the website.

BRIAN AND JOYCE MATTEN (1943) of Tunbridge Wells were unable to attend the Reunion but we send them our congratulations and best wishes for their 60th Wedding Anniversary which they celebrated on 10th April 2010.

*Further to our previous item about Dances at Claremont Hall, Surbiton....*JEAN FUGE writes from Cobham that her first date with her husband, who was at KDCS 5 years earlier, was at Claremont Hall.

SHEILA EDWARDS (nee Cornwell 1949-1951) writes.. That like Peggy Parlett my brother, who is an ex pupil, and I, went to learn dancing at the Peggy Spencer/Carl Bryant School of Dancing. This was at the bottom end of Victoria Road, Surbiton.

ENID ABRAHAM (Oakes) 1944-46 also remembers the dances at Claremont Hall and the Assembly Rooms, she writes ... We would play tennis all day and then off to dance half the night! What energy - I only wish I had half of that get-up-and-go now.

BILL CRISELL e-mails from Ontario, Canada....In the letters section Maureen Piper mentions cycling to Epsom to dances and makes mention of dance studios. After finishing my National Service in the RAF in December 1949, I lived in Epsom for a year and while there I took ballroom dancing at the Court Studio which was on the main street - cannot recall the street name.

MICHAEL STAFF e-mails from East Sussex.....I left KDCS (Hinchley Wood) in 1950 and went straight into the then National Provincial Bank but for a time was very active with the events committee with KDCS and ran a number of dances at both the School and Surbiton Assembly Rooms. I wonder if anyone remembers that we used a band regularly called the Bob Barter Band; it cost the vast sum of £200 per appearance. In an effort to promote the association the then committee decided on one occasion to bring down from London a well known dance band "Charlie Brown and his Band Renown" and a second group - a skiffle group with Nancy Whiskey (of Freightrain" fame). Tickets were priced at £5 to cover the cost and three days before the event we had hardly sold any. However, on the night the Charlie Brown Band arrived with three coach loads of supporters and the event was a great success. I dread to think what a similar event today would cost. Happy Days.

Rosemary Searle has passed on this letter from JOHN BAGGE (1944-46)....I have been racking my brain to come up with something about KDCS and "Ted" Woodward, but with very little success I'm afraid. A bit disappointing really considering that we shared the same desk for two years, but it is over sixty years ago and memories fade. I can tell you, however, that he was a great mimic and often had the class in fits with his impersonations - especially his 'Kookaburra' noise. He would suddenly, without any warning, give out this awful cackling laugh (this was done before the teacher arrived) and made me lose a

House Point because Miss Adams came in and caught me laughing, not Ted. I also had the distinction of acting opposite Ted in a school play called "The House with the Twenty Windows". Quite put me off amateur dramatics for life.

DENISE KNOWLES (Blackmore) 1944 (*One of our new members*) writes that when out on a WI walk she met Shirley Rosser (Massey) and discovered that they were both students at Hinchley Wood. Denise attended our Reunion and met up again with Shirley and Pam West (Austin) 1943. She had hoped to meet Joyce and Brian Matten with whom she worked at Woolworth's Head Office in New Bond Street. She writes that she enjoyed the Reunion and found it a strange experience to be back in the school. Her last visit was in 1954 when a tea and fun afternoon was arranged by the then Old Students Association.

Q: Name six animals which live specifically in the Arctic.

A: Two polar bears Three four seals.

SADLY

Elsie Owen passed away on 26th February 2010. Her daughter, Marian Burgess, informed us that her Mother would have been 102 years of age on the 27th, the day after she died. Definitely the oldest member of the KDCS Association

Mr K E Thorpe writes from Herne Bay... I write to tell you that sadly my wife Marjorie Thorpe died on 2nd May 2010. I think she attended KDCS in 1937-38. We attended several of the reunions, when we were able, and she enjoyed them very much, meeting old classmates and so on.

Hope you enjoy seeing the photographs that were taken at our Special Reunion on 24th April 2010, printed in this Newsletter.

No **DENNIS'S DELIBERATIONS** this month, instead, in reply, we have **CURLY'S COGITATIONS** (Harry Stanley)

Where does patriotism stand in the order of things? It is in the mind of the individual.

Is it within one's rights to be indignant and angry about wind turbines? Of course it is - read Thomas Paine's "Rights of Man".

Is support of renewable energy by politicians guided by politically fashionable campaigns? They are guided by two things:- Advice about global warming and Advice that fossil fuels will be exhausted in the foreseeable future. There is conflicting advice about global warming but nobody doubts that there is a finite amount of fossil fuel. Water and Wind offer alternatives which are renewable. If action had been taken sooner the need to consider nuclear power would not have arisen.

TO THE COMMITTEE

Thank you for all the time and effort you have given to ensuring that our Association continues. I am most grateful and I am certain that all other members feel the same. If subscriptions of £5 a year enable three Newsletters a year to be produced this is very good news.

ANON

Q: Explain the phrase 'free press'

A: When your mum irons trousers for you.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

£5 per annum payable in July. Cheques should be made payable to KDCS Association and sent to the address below.

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