

STRENUÉ

**KINGSTON
DAY
COMMERCIAL
SCHOOL
ASSOCIATION**

NOVEMBER 2017

KINGSTON DAY COMMERCIAL SCHOOL ASSOCIATION
Incorporating the Commercial Section of Hinchley Wood School
November 2017

Dear Readers

The months have slipped by while I have been waiting for Summer and now the Christmas catalogues are dropping through the letterbox - where did the year go?

Many thanks to those of you who responded to my SOS for contributions for our newsletter. I have enough for this newsletter and I am even keeping some in reserve for the March issue, but don't stop writing, please keep your letters coming, I am very grateful for all contributions.

Mike Murray says a popular thing amongst friends of similar age is to write a little piece about an amusing or interesting event in their lives, not for circulation, but to be read at some time in the future. He wonders if members might like to do the same and share an event with us through the Newsletter. Mike has written over a hundred and calls them "Murray Mints" and you will find one in this Newsletter entitled "Travellers' Tales - Saskatchewan". We would love to read your memories of an amusing event - it doesn't have to be related to our school years - so I look forward to receiving your contributions.

We are trying to organise a GET-TOGETHER in the Dorking area, in April or May. Those of you who feel that they will be able to attend either of the following venues, please contact me, Janet Creighton-Kelly, 2 Maultway Close, Camberley, GU15 1PP or phone 01276 25357

- Denbies Wine Estate. We could meet at either 12 noon or 2 o'clock for a light lunch or afternoon tea in the Conservatory Restaurant. We can fix a date and everyone turn up and take 'pot luck'. It is difficult to make a definite booking without knowing how many of you would like to attend.

- The Mercure Box Hill Burford Bridge Hotel. This hotel is on the A24 between Leatherhead and Dorking. Bob Coleman has researched this hotel and there is a section in the lounge which is semi separate from the rest, by reason of being slightly around a corner, and they would reserve all the tables in that area for a group.

To reach both Denbies and Burford Bridge Hotel by public transport you would go to Dorking Railway Station. I think there is a bus from the station, but this would have to be checked. An alternative is a taxi and perhaps a group could get together to share. Both venues have a large car park.

PLEASE DO LET ME KNOW IF YOU THINK YOU WILL BE ABLE TO ATTEND EITHER OF THESE VENUES, BECAUSE WE DO NEED TO KNOW NUMBERS. NO OBLIGATION, IF YOU FIND AT A LATER DATE THAT YOU CANNOT ATTEND, WE WON'T HOLD IT AGAINST YOU!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Members living in other areas who would like to arrange a get together - suggestions regarding places to meet, would be welcome.

We hope to hold another meeting at The Antoinette Hotel, Kingston in either April or May next year. More details in the March newsletter.

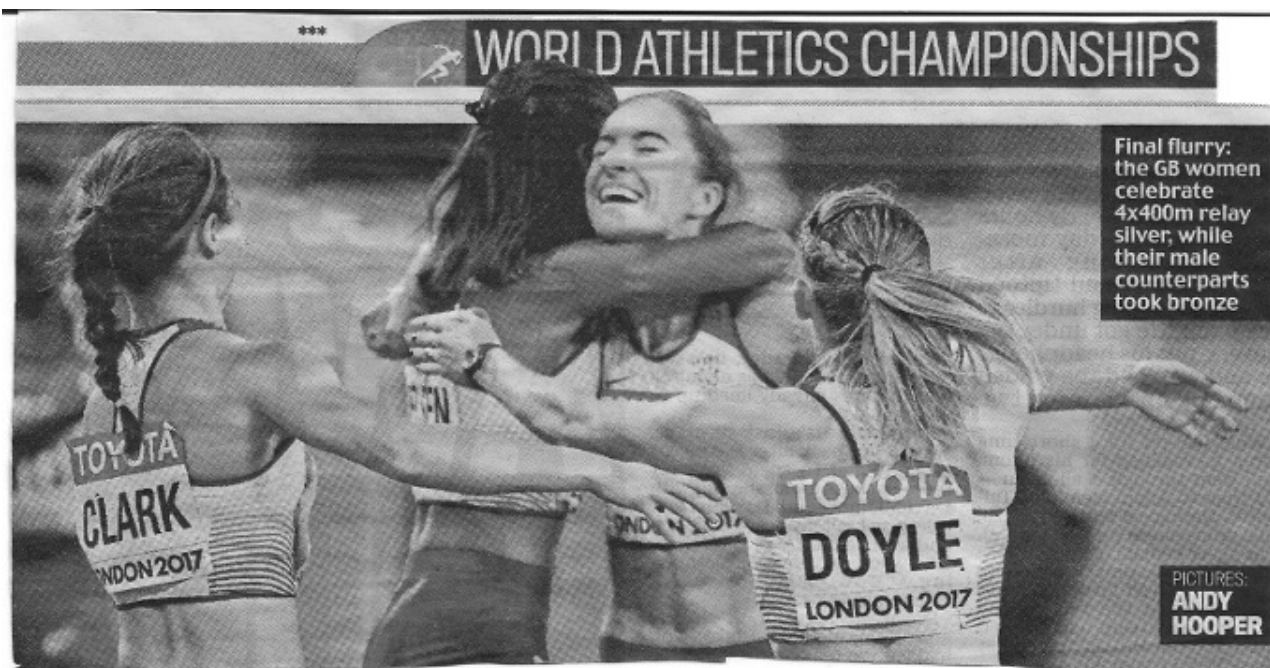
I hope you enjoy reading this newsletter and thank you again, for all your contributions.

Janet C-K

email janet@jangeo.co.uk



Janet Priscilla and I hope you have a Very Happy Christmas together with your family and loved ones, and wish you a Peaceful and Healthy New Year.



VALERIE WEBSTER who attended KDCS in 1947 was a Long Jump Champion and this picture shows her Granddaughter, Emily Diamond, and her team celebrating winning the silver medal in the 4 x 400m relay at the World Athletics Championships this year.

The women's quartet of Zoey Clark, Livial Nielsen, Ellidh Doyle and Emily Diamond picked up silver behind the US. They have now won 4 x 400m medals in five of the past seven world championships, as well as Olympic bronze in Rio. Valerie, you must be very proud.

Welcome to new member **DEREK CARVER** who discovered our website and writes from Cobham..... I'm an old student in every sense of the word (1944-46) having first gone in 1941 to the then new school on the other half of the site. Although interested to read about the early years of the school it isn't quite as I understood them.

The 'history' implied that the new school on the left of the Hinchley Wood site was intended for the KDCS. That is not my understanding. In its layout with girls' toilets at the extreme left of the three separate buildings linked by an endless corridor, and boys to the right (with cookery rooms to the left and woodwork to the right) it gave the impression of being divided into a boys and a girls school. This was also borne out by an early

classroom trade-off with Miss Mackintosh's typing room being not in the KDCS section but at the far end of the Central School section adjacent to the boys' toilets. A curious arrangement. It seemed to be a wartime mind change.

The fact that the KDCS could be accommodated on half of the site was, as I understood it, as a result of reducing the catchment area for the new Central School.

An interesting point about the KDCS in wartime is that it was nigh impossible for some of the pupils in the KDCS section to reach the far away air raid shelters swiftly. (I well remember in the time of the V1 flying bombs having to fling myself flat on the ground only part way to the shelters). Presumably, because of this, the central corridor was reinforced with large metal girders. I still live in the area and am still very fit, I'm pleased to say. I certainly recognise a few faces in the photos.

(Due to never receiving the evacuation notice I didn't go to Leigh. The half that was left had the Pitman and Gregg groups combined. We worked from home for a time and slowly Leigh students trickled back.)

I was amused at the assertion that pupils of the KDCS benefited from the services of Sgt Willis for PE. A mixed benefit, given that Sgt Willis seemed to be absent most of the time, suffering from arthritis or some such! But in wartime male teachers were in short supply anyway; certainly the young ones.

I think Derek has drawn his information from the History page of the KDCS website. Over to you, readers, for corrections and/or confirmation of the points he raises!!!

Steven Jones is our Website Manager and has created pages for the 2016 and 2017 Get-togethers on our website. All the reunion photographs are also shown. Do have a look at it sometime, perhaps with the help of children and grandchildren. We are very grateful to Steven for his expertise.

www.kdcsa.co.uk

Janet C-K

SHIRLEY ROSSER writes from Midhurst..... On reading the memories on Mr Scrutton in previous issues I well remember one French lesson with Mr Scrutton when one member of the class at a time was sent outside the door for not behaving, for some reason or another, until all the class except for one student were outside the door. As you can imagine we were all talking and laughing as we lined up outside the classroom until Mr Weaver, hearing all the commotion, came along to find out what was happening. Poor Mr Scrutton - he did have problems trying to keep us all in line. Unfortunately, that was the last time we saw him and I understand he left at the end of that term. Naturally the class was severely reprimanded and we all felt very guilty that we had caused so much grief.

ALAN SLAWSON writes from Wimborne, Dorset..... It was interesting reading about the travails of Mr Scrutton. I have to admit I was present at the last lesson he took. I don't recall the exact details. Mr Scrutton left the classroom and shortly after the Headmaster, Mr Thorpe, entered the classroom and told us off in no uncertain terms. The upshot was that Mr Scrutton had been infiltrated into France during the war and the inference was that he had suffered as a result of his time there. Bob Coleman should be able to confirm this as he was there at the time.

KEN PHILLPOT writes from Epsom..... I was sorry to see in the newsletter that Peter Daniels is no longer with us. When I attended reunions Peter, one of two attending class members was there. He sat in front of me in class and didn't seem to change as a grown man.

You appeal for a few lines from us for the next newsletter, it could take a lot of pages, but here goes.

In my mind I didn't do well at KDCS, not for the want of trying I might add, but really I should have gone into the art world not the commercial. I could rely on being top in art in my state school and did maps etc for the geography master, plus a 11 foot water colour of the River Thames with small pen pictures along its way being "Westminster to the sea".

My misfortune was having an uncle in the art world who struggled to make a living, so it was not to be. My good fortune was then to join a Ship owning Company after leaving KDCS, and entered the ship management department. After being called up after a couple of years into the RAF, I rejoined the Company.

In the RAF I was trained as a wireless mechanic in Signals and joined 76 Squadron, a heavy bomber Halifax squadron in Yorkshire and eventually transferred to Transport Command with the Squadron converting to Dakotas and we all went to India in 1945 where I stayed to July 1947. During this time the Squadron was occupied in supply dropping, being available for the Indian Army training in parachute drops but mainly transporting Army and RAF personnel etc homewards to the next staging post for demob.

On my demob I came home by ship from Bombay and rejoined my Ship Company. Over time I learnt the problem of seasonal zones - winter, summer, tropical - and the difference this has on a ship as she travels through the various zones and the effect of salinity and temperature of the sea. The warmer the sea, it becomes more buoyant as much as 1800 tons or so, one zone to another, which in turn means you can load more cargo or fuel. Turning back into colder water means you have to burn off fuel to reach the right weight for the next zone, the Plimsoll line being involved.

I eventually looked after the oil tankers up to 65000 tons which traded world wide - costing the voyage as well. A fascinating and interesting job. After 42 years I retired.

ERIC J LIPSCOMBE writes from Epsom..... I was saddened to read of Janet Major's death. We were in the same form and I recall Janet (Cassidy) being so clever, at the top of the class in most subjects, and I remember her and her close friend Evelyn ("Sphinxy") whose real surname slips my memory, with great affection. Happy Days! I think Janet and I last met at a Toby Jug reunion, and of Evelyn I have had no news since School perhaps someone has? My sister Eileen and brother John, as you know, have reason also to be grateful for their attendance at KDCS.

JILLIAN PAUL writes from Reigate..... Reading Janet Priscilla's account of her balloon trip in the July newsletter, took me back to when I first went up back in the early 90's. On holiday in Egypt, we flew over the Nile - a ribbon between two strips of 'green' with desert either side as far as you could see - over the Valley of the Kings and, very quietly I recall, over a funeral procession.

Flights over Hawaii, Australia, Kenya and Tanzania have followed over the years. I am recently back from a wonderful two weeks in Kenya - a week on safari visiting the Elephant Orphanage, the Giraffe Sanctuary, then to the Masai Mara, (another balloon trip), Lakes Navasha and Nakuru and Amboseli - under Mount Kilimanjaro - absolutely wonderful, the animals a real joy and privilege to see, and we saw just everything. It's 9 years since I've been to Kenya and it was very obvious to me that there are not the huge numbers of 'anything' that there were and the Wardens, at the Game Park Lodges we stayed in, told us that poaching has been and continues to be absolutely terrible. I read in my WWF magazine that Tanzania has lost about 90% of its elephants and the rhinos are down to single numbers.

A week at Diani Beach near Mombasa was a delight with a great trip out on the Indian Ocean where 'my family' had wonderful times diving, snorkelling etc. The sand in Kenya is like silk and the sea just the most wonderful colours. There were nine of us, two lots of Mums and Dads and four children, two boys 13 and 15 and two girls 12 and 14 - they all absolutely loved it and said when they got home they all wanted to turn round and go back. A very memorable 15 days away.

Sounds wonderful, I wonder where you are going next year!!! Janet CK

RON AND ANITA CLAYDON email.....Anita and I feel duty bound to let you know that we will not be renewing our membership of the Association. We had been unable to attend many of the Reunions and combined with our health issues, tend to be restricted to our local area (South Gloucestershire). We are now at the stage where we no longer recognise anyone in the magazine or website, so the time has come to say Goodbye.

When we first joined the Association, Anita met up with a number of her classmates, but with the exception of a couple of 'lads' I did not seem to be recognised or recognise members of my year.

I think we both owe a lot to KDCS. Apart from the education, I first met Anita at Hinchley Wood and we are still married after more than 62 years. My commercial training and School Certificate helped me gain access to RAF pilot training, but the lack of Science subjects made me work very hard to gain the knowledge needed - the work done at KDCS provided the discipline I needed.

We appreciate the hard work done by you and others to make the Association a success and wish you well in the future.

Ron and Anita - Sorry to hear that you will not be renewing your membership of the Association, but would like to thank you for your loyalty over the years.

Welcome to new member **DORA BARD** (Ulman) who emails from Newton, Massachusetts..... Thanks to my friend Maureen Piper (Marshall) I was happy to receive the March 2017 copy of Strenue, via snail mail, and to read the letters from Marjorie Purkess (Darlington), remembering Spud Murphy, from John Lipscombe and sorry to read the sad letter from Josephine Coles (Mitchell) about her husband Ron. I was in the same class as Maureen, John and Josephine, 1949-52, and have very fond memories of my years at KDCS. Maureen has been a faithful correspondent these many years and visited us here in the Boston, Massachusetts area. Spud sent me a calendar with scenes of England every year, along with a note about what he had been up to. He arranged a reunion of the drama group in 1994 when my husband and I visited England. It was a memorable event and I have a lovely album of photographs of everyone who was present. John Lipscombe visited us in New York some fifty or more years ago! Also had a visit with Mr Bamber when he and he wife came to New York.

Shortly after leaving school my parents and I left England for the USA where my mother had family. I was very sad to leave my friends and my new job in London. It took me a long time to get used to living in frenetic New York and life was very different! The old school drama group had morphed into the Worcester Park Young Players under the leadership of Miss Knight and we not only put on plays but went on hikes, led by Spud, and played tennis - I missed all that and everyone a lot, but eventually settled down.

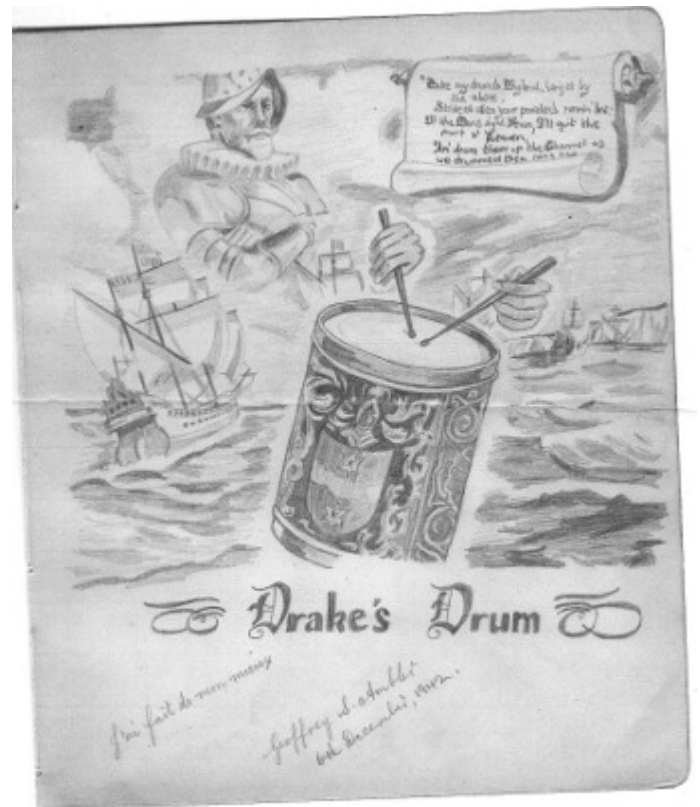
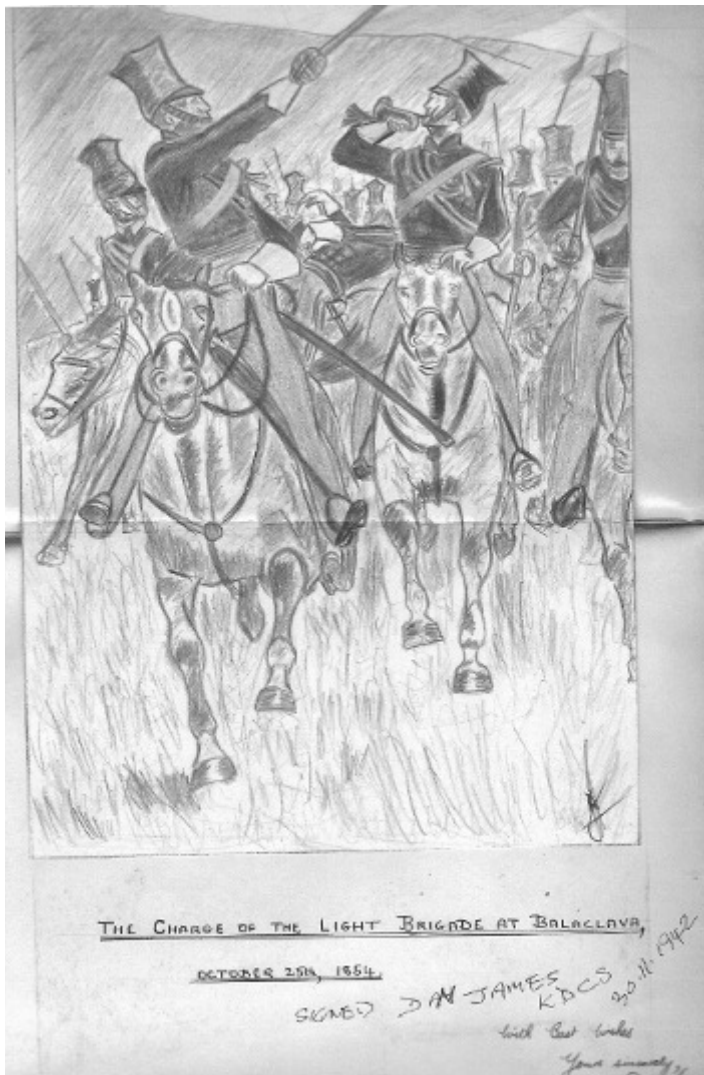
Am wondering if there is any news of the other older members of the drama group, Roy Ward and Shirley Green were our “stars” but we had a lot of other actors and “tech” supporters. Look forward to more news from old students!

MARGARET SHARRARD (Grimshaw) writes from Stockport...I am pleased to hear the gathering for Afternoon Tea is so successful, entirely due to your enthusiastic planning. Life here “up North” is busy and bright. We live on the edge of the Peak District so have splendid views and glorious sunsets! Last December I celebrated my 90th Birthday at a lunch with sixty friends and family. My grandchildren made a huge family tree, complete with individual photos of those present. Now I am busy caring for my husband whose health is deteriorating, so we take each day as it comes and count our Blessings for 64 years together.

Nice to hear from you Margaret, many thanks for your donation and Happy 91st Birthday this December.

BARBARA DAWSON writes from Brighton.... I attended KDCS 1939/41 but was not evacuated. We did correspondence work for a while and then left Kingston and went to Hinchley Wood. I remember all the girls used to put a dent in their hats - we thought this was ‘chic’ - also quite a few of us used to buy two cigarettes from a machine at the railway station then we cut them in half, so four of us could smoke on the train back to Surbiton after school. I notice you may be having a reunion in Reigate. This would certainly be easier for me as I live in Brighton. Keep up the good work. I enjoy the magazine and was delighted to see a photo of Dorothy Gardner who is a friend of mine.

Look out for news of the meeting in Reigate in the next newsletter.



The drawing on the left is signed by Dan James and the one above signed by Geoffrey S Ambler 6th December 1942.

STELLA ELMS (nee Hobden) writes from Bognor Regis.... Thank you for the magazine. I still find much in it to interest me though there is very little relevant to anyone who was there during my time (1941-43) though I am still in regular touch with Jeanne Lester (nee Byford) who was also with me at our previous school West Byfleet Secondary, and was my bridesmaid 71 years ago last May. Whilst going through my autograph album I came across three drawings done by boys who were at KDCS with me but not necessarily the same class. I met Dan James at an early reunion when I had my autograph book with me. He had no recollection of having done it.

“The Charge of the Light Brigade” and a third drawing by Jimmy Walsh were printed in the July 2013 newsletter.

GERALD HOWELL Emails from Victoria, Australia..... Pat and I lead a busy life. We are members of a local Probus club. Pat is treasurer and I organize theatre outings, mainly amateur productions, repertory and musical. We have two extremely good musical companies who have lots of shows such as Les Miserables, Godspell and so on and many others as well. I well remember, when starting my working life in the City, that I looked after props for the old students theatre group. At lunch time I went to Covent Garden to hire props from Strand Electric. When I came to Melbourne I joined a theatre group and we did Pygmalion and a little Shakespeare etc.

We have 4 children and 12 grandchildren and are involved in many ways with them - but that is, of course, a delight. The youngest is 3 and the oldest is 18. Three are now at university, all with similar aims. Twin girls and the boy are all doing various engineering courses. It would have been nice if I still had my old business as a Foundation and Piling Contractor, as I could have employed them, but I sold it in 2006. My youngest daughter lives in Sydney and she has the 3 and 5 year olds. We see them several times a year, generally flying there, 'though on the last occasion we drove. It is 550 miles so with good freeways we do it in 11 hours. Changing drivers every 2 hours makes an easy drive.

Our news from last year is that we went on a Mediterranean cruise from Greece to Monte Carlo stopping at island resorts - Italy etc for 10 days and then to UK to do some bucket list things. Bristol for the ssGreat Britain, Isle of Wight, the Victory at Portsmouth and then on to a very old friend at Harwich where I celebrated my 83rd birthday.

I know we all like to hear about KDCS history, but I admit my recollections of that time are hazy and what I do recollect seems very insignificant. Silly things like being scolded by the girls' Sports teacher for wearing a yellow pullover in lieu of blue or grey. Walking from the bus stop to school talking to girls. That caused comment at morning assembly. Most of the time I just kept my head down and got on with the learning.

IRIS FREESTONE (Dedman) writes from Walton on Thames..... I have just spent an interesting hour or two. Whilst hunting for an old theatre programme - having realised from a recent documentary that I must have seen Barbara Windsor in her early career in 1952 - I came across KDCS Chronicles which I didn't remember I had. They are 1947-1949. I recall a few years ago someone was asking if any one had old issues. It was fascinating to see names forgotten over the years and to learn after-hours activities ones classmates were involved with - The Debating Society, The Gramophone Society and various Sports. Also all the Diploma results listed. One copy has an advert from Ferritto & Sons, the ice-cream makers. We were not supposed to leave the school grounds but used to sneak out to their van, usually parked outside at lunchtimes.

Happy memories.

PAMELA BUDD (Richards) writes from Tadworth..... I lived in Kingston, went to Latchmere Road School and then on to Bonner Hill. My late husband, who died 5 years ago, was also an Old Student but 18 months older than me so left KDCS before me. He lived on the Tudor Estate and also went to Latchmere. He lived in Cardinal Avenue and was a choir boy at Ham Church where Tony and I were married. He also played football for the Old Boys for many years. Janet Major was in his class and we were friends until she died last year. Tony and I both attended a lot of the old school reunions until recent years. I live in Tadworth and my son Nicholas and family live nearby. My daughter and family live in Brecon, Wales - not so near for visiting!!! I am enclosing some very old news of the KDCS - 1995.

Pamela sent a reunion Newsletter dated April 1995 written by Dennis Clayton which will be reproduced in our March 2018 newsletter. A letter "From the Headmaster's Study - Easter Term 1847" is reproduced here. I think it should read 1947!!!! The Headmaster was Mr C H Bray.

Thank you Pamela, for sending these documents, I am sure they will be read with interest. I am pleased to hear you are interested in attending a 'get together' in the Dorking area. Details will be in the March issue.

From the Headmaster's Study - Easter Term 1847 (sic)

It is with rather mixed feelings that I write my last contribution to the School Magazine. I became Headmaster of the School at the beginning of 1934 when there were rather less than 200 pupils aged 14 to 16, including only 27 boys. Today there are 412 pupils aged 14 to 18, including 123 boys. In 1934 the School had no premises of its own and was housed in scattered rooms of the Kingston Technical College. Actually it was not a school but just a collection of classes. When, in 1937, we moved to the large building vacated by the Tiffin Girls' County School we were able to hold a morning assembly in our School Hall, to organise classes in our own classrooms and to develop tone, discipline and various corporate activities worthy of a school.

The House System, which has proved so stimulating to work and games, was started in 1935, school prefects were appointed and Sidney Herbert became the first School Captain. The teaching staff consisted in 1934 of Mr H Overton, Mr E J Weaver, Mr C H Ballantyne, Miss M Mackintosh, Miss E P Adams, Mr A J Jones, Mr E Whitter (now Head of the Commercial Department of Kingston Technical College), the late Mr Edward Pike and Dr Appelian. We joined the Technical School Boys for PT under Mr Willis in a hut partially fitted as a gymnasium, and the girls had a part-time PT Instructress. Today there is a full-time staff of 18 teachers, a school secretary and a full kitchen staff for dinners.

The present premises with Assembly Hall, Gymnasium (with dressing rooms and shower baths), Dining Hall, Kitchens, fine light classrooms, playing fields and playgrounds, are a great advance on the 1934 tin huts but are still not worthy of the school. We have a library but no room in which to put it other than a classroom. We should have rest-rooms for those temporarily indisposed, a room for medical and dental inspections, more classrooms and a common-room.

In spite of deficiencies in accommodation due to lack of planning on the part of the Education authority, the School has been quite full (some would say over full) since September 1934.

It has never ceased to give regular instruction, for in the early days of the war, when all schools were closed, the lessons were carried on by Correspondence Courses, and later on (during the Flying Bomb menace) at Leigh, in Lancashire, where over 200 boys and girls lived and had their daily instruction for a period of about eight months.

The Rt Hon J Chuter Ede, MP, when Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Education stated at one of our Birthday functions that he knew of no other school which was making a greater contribution to the national effort.

We are proud of the 2372 boys and girls who have already satisfactorily completed the course since I have been Headmaster and who have made for themselves a place in the world of commerce or in Local Government. It is a great joy to me to see my old pupils and to read the many letters they are good enough to write to me. I hope that in my retirement after Easter they may keep in touch with the "Old Man" whose address will be "Holford" Colaton Raleigh, near Sidmouth, Devon.

The renewed activity of the Old Students' Association is most gratifying and I was glad to see their efficient Secretary, Mr Alan Rowatt, who has recently returned from the Forces. The dinner at Nuthall's in honour of Mr H Overton, who has now retired, was organised by Mr A Downing, with the help of an energetic committee. At this function Mrs Alan Rowatt made a fine speech and her reminiscences of bygone days were both interesting and amusing.

At the time of writing we are preparing for the 37th celebration of the School's Birthday at which there will be the Annual Prize Distribution. Others will be in charge at the next birthday and I have no doubt that the progress and reputation of the school will continue to advance under the new Headmaster.

I can, in all sincerity, state that I have esteemed it a privilege to have been permitted to serve the school for so long and to have helped so many boys and girls to a good start in life.

MIKE MURRAY writes from Sevenoaks and sends one of his “Murray Mints”.

Travellers’ Tales - Saskatchewan

My wife, Tessa and I were on holiday in the South of France, and one day we thought we would take the public bus out to St Paul de Vence, a lovely little walled village about a leisurely hours journey from Nice. On the way back we were sitting near a couple who had been doing the same thing, and unlike being in England we were soon in holiday conversation. We told them we were from England (they said they knew), and they were from Canada. Before they told us where, they said we might be amused by one of their travel tales.

They had just flown the long journey over the Pacific and had arrived at Sydney where they were staying for a holiday. They were sitting in the Arrivals Hall, waiting to meet some friends, and they were wearing their heavy fur coats on the flight as they could be taken into the aircraft, and not take up limited luggage space.

At a nearby table, were a couple of rough neck Australians who couldn’t take their eyes of this couple dressed so incongruously for Australia. One said to the other, “I wonder where that couple come from to be dressed like that?” and his friend said “Why don’t you go and ask them”. So he went across.

“I am sorry to trouble you” he started, “but my mate and I were just wondering where you guys might have come from”. So the man simply replied “Saskatoon, Saskatchewan”, whereupon the rough neck stood still for a moment and then turned on his heels and walked back to his friend, who immediately asked “What’s the answer?”. The classic reply was “I dunno - but they don’t speak English”. Fortunately this was overheard, much to everyone’s amusement since.

JOHN LOW sends a short note from Marlow..... Thank you for sending the magazine. Unfortunately, all the news is regarding a different period of KDCS life. I’m only one known male survivor now and three ladies!!!! We are all in touch but rather far apart!

1950

GORDON (BOB) COLEMAN 1948-51 writes from Itchingfield.....
Brian Shepherd's note in the last issue of the KDCS Newsletter in which he told us that learning to touch-type at KDCS had, for him, been an advantage when using a computer in the latter years of his career, set me wondering how many of us had similar experiences of subjects which we learned as part of the curriculum proving to be of significant benefit in quite unanticipated ways during our lifetime. In my own case I could never have dreamed in 1948 that learning shorthand and typing for example would come in so very useful, after all, it seemed to me that the subject was strictly for girls!

Shortly after leaving school in 1951 I joined the RAF and chose to become a Wireless Operator, which involved a six week course at the RAF Wireless School at Compton Bassett in Wiltshire. A significant part of the course was to train to be proficient in Morse Code, which I achieved by the end of the first week or so. That enabled me to concentrate on the technical content of the course whilst my fellow trainees continued to struggle with Morse. I am sure that the reason I was able to make such quick progress was because the basis of both Morse Code and Shorthand are the same, in that they both comprise reacting to sound, in the case of shorthand - to the spoken word, and in the case of Morse - to an electronic sound. Thus my mind was attuned to processing information in this way, courtesy of Miss Mackintosh, and adapted easily to Morse. Additionally, both skills involved testing to develop speed in the process, with specified speeds needing to be attained in order to pass the examinations which followed!

Then came O levels and Mr Stag who taught French. "You'll never pass French, Coleman" he threatened. He was wrong; I passed in both the written and spoken exams! The French he taught me proved invaluable in my aviation career, and in conversing with the in-laws of my middle son, who married a French girl. I sometimes think that Mr Stag challenged me in the above way in order to goad me on to greater effort, and if this was the case, it obviously worked and I am grateful to him for it.

After I was demobbed and back in “civvy” life, I studied for some professional examinations, and again shorthand and typing proved a real boon - I was able to take down comprehensive notes by shorthand, and type them up for revision and thus being so clear were the envy of my fellow students, some of whom had the temerity to ask me for copies!

Nobody could have dreamed in 1948 that one day we would need to use a machine called a “computer” and that we would need to use a keyboard to operate it which was an almost exact replica of the one we used in our typing lessons at KDCS. Just as Brian found, my colleagues were amazed at the speed at which I processed work on my laptops.

We all did our studies at KDCS in order to pass our Diploma and for some, our “O” levels afterwards, but as the above few examples show, were inter-alia being equipped for challenges in life which we could never have anticipated. I found Brian’s note so interesting that it prompted me to get my thinking cap on and see what examples I could find in my own experience, and I hope some of you will also have found the above interesting. If you did, how about getting your own thinking cap on and share with us your own experiences.

Bob adds I wonder if those pupils from 1948 who remember me, would have guessed that I would have developed a hobby of breeding rare breeds of sheep and now judge them in agricultural shows.

SHEILA EDWARDS (Cornwell) writes from East Sussex..... Here are a few holiday jottings. Our first long haul flight was to tour Canada not knowing that a few years later one of our daughters would be living there.

One holiday that sticks in my memory is the one to the Far East. We flew to Singapore and had a few days there, including crossing the Causeway into Malaysia. After this we flew to Kuching in Sarawak on the island of Borneo. The highlight of this was a trip up the Skrang river to stay in a traditional longhouse. The villagers still had the skulls of enemies from distant skirmishes hanging up! The courier prepared and cooked our meals. We slept in a redundant longhouse and the sleeping booths were divided by curtains.

Except for me, everyone said how noisy it had been with pigs snuffling underneath the longhouse and dogs barking, and heavy rain pounding on the roof. The village was gradually being depopulated because when the children reached 11 years of age they had to go into the town to continue their education and as a consequence found jobs in the wider world.

Looking at holiday brochures after our return, to do the sort of holiday that we had, purpose built longhouses were used. This would have spoilt the whole atmosphere. We also prided ourselves that we got to Kuching before Macdonalds.

We then flew on to Sabah which is also on Borneo. Here we visited a village on stilts and saw the rehabilitation of baby Orangutans. We finished this holiday in Penang where we visited the Temple of Snakes. My husband had his picture taken festooned with snakes. The snakes were half dopey from the incense.

When we went to see our daughter in Calgary we were there when it was Canada Day which was a public holiday. Like most of our Bank Holidays, it poured with rain. This didn't stop us being taken out to see the countryside, in particular some spectacular waterfalls. These were surrounded by woods and picnic areas and people had not been deterred by the rain and were enjoying their picnics. So reminiscent of the British on a wet Bank Holiday. Our other long haul holidays have been to the usual tourist spots.

What marvellous memories you must have Sheila - and lots of photos I am sure.

SADLY

NANCY BAILEY Alan Slawson advises that his sister Nancy Bailey (nee Slawson) passed away on 2nd March 2016 from cancer.

SUSAN LEE Lucinda Laver advises that her Mother Susan Lee passed away aged 77 years on 20th March 2017 after bravely fighting cancer for over 2 years and losing her beloved husband Richard Lee 14 months before her death.

SYLVIA WALE (Shaw) 1945-47. Margaret Hilliker writes... With sadness I have to tell you that my very dear friend died on the 9th April 2017. We met on our way to school on our first day as new pupils, it was a cold wintry day in early January. We soon became a threesome with Mary Thomas (Dudley), which has lasted for a lifetime and she is sadly missed by us and of course her family. Her husband pre-deceased her by a year. Sylvia stayed on in the Upper Sixth and was one of the earliest pupils to take their School Certificate examination.

SHEILA MARY CARDEN (Brangwin) passed away on 24th May 2017 just before her 85th Birthday. She will be sadly missed by Grahame and all the family.

ETHEL BRYANT Ethel's daughter Janet Smalley writes... Sadly, I have to tell you that Mum passed away on Thursday 10th August 2017 having suffered for a short while with lung cancer. She passed peacefully in St Catherine's Hospice and we now know she is at peace.

JUNE HOLT passed away on 24th August 2017. Her husband, Louis, writes... June kept in touch with old school friends, Maureen, Pam and Daphne and attended the School reunions. We celebrated our Diamond Wedding Anniversary two years ago.

JOHN LONDON (1945-47) William Crisell in Canada advises that a relative in England notified him that John London died at home in Belmont on 24th October 2017.

PATRICIA POTTON (Symondson) Jennifer Boorman writes to let us know that her Mum, Patricia Ewa Potton, passed away suddenly, but peacefully on the 17th September. Jennifer says Mum always enjoyed receiving her KDCS magazines and sent a copy of the eulogy, part of which is printed below. She will be missed by everyone who loved her and knew her.

Pat was born in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, Canada on the 18th October 1930. She was the second child of six children to Gordon and Mary Symondson, with her sisters Anna, Joan and Iris and brothers Neil and David. She spent her early life in Canada before returning to Wallington Surrey, in the UK with her family when she was 6 years old. She was raised and educated at local schools and on leaving senior school decided to further her education by enrolling in secretarial college.

Quickly learning all the necessary skills, such as shorthand, record keeping and of course typing, she qualified as a secretary and was ready for the big wide world. She worked as secretary to Colonel Beadle in London and while working for him she met Reg Potton and fell in love and they married on the 28th June 1952, the beginning of 65 wonderful years.

It was while living in Upminster, Essex, that they celebrated the birth of Jenny in 1957 and further joy was to come when the family was made complete with the happy arrival of Gill in 1964. Both Jenny and Gill have themselves complimented the family with four beautiful grandchildren for Reg and Pat, with Alex, Peter, Lucy and Tom.

In 1972 Reg and Pat decided on a completely new adventure, to up sticks and move to Truro in Cornwall in order to run the Red House Supermarket in Perranporth with her sister, Iris. This was a major career change and hard work, but Cornwall had always been a draw - they had family there and had visited many times over the years. They ran the supermarket for over 10 years but with their daughters moving away they decided to move 'up country' to be closer to them in the early 80's. They moved to Wincanton in Somerset to run James Stores. This was a good move and together they managed the store right up until they both retired.

MARGARET HILLIKER writes from Horsham.... Way back in 1945/46 several students were asked by a member of staff, I cannot remember her name but think she was a PE teacher, if they would be interested in having a pen-friend in a school in Australia. Well I decided I would like to write to a friend on the other side of the World and lo and behold we are still corresponding in 2017. Most of the friendship has been by post but Faye has been over to the UK and stayed with me three times, once in the 1950s and the other visits after retirement. My husband and I eventually got to Australia in 2000 on an extended holiday and spent some of the time and Christmas with Faye. When my daughter went off on her year long back-packing trip with two friends, Faye, or her family, accommodated them during the time they were in Sydney. I thank that teacher at KDCS for this long and special friendship.

Margaret, hope to see you, should we be able to organise a get-together in your area.

SUBSCRIPTIONS Thank you for all the subscriptions received. If both husband and wife attended the school, only one subscription is required.

£5 per annum payable in July. Cheques should be made payable to KDCS Association and sent to KDCS Association, c/o Janet Creighton-Kelly, 2 Maultway Close, Camberley, Surrey. GU15 1PP

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JANET PRISCILLA'S PAGE

Hi All

Would you believe it? We are almost upon Christmas! Summer and Autumn have been reasonably good so the gardens are still looking fine. I hope you all had a break because it does refresh and revitalize us. Mind you, at our age, it is nice just to stay in our own environment with family and friends. We have just returned from our annual TURKEY & TINSEL weekend on the Isle of Wight. It was great to see friends who we hadn't seen since last year and even longer. We were not able to join in the dancing in the evening but we didn't stop talking, catching up with news.

Now we must prepare for Christmas. Fishing out the decorations we have had for years, make sure the tinsel is not tarnished, check the wreath still has the Poinsettias and are not too creased and the bow or ribbons are still useable. Don't forget the Christmas Tree, that every branch is placed in the right order, then, the baubles, figures and other decorations, especially those you have kept carefully because they were on your tree when you were a child! THEN the lights - however carefully you put them away they still get tangled up and don't work until you painstakingly search every bulb until you find the offending one. (The spares don't always work do they?) Try getting more, "blow me!" they have changed the design and so you need new ones. The Angel has lost her wings and legs are twisted but she was your favourite, so you have to make do.

Then the Christmas cards you have been collecting since last year, getting bargains in the January Sales - I must admit I do like the traditional Nativity cards which now-a-days takes a lot of searching to get the right ones. Now, where is my list? I have a book that every card we receive is entered in, CODED, so I know where and who they come from. I have been doing this since 1966 so there are several of them (books).

I send the “abroad” first, then gradually get through the rest in batches. My husband, love him, hangs or clips the cards we receive around the room. We live in a 45ft x 12ft mobile home so you can imagine what it looks like when decorated. The only thing he objects to is putting lights round the house outside. I would love that but neither of us can climb and children - 62, 61 & 55 have their own homes to decorate.

I hope I haven't put you off Christmas. You are quite welcome to come and see our efforts if you are ever this way.

Have a happy and Blessed Christmas and New Year 2018.

Janet Priscilla