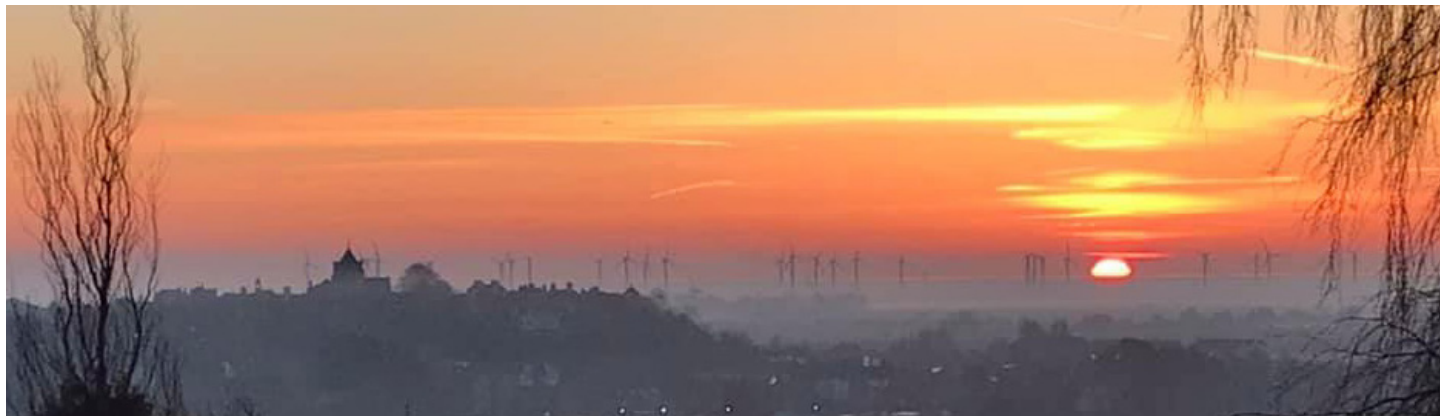


RYE OLD SCHOLARS ASSOCIATION

Bulletin 170 November 2021



CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Welcome to Bulletin 170. Little space to say much, due to some wonderful and varied contributions from Old Scholars from the 1940's to the 21st Century sharing memories of some wonderful people who we have lost this year. Covid seems to have given you all verbal diarrhoea (!) and forces you all to share your thoughts and words through our bulletin.

A second year of no AGM, Lunch or even the hint of a reunion, although we are aware of small gatherings of people keeping in touch. We hope 2022 can return with some normality, we can only hope.

On this occasion space forbids me to waffle anymore and I leave the rest of the pages to our wonderful contributors.

Wishing you all a wonderful Festive season, which appears to be fast approaching, along with a healthy and Happy New Year

Richard Moore
Chairman.

CELEBRATING THE 60'S

Make no mistake Saturday 15th October 2022 - the day Rye Old Scholars celebrate in style.

DAYTIME EVENT

12 Noon to 5pm at Rye College (Formerly R.G.S.)

Tours of The School, two course buffet lunch with tea/coffee,

1960'S Memorabilia and Memories cash sale licenced bar, raffle and the chance to meet up with friends and contemporaries

£12.00 per head – reservations for catering purposes please email r.fm@btopenworld.com

Does the celebrating finish at 5pm – no chance

EVENING EVENT

“Rock, Jive and Twist”

A tribute to lunchtime gatherings around the record player with Mr Dipper

Rye Creative Media Centre (formerly R.S.M.)

7pm to 11pm

Dance the night away to your favourite hits of the 50's & 60's

Licensed bar, raffle and more (to be confirmed)

Tickets on the door £5.00

Music requests in advance to Kevin Williams who will compile the evenings entertainment that you want to hear

email newktrl@yahoo.co.uk

More details during the months ahead on the ROSA website and Facebook page.

ROSA OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE 2021 / 2022

President: Mr Barry Blakelock, **Chairperson:** Mr Richard Moore, **Treasurer:** Mrs. Susan Moore, **Secretary:** Mrs Judith Blincow, **Webmaster:** Mr.Tim Rothwell, **Bulletin Compiler:** Mr.Richard Moore, **Press Officer:** Mrs.Margaret O'Neil, **Overseas Correspondent:** Mr. Gordon Boxall, **Committee:** Mr. John Breeds, Mrs. Shirley Bannister, Mrs. Claire Spacey, Mr.Andrew Spacey, Mr. Kevin Moore.

A TRIBUTE TO RAY FOOKS M.B.E

I was delighted that Ray was able to write in last year's bulletin, which is now even more poignant because it would be the last time I'd hear from him after keeping in touch for many years. It was an honour to be Head Boy in Ray's first year at Rye in 1976. He was an absolute gentleman, and all pupils and staff had total respect for him. I will say no more, and leave it to others to share their memories and affection for him.

LOUIE FOOKS

Sadly, Ray died on 25/5/21 at the Lady Nuffield Home, Oxford, where he had lived for the last 18 months - much of it during the COVID lockdown. Marjorie (Hope Newton nee Jones) predeceased him, passing on 8 November 2017 after fifty years of happy marriage, leaving daughters Sarah and Louie, and grand-daughters Maya and Caitlin.

Ray and Marjorie were well loved by family and friends in Dorset and Jamaica, as well as friends and colleagues in Croydon, Droitwich and Rye, and elsewhere in the UK.



Paul Bishop So very sad to hear of the passing of Ray Fooks, who I had known since April 1979 when he appointed me to teach Rural Studies at Thomas Peacocke School straight from college. I will always thank Ray for this, as the post brought me to this wonderful corner of East Sussex where I still enjoy living over 40 years later.

Ray was a wonderful headteacher, who really cared for the staff and students at his school and was always prepared to offer his thanks.

I have many very fond memories of Ray, including being invited with other new teachers at the time for a meal at "Spains", his then residence on Rye Hill. It was here that I met his lovely wife Marjory and family, and discovered that, before being appointed to his headship at Rye, Ray worked near Worcester, where I had been at college from 1976, and he knew of the challenging "Sammy Southall's Sec Mod" in the city where I had survived teaching practice early in 1979.

During the 1980s, when Thomas Peacocke School enjoyed considerable success, the number on the roll touched 1300, with a large, thriving Sixth Form, thanks in no small part to Ray's excellent leadership. I can remember that he was in his element taking school assemblies, complete with flowing gown as he addressed the youth of Rye with an oratorical eloquence that befitted his status as head of what was then a good-sized comprehensive.

During that decade, Ray loved to be involved in the annual staff productions that included our take on "Oh What a Lovely War!", clearly bringing out the aspiring thespian in him.

Closer to his retirement in the early '90s, I will always remember our weekly squash games in the sports centre in which Ray usually beat me. But these did provide the opportunity for some enjoyable one-to-one conversations about school and life in general.

It was no coincidence that school lost its way somewhat in the subsequent years following Ray's retirement, with a string of less successful heads appointed as the role shrunk and school descended towards special measures early in the new millennium.

After his retirement, Ray was a passionate and active member of his Rye Community who thoroughly deserved his MBE. Two years ago, whilst enjoying a caravan holiday in his hometown of Wareham, Dorset, I was constantly thinking of Ray. Without a doubt, he was a very special man who will be sorely missed by all the communities that he was involved in during his busy life.

Dean Blanchard 1981-86 I was at Thomas Peacock School when Mr. Fooks was headmaster, I left and moved away, but on my return to the area 10 years later I bumped into him and he remembered me instantly, knew where I'd been what I'd been doing and who my friends were. As a headmaster he was a legend.

Janette Radley (Head of English & Head of Lower School 1985-1999) He always saw the good in people and encouraged them to think they could achieve, and so many of his pupils and staff did. He was generous with his time and praise. It wasn't in his nature to have a sharp tongue even when it might have been warranted. He delighted in both the small and big things in life. It was a privilege and a pleasure to be appointed and promoted by him. He remains one of the most influential and important people in my life. Rest in peace, Ray. Your work is done, but the love you showed remains. You will never be forgotten.

David Double 1972-78 He was a wise and kind man...easily the best headteacher that I ever had. Last time I saw him was at a 1970s reunion a few years back. Not only did he remember me and my name, he also asked how my brother Peter was getting on! He will have dealt with hundreds of pupils at TP, so this is a measure of the man. RIP.

Debbie Hills 1983-89 That's so, so sad, I had the utmost respect for this man! The way he used to almost float into an assembly and command silence without uttering a single word! No headmaster could ever match him! Loving thoughts going out to his family.

Andy Stoodley 1980-86 Thanks to you, Richard, for giving me the address. I had been writing to Mr. Fooks for several years and we reminisced over many a school topic and he was always keen to hear about my job at Brighton. A gentleman to the end, who had time for absolutely everybody.

Lee Pascoe 1980-87 Mr. Fooks was a great headmaster who always seemed to have the utmost dedication to TPS and would defend its pupils with amazing and unerring passion. Thinking of his family and friends at this time.

Sadly space does not allow all the wonderful tributes that I randomly selected from the 80 made on the Facebook Group TPS Do you Remember. The family have set up a Facebook page Remembering Ray and Majorie Fooks.



The Mermaid Inn

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MEMORIES FROM JOHN E. SWANN

We are very grateful to John for his generous donation to ROSA, part of this will be used to support the Generation X Opportunity Fund and the rest has been used to support our wonderful developing website, which needed more storage capacity. John wanted to relay a tale from his youth.

After a short but unhappy stay in Tonbridge, we eventually ended up in Rye in 1940, which was my father's hometown. He was the senior Goods Clerk at Rye Station, and we were renting a house in Cadborough Cliff. The people from this house had been evacuated and to my joy, left behind a beautiful rocking horse.

I should mention that on our last days at Marden we saw trains at the station with survivors of Dunkirk and village ladies gave them tea, cakes, sandwiches, and lots of sympathy. We were in a dangerous situation because Rye was at the start of "Bomb Alley" where the Germans flew over the coast towards London and was part of the designated landing area for any invasion. My Father was a very religious man and was a sidesman at St. Mary's church, known as the Cathedral of the Marshes. One Sunday morning in September 1940 the sky was black with German bombers and fighter planes and the Spitfires of several English, Polish, and Czech units were up doing battle. My mother could be quite brave at times and so we stood at the back door watching the action. Planes on fire, occasionally one would crash, and men were seen floating down by parachute.

Then it was all over and we went back indoors. Our next-door neighbour tapped our front room window and Mum went out to look. Staggering through our garden gate was a Luftwaffe Pilot, young and blond haired with a pistol on his belt, obviously in a state of shock. Our neighbour brought out a chair for him to sit on and after Mum had been to look at him, she decided to make him a cup of tea and delivered it to him. At the age of 4 1/4 I was left to guard him. In those days hardly anyone had a telephone, so it was sometime before the police came to collect him. Two special Constables arrived in a commandeered butcher's van, put the soldier in the back and drove off. Nobody seemed to have noticed that he still had his pistol.

As well as this war-time memory John has many fond memories of Rye with not only family and school but also historical and sporting connections. Sadly his wife passed away last year after 62 years of marriage. With some research he discovered family who were Mayors of the town: Henry Swann in 1491-96, and then his son John Swann 1530-1535. There was also a shipping connection with Charles Swann Captain of the Cygnet. During his own school days at Rye, John played football and cricket for Peacocke House, he was goalkeeper for the Second XI. He represented the ATC Squadron at athletics for putting the shot and in the 100-yard relay.

A POTTED HISTORY BY PAT BARFOOT 1941-47

Pat spent her school days in Bedford and Rye. She left after Lower VIth rather than struggle with Latin catch up which Mr Jacobs wanted me to do after a good school certificate and an easy year in Lower VIth.

Pat trained at Bishop Offer Teachers College in 1948-50, then taught in Kent, Sussex, Kenya (training African Primary School Teachers 1959-1961), Kent again and then five years in New Zealand, 1966-71. Back in the UK she spent a year at Brighton Art College before moving to Lincolnshire to find a property she could afford in 1976. She ran her own studio pottery and did plenty of supply teaching to pay the electricity to fire the pots and to eat. She sold pots a-plenty, but nobody really wanted to pay enough for craftspeople's time.

She gave up tennis after a bad Achilles operation and took up golf, where she made her lowest handicap at 65 - a single figure of 9 (George Roberts would have been impressed). Pat gave up all sporting activity in 2006 and took out her paint brushes with moderate success. Thanks to Mr Morgan and another man whose name is now lost in time unlike Jumbo Broome, Miss Dann, Mr Douglas (Science) and the only person ever to call her Patricia. Now, she sits and thinks, or just sits, feet up.

ADVANCE NOTICE OF A 90'S & 00'S REUNION SPRING 2023

Calling all students of the 90's and 00's we hear through the grapevine that you want a get-together and we hope to arrange this in the Spring of 2023. More news and details of this event will be announced in the 2022 Bulletin.

MORE ADVANCE NOTICE OF A 70'S REUNION IN OCTOBER 2023

Giving members of the 1970's decade fair warning that their gathering will be in October 2023 at the college, unless people have other ideas, which still have plenty of time to be considered. Having co-ordinated the 70's reunion since 1985, a change is as good as a rest and if someone has a feasible idea of an alternative venue, please message me. All I would say is that in these strange times, might it be better to play safe and have it at Rye?

AFTER 80 YEARS MICHAEL HILLS DECIDES TO REMINISCE

Having this morning received Bulletin 169 I decided that now is the time to reminisce.

When I left school in 1958 the last thing the head said to me was "You will never make anything of yourself, Hills". I had not performed well academically, perhaps playing too much football and cricket for both 1st XI's. I was the only member of the football team who did not play for Rye Minors, having been asked by Will Dunlop to play for Icklesham Casuals. No-one said no to Will Dunlop! (Ed).

I already had a job offer subject to my exam results. I did not get the required grades, but I must have made a good impression at interview as I was given a second chance with an intelligence test in London. I had a very successful career over the next 32 and a half years retiring in 1991. In March 2021 I will have had my pension for 30 years.

A few years after leaving school I spent three evenings a week after work for five years going to Hastings College of Further Education to obtain my degree (equivalent) and becoming Chairman of Rye Grammar School OSA, with Will as Secretary.

Some years later the school invited me back to give a talk and present the prizes at Speech Day. The theme that year was "even if you do not win one of the prizes you can, with application, have a very successful career". I was very pleased to be asked as I have always liked to encourage people to do their best. I would have liked to have met my headmaster but unfortunately, he had already passed away.

LEASAM REUNION – A REPORT BY SAM LAMBOURNE

It was the beginning of term in 1961 when our class of boys first met at Leasam. There were 12 of us and we were from all over East Sussex, mostly secondary school boys getting a second chance at 13 plus. We all had a great 4 years there and all got on well together. We still keep in touch now by Zoom, thanks to lockdown and Roy Forward. As it was 60 years since we first met we decided to have a meal to celebrate so we booked the Mermaid on Thursday 2 Sept and 7 of us made it to a very nice 4-course meal there, lots of catching up and lots of interesting stories and a couple of pints in the Ypres. Where the time has gone I just don't know.

Those present were back row: Bob Carter, Des Lambert, Roy Forward, Malcolm Granger.

Front row: Sam Lambourne, Dave Chesman and Godfrey Tolputt.



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REMEMBERING JOAN SPENCER

We are sad to announce the death of a much loved Rye resident, Joan Spencer, on January 10. Born Beatrice Joan Bush in Settle, North Yorkshire on July 22 1939, Joan was one of five children.

As a child Joan embraced the wild beauty of the Yorkshire Dales, playing in the meadows, swimming and paddling in the River Ribble and building dens in the woods. Later she became more adventurous and enjoyed hill walking, climbing and potholing.

Joan attended Settle Girls High School where she excelled in creative writing and regularly won the poetry prize. She then went to Portsmouth University where she completed her teacher training and also met Terry, her future husband, and they married in 1960. Joan and Terry moved to Rye in the 1960s where they both went on to teach at Thomas Peacocke School.

After a short residence in Landgate Square, Joan and Terry moved to Military Road, where, after the death of Terry in March 2000, Joan continued to live until recent years.

Joan had a busy life, juggling work (which included supervising ski and camping trips for pupils in the school holidays), raising money for and running a local group for the ESAB (East Sussex Association for the Blind) and taking on the important role of Mayoress when Terry became the Mayor in 1974 and 1975 — not an easy job while raising five children!

Terry shared Joan's love of the countryside and, as their five children grew, the family would drive back up to the north in their camper van to enjoy summer camping holidays by the river near Settle and in the Lake District.

Joan was very well read, she loved music and poetry and played the piano. She shared these interests with her pupils at Thomas Peacocke School, where she specialised in teaching English and later worked in the special needs department. She was much loved by her pupils, often being stopped in Rye years later by a former pupil or colleague wanting to share a happy memory of being in her class group. Joan relished living in Rye, and in her later years she continued to contribute to the local community. She was a member of the U3A and of a local music group, she maintained her links with ESAB and, until recently worked in a local charity shop. Joan was a dearly loved mother, grandmother, sister, auntie and friend. She has made such a positive contribution to so many lives. Rye will not forget her.

GENERATION X OPPORTUNITY FUND UPDATE

The Fund is off to a great start and we look forward to launching it during 2022 so we can assist Old Scholars to achieve their goals and aspirations. We shall always be eternally grateful to the Right Worshipful Mayor Rebekah Gilbert for choosing the Old Scholars so this Opportunity Fund could be created. It will be down to ROSA Members and Officers to keep it alive in the future.

At the moment events are still taking place and donations coming in. Rebekah's term of office to tenure concludes in early May, and at this stage we shall know how much has been raised during her term of office.

So far, Richard's grandchildren raised £510 by walking 8 miles in the Rye and Winchelsea Countryside in May, when they took part in the Rye & Winchelsea Rotary Club Walk. An evening of Opera Classics at St Thomas's Winchelsea raised £650. A memorial service for Clifford Jordan raised a further £135.

Future events include a Quiz Night at the Queens Head in November raised £180. Pledges for either Rebekah to shave or save her hair (the save won) and raised a further £850.00 for the fund. In 2022 there will be a Black Tie Gala Dinner at the Mermaid Inn on March 26th along with a Scratch Messiah at St. Mary's Church in April. For more information of the 2022 events, please contact cllr.rebekah.gilbert@ryetowncouncil.gov.uk.

The criteria and terms and conditions are still being put together, saying that we want the fund for Old Scholars up to the age of 25 to be as approachable as possible. The fund will be launched via our ROSA Website and social media as well as local press.

ROSA AGM & DINNER 2022

Our AGM and Dinner will take place on Sunday May 15th at the Mermaid Inn. AGM will commence at 12 noon with lunch guests arriving 12.45 for 1pm start.

Due to Covid 19 this event has not taken place for two years, however we feel we are not alone in missing the AGM, as others have struggled and cancelled as well. The ROSA Committee are in regular contact with each other as well as taking part in two Committee meetings. We have always been transparent with our accounts, and due to the fact a second AGM has been missed a brief resume of our balances is included within the bulletin.

If you would like to attend and we encourage members of the 40's through to the 70's to this event, please email judith@mermaidinn.com who will send on a menu for your selection. The cost per head for the four course lunch will be £22.00 per head and no doubt as is tradition a jar of marmalade or jam will be presented as a souvenir of the occasion.

KEVIN'S CORNER



Many readers have probably never heard of 'Intelligent Horsemanship'. It is a concept that is amazingly simple in many respects, but by the same token was alien to most horse owners/riders until relatively recently. Many will have heard of the 'Horse Whisperer' and may have seen the film featuring Robert Redford. However, most non-horse people will not have heard of Monty Roberts the real Horse Whisperer, albeit that he prefers to be known as the man who listens to horses. Intelligent Horsemanship is, in short, about trying to understand a horse and then working with it in order to achieve a mutual understanding between horse and owner/rider. This replaces what was the traditional means of encouraging horses to do what you wanted which was in the main achieved through physical force.

I first 'found' Intelligent Horsemanship back in 2009. My daughter Kelly and I attended a Monty Roberts demonstration near Southampton. I was quite simply mesmerised and in awe of what I witnessed. Within a relatively short space of time, he was able to identify problems with several individual horses and then gain their confidence to work with him. To this day, Monty Roberts remains a hero of mine and I have attended many of his demonstrations ever since that first occasion. He has shown how the methods used with horses can be adapted to be used with humans. He has assisted several armed services veterans suffering with PTSD through getting them involved with horses and Intelligence Horsemanship.

Let me say that I have still to this day never ridden a horse in my life! You might find it strange therefore that I am such an avid follower of Intelligent Horsemanship and own four horses. I am one of those individuals who loves horses for what they are and what they give.

When Kelly was growing up, we took on several different horses on a loan basis for Kelly to ride. My wife Ann had ridden when she was younger - in no serious sense, but she showed ponies and rode for enjoyment. Kelly remained interested in riding until the time she reached 18 years of age and then, inevitably for a girl of that age possibly, other things took over her life.

When Shannon, Kelly's daughter and our granddaughter, reached the age of about 5 years, Kelly started to take her to a local riding school once a week for lessons and Ann and I became involved in this. We all got 'bitten by the bug' and very quickly I suggested that perhaps we could buy a pony for Mum and Daughter to share. This was the start of a very steep learning curve and provides a stern lesson for all would-be purchasers of horses and ponies out there! It was not a happy experience in those early days. To cut a very long story short, we found ourselves in the hands of what can only be described as unscrupulous horse dealers who, we were to find out, regularly shipped over horses and ponies from Ireland. It would be fair to say that many of these in hindsight had somewhat dubious backgrounds and pasts. Due to the way in which they did business, following purchase of a horse, there were NO refunds, only exchanges. The first horse, a Cob type, turned out to be unsound physically once we had got him to the yard we were to use and had him checked by a vet. We were then presented with a lovely looking young 13.3 tri-coloured mare. Ideal on the face of it for a Mum and Daughter share. However, she was a 'kicker'. Indeed, on the morning prior to attending our first Monty Demo she kicked me so hard that my left leg was badly bruised for a month! Having had her vet checked, we were rightly advised to return her, bearing in mind that she could clearly not be trusted around youngsters. The vet actually classed her as dangerous!

We ended up with a four year old Connemara gelding who we christened 'Limerick' and who we have to this day. He has been a huge part of our family now for over ten years. Even he was to have problems though. Only a short time after we got him, he had an issue with a tendon which required specialist treatment. Barely two years later he had to go away for further specialist treatment relating to issues regarding his skeletal structure, affecting the area around his withers, back and hocks. He received excellent veterinary care. After a lot of rest and patience, he became sound again. Whilst just a 'happy hacker', something which he will only ever be due to his condition, he loves his life and we love him as he is a real character!

Since this time, we have acquired another three horses/ponies! Ollie, a delightful 13.1 Welsh Section B gelding, Lenno, a gelded Irish Sports Pony, and Charlie, another Connemara gelding aged 6 years now who we had for two and a half years before we recently sold him to a good home where he will be a competition horse taking part in cross-country eventing. The horses are ridden variously by Ann, Kelly, Shannon and occasionally by Kelly's younger daughter Willow. Suffice it to say, we learnt the hard way from our early experiences of horse purchasing and ownership! We went to huge lengths to ensure that the latter three acquisitions were what we wanted and were sound with excellent temperaments.

So what is my involvement in relation to all of these wonderful animals you are probably wondering? Well, apart from the financing of this 'little' venture, plus the daily chores, I have taken what I have learned from Monty Roberts and my membership of the Intelligent Horsemanship Group and tried to put this into practice. I have had so much joy, as well as some emotional pain, from our wonderful 'boys'. I have spent endless hours getting to know them and trying to understand what they are feeling or as Monty says, 'listening' to them. I have learned so much and I continue to learn much more. It is an absolute pleasure, privilege and a huge responsibility to be a horse owner. Put simply, whilst I have still never ridden, I wouldn't ever wish to be without our horses!

I have gained such an affection for horses generally that Ann and I have joined the Elite Racing Club and Owners Group and have small numbers of shares in many racehorses now. We are, of course, just two of many hundreds of shareholders involved in the various syndicates and it is this fact that makes ownership affordable to many members of the public. It is also great fun, and I am delighted to say that those groups and the respective trainers have the health and wellbeing of the horses as their number one priority. We have been to race meetings and have visited trainers' yards where 'our' horses are kept, and we are having a simply wonderful time watching them run and on occasions winning. In two such cases they even won major races at Cheltenham, Sandown and Aintree. Several our horses are trained by Paul Nicholls and Nicky Henderson, both of whom are champion national hunt trainers!

Horses have become a passion of mine in the past nearly 12 years and take up a huge amount of our family's time. It is just as well that now, in full retirement, I am now able to devote the time that I do!

WEBSITE NEWS BY WEBMASTER TIM ROTHWELL

The ROSA website was launched in 2017 with just a few pages. It now has over 20 separate pages, with many photographs and stories about Rye College, Thomas Peacocke, Rye Grammar School, Rye County Secondary Modern School and Rye Primary. It has a wide selection of school magazines spanning over 70 years, speech day programmes and other memorabilia. It also has digital copies of the ROSA Annual Bulletins from over the years. Because of the ever-growing amount of information it contains, the site has had to be moved to a new server to cope. A database of 220 ROSA members is kept informed by email each time there is an update to the site - usually at least every couple of months. Those accessing the site include Old scholars living all over the world. The site has also enabled old scholars to get in touch with their former classmates.

REFLECTION OF LIFE IN SWITZERLAND BY SARAH WEINGER (NEE AYRES) 1971-77

I left Saltcote at the end for the summer term in 1977. My dream was to become a Needlework and Sports teacher. Unfortunately, this was not possible as there were no places available at that time. Mr Blacker suggested I should try catering, which I did. My mother came by taxi to fetch me at Saltcote on my last day. We lived in Winchelsea which was not far at all. I will always remember leaving Saltcote. All of the girls were at the window on the first floor to wave goodbye to me. I had such happy times at Saltcote and Thomas Peacocke school. I was to start catering college in Hastings in September 1977. To pay for my college books and uniforms I worked at "Mary & I" shop in Rye. I spent the next two years at college and during the holidays I worked at the "Grand Hotel" in Eastbourne. I shared a flat with Alison in St Leonards. The two years of college were also a very happy time.

I was sent to Switzerland for one year after finishing college. This was an exchange, with one English girl going to Switzerland and one Swiss girl going to England for one year. Alison and I arrived in Neuchâtel in the French speaking part of Switzerland on the 29th June 1979. The only problem was that I did not speak French. I was not at all good at school. Sports and needlework were the only subjects that interested me. It was very hard at first trying to understand people. Alison and I were not allowed to have the same bedroom because they wanted us to learn French. We were working in the train station and there were three restaurants. After one year we came back to England. I wrote about 60 letters to hotels and restaurant in England, but no one wanted me. So, I went back to Switzerland and have been there ever since.

I learned French and the Swiss German language, which is why my English has gone to pot. I think and dream in French now and must translate from French into English. My French teacher at school would be pleased with me.

I married a Swiss German man in 1984 but this did not last. In 1991 I re-married, Philippe from Neuchâtel. We were happily married for 27 years but unfortunately, we could not have children. I live on my own in Genolier, Vaud in Switzerland. I have two lovely dogs Happy and Toffee. My life here is very happy and stable, which I love. I cannot see myself coming back to England. I have no family in England, just a cousin in Yorkshire with his Swiss wife, who comes over to Switzerland twice a year to visit me and his mother in law.

I am 62 years old now. I enjoy very much the contact with my old Saltcote and School friends. I am busy investigating my family tree and looking at old photos from my school life in Rye. I have had very bad depression for over 15 years due to harassment and mobbing. I think I am over this, and I am back to normal now. Thank you all for your kindness and friendship towards me during all these years. Love to you all, Sarah (Ayers) from Switzerland.



FRENCH NEWS FROM DENISE BRACE NEE SELMES (1975-1980)

Married Leslie Brace, attended RSM (64-68). We decided to buy a property in France in 2003 and we finally bought a farmhouse with land and outbuildings in 2004 in Suisse Normandy, just outside Pont d'Ouilly. The house had been empty for 15 years, so we had a complete renovation on our hands. Les and I undertook most of the work. It was character building and at times we thought we had taken on too much. So, in 2013 we left the UK and came to live in our little bit of France.

We needed income, and in 2015 we turned our field into a camp site. Les built a loo and shower block and we went from strength to strength, with a lot of different nationalities visiting. Life in France is completely different from the life we had back in the UK - calm and laid back, and we have been accepted by the locals and made some good friends along the way. What we love about France is the beautiful countryside, wine and food, and the French are so passionate. It does help if you speak the lingo.



1969 - THE BEGINNING OF THOMAS PEACOCKE: A PATHFINDER'S STORY, PHIL LAW

As 1969 began I remember strange and secret conversations taking place between my parents: "It's good he won't have to take it..." "Yes it's good, but he would have passed." The subject of 'good'? The 11 plus. As Thomas Peacocke (TP) formed one of the first comprehensive schools in the country (surprising in the staunch conservative Rye of the time) I found myself an education pathfinder; not dealt a Grammar or Secondary school hand at eleven, but allowed to enter a utopian new world of education. What was it like?

The teachers were a curious mix of the young and trendy - Mr Fletcher, Mr Moy, Mr Wiseman - and the old guard of Mr Darby, Mr Latimer (who had a rather intriguing nickname) and most interesting of all: the headmaster, Mr Buttery. He wore a gown (a mystery to a lad like me from the council estate) and in assembly played wonderful classical music records (always cracked and very scratchy) to illustrate his homilies. So, my early memories of TP in the first year of existence, 1969? Teachers either with long hair and wearing ridiculous flares, or tweed-jacketed cavalry twill ex-military chaps.

Still 'primum non nocere' (attrib. Hippocrates) appeared to be the hidden mission of TP and I remember my time there fondly and with great hilarity.

What have I done with my life: church organist, musician, postman, deckhand in the merchant navy, dustman, civil servant, gardener, but most of all after finally settling down at the age of 26, thirty years in the NHS in disability and mental health services, mostly working in boroughs of South West London. Now at 63 I live in Iden, play the piano, write music and try and entertain from time to time.

I still remember TP as a good place: necessary education, although occasionally I wonder would things be different had I been a Grammar School or Secondary Modern boy - who knows? Good old Thomas Peacocke: it educated me but also 'primum non nocere'. For those without a classic education I'll save you the time of googling 'First, do no harm'.

Bless all the old scholars and I'm available to play the organ at your funerals - reasonable rates. Email: phillawmusician.com

NEWS & VIEWS FROM OUR PRESIDENT – MR BARRY BLAKELOCK

It was a great pleasure to attend once again The Rye Proms in September, with all the pageantry we have come to expect. Coming as it did after a challenging year of lockdowns, closures and restrictions, this year's event took on a particularly celebratory air – not only were we uplifted to hear the Wurlitzer playing, but also by the sheer pleasure of being in the company of others. As the organ reassuringly rose from the stage, I reflected on all it must have seen. If those pipes could speak, I am sure they would tell many a tale of endurance.

This sentiment is no better illustrated than with the reopening of our schools. The return of all students belies the understandable uncertainty caused by the pandemic for many young people. Everyone is delighted to be back, to see friends, to return to classrooms. No-one could say our children take their education for granted: they have continued to learn whether at home or in school; online or in person; whether they have examinations or not. Given the multitude of tribulations our young people have had to endure, I firmly believe the pandemic may well be their making – giving them the perspectives required to tackle unprecedented global challenges.

September saw our largest intake of new students for years. Our continued growth is testament to our learners' achievements and our growing reputation amongst families and local community. At our recent open evening, which was very well attended, three messages came across when talking to parents: how everyone is known to us; how children are free to be themselves; and the importance we place on high academic standards. It is reassuring to hear that despite the disruption of the last 18 months, the values we have worked so hard to embed continue to resonate with the families that we serve.

Those values are no better seen than in the outstanding work of Rye Wurlitzer Academy, which continued to teach youngsters throughout the pandemic. It was fantastic to see the fruits of their labours as our students performed on stage at the proms. Our thanks go to all those who made it possible – thank you for your perseverance, thank you for your endurance.

Rye College is proud to have been awarded the National Careers Standard for their excellent careers provision. A key feature of the careers programme is to raise the aspirations of young people. One way that this can be achieved is through providing encounters with employers. If you have an inspirational story or an interesting job and would be willing to speak to the students, please email Donna Starkey on dstarkey@ryecollege.co.uk.

MEMORIES OF VILLAGE & SCHOOL CRICKET BY RUPERT DALE (1975-1976)

Cricket in the 70's. In the early 1970s my family moved to Staplecross and I automatically joined the local cricket club - not that I was any good, but I enjoyed the game and was able to help out as an extra on Sunday afternoons and get the odd game in. Reg Blanch was the captain, a true local, and he was always very encouraging.

It was there I met Paul Jeffries (TPS) and we played together for quite a few seasons for both Bodiam and Staplecross, and then for Thomas Peacocke School. Those years of playing for the village and for the school meant a great deal to me. Beckley, Westfield, Sandhurst, Burwash and Bodiam were some of the villages we played against during those summers. Sunday afternoon teas, raffles, jovial chit-chat and stumps up when the pubs opened were all part of the club's traditions.

It was a good learning curve, mixing with people from all walks of life. It all peaked when I got to Thomas Peacocke, playing for both the village and the school. I remember the school cricket field (Leasam), the matches, Mr Jones, Mr Spencer, the long hot summers, trips to Hythe, Hastings, Eastbourne and Bexhill, it was all a pleasurable and worthwhile experience.

Since the early 80's I have been living in Denmark and am still involved with cricket in schools and clubs around the country, which is still satisfying and good fun. Rupert Dale.

SARAH AVERY REPORTS QUEEN'S HEAD REUNION 26TH SEPTEMBER

Saturday 25 September saw another gathering of members of our school year (First year, Lower School September 1976), this time at the Queen's Head, Landgate. We had over 20 attendees, which was very pleasing. It's difficult sometimes to persuade people to venture out. Some of our school friends, whilst happy to chat on our Facebook group, are reluctant to meet up in person. We didn't meet in 2020...who did? But we have tried to hold an event every year since 2015, when most of us turned 50.

It's always good to meet up. Some schoolfriends come to every reunion. Some were new to this event and haven't seen each other for 40 years. It was lovely to see people laughing and reminiscing about classmates, teachers (inevitably), lessons and trips. We spent a good four hours catching up, arranging visits, and discussing 'the next one'.

We could probably have talked for another four hours as some people had so much to say. Old friendships were renewed, and new friendships were made.

We look forward to the next meeting in 2022. Those attending included Sarah Avery, Judith Payton, Vanessa Ramus, Peta Coram, Heidi Bedwell, Paul Kingham, John Shaw, Philip Reeve, Paul Curley, Denise Russell, Lindsey Bryant, Nicola Pepper, Tony Pierce, Debbie Gladwish, Marcus Hamilton, Guy Thorp, Donna Stradwick, Malcolm Owst, Terry Cope, Andrew Spacey, Colin Turner, Jane Phillips.



NEWS FROM STEPHANIE DUNK (1968-1974)

Stephanie had a life-long ambition to write a book, and in 2007 she did just that and self published. However there is a wonderful twist to this story which has blossomed recently. Stephanie, author of the popular children's book *Level Control*, will explain more.

I have always believed from a child that underneath the mushrooms at the bottom of my garden lives the fairy folk. Their kingdom is run by little creatures called Talbots. The story has a real twist. I have four more books already written to follow their adventures. Recently, a book publisher has relaunched the story. It is now on sale in bookshops, on Amazon and in all public libraries. I have loved writing these stories and I do believe there is a writer in us all.

Following my *Level Control* series, I will be writing new children's stories that have already developed in my mind. Many people asked me why I called the books *Level Control*. To rescue the fairy folk from the Talbots you must control the levels underneath the ground. With the help of the two children above the ground and the readers of the book this can be achieved.

Please enjoy the book as much as I have enjoyed writing it.

Level Control ISBN 978-1528909815.



LIFE MEMBERSHIP AND ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

News and subscriptions go hand in hand in keeping the ROSA Bulletin alive. Can we remind you subscriptions are now £5.00 per annum. Life Membership at £25.00 has been maintained for many years now, which we think offers great value for money. To keep our costs down we set and design the bulletin ourselves. Please send a cheque to R.O.S.A. to:-

Mrs Judith Blincow, R.O.S.A. Secretary, The Mermaid Inn, Mermaid Street, Rye, East Sussex TN31 7EY

If you are reading this bulletin for the first time, please consider joining R.O.S.A.

Standing order information

Make it easy for yourself and ROSA by setting up a standing order to pay your annual subs.

Account Name: Rye Old Scholars Bank Details: Sort code: 60-18-09 Account No: 59114479

Please quote your name for reference.

FOND MEMORIES OF MRS LONGFIELD

Erika Longfield passed away peacefully on 24th February 2021, aged 94. Much loved mother of Julia, Helen and Madeleine, grandmother to ten and great grandmother to eight children. 26 happy and fulfilling years teaching German at Thomas Peacock School, Rye and a keen and valued volunteer at the Conquest Hospital for 20 years.



Gwyn Williams 1979-1985 I saw her last working in the little shop at the Conquest. After I had greeted her, she asked if she'd ever taught me. I told her that she had, so she asked my name. 'You must have been a good boy,' she said, 'because I don't remember you at all!!' A proper character!!

Richard Fry 1976- 81 Fond memories of her trying to browbeat German into me so many years ago. She once agreed to stand on stage and sing Lili Marlene in front of the entire school for charity - such a great sport!

Emma Louise I loved Miss Longfield, I remember once saying to her that a well known boy who had 'learning difficulties' kept chasing me with his arms outstretched saying 'I want your body' and she replied innocently in her German accent 'what does he want it for.... to bury it?'

Jason Lamb 1978-84 I liked her very much. I remember being in the Lunch Box Café in Rye when I should have been at school, and she sat behind me. I obviously couldn't leave.....she must have noticed me but didn't say anything until about ten minutes later when she leaned over and said quietly into my ear.... "I von't tell if you buy me a doughnut....." I did, of course, buy her the jammiest doughnut I could find. Absolute legend. RIP.

Robin Horner 1984-90 That's very sad, I hated German, but really liked Mrs Longfield. She had a cheeky way about her, a good sense of humour and let me get away with far more than I should have. She lived a long life and for that I'm grateful. Rest in peace Mrs L.

A POTTED LIFE PIECE BY JAMES WILSON RSM (1958-62 AND R.G.S. 1962-64)

Richard Moore, our current head of association, and I, apart from being Rye Old Scholars, have another commonality in so far as we are equally proud of our Northiam village heritage. I assume it was a major factor toward prompting his request that I write a short narrative on the course of my life after leaving school for entry in this years bulletin. I hasten to add that there is a considerable age disparity between us, and as a consequence our attendances were over two different eras. My submission is limited by the confines of space, but I do hope it is of interest to old school friends and others who remember me and doesn't appear over egocentric.

On failing my 11+ I initially attended Rye county secondary where during the early 1960's I passed a number of GCSEs, and at which time I had a career ambition to become a village general practitioner having been so unimpressed with Northiam's incumbent medic Dr. Kerr over the post-war years that he practiced when I was a resident. The path to my endeavour required the acquisition of Advanced Level GCEs in some science subjects, particularly biology and zoology; Rye secondary didn't cater for them, but Rye Grammar did so I was offered mentorship in those subjects there, which was the reason behind my late membership of the grammar community. Unfortunately, just prior to sitting my A level exams a crisis within my immediate family gave me no option other than to leave school in order to earn a living.

My initial full-time employment was as an "apprentice" groundworker/ labourer with a large local firm of builders whose main income was derived from various council housing estates builds. Within two or three years I was in charge of a gang of men trailblazing new estate building sites. We were the vanguard tasked with the installation of roads, footings and drainage complexes, together with a hundred and one other tasks connected to large building enterprises. Unfortunately, in a contention over pay with my employers, specifically being offered a derisory increase that I considered wasn't on par with the responsibility I had, I decided to leave and for a few years after that I carried on building, interspersed with agricultural employment in partnership with a close friend. It was during that period that I was approached by the son of a local farmer, an old school friend, with a request to join his team in order to fulfil a contract to build a wildlife park within a historic country estate for its millionaire owner.

The prospect of working in close proximity with nature on such a project linked to a reasonable pay structure had great appeal and I eagerly joined the team, each member of which possessed of the specialist work skills required for such a project. It was one of the best decisions I have ever made. After a few years I achieved the status of estate manager, a position I served in during the estate's ownership by 2 successive millionaire families, one headed by a Harley Street doctor, the second by a Norwegian shipping magnate. They both treated my family and myself extremely well. I was regarded more the status of a friend than an employee, leading to both myself and immediate family sharing many aspects of their lifestyle.

Great faith and trust was placed in my knowledge and ability, to the extent I was given carte blanche authority of administration over virtually every aspect connected to the running of the estate. I had at my convenience a full complement of directly employed staff including gardeners, builders, housekeepers, secretary and P.A, and, if and when deemed necessary, assistance from an army of outside contractors and individuals all expert in their particular fields of work. It was a unique and enviable period of employment when finance for any project, renovation, reinstatement or employer's wishes was freely available in copious amounts. Many were the times when my employer would pose a question, "Why didn't you spend more money on it?"

“My response would be, “To save you money”. His cliché retort would be, “Pah! It’s only money” . I could recite a catalogue of examples when finance that were large amounts of to me were of much less value to him. My second employer and owner of the estate, he who had no qualms about spending inordinate amounts of capital, purchased the estate in June 1993 for the sum of £830,000; The price reflected several years of neglect and lack of financial input by my previous employer.

On being sold in 2007 it realised thirteen and a half million pounds by virtue of the improvements implemented under the period of his ownership and my management. Subsequently, a much smaller estate, several miles distant, was purchased and I was tasked with the improvement and management of it. My employer had, a few years prior, after divorcing his first wife, a former Miss Norway, married a despicable gold-digging divorcee; She and I fell out, prompting me to retire to the farm my partner and I had recently purchased. I met my lovely partner, and mother of our 3 beautiful children, in 1979.

The children have long since flown the nest but have done their duty by presenting us with us with several gorgeous grandchildren whom we adore immensely. I met Nicole, my partner, when i worked night-time shifts as a club doorman, and it was at that time I was offered an extremely lucrative position in the security business by an owner of one of the top agencies providing security to the stars. It was just after Paul McCartney was ejected from Japan for infringement of its drug legislation, and the agency was shielding him from publicity on his return to home in Peasmarsh.

My first stint would have been a, six month period as a bodyguard to Rod Stewart during his forthcoming tour of Las Vegas. The salary offered was huge, but my infatuation with Nicole who I had only just met after the breakdown of a previous long term relationship, prompted me to reject the offer. A decision which I have never regretted: the past 42 years of companionship, empathy and affection are proof that the decision was correct. Since leaving school my life has been extremely fulfilled and I am sure I’m the envy of others who have not had the good fortune of being offered the variety of opportunity and benefits as I have, which i am sure would never have been my experience had I realised my original career ambition of becoming a village GP. And for that I am eternally grateful.

REMEMBERING BOB EDWARDS BY HIS TEACHING COLLEAGUES

Bob first came to teach Outdoor Pursuits, which amongst other thing involved lots of canoeing and other water-based activities. I will always associate him with students looking like drowned rats.

Amongst many specific memories of Bob, two stand out. When computers were in their infancy in schools, I had collected some data with a class and thought it might be good if I could display the results using the school’s only computer. Bob was able to write a program to do this, certainly the only teacher in the school who could have done so. I was most impressed, so much so that teaching and examining ICT became my second teaching career.

My other memory is of Bob coming round to refurbish my kitchen when he had left teaching—new floor, kitchen units, etc. The only time I ever saw him get upset was when I trod on a tile he had just laid in position, with rather disastrous results. **Ed Wiseman.**

My abiding memory of Bob is the Year 8 Camps he organised in the 1980s. They were a wonderful example of organisation and fun. To organise the camping / activities of 250 plus young people over 2 weeks was a fantastic logistical achievement. It gave so many young people an opportunity to experience the skills of outdoor life, and to develop so many personal life skills. Bob did this through his Outdoor Pursuit Sessions, Walking Holidays and Ski Holidays. **Martin Blincow.**

Chris Rose I started, as a probationary teacher, at Thomas Peacocke on exactly the same day as Bob. It was his first job too. I vividly remember that, with some other new teachers, we had to meet what was the new Head to the school, Mr. R. V. Fooks. Bob, from the start, struck me as a determined guy with a very good sense of humour. I think Maggie soon followed him to Rye and Vicki and I got to know them well. Bob was employed to teach Outdoor Pursuits and later became a Geography teacher. I taught English and Drama. But Bob’s joy was the outdoor life and he used every opportunity to educate students in the great outdoors through camping, canoeing and sailing. Annually, in his own time, he would take students on testing camping trips.

We both worked together at the boarding facility at Leasam in our time. Bob and Maggie, soon after they married, lived in the cottage annexed to the main house. Many of the boys, who are now in their 50s, remember him very fondly and have their own camping stories to tell. Many remember him as firm but fair... and he was! Bob also had dexterous woodworking skills and I recall he made their whole kitchen by hand from wood and even replaced his windows with his own handmade ones. I think he made his own workshop too. Later, after retiring from teaching, he set up his own small business and did some woodworking jobs for us.

We had a boating holiday on the Thames with Bob and Maggie, and another couple from school. I’m not sure if it was really Bob’s cup of tea, I think he would have preferred something more hardy and less luxurious. Nevertheless, he enjoyed himself until developing severe toothache at one point, which was so bad that he decided he needed to see his dentist in Rye. Would you believe it, he insisted, one morning, in walking what must have been at least 7 miles along the towpath back to his car at Datchet I think, drive back to Rye, get treatment to relieve the pain, then did the reverse to join us back on the boat in the evening. What a guy! An example of the Bob Edwards determination.

Like many of us, Bob could not relate to the many changes in Education and adaptations to the school curriculum cast by government. He made the brave move and left the profession early. He was fortunately able to use his other woodworking talents to bring in an income alongside Maggie’s and he was much more content. Of course, he was also a keen and able golfer, which he took up again later in life.

In the last few years, we have been to Edinburgh and travelled Scotland. We tried to contact Bob on our return to drop in and say hello, but did not make contact until we got home. I wish now that it had worked out and we met up.

REMEMBERING GARRY BLACKMAN

11.09.59 – 16.09.21

It is with tremendous sadness that we announce the death of Garry Blackman. Garry was a pupil at TPS Rye during the 1970's and was a "larger than life" character throughout his time there. Garry and his family were well known in Rye, living in the newsagents close to the Landgate.

Garry died on 16 September following a short but courageous battle against pancreatic cancer. When he started his working life, Garry was determined to become part of the entertainment industry, and despite the school careers advice, he achieved all of his goals in his remarkable life.

Garry's incredibly impressive portfolio during his working life included being an "Entertainment and Publishing Manager" for many international media companies. He was Head of Visual Media for Virgin UK, Head of Film UK at Blockbuster and Head of Books and Publishing at Tesco UK. Most recently, until summer 2021, he was Group Commercial Director at SJH Publishing House in London.

In all of these experiences Garry's strong and focused leadership skills, alongside his endearing personality, engendered tremendous respect from both those who worked with him, and also the movers, shakers and celebrities of the worldwide entertainment industry. He worked on huge projects, many with musical heroes and legends including David Bowie, Keith Richards and George Harrison.

One of Garry's passions outside work was for motor sport and cars in general. We will be forever grateful to the dedicated team of mechanics and specialists who worked tirelessly throughout the last summer to ensure his mini restoration project was completed ahead of schedule. In fact, about a week before his death Garry was able to admire, collect and drive his pristine classic Mini Cooper which can be seen in the accompanying photo.

Throughout his exciting and often surreal working life, involving film premieres, book and music launches and celebrity jaunts of all kinds Garry's feet were always firmly on the ground. Return trips to Rye for a stroll through the town were a regular feature of Garry's year. He was kind, thoughtful and generous, and without any doubt his "Happy Place" was at home in Haywards Heath with his family.

Garry will be much missed by everyone who knew and loved him, and especially by his wife Sue, daughter Jo and his two brothers Steve and Trevor.



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