

Fellow Old Retfordians.

Present:-

Host David Waterfield 1957-62
President Ged Moss 1977-84
Treasurer Edward Otter 1953-58
Secretary Peter Holdsworth 1955-62
Phil Towler 1955-61
Dan Needham 1953-60
Peter Skelton 1964-72
Robin Williams 1975-79
John Brooke 1955-62
John Dornie 1955-62
Chris Trend 1970-77
Geoff Hughes 1960-65
Jonty Connor 1956-62
Jack 'The Cat' Barber!! 1955-62

Huge thanks to David Waterfield for hosting this meeting. As you will see we had a very wide spread of years from 1960-84 which made for a very entertaining meeting. There was a lot of varied input from a whole spectrum of contributors and I'm confident that everyone was as fascinated as I was.

In order of discussion the more important matters were as follows:-

As Secretary I pointed out that we now have a Reunion coming up in September which is a longstanding event, so not an official ORA2021 event, which I am running, but not as Secretary for the aforementioned reason. Thus, I would like to hand over the task of organising the 2022 Reunion, and I would like everyone to consider taking it on. On its own it is an enjoyable task, despite the disruptions of COVID-19, and is basically internet-based; personal visits to the venue are not absolutely necessary as the format at Ye Olde Bell Hotel should work well. Both Ged and I would be willing to offer any advice or assistance to the new organiser. So, it will be an item, possibly the only item, on the Agenda for the 2021 Reunion on 8th September, unless someone has volunteered prior to that.

President **Ged** pointed out that Bassetlaw Museum is an asset which we really need to use to its full potential for depositing memorabilia etc. To that end he is asking for a local Retford resident to act as Liaison Officer with the Museum. A simple duty with little responsibility other than to pop in from time to time.

Ged also requested that members should look at the photos on the website, particularly the panoramic shots from 1957, '60 and '63 with a view to adding names via the comment box. He would also like anecdotes to add to the website and there is a prize for the most complete contribution!! Ged has a spare copy of 'A History of King Edward VI Grammar School Retford' by former teacher Douglas Grounds which he will send to the winner.

Ged has also produced an A4 poster for home printing with a view to displaying in libraries, shops, and other windows around the North Notts area. He will send that to you via email by request.

Treasurer **Edward** reported that we have 25 paid up members of which 23 have paid the full £50 and 2 have paid the first £25 with a further £25 due in 5 years. Edward will produce a Standing Order form for anyone who wishes to pay £5 annually. This will also be available by request.

There followed a wide-ranging discussion covering various school related topics including analysis of various teachers.

David Waterfield told us that, back in the day, he had spent hours practicing the signature of Headmaster JCH Gover and could still make a reasonable effort which he demonstrated.

McFerran was discussed and it was discovered that his stories of Troddles and Charlie Cash had been going on for at least 17 years when we heard them back in the late 50s. **John Brooke** related that one year, McFerran was unavailable to set our Geography exam paper, so it fell to John's father Hedley, the alternative Geography teacher, to set the exam. On examining John's textbook, he discovered that the only entry was relating to the tilt of the Earth's axis!! Not a lot of scope for setting 9 questions.

Discussion also included teachers Tash Illingworth, Paddy Robinson, McLellan, Howard Paynter, Derek Lee, and Simon Cox.

Other topics included Iolanthe and the Entrance Exam necessary to enter the School from certain areas in the North of the County in addition to passing the 11+, however the most enlightening contribution came from **Jack Barber** who began by announcing that he has the fire bell from the New Block in his garage.

He went on to tell us how he had realised that the school keys were sequential, and that he taken a plasticine copy of the caretaker's master key by going into the caretaker's little room under the stage. With that he could enter any room in the school; he could even open the Chemistry lab store cupboard!! He did all this in the evening after the school was closed, and he also entered the old school roof area with another 'adventurous' boy. They were able to get right over the Headmaster's house where they were heard, however they were able to hear Mrs Gover say that it was probably mice! As you can imagine we were all spellbound.

There is nothing to top that, so all that remains is to thank everyone for their contributions and hope to see a few more of you next time. No date has been fixed for the next meeting, but I have suggested Wednesday 20th October, 3 months to the day from this last meeting.

Best regards,

Peter,
Secretary ORA2021