

Fellow Old Retfordians.

The Reunion 2021 was held at Ye Olde Bell Hotel, Barnby Moor on Wednesday last. The final number was in fact just 11 as President Ged was unable to attend.

Despite the low numbers everyone appeared to have a great time even though the entry dates ranging from 1953 to 1975, and most had only met during the Zoom meeting. As I've said on numerous occasions before, the School is the common denominator and everyone seems to get on.

We convened in the fresh air from 1-00pm on a beautiful sunny day and I was delighted that they had 2 real ales on, very important to me in choosing a venue. The meal began at 2-00pm as planned and all went well until around 2-45 when the fire alarm sounded. Despite the fact that our table had just been served with our main courses we were all ushered into the car park! 10 minutes later a spider had been discovered to have set off the alarm and we were allowed back to the table. Our meals were still sufficiently warm to be consumed with enthusiasm, although the manager did offer assistance in that regard.

I reported the death of Ian Collins, Head Boy around 1955/56. I also reminded the meeting that I had expressed a wish to resign my self appointed position of General Factotum. In the absence of any volunteers or nominations it was decided that I should abandon my GF hat and continue to do the job as part of my Secretarial duties. Oh go on then!

Soon after 4-00pm I introduced the speaker, General Manager Kate Firth, who has been at the Hotel for 40 years. Indeed her topic was the Hotel, which she told us was her favourite topic, and this was quite obvious from the enthusiasm and quality of her presentation. I'm sure that we were all particularly interested in the section on the Monte Carlo Rally, and the only watering hole between Glasgow and Dover was at the Hotel. I'm sure that many of us remember the cars passing the School during the following day.

Kate seemed to suggest that it only lasted for 3 years around 1959-61, however records suggest that it ran from 1955-73 so maybe they just moved the overnight stop elsewhere.

Kate brought her talk very much up to date and told us that the Hotel is due to be refurbished very soon, after around 12 years. She also left us with the 'Famous Visitors Book' which included many famous media celebrities and politicians. At this point I wish that I had had the foresight to take some notes because I'm pretty sure that Queen Victoria got a mention, but don't quote me on that one!!

I do remember that a large section of the Hotel was gutted by fire but I don't remember the date. I gave a vote of thanks at around 5-00pm after Kate had answered questions.

Four of us, Edward Otter, Dan Needham, Geoff Hughes and I were staying the night so we had a table booked in the bar where we partook of liquid refreshment, non of us being remotely hungry. We then retired to my room which had the most suitable facilities for sampling the 3 Scotch whiskies which we had between us. At 12-20 I

sent them all packing and went to bed. Edward has reported the best nights sleep that he has had for years. No comment! After meeting up for a superb breakfast we all went our separate ways. No date or venue have been yet set for 2022 but we can discuss that at the Zoom meeting on Wednesday 20th October and I commend both events to you all.

Regards,

Peter,

Secretary ORA2021