

The Sibford Rocket 2001



The Sibford Rocket

The Annual Magazine of the
Sibford Old Scholars' Association

Hello, and welcome to the second edition of the 'Sibford Rocket'. I am greatly indebted to last year's Editor, Caroline Mills, who pioneered the first edition. It is so much easier to follow a lead given by others than it is to travel alone. Thankyou also to the many old scholars have helped with contributions for this issue. Photographers Ian Weatherhead, Russell Steed and Raymond Bond provide visual impact, with numerous images that have been taken specially for these pages. The Association has been saved considerable expense in the production of both this and last year's magazine: Raymond Bond has provided his professional typesetting and layout facilities entirely free; we are so grateful. The magazine is for all Old Scholars, no matter how far distant from Sibford, or how busy. We hope you enjoy it.

Ann Bond, Editor (December 2001).

Dates for your Diary:

(please check before travelling)

Saturday 6th January: School Event -
'An Evening of Shakespeare & Music' - see page 22.

Saturday 26th January:
Midlands Branch 'New Year' Party - see page 36.

Sunday 24th February: SOSA Committee Meeting.

Sunday 17th March:
SOSA v School Football Match - see page 22.

Saturday 15th June:
Sibford School Open Day & SOSA Day Reunion -
see page 21.

Wednesday 31st July: 'copy date', 2002 Magazine - see page 18.

Saturday 24th - Monday 26th August:
SOSA Annual Reunion - see page 19.

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PRESIDENTIAL PROFILE

Hi, I'm Simon Barfoot, your President for 2001-2002.

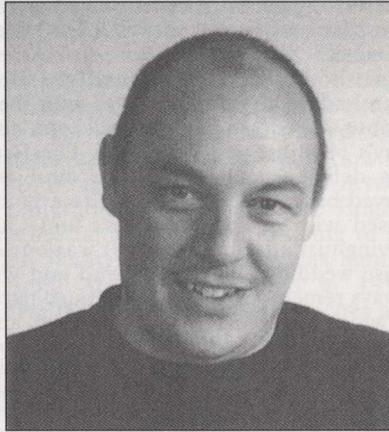
I was at Sibford between 1972-1977 during the reign of Ken Greaves and June Ellis. I was a 'day kid' and probably one of the few Presidents who never actually boarded at Sibford. In fact the first time I ever slept over at Sibford was at my first SOSA reunion week-end. I guess there are three parts to my profile. Firstly, life before Sibford, secondly life at Sibford and thirdly life after Sibford.

Life before Sibford: I was born on 30th December 1960, the only son of Kate and Clive and brother of Sarah (also an old scholar). I was born in Redruth, Cornwall, due to my Dad's national service in the RAF, and for the first six weeks of my life I was a born and bred Cornishman! My Father's national service ended in my seventh week and I left Cornwall and moved back up country. For the next three years I lived in Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Warwickshire and finally Oxfordshire; we were not a family on the run!

For the next fifteen years I grew up in Banbury and started my education at Britannia Road Infant School, Dashwood Road Junior School, Overthorpe Preparatory School, and then on to Sibford. I had a happy childhood and, whilst at Britannia Road, developed an interest in girls to the point where, aged about 5 or 6, I persuaded Rachel Old to miss her bus stop and stay on the bus to mine and come back to my house to see my train set! I sneaked her into the house and went to my bedroom without my Mum knowing. Obviously Rachel's Mother was panicking with the non-arrival of her daughter and search parties were being organised when the missing girl was found in my room and all ended well. I have never lost that interest in the opposite sex (hope I never will).

At Dashwood Road School with the aid of a tennis ball I slowly developed the other love of my life, football. Over the last 30 odd years I have played school boy, youth and senior football with two of my old clubs, Rushden Town and Irthlingborough Diamonds, who have now amalgamated and are in Division 3 of the football league.

Life at Sibford: I arrived in 1972 straight into Year 2 and was in Nansen House. I have my old school reports to help write my profile of this period of my life: having read them I can honestly say I was average! In my first year I managed to score C3 in 10 out of 11 subjects; why couldn't there have been a grading for Games? I am sure I would have achieved my first A grade. Looking back I have fond memories of school. I was able to continue with my interests, girls and football, but these were interrupted by the constant demands of staff for me to attend classes, which I did and maintained my run of C3 grades.



My favourite subject was Geography which was taught to me by Brian Holliday and as an extra bonus for me he also coached football. I recall one game which he was refereeing where I think I shouted some industrial language. He stopped the game, called me over, had a few strong words with me, made me bend over and kicked my backside; summary justice was dispensed. I have reminded Brian of this incident, of which he has no recollection - but it wasn't his backside that got kicked!

Due to girls, football and C3 grades I left Sibford in 1977 with three 'O' levels in Geography, Football and Girls, or was it Geography, Human Biology and English.

Life after Sibford:

I went to North Oxon Technical College in Banbury to do a two year course in some more 'O' levels but left after a year because I wanted to go out into the big wide world and there was no football. Upon leaving I moved with my parents to Northampton in 1978. I got my first job working in a Sheepskin Factory and I think my first pay packet was £15 a week. In 1982 my parents moved to Kent and I decided it was time to make the break and bought my first house in Northampton for £13,000; how times have changed. In 1985 I left that job and went to the USA to seek my fortune. After six months of playing soccer and going out with girls (that English accent really helped), I had run out of money and came back home to Northampton where I took the first job that had a car and money and ended up selling office stationary. I then changed jobs and went into the world of direct marketing. I was made redundant in 1990 with a nice pay off, so went back to see all my old girlfriends in

America; I also had the odd game of football. On returning two months later, I applied to the Police Force, was accepted a year later and joined Northamptonshire Police Force on the 13th January 1992 aged 31. For the whole of my police career I have been stationed in Kettering and have had many eye-opening experiences.

In March 2000, I became a Father to William Richard Barfoot who, as I write, is an eighteen month old delight, giving me wonderful pleasure and now I am 40 and getting too old for football (but not girls), is the new interest in my life instead of football. He keeps me young at heart, young of mind and is a 'babe magnet'. I have also brought him his first pair of football boots.

I feel my time at Sibford taught me more than anything the Quaker values of patience and tolerance, which have given me a good footing in life and if ever there was a profession that needed these values it is being a Police Officer.

Having attended my first SOSA reunion as a helper back in 1977 when Grace Beckerlegge was President, I consider it a great honour 25 years later to be your President and hope to serve this position well over the next 12 months and into our centenary year.

News of Old Scholars



SOSA Members:

Paul Day (1981-84): I have been a practising arborist for almost a decade and am married with a four-year old daughter. We live in Canada and I run a seasonal business (the season is short here in the 'great white north').

Graham (Don) Downer (1971-73) wants to catch up with old friends, and sends regards to them all. He was in Penn House and then the sixth form.

Edd Frost (1985-90) stumbled across a fifth form photograph (1990) and surprised himself by being able to identify them all. These he has passed on for the 'former pupil archive'.

Alicia Hamel (19??-2000) has just started a Sports' Science degree at the University of Brighton. Alicia has been in Australia and New Zealand for six months; a few of her e-mailed diary snippets are published on page 43.

Guy Kingham (1982-84) married Jane Ashdown on July 28th, 2001. 'Sibford' guests included Cindy Poulton, Julie Greenhill and Fritz (Michael Herm). Cindy provides this account: What a wonderful day to get married, the weathermen had predicted a heatwave and for once they didn't get it wrong. It was the start of the school holidays and the world and his wife were on the road! The wedding took place at St. Mary's Church in Old Town, Eastbourne. None of us had ever seen Guy scrubbed up quite so smartly; he had apparently had a hair cut for the occasion too! The Church was full to over-flowing as Jane arrived on the arm of her father looking surprisingly calm. Her dress was beautiful, simplistic in design and extremely elegant. The atmosphere was one of excitement and relaxed enjoyment throughout the whole day. After the service Jane and Guy walked their guests through Old Town to

Jane's parent's house and the celebrations continued in the garden with Champagne and Canapés, whilst a Jazz quartet played in the background. Jane's mother rescued her buttonhole, which she had left in the fridge, and Jane appeared with the announcement that she now had her hoop on - she had discovered it missing from under her wedding dress during the service! We then sat down in the marquee and were entertained by Jane's Father, the Best Man and Guy as they delivered their speeches. Entertained was the correct word: both Jane's Father and the Best Man had us in fits of laughter with their various anecdotes of Guy and Jane, and Guy's response was on a par. The food was delicious and then once more we moved back to the garden. The evening closed with a disco and Jane and Guy leaving just after midnight. It was one of those weddings that you attend and will always remember; it was like a huge party at which everybody was so relaxed and everybody enjoyed the event. So now 'Mrs Guy' really is Mrs Guy Kingham and we wish them every happiness for the future.

Tom Lane (1992-95, and a SOSA Committee Member) is currently living and working in New Zealand. He keeps in touch via e-mails. He has written a short paragraph for the 'Down Under' section on page 43.

Mary Mascaro (1965-70) fulfilled a life-long wish this summer to visit New York before spending a month with the Copake Camphill Community.

Caroline Mills (*neé Bond*, 1982-87) and her husband, Paul, now have a baby son, Dominic - a sister for 3yr-old Kate. Caroline and Paul celebrated their fifth wedding anniversary in October.

Naomi Prosser (1988-92): After graduating from Leeds University in Philosophy and Politics, I travelled/worked through Africa for 15 months,

before going on to NZ and Australia. Upon return, I moved to London, completed a postgraduate diploma in law and now work as a legal assistant in a US law firm.

Wendy Salmon (*neé Holden*, staff 1983-92) sang at the wedding of **Chris and Emma Wollerton** in June. Chris (1980-85) is also an old scholar and the son of ex-staff, Mike and Jenny Wollerton.

Gerardo Sanchez-Reyes (1981-86): For the last seven years, I have been working from an office based in Great Rollright near Chipping Norton (wouldn't like to be too far from Sibford you know!), buying and selling insecticides for public health, pharmaceutical and agricultural use all over the world.

Eleanor Smith (*neé Blunsom*, 1949-55) remembers trips to Whichford Woods in the summer. Her father was at Sibford for a couple of years, and was a lifelong member of SOSA until his death in 1992. Her father's cousin, Bernard, (1925-30) was at one time head boy.

Lucy (1988-92) and **Jonathan** (19??-19??) **Snow**: Lucy is doing a PhD in London and Jonathan is in his final year at Southampton University.

Katy Tuthill (1988-92): I work for myself and organise International Events for a living. Currently (May 2001), I am organising a classic car rally in South Africa. Last year, amongst other events, I worked on the Sydney Olympics and also another classic car rally, the London-Sydney Marathon.

Jonathan Tutte (1986-91): After Sibford, I went to Dorchester College where I did a BTEC First Diploma in Agriculture, then in Countryside Management. I spent a year working in Australia and NZ, and visiting the Cook Islands and Fiji. ... On my return, I went to work for three years for a food company in Chard, Somerset, ... then visited Canada ... then Trinidad and Tobago. On 20th December, 1999, my father passed away suddenly in his sleep. He was only 64 years and 10 months old. Christmas was not the same without him. Last year I took my father's MG Roadster to York with the MG Club, visiting beautiful places all over Yorkshire. This year, I looked forward to meeting everyone at the Reunion; seeing old friends plus new friends would be my pleasure. I am still single, until I meet the right person.

Sylvia Williams (née Webster, 1948-55) is working tirelessly, providing names for the 'former pupil archive'.

News of Old Scholars living overseas is given in the 'Down Under' section on pages 40-43.

Message Board

We hope these 'non-member' old scholars will be able to trace some of their school-friends or former colleagues through this message board - and also that they will soon join SOSA!

James Atkinson (1986-88): I am now 26 pushing 27. After leaving Sibford, I moved on to a school in Sussex and then to Hadlow College of Agriculture, where I studied for a year. I have had many jobs since then, and am now back at college studying advanced Networking in NT4. I run my own business (a computer repair service), and also run the family farm.

E-mail:

Fred de Bradeny (1977-82, known as

Fred Avati whilst at school) requested details of two school friends now living in Kenya (John and David Nicholas - 1977-82 and 1979-84), whom he hoped to visit during August.

Alex Cumber (1985-88) remembers his days at Sibford: I left school after a turbulent few years which physically and emotionally were very up and down. I have happy memories of the Chicken Run, Baron Bolingrew, Mr J etc. I remember bicycle rides to a wood in the next village and confess to making camps and lighting bonfires on those visits. I remember Ken Francis as an outstanding teacher and a man of great spiritual wisdom, who brought both history and the bible alive for me as a 13yr old. Mr Bateman and Mr Guy taught me confidence and how to communicate and stand up for myself. I remember the Art and the English teacher falling in love and going to see Miss Penny performing by gas light in a small theatre. I married in 1993; Katya is a religious studies teacher and a wonderful wife. Last summer, I was ordained by the Anglican Church and am now a curate in Essex. Thanks to school social services committee, I have always been actively involved in community issues and am a trustee of the local citizens' advice bureau, on the management of a charity working with those affected by HIV, a labour party member and recently elected onto one of the new neighbourhood committees. Does anyone else remember going on those visits with the school to old people's homes, or raising money for the Terence Higgins Trust? My spirituality has been developed from a rich variety of sources, from Walsingham pilgrimages through to experimental multi-media and multi-sensory new forms of worship. Silent worship was vital in this development.
E-mail: countdarcy@hotmail.com.

Susan Gray (née Lock, 1940-43) requested details on how to join SOSA. She had hoped to call at the Reunion.

Fiona Hook (née Poulton, 1969-76) moved to north Devon six years ago with her husband, Stephen, and two sons, Justin and Luke. After months of hard work, the cottage they own next to their house in Burrington is finally up and running for self-catering bookings, with access to beaches, moors, rivers and places of interest. So if you fancy a break, contact 01769 520610, or log onto:

www.Meadowhouseholdiays.freesevers.com

Denise Johnston (néé Davis, 1972-76) has e-mailed quite a few times and enjoyed last year's magazine, 'a wonderful way of putting the clock back'.

E-mail: Johnston.athome@virgin.net

Sarah Knight (née Lodge, 1971-74) sadly, is in a wheelchair all day as she has MS. Her husband, Bill, is trying to cope and look after their 10-yr old daughter. This is difficult before and after school when he is out at work. Sarah is at present in a residential institution which she finds very depressing and frightening. Is there anyone in the Milton Keynes area who can lend an occasional helping hand so that the family can stay together?

Contact Denise Johnston:

E-mail: Johnston.athome@virgin.net

Bryan Lee (1986-90, staff) reflected on the years since the cold winter of 1990 and his final concert as Director of Music at Sibford: ... held in a crowded dining hall, with people huddled together wearing a bizarre array of rugs, bobble hats and multi-layered clothing absorbing heat in the only remaining warm place the severe winter had left the school with.

Candles illuminated the evening and I still remember the shadows cast on the blinking sea of faces watching as I finished, saying I was about to leave Sibford but it will never leave me. Yet when I arrived at Sibford in 86, music was not on the timetable. I left Sibford in 1990 to become Head of Music at a

Birmingham Catholic school that we had met on two separate occasions at the Queen Elizabeth Hall in London, when Sibford students were finalists performing two of my musicals, Mr J and Edie.

My divorce around this time then prompted a change of direction. South East Asia beckoned and I left the UK with by my two children to become Director of Performing and Expressive Arts at a large International School in Kuala Lumpur. This was an amazing opportunity and a truly magical time. My role was the design and structure of a Performing Arts Faculty and to implement the British National Curriculum in all key stages. Here I was asked to join The International Schools Theatre Association (ISTA) which led to me taking young performers to China to perform on the Great Wall.

Two years later, in Saudi Arabia, I became Head of the Performing Arts Faculty and Theatre Administrator in a new International School. My father's stroke prompted me to return to UK last August and I am presently freezing as Head of Performing Arts at a 1500 strong school in Coventry! Next? I really don't know. It is good to be home but I do miss the sun so much.

William Lester (1972-77): Since leaving Sibford (head of Nansen), I went to college to further a career in catering. I have run large hotels and small, had my own pub and now, perversely, I am working for the Quakers in a children's home near Cambridge. I am married with 2 boys and a girl. I am learning how to use this computer contraption, and would love to hear from any 'old schoolers'.

E-mail:

Stella McIver (1951-53) has e-mailed that she would like to re-join SOSA, since discovering the School's web-site some months ago.

E-mail:

Toby (Jim) Marsden (1986-89): After leaving Sibford after GCSE, I took A-levels at another Quaker school, Bootham in York, and then a degree in Electronic Engineering, Computing and Business Studies at Kingston University, Surrey, and was awarded a first class honours. I am now an IT consultant, having started a company in 1995, now employing 30 people. I married in 1997 and live in Bracknell, Berkshire with my wife Claire and children Ellie and Charlie.

E-mail:

Billy Maxwell (1979-83): a child of Quaker parents, I have mixed memories of my time at Sibford, but am still interested in news of former students from around that time (I was in Lister). I was always a bit opinionated, running the debating club and such. I guess I carried on in that vein, trying to change the world. This led me from feeding homeless people on the sea-front in Brighton, to living in a squat in Bristol. I helped with regeneration projects in Yorkshire and Manchester before returning to University. I am now a community development officer with a local authority and am living with my wife and 2 year-old baby boy. My obsessions remain, but rather than defying the status quo, I defy gravity by paragliding across the glorious Lancashire countryside.

E-mail:

billymax@cloudbase71.freemove.co.uk

Thomas Miles (19??-99) collected membership details from the SOSA 'Hub' on Open Day.

Simon O'Gorman (1980-83): After leaving Sibford (Nansen), I studied Horticulture at Usk College in South Wales, followed by a year working in Horticulture and Agriculture in Israel. ... Continued my horticulture studies on my return, worked on an estate in Surrey as Head Gardener and for my father's gardening business ... back to Israel ... started my own garden and

landscape construction business ... travelled around Australia ... then further studies. I was undertaking building contracts in the south of England, south Wales, France and Spain. Eventually became more of a debt collector than a Landscape Gardener, so closed down the business and went into the Royal Marines. I have just married my wife, Alison, and having again made a career change, I am enjoying life to the full in Cardiff. I would love to hear from fellow Old Scholars.

E-mail: simon.o'gorman@landg.com

Richard Orange (1976-79): I run an independent news agency business in Lincoln which supplies 'copy' from local authority meetings to national, regional and local media companies. I am a part-time lecturer in Journalism at the University of Lincolnshire and Humberside. I have edited and published a winter travel guidebook to Switzerland, and help to promote various Swiss resorts in the UK. Please pass on my regards to anyone who will I am sure remember me.

E-mail:

Brodie Orford (1968-72): I am now married with a daughter aged 20. I have been in the motor trade since leaving Sibford and have been running my own small business as a mobile mechanic since 1981. I am occasionally in touch with Old Scholars Simon Matthews and Philip Sinclair. Two of my brothers and a sister also went to Friends' schools, so we are all products of a Quaker education.

E-mail: brodie@orford.freemove.com

Chris Piper (Howe-Piper, 1963-68): Hi, have you got a page for us old boys to e-mail to, or even a notice board?

Sarah Smith (19??-83) is trying to trace three fellow-students from Nansen: SOSA member, Helen Brown (née Trathen, 1980-85), also Janet Hastings (1981-85) and Joanna Warren

(1979-84). They shared dorms for about three years.

E-mail: sarahwillson@hotmail.com

Julia Tatton (née Nicholas, 1976-??) lives in Kenya and has just requested membership details.

Yvonne Walls (née Williamson, 1968-73) - head girl - visited the SOSA 'Hub' at Open Day.

Andrew Wheeler has sent news of his elderly father, **Thomas Kingston Wheeler** (1919-23) and wonders if he is the oldest surviving old boy. Andrew remembers visiting the old school with his parents several years ago, and meeting the housekeeper, Mrs Lovejoy. Unfortunately, his mother fell on the ancient worn steps at the front door as they left, and broke her hip. She since recovered well and his Dad greatly enjoyed seeing his old school again, as he has many fond memories of his time there.

Andrew Yale (1983-??) is trying to trace James Ross and Andrew Bishop from the early 80s. He recently 'found' Dave Minchin.

E-mail: AndrewCfYale@aol.com

Welcome & Farewell:

There has been much activity to encourage new Members this year, and SOSA is pleased to welcome:

Eric Bibby (1939-42)

Paul Day (1981-84)

Graham (Don) Downer (1971-73)

Anne Jackson (née Matthews, 1945-49)

Bronwen Lilley (née Quinton, 1955-58)

Lister Matthews (1949-54)

Rosalind Mead (1945-53)

Davy (1978-81) & **Yvette Quinton**

Wendy Salmon (née Holden, 1983-92)

Gerado Sanchez-Reyes (1981-1986)

Eleanor Smith (née Blunsom, 1949-55)

Patricia Thornton (née Robinson, 1948-51)

From this year's leavers (2001), all the following have taken Life Membership:

Dee Dee Booth
Harriet Cann
Richard Gleed
Stuart-John Greenfield
Katy Harper
Keiko Kurimoto
Abbi Little
Alexander Martin
Rasmus Nielsen
Keith Parsons
Johanna Russell
Duncan Scott
Matthew Teall.

So, too, have Emma Cobb, Harriett Cooper and Maia Keeling, but they are staying on in the Sixth Form; we look forward to welcoming them to Reunions when they leave in 2003.

The following have re-joined, or extended their original 10-year membership:

Paul Ambler (1987-90)
Ed Frost (1985-90)
Ben Hedges (1990-93)
Jonathan Pratt (1988-90)
Margaret Rhodes (1950-55)
Jonathan Tutte (1986-91)

The following 'missing' members have been traced through the diligent work of a number of people: **Koso Aburagi** (1990-94); **Gabrielle Briars** (née Barrell, 1944-48); **Mark Derbyshire** (1995-96); **Kathryn Holton** (née Weeks, 1986-93); **Stephen Hussey** (1956-61); **Ruth Jones** (1948-54); **Naomi Prosser** (1988-92); **David Quinton** (1949-52).

Addresses, and e-mail/phone numbers where applicable, are available for all these members. Please contact **Raymond Bond**, Membership Secretary (address on page 48) if you would like to receive any of them.

We are sorry to report that resignations have been tendered by **Clem Cox** and **Janet Mitchinson** (née Brown, 1949-54).

'Gone Missing!' - where are they now?

The following fully paid up members of SOSA have no currently known address. (10/11/2001) Can you help? *Details to Raymond Bond - Membership Secretary - address on page 48.*

ARTHUR, ALEXANDER
ARTHUR, MICHAEL TARIQ
AUGAR, JOHN CHARLES
BALDWIN, ELIZABETH
BARING-TAIT, OLIVIA
BRAY, LUCY MURIEL
BUNEMAN, MARCUS ADAM
BUNEMAN, NAOMI JANE
CHAN, PENELOPE SAU-YAN
CHAPMAN, JANE ROSALIND
CHARENBHOL, TANAWAT
CHARLES, DEIRDRE RUTH
CHOU, CLAIRE
COLE, STACEY DIANA
DONKERSLEY, MICHAEL
ENGLAND, JONATHAN
ENGLAND, REBECCA
EVANS, ROSS
FAIRWEATHER, TERESA
GATES, NIGEL
GRIFFITHS, ANNA MARY
GUILLEN, ROSELYN
HARPER, JONATHAN
HILLS, LORNA
HOLT-WILSON, BRADLEY
HOSKYNS, TARA
HUDSON, JAMES RICHARD
ISHIKAWA, KYOEY
ISHIWATARI, YUICHIRO
JONES, EDDA
KENNA, JESSIE ANN
KENNA, LUCY ANNE
KENNEDY, PATRICK
KEUNG, KEVIN
KIATNAWANAND, JESADA
KILCIOGLU, TALAT CEMRE
LAN, CHAO-WEI
LEE, I-TEH
LIST, DOMINIC GUY
LUNNON, JOHN DAVID
MAJSZYK, TOMASZ
MILLS, SIMON
MO, GRACE
OWOADE, VANESSA
PAINE, ANDREW
PROSSER, TOBY
SAMM, SUSAN, (née GILLETT)
SCHWARTZ, DEBRA
ST CLAIR, EMILY
TABU, RYUUCHI
TAIBOWORNPIITAK, CHAWALIT
THOMSON, MICHAEL
THRESH, JONATHAN
TOMORI, SAYAKA
VINEY, NATASHA
WATERFIELD, LISA
WHITE, LEO
YUEN, NANCY

REUNION WEEKEND 2001



Change is inevitable. In fact to resist it can mean at best a missed opportunity and at worst the demise of the very institution that you're trying to protect. However, change for the sake of it can be just as damaging. 'We have to move with the times' often means we want something to change only at the rate at which we ourselves are changing. At various points of the reunion weekend I felt highly conscious and uneasy that the more raucous pursuits of the younger contingent were imposing on the delicate enjoyment of the older - and therefore more eligible - Old Scholars.

I was completely wrong, of course. The very nature of this reunion enabled people to enjoy the weekend at different paces, each as 'eligible' an old scholar as the other. For the first time in a long while, there were activities and opportunities that kept everyone 'together' at the reunion. Too many years have seen groups of friends sloping off to the pub because there's nothing going on at the school that is attractive to them. It's hardly surprising that fewer and fewer recent leavers want to fork out seventy quid to meet up with their mates.

For me, the stars of the show - apart from Nicola Grimes and Ellen Salway who relentlessly and magnificently slogged their socks off to provide us with a great weekend - were Ann and Raymond Bond. It had occurred to them that there was no real central focus to the reunions, no place which acted as a constant haven or meeting point. Visitors that just popped in for a day were not really provided for and could not expect light refreshment. Ann and Raymond changed all this by turning the main hall into the 'SOSA Hub'. Half the hall was fitted out with staging, on top of which were scattered a number of

respectfully dressed tables, accompanied by chairs and candles. More tables stood on the remaining floor, along with coffee tables surrounded by comfy chairs.

Outside the Hub the hall foyer had become the meeting point. Information and personal messages, as well as the programme for the weekend, could be found on the noticeboard. The tuckshop stayed closed and unwanted, and instead a delectable array of fruit, chunks of homemade bread, cakes, fruit juice and bottles of wine were on sale, at less than reasonable cost. Here also was the start of the treasure hunt, designed this year to be undertaken at one's own leisure, overseen by the Sibford Elf (curiously akin to my dad in a silly hat). Unfortunately my mother had also had a hand in its conception, rendering some of

the questions eccentrically obscure. Still, those who took part thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

Michael Farr, this year's esteemed President, compiled and provided Saturday night's cabaret. A mixture of song, stories and humour, the '21st Century Show' entertained a seated audience in the civilised environment of the Hub. Less formal but equally congenial was Sunday night in the Hub, where groups of people sat and chatted, drank wine and finished their hog roast, a feast provided by Old Scholars and including a full pig on a spit.

Across the way, in the Oliver Studio, the atmosphere was very different. Old Scholars had been invited to bring recorded music for sharing, and this was duly done. Some people's taste in music didn't quite match that of others, but those for whom it became a little too lively quietly sought the sanctuary of the Hub.



Mike and Eileen Farr



OS 'Hubbers' engaged in their favourite activity: talking!

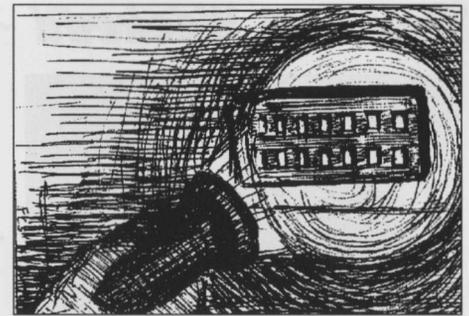
Even so, an eclectic mixture of ages listened to an eclectic mixture of music, from Irish folk, rag-time jazz and big band to Macy Gray, Robbie Williams, Shaggy and Primal Scream. We even had a Salsa dance lesson from Ivano Ricci. (*Editor's note - fantastic!*)

Earlier in the day Kageha Marshall (néé Watts) had given the Lesley Baily Address, sharing her struggle to come to terms with being adopted as a black Kenyan child into a white English family. Her account of trying to discover where she fitted between two cultures, neither of which felt her natural home, was very moving.

The School is fast becoming a very different physical place to the one where we went to school, but the ethos, the belief in people, stands firm. Indeed, change for the good builds on and enhances fundamental strengths. To my mind, the changes in this year's reunion brought people together and added an extra cohesiveness to the weekend. Old Scholars should be for ALL old scholars, and that felt truer this year than for quite a while.

Michael Grimes (1984-1991)

We are sure that Claire Smith wasn't the only OS who had problems with the security locks!



Claire sent us this sketch with the query:

'Did you remember the code?' 'Did you remember your torch?'



← *Leslie Harrison 'drives home a point' to Harold Pugmire and Eric Bibby*

It's a powerful argument, Mike, but Ian Weatherhead obviously isn't fully convinced....

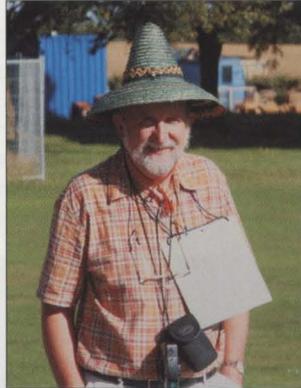
↓ *...Christine thinks the whole thing is a joke anyway!*



Reunion Weekend - - - People, Places and Events



The 2001 President, Mike Farr, and his wife Eileen.



Chris Grimes, 'The Sibford Elf'.



After Meeting at the Gower.



Tea Girls: Nicola Grimes, Ellen Salway & Pat Grimes.



Gentle 'hub' music
from Raymond Bond.



Neil Williams looks worried, but Norman Coxon seems happy!



Cindy Poulton describing ??



The ones who sneaked away to the!



Guy & Jane Kingham.



Kageha Marshall.



The Ricci family with Philip Casson.

Events, Places and People - - - Reunion Weekend



Fun at the 21st Century Show.



Monday afternoon - enjoying the sunshine.



Don Ryan & friends take tea on the South Decking.



Younger old scholars at the Presidential Dinner.



The Pig Roast.



Diana Lloyd, endlessly serving tea!



Helen Doyle entertains.



The wine bar & food stall proved popular.



Mike van Blank' chats to Committee Guest, Ron Barden.



Cindy Poulton with young visitors.



The Marshall family dine with Guy & Jane Kingham.

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

('Digested')

Last year's reunion, so memorably presided over by Mike and Wendy Finch, was called the Millennium Reunion but, as everyone now knows, the year 2000 actually fell at the end of the 20th Century. It follows that 2001 marks the start of the 21st Century (and the opening of the third Millennium); so allow me to welcome you all to the true 'Millennium Reunion'!



Anyone who has read my Presidential Profile will know that I have travelled to many corners of the world, doing all manner of things and mingling with all manner of people. Now, in my 75th year, I have been urged to draw upon my life's experiences to develop a theme for this speech.

I have thought about giving my address a title and I've settled for a conundrum. It is just four simple letters, 'MPGD'. That could be 'Miles Per Gallon of Diesel' - but wait and see!

Honestly, without narrating an account of events and experiences, I've hardly known where to begin; somehow though one fleeting memory from Nigeria has contrived to remain with me down the years. As we sometimes see on TV, West Africa's commonest mode of public transport is a basic lorry chassis carrying a covered body with hard plank seats. Because they are widely used by the women market traders and their mainly female clientele, they are affectionately called 'Mummy Waggon's' and their most memorable feature is the variety of slogans displayed above their cabs. The words are usually pious and thought-provoking - if sometimes obscure. Some proclaim such things as 'Judgement Day Is Nigh', 'Jesus Saves', 'Trust in the Lord' and (one which rather spooked me) 'Sea Never Dry'. However, for me, the most succinct and abiding is simply: 'Man Proposes, God Disposes'. Possibly that stark statement will develop a meaning during my speech.

Someone once said 'I quote others the better to express myself' and likewise I will now use the words of another to sum up the lessons learned in my Life Journey.

Many of us will have seen framed in the Gower Meeting House an anonymous piece entitled 'Desiderata'. Its origins are obscure: simply that it had been found in the Old St Paul's Church, Baltimore in 1692. Its three opening sentences encapsulate some lessons which life has taught me (even though my personal conduct often falls short of such ideals):

"Go placidly amid the noise and haste and remember what peace there may be in silence. As far as possible without surrender be on good terms with all persons."

"Speak your truth quietly and clearly; and listen to others, even the dull and ignorant; they too have their story."

These are the core lessons of my life; this quotation simply expresses them more lucidly than I could ever do. The first bit, about being unruffled by noise and haste, and maintaining a dignified silence, was something imbued with our Sibford education, but it was only after entering the world outside that I appreciated how widely the tenet is ignored.

The bit about staying on good terms with others, without compromising one's standards, is often easier said than done. If you

display unwavering resolve it can be wonderfully productive - but it must always be tempered with tact, tolerance and diplomacy - qualities which I don't possess in easy abundance.

I can illustrate here with ease, not to mention some embarrassment, how my own conduct - even quite recently, when I should have known better - fell short of these lofty ideals. As a SOSA officer I was required a few years back to constructively criticize the efforts of a junior committee member. I think I performed my duty well enough, but I did it too publicly and it completely demoralised the youngster. He melted off the committee soon afterwards and I take this opportunity now - albeit belated - to admit my then lack of tact and diplomacy.

A rather mundane factor, which didn't merit inclusion in my Magazine CV, has been the development of basic mind-sets moulded by a succession of dramatic events. These episodes - somewhat medically-related in character - were not exclusively personal; several involved people close to me.

Take for example - four decades ago - my 8-year old daughter in Ghana, who was savagely bitten by the mother of some puppies she'd been stroking. It happened in a Government Minister's garden, beside our own in Accra. The Vet suspected the possibility of rabies and he bravely ordered the destruction of the canine family and the despatch of specimens for analysis abroad. After an anxious week, which seemed like a year, the dreaded worst news came back. Thereafter, for eleven days, I had to take Jane to hospital for the administration of long-needle injections deep into my little girl's stomach. She was very brave, never once flinching, and we were hugely relieved when, after a nail-biting incubation period, she was finally declared free of the deadly virus.

Again, my late mother (who had joyfully raised a large family despite being seriously crippled and suffering impaired vision) developed an enviable tolerance to the consequences of repeated falls and mishaps. Her attitude in some hair-raising episodes became an inspiration for us all.

Picture if you can this lady, in her old age, having just taken tea with friends in their new home. She'd helpfully loaded the trolley before pulling it backwards to where she thought the kitchen was. She opened the door behind her and continued reversing. Unfortunately she'd opened the wrong door and in a trice she was at the foot of the cellar stairs, lying in a pool of blood, with a smashed tea trolley on top of her.

Our alarmed family rushed to her hospital bedside where we found her cheerfully sitting up - swathed in plaster-casts and bandages - laughing off all the concussion, the bruising and the broken bones. As we had long learned to expect, she made a full and rapid recovery.

That exemplary attitude was repeated on - of all days - her 85th birthday. My driver brother, manoeuvring in a hotel carpark, was unaware of her fumbling to open the door from a prone position on the back seat. When he reversed quickly, right-hand-down, the door flew open and she was catapulted out horizontally, like a torpedo, to land head-first on the gravel. True to form, her nasty head wounds and concussion were shrugged off. She firmly declined a hospital stay and when I visited her that evening, I found the birthday girl toiling at the ironing board, contentedly humming to a radio tune, oblivious of her shaven and stitched head which was bandaged like a turban!

Yet another humbling experience, which affected me deeply, occurred in the early 1980s. Eileen and I were not long married when she took

on the full-time care of her sick older brother. He was a single man who had worked for many years in the USA, only being sent home when helpless with advanced MS. He needed to be dressed and undressed, hand-fed and all ablutions managed for him. Eileen for two long years, on top of all her domestic chores, lavished unstinting care on her brother - even while his emotional state was declining in parallel with his physical collapse.

How she bore it for those two years I shall never know. Even following his eventual removal to a distant hospital (where he survived for three more harrowing years) we made frequent visits to his bedside.

Confronted with these examples of a small daughter, of an aged mother and of a saintly wife with her brave brother, I've had no option but to square up to my own fragility and to take infirmities in my stride. My clinical experiences have combined to teach me the most important lesson in my life. Although I seem to enjoy a sound basic constitution, my health record has often been alarming and wildly erratic. Yet - in an odd way - I am thankful today for having had that record.

In my tropical life I experienced some unpleasant maladies. Bouts of malaria sometimes laid me low, along with other nasty conditions including Dengue Fever and Filariasis (that's a parasitic condition whose symptoms I'll not dwell upon). Then in 1983, at 3 o'clock in the morning during a Dublin weekend break, there came emergency abdominal surgery, and later in that same year, aged just 54, I was paralysed by a stroke. I recovered wonderfully from both events and, while I dared to believe that little else could befall me, other surprises were actually waiting to pounce.

Firstly there is a well known condition (it's delicately masculine and cancer-related) for which some older men undergo corrective surgery. Not for me! Over a few short years I've been subjected to three of those surgical procedures.

And during the 1990s my tropical past has returned to haunt me. Prolonged exposure to strong sunlight led to the eventual development of a cancer called Malignant Melanoma. This often fatal condition first appeared on my back, from where it was surgically excised - seemingly in the nick of time. But then, following five symptom-free years, my melanoma decided to make a rapid return - in the shape of simultaneous lung and liver tumors, accompanied by ghastly skin swellings. I wasn't best pleased! At 71 years of age it seemed that my end had come. But yet again quite unexpectedly (just as suddenly as they had re-appeared after five years) all the symptoms shrivelled and disappeared! This was even before any chemotherapy had begun.

(Incidentally I also realised, - with strangely mixed feelings - that I now lacked a ready-made excuse for standing down as Old Scholars' Editor!)

As I say the doctors hadn't yet started any therapy and they could not explain the spontaneous remission. They've kept me under observation for four years now and, aside from one positive biopsy two years ago, I've continued virtually symptom-free. Even more recently, I was whisked into the Cardiac Care Unit for three weeks' correction of some tricky heart problems. But here I am today - while obediently gulping daily medication - digging garage foundations, laying concrete driveways and felling trees! As I say, I have developed an extremely

welcome and comfortable mind-set in the wake of these experiences; experiences not solely mine and, indeed, more notably those I've been privileged simply to witness.

One might read a 'spiritual dimension' into all this, but if I were to do so, it would be totally out of character and hypocritical. We homo sapiens, being blessed with a superior intelligence, have to pay for it with an ability to ponder the future. Man can visualize things so much more readily than can some less complex creatures, which means that words like 'cancer' and 'death' have a tendency to spawn all-consuming fears.

My emotional condition now is inwardly reassuring and I can only describe it as 'positive serenity'. I've been conditioned to accept my mortality and to cease brooding over what lies ahead. I just wish I could bottle it and pass it around. It's blissfully liberating being free from worrying about one's mortality. I am grateful for this undeserved gift, and I only hope that my recounting these events can help others to develop such an unworried philosophy. Truly it's a beautiful asset; perhaps it can rub off on you.

I would like to close by quoting the whole of that short piece entitled 'Desiderata'.

"Go placidly amid the noise and haste and remember what peace there may be in silence. As far as possible without surrender be on good terms with all persons.

Speak your truth quietly and clearly; and listen to others, even the dull and ignorant; they too have their story. Avoid loud and aggressive persons, they are vexatious to the spirit.

If you compare yourself with others, you may become vain and bitter; for always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself. Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans. Keep interested in your own career, however humble; it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time.

Exercise caution in your business affairs: for the world is full of trickery. But let this not blind you to what virtue there is; many persons strive for high ideals; and everywhere life is full of heroism. Be yourself. Especially, do not feign affection. Neither be cynical about love; for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment it is perennial as the grass.

Take kindly the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth. Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune. But do not distress yourself with imaginings. Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness.

Beyond a wholesome discipline be gentle with yourself. You are a child of the Universe, no less than the trees and the stars; you have a right to be here. And whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the Universe is unfolding as it should. Therefore be at peace with God, whatever you conceive Him to be, and whatever your labours and aspirations, in the noisy confusion of life, keep peace with your soul.

With all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world.

Be careful. Strive to be happy."

Or: 'MPGD' - 'Man Proposes, God Disposes.'

Michael Farr (1938-43)



Amongst those who were able to attend for all, or part of, the weekend were:

Barbara Abercrombie; Ron & Eleanor Barden; Simon Barfoot & baby son, William; Nick & Chloe Bennett; Eric Bibby; Alix Blakelock; Michael & Wendy van Blankenstein; Jennifer Blow; Kay Bohm & Neil Williams; Ann & Raymond Bond; Graham, Oliver & Hannah Bond; Michael & Scilla Bond; Maureen Bottom; Loraine & Philip Brown; Moreen Budgen; Diana, Philip, Paul, David, Matthew & Rachel Casson; Liz Cordiner; Norman Coxon; Irene Coxon-Smith; Mrs David; Bryony Denton Williams; Martin Dodson; Helen Doyle; Margaret Fairnington; Mike & Eileen Farr; Stephen Farr; Wallie Farr; Mike & Wendy Finch; Andy, Clare, Michael & Alexander Finch; Ruth Fletcher; Sue & Rupert Freestone; Derek Gaffee; Irene Glaister; Julie Greenhill; Chris, Pat & Nicola Grimes; Michael Grimes & Nessa Williams; Jane Gunston; Hilary & John Haddleton; David Haines; Arthur & Pamela Harrison; Leslie Harrison; Ian Hedger; Ben Hedges; Michael Herm; Brian Holliday; Katie Holton; Ann Jackson; Esther Jackson; Anthea James; Guy & Jane

Kingham; David Laity; Paul Levy; Bronwen Lilley; Jeanne Little; Diana Lloyd; Winifred Lycett; Jennifer Macintosh; Rosemary Maling; Kageha, James, Gemma & Natasha Marshall; Lister Mathews; Hugh & Daphne Maw; Mark Mercer; Jean Mills; Michael Morris; Philip Morris; Barrie & Sheila Naylor; John & Jean Osborne; Tara Overend; Marjorie Palmer; Janet Parsons; Cindy Poulton; Harold & Nancy Pugmire & grandchildren, Joel & Cherry Taylor; Barbara Quinton; Hedley Quinton; Tony Reynolds; Eleri, Ivano & Mario Ricci; Ann, Peter, Adele, Charlotte & Daniel Rose; Desmond & Margaret Rose; Tony Russell; Don & Beryl Ryan; Ellen Salway; Julian Sandiford; Fred & Erica Sessa; Janet & Joseph Sewell; Joy Shea; Margaret Shelley; Jim & Joan Shields; Adrian Shirlin; Connie Shirlin; Peter & Jenny Sladen; Claire Smith; David Carlton Smith; Russell & Janet Steed; Peter Stewart; Mavis Stiles; John & Doreen Taylor; Pat Thornton; Jonathan Tutte; Tim Wardle; John Watson; Judith Weeks; Ian & Christine Weatherhead; Richard & Veronica Watts; Carol Williams; Kara Williams; Sylvia Williams.

Ed. note: apologies for any errors or omissions.

Greetings, Mr President:

Messages received from those who could not come to the Reunion in August, 2001.

“Dear Mike Farr, Thankyou for the SOSA Reunion info. I have read it with great interest, though I doubt if I shall manage to get over for it. I have happy memories of Sibford, and of the old school, the countryside, and all the lovely people I was at school with. I am still in touch with Joy Shea (Phillips) and Rosemary Maling (Dearden), and shall ring them to see if we could not all meet up at Sibford this year - before it gets too late, as we are getting on a bit! Best wishes to you,” **Naomi Alexander** (née **Butler** 1933-37)

“Dear Mike Sadly, I shall not be at Sibford this coming weekend but you can be assured that you and others I know (and don't know!) will be very much in my thoughts. My years at Sibford are still vivid and were at the start of an exceedingly happy and fulfilling career. Greetings to all”, **Grace Allen** (who joined the staff in 1942 with *Jean Morley* who taught *P.E.*.)

“Dear Mike, Thank you very much for your kind invitation to attend the annual reunion. I have to decline as I have a previous engagement. I hope you will have a very enjoyable time.” ??? **Ella Barlow** (19??-??). *Ed. note: apologies if this name is wrong - the signature was difficult to read.*

“Have a successful reunion. A stroke has laid me low!! Regards to Pussy Hughes, Ian Hedger & Monica Stephens. Regards,” **H.J. Burt** (1929-31).

“Dear Mike, Thankyou for your Presidential letter about the 2001 SOSA gathering. It looks interesting and fun so hope you all have a great time. I am sorry I am not going to join you all. I had a double hip replacement eight weeks ago. .. Very best wishes,” **June Dawson** (née **Ladell**, 1934-40).

“Would love to be with you at SOSA. Was at Sibford 1934-38, some of the best years of my life! Important names back then were *A. Johnstone* (headmaster), *Dorothy Prior* who gave me piano lessons at the Manor, then *Gladys Burgess* who put me in a Nativity play - I was the King's servant carrying 'gold'. 'Wind in the Willows', what fun! I was the back legs of Alfred who was startled by thunder, had to jump over a log on stage! *Monica Knight* was front legs, *Edith Worrall* 'Mollie', Libby ? Toad, and all those little creatures!! Have a wonderful weekend. Thoughts and prayers from” **Anne Doxsee** (née **Russell** 1934-38).

“Dear Michael, Thankyou for your kind invitation to attend the SOSA reunion this year. Unfortunately But I am delighted that Ron Barden will be representing the School Committee. As a member of the Appeal and Development Steering group, Ron is well placed to bring everyone up to date with the exciting new developments at the school. My sincere best wishes to SOSA for a successful reunion” **David Ford**. *Ed note: David is a member of the School Committee.*

“Dear Mr President, Mike, I had even got to the stage of booking a B&B

for O.S. weekend. Alas, family problems dictated All the best for a very successful Presidential Old Scholars. Regards,” **Hugh Gibson** (1937-42).

“Dear Mike Farr. I very much regret that I am unable to come to Old Scholars this August. I send my Best Wishes to all gathered who remember Brian and me It sounds a very exciting programme and you will be in my thoughts, as I will be there in spirit. Yours” **Pauline Hooper**.

via e-mail: “Hi Mike a quick medical bulletin before you take off for Sibford. Harriet is out of the wheelchair as of yesterday and wearing what looks like an astronaut boot that you can inflate So my thoughts and emotions will be with you at the month end. Best regards to *Frances Brookhouse, Erica Bond, Eva Roy, Meriel Manasseh*, all of whom I was desperately in love with in turn. Also *David Heckford* who was a good friend when *Eddington's* teasing of me got a little out of hand. See you next year, *Across the years with Love*,” **Rainer Josenhans** (1938-42). *Ed. note: Rainer was to have presented "President's Choice" but was prevented from doing so by his wife's serious car accident in the USA.*

“Dear Mike, Even though I have not been able to attend SOSA Reunions, I still get pleasure in hearing from time to time about the activities of S.O.S. I hope you have had a good year as President and that everything has flowed smoothly. I would appreciate it if you would give any old scholars still around from my days my greetings and should any of them like to tell me how they are getting on these days I would love to hear from them. I often think of those days And will mention three names I frequently think of them: *Ian Hedger, Irene Coxon-Smith* and *Ina Lamb*. Yours sincerely,” **Ronald Kennedy** (1928-33).

“Dear Mike, This is just a short note to let you know Sorry to miss your special week end, I hope it goes well for you. Regards,” **Mike Ladell** (1939-44).

“Mr President, Unable to be with you. Best wishes for a bumper Reunion. My regards to all my special friends in the war years.” **Geoff Moore** (1937-41).

“Dear Mike Farr, Have a good W/E - ENJOY IT! Congratulations on your Presidential year. Love to all who know me - sorry I'm not with you” **Jean Moore** (née **Winter** 1940-44).

James Wapples (??-??) booked for the weekend and was then unfortunately ill.

“Dear Mike, Greetings to you and all Old Scholars. I hope that you'll all have a very happy Reunion - with good weather! I cannot join you this year as a back condition makes life difficult It's a great disappointment to me as I so enjoyed last year - meeting up with so many old friends was wonderful I shall be thinking of you all. With warmest greetings,” **Lilian Ward** (née **East** 1928-34).

via e-mail: “I received details of the 2001 reunion and the program and certainly it will be a winner. I regret that in the year of you being President I will not be able to attend. Unfortunately it is getting more and more expensive to travel overseas I have not given up hope that one year I will make it. I wish you every success at this year's Reunion and send my best wishes to all Old Scholars. Regards” **Otto Wolf** (1939-45).

SIBFORD OLD SCHOLARS' ASSOCIATION

Minutes of Annual General Meeting

Date & Time: 10.00am on Monday 27th August 2001
Venue: Sibford Friends' School
Attendees: 60

Michael Farr welcomed Old Scholars and Guests to the Meeting.

1. OBITUARIES: The meeting observed a short silence to remember the lives of:

Peter Baily, Philip Beckerlegge, Arthur Dring, Marjorie Fielding, Peter Gutkind, Margaret Hargreave (nee Herbert), Rosamond Morris (nee Flinn) Chris Plummer, Jean Poulton, Monica Simpson (nee Foss), Jeanne Southam (nee Cottrell), Leslie Tucker, Geoffrey Wright.

2. GREETINGS RECEIVED: Michael Farr reported that Best Wishes for the Reunion had been received from many individuals including, Hugh Gibson, June Dawson, Mike Ladell, Otto Wolf, Rainer Josenhanss, Jim Hilling, Naomi Alexander, Grace Allen, Will Norgrove, Stephen Butt, John Hicks, Alfred & Susan Holland, Pauline Hooper, John Hughes, Ronald Kennedy, Ian Parsons, Jimmy Setna, Lilian Ward, Jean Moore, Geoffrey Moore, David Ford, Philippa Harrison, Anne Muir and Caroline Mills.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: The minutes were approved unchanged and signed by the President as a correct record of the meeting.

4. REPORTS:

a) General Secretary's Report: Presented by Lucinda Poulton.



It gives me great pleasure to be able to present to you my first General Secretary Report which will be short and concise!

This year has been a successful year of consolidation and regrouping.

SOSA General Committee - I think we should begin by thanking the SOSA General Committee members for their ongoing hard work and the time they devote to Committee Work. We have had four very good meetings this year under the keen eye of our President Michael Farr, and there is a very

positive approach to all matters that arise.

It is with sadness that I have to inform the AGM that Julie Greenhill has retired from the Committee, having sat on it with many varying hats since she left school in the mid 80s. A special thanks should be offered to Julie for the extremely hard work she has given to the Association during this time and I hope it will not be too long before we see her back on the Committee.

Sibford Rocket Magazine - Tribute must also be given to Caroline Mills. As you are aware last year it was agreed to return to the production of two separate magazines: one by the School and the other to be produced by SOSA. Caroline stepped into the breach and so we saw the birth of the 'Sibford Rocket' which has received an excellent response from our members and so our thanks and congratulations go to Caroline.

SMAG & Membership - Throughout the year a great deal of time has been spent on discussing SOSA Membership and future recruitment. Our Current membership stands at approximately the same as last year, around 720, with some who have not renewed subscriptions being replaced by some new members. Our subgroup - SMAG, under the leadership of Ann Bond - has worked hard to look at the dwindling membership of new, young Old Scholars and we will hear more from Ann when she presents her report.

Finance - I will not go into any great detail at this point; that will be covered during the Treasurer's Report. We are however very concerned about the Recent Leavers subscriptions and membership. In relation to the Special Reserve Fund - we have been able to make 4 awards this year, which has gone to help 4 families within the School. The Pavilion is in need of repair and refurbishment. As you are aware SOSA funded the Erection of the Pavilion back in 1960 in memory of Mr Harrod. The Pavilion is in regular use by both the school and the Local Community and your Committee felt that it was an extremely appropriate use of SOSA funds to contribute to this project. I am delighted to inform you that along with an anonymous donation to SOSA, for this specific use, we have been able to donate £1000 to the Pavilion's makeover.

I would like to close with a special thankyou to Sue Freestone and the School for allowing the Association to continue to hold both our Committee Meetings and our Reunions here at Sibford.

b) Membership Report & SMAG: Presented by Ann Bond.

This report appears on page 30.

c) Branch Reports: Presented by Hilary Haddleton (Midlands) and Chris Grimes (London).

These two reports are presented on pages 36 and 37.

d) School Committee Representative Report: Presented by Pat Grimes:

This has been a momentous year for the School Committee and the Sibford Community. The decisions to sell the Old School, to go ahead with the new development at the Hill and to launch a major appeal were huge steps for everyone to take and have needed a fair amount of faith and courage as well as time and energy.

The appeal was launched in October. Several Old Scholars were present for the occasion along with pupils, parents, staff and friends. As a goodbye gesture to the Manor we linked hands together and encircled it.

During the year, fund-raising events, large and small, have been



organised and supported but there is still a long way to go. One spin-off from all the publicity for these events is that the profile of the School has been raised to such an extent that there has been a marked increase in enquiries for places.

At the end of July, Adrienne Lawler completed her term as appeal consultant to the School. Sue Freestone is now directing the Appeal personally.

You will have seen that the Music and Art blocks are well under construction. They are due to be in use towards the end of the Autumn Term. The Art Block will be officially opened, by artist McKenzie Thorpe, on Friday 7th December, 2001. He is currently in the USA for two years but has promised to fly back especially for the event. His particular interest in Sibford stems from his own dyslexia. For this reason he has Sibford as his present charity and is going to design a stained glass window for the new hall when that point is reached.

School Committee is convinced of the urgent need for swimming facilities on the campus. The Swimming Pool is scheduled to be built next and the Appeal and Development Group have considered detailed plans for one. However, beginning work on it is dependent upon the money becoming available. We hope it will happen quickly, but at the time of writing this report it is not possible to predict a starting date.

Old Scholars may be able to help access some funding from Grant Making Trusts. Helen Houghton who is responsible for this side of the Appeal has stressed to School Committee the value of personal links, however tenuous, with appropriate Grant Making Trusts. She is seeking everyone's assistance. So if you personally know any Trustees, please tell someone: either Sue Freestone, Russell Steed or Pat Grimes.

I am sure that many Old Scholars will be sad to think that the Manor is no longer a part of Sibford School, though we all recognise that it had long outgrown its usefulness as a modern educational facility. As a listed building, it had also become something of a milestone. The Manor has been purchased by Swan Hill who have interesting plans for its redevelopment. The full purchase price is subject to them obtaining planning permission for everything they want to do. The Appeal and Development Group have seen Swan Hill's outline plans and believe them to be attractive and fitting to Sibford. No doubt we shall all watch the development at the other end of the Paddock with as much interest as the one at this end.

Not surprisingly the new development and everything connected with it has loomed large during this year but not, I'm glad to say, to the exclusion of everything else. Routine maintenance of the existing buildings has continued. The programme of double glazing is proceeding well. Edmund Hudson, the Facilities Manager, reported that where this has been completed there has been a great improvement to the warmth and light as well as to the appearance of the buildings.

Sibford Trading is now up and running. It is responsible for VAT activities including Lets and Developments. It is hoped that we will be able to recover the VAT liable on the Development.

The School has recently changed banks from Barclays to Allied Irish, as they offered a better, more personal, service. It is anticipated that this switch will bring more business activity to the

village as the School will be working with Allied Irish through the local Post Office, which will then become involved in some of the day to day banking for the School.

School Committee is not just concerned with property and finance. A School is after all an educational establishment, housing a community of people of all ages. Matters relating to the learning, teaching and general well-being of pupils and staff are equally important aspects of Committee work.

This year has seen a change in the School Management structure, with a move back to the appointment of a Deputy Head. In view of the tremendous increase in the work load brought on by the new development, this was considered a very good move. The post was advertised internally and we are delighted that Maggie Guy has accepted the appointment as from September 1st, 2001.

Although Maggie does not officially take up her post until the beginning of term, she has already deputised for Sue on a Marketing Mission to Singapore which took place in May. It was a very successful trip with fifteen new agents from all over the Far East adding Sibford to their books.

During the year the Committee looked at proposed changes to the Terms and Conditions of employment for staff and agreed the School's proposal to discontinue the Sibford Unit and replace it with a new Sibford Scale which will embrace a system of performance-related pay. This was stimulated by the introduction of performance-related pay in the maintained sector, and should encourage teachers to seek employment at Sibford, as the route back to the maintained sector will remain open to them.

One Committee task is to consider and approve the various policy documents drawn up by the School. These are what underpin the day to day work that goes on in both the apparent and hidden curriculum. Sibford has long had a policy on antisocial behaviour and is striving towards eradicating Bullying. One of the most helpful documents that has been seen on this issue is the School's Social Respect Policy - subtitled Social Respect and Caring for your Community Policy - which recently came to Committee for approval. It is in the form of a three page booklet for pupils, parents and staff and spells out very clearly what is unacceptable behaviour, what the warning signs are and what to do about it. As Old Scholars, we are very aware that a degree of bullying has always existed and we wish the staff every success in implementing this policy.

A matter of great interest to Old Scholars is Sibford's History. Ted Milligan was asked to undertake the writing of The History of Sibford School from the first beginnings. Ted got as far as the 1970s but then circumstances prevented him from continuing with it. School Committee looked for somebody to liaise with Ted and to finish the book and are delighted that Michael Finch has accepted the challenge of writing the last 30 years of the History of Sibford School. Mike aims to complete the work in time for SOSA's centenary year in 2003.

Life on the School Committee is varied and interesting and Pat thanked the AGM for the opportunity that they had afforded her to serve on it for the past four years.

e) Treasurer's Report:

Presented by Michael Finch.

The Association finished last year with a small surplus of £832, which in itself is a pleasing result, but it should not hide the fact that our income has declined dramatically over the past two years due mainly to the fall in recent leavers joining.

For several years, we have, through the School, been trying to persuade parents to pay for their offspring's subscription to SOSA on their final fee account. This has worked very well from the Association's point of view, with around 40% of leavers joining the Association - giving us approximately £3000 to £4000 a year. Recently, in order to encompass new legislation regarding the Data Protection Act, the letter to parents has been slightly amended. This has certainly worked against the Association with an enormous drop in income.

The Committee are currently seeking ways to improve the situation and of course your help and advice would be most welcome.

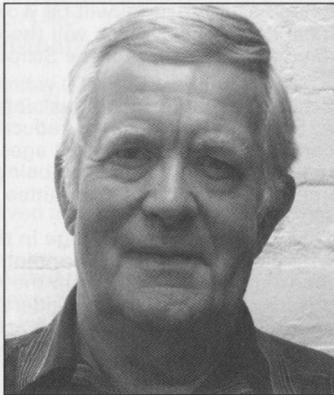
We have considered a few suggestions:

Creating SOSA members from the year in which they enter the School by debiting the parents' fee account each year by an equal amount - with their approval. Creating associate members at a lower rate of subscription for people just wanting a magazine. Reduction in the Life membership rate for Recent leavers to £100 (this brings in a 90% entry rate at Bootham). Ask long time Life Members if they would like to enhance their original subscription (some only paid 3 guineas). Increase the annual subscription rate.

These matters are all to be discussed at the next Committee meeting but I would like to add my own personal comment in that, irrespective of the problems with the Recent Leaver subscription, I genuinely believe that general subscriptions should increase next year to keep us abreast of the inflation rate. We haven't had an increase for five years and it wouldn't seem unreasonable to charge £20 per annum. The rate in 1959 was £1 per annum. I am sure that, based on those far-off figures, our annual subscription should probably be nearer £100 per annum. I move that the Committee should be given licence to look at an increase for twelve months' time.

Special Reserve Fund - The Association has made awards totalling £2251 to four recipients within the School which ranged from helping a child buy uniform to helping another student, from a largely dysfunctional family unit, to buy a laptop. All recipients were most appreciative. The Committee's hope is that this will continue for many years to come - and remember it is open to recent Old Scholars to apply.

Requests - The Pavilion is in need of refurbishment and we are pleased that the Association have been able to donate £500 towards this. This has been further enhanced by another £500 which has been donated by James Harrod's family.



In concluding it should be stressed that we do not have sufficient funds in the current year to undertake any major new projects, other than those already mentioned, so in recapping we had at the start of the year a total amount of funds standing at £24,877.00.

£1000 - Pavilion; £ 749 - Special Reserve Fund; £3000 - Centenary Celebrations; £1700 - SMAG Publicity; £ 350 - Archives; £15903 - Life Membership Fund: Total - £22702; Balance - £ 2175.

The AGM thanked Michael Finch for his detailed and clear report. (If any member would like a copy of the accounts then please write to the Treasurer; address on page 48).

The Accounts were presented to the Meeting.

Adoption of Accounts: Proposed by Ian Weatherhead; Seconded by Guy Kingham. Carried Unanimously

5. REVIEW OF THE SCHOOL YEAR AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME: Presented by Sue Freestone, Head, Sibford School.

This comprehensive report is published in full on pages 26 and 27.

6. ELECTIONS

Membership Secretary (for 3 years): Raymond Bond. Proposed by Michael Finch and seconded by Wendy Finch.

School Committee Representative (for 4 years): Patricia Grimes. Proposed by Michael Finch and seconded by Guy Kingham.

Committee Member (for 3 years): Philippa Harrison. Proposed by Patricia Grimes and seconded by Lucinda Poulton.

Committee Member (for 3 years): Christine Weatherhead. Proposed by Simon Barfoot and seconded by Chloe Bennett.

Confirmation of Editor (for 3 years): Ann Bond. Proposed by Michael Farr and seconded by Guy Kingham.

All the above nominations were accepted unanimously by the Annual General Meeting.

Endorsement of the President 2001 - 2002 - Simon Barfoot

Endorsement of Vice President 2001 - 2002 - Guy Kingham

Honorary Life Membership - Nicholas Bennett and Russell Steed.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

Michael Finch explained that he would be contacting individuals in order to gather information to assist in the completion of Ted Milligan's work on the history of the School. He would be grateful for any personal recollections that Old Scholars might have.

Mavis Stiles offered thanks to Sue Freestone on the style and enthusiasm that her report held.

David Carlton-Smith requested that in future years a list of Obituaries be posted on the notice board at the beginning of the Return. This was noted and will occur at future reunions.

Michael Farr has a number of 'The Smallest Bible in the World'. This is a microfiche of the complete Bible and there is one in a Time Capsule on the Moon. Mike would be selling these for £10 and all the money would go to the School Appeal.

The meeting closed at 11.35a.m.

Committee Jottings and Notices:

Your SOSA Committee meets four times a year - once a term and again just before the August Reunion. Various sub-committees also exist to action specific aspects and projects. These sub-committees frequently 'meet' by e-mail alone, very useful for members who live a long way from Sibford. A full list of Officers and Committee, with contact details, appears on page 48. We like to hear from you! As you will have read in the AGM report, the Committee had a particularly busy year, and we anticipate that 2001-2002 will be even more hectic, with preparations not only for the 2002 Reunion, but also advance plans for the SOSA Centenary Year in 2003.

Hello and Farewell:

We welcome three new Committee Members this year: Christine Weatherhead, Philippa Harrison and Raymond Bond. Sadly, we say goodbye to Julie Greenhill, Wendy Finch, James Thompson and Rebecca Hare.

We asked each new Committee Member to write a short profile of themselves, so that all SOSA members could 'get to know them':

Christine Weatherhead:

"I was born in Kansas City, Missouri, USA and raised in Columbus, Ohio and Fort Lauderdale, Florida. I have a two-year degree (modern languages and psychology) from Broward Junior College in Fort Lauderdale, Florida and I have studied in Geneva, Switzerland and in Germany spending one year in each country - studying the language and culture of each. Ian and I met in Fort Lauderdale. I was Personnel Manager for a Burdines store (a retail store like John Lewis) in Hollywood, Florida and I worked for Fort Lauderdale National Bank, as secretary to one of the many Vice Presidents. Shortly after Ian and I married, we were moved to New York, subsequently transferring back to London with Ian's job. We have three grown children, Trenham, Mary and Richard. All have come to Sibford during their 'growing up' years for the August bank holiday Old Scholars' Reunion. Over the years I have worked with several American Universities, housing students with families in London. I am currently Secretary for the Guild of Glass Engravers. Outside interests include being an active member of Hampstead Parish Church, on the Committee of Friends of the Music, teacher of Sunday School, Treasurer of Tennis Club as well as a team player.



I must mention too, by way of introduction that I am the one with the 'golden retriever' tied up outside the dining room on SOSA reunions - all part of Sibford too, just like us"

Philippa Harrison (1964-67): "I left Sibford after only two and a half years when my father (Arthur Harrison) left his job there to take up a new position at Leighton park in Reading. I did not do particularly well at my new school and left at 16 to go to the local Technical College to

do a Secretarial Course. After a few years of working in an office, I moved to Cornwall where I lived for about ten years, working mainly in the hotel industry. I returned to Reading in the early 80s and have had a variety of jobs over the years, but returned to office work in 1989 and currently work as Office Manager for a very small company manufacturing electronic test equipment. I have one son who is now almost 22 years old. My main interests are gardening, walking and also travelling when I have the opportunity."

Raymond Bond (1941-45) *has become our new Membership Secretary, and is also compiling the 'Former Pupil Database':* "The family connection with Sibford goes back well into the nineteenth century, with grandparents, parents, uncles, aunts and cousins - (out of number!)- all having passed through its, then freezing cold, bedrooms! My wartime stay was followed by Bootham; National Service - as a 2nd Lieutenant in Northern Ireland, and then The Royal Academy of Music, where I studied the Clarinet with that great exponent and teacher, Jack

Brymer. A number of years spent touring with theatre, opera and ballet orchestras persuaded me that 'music' was a marvellous hobby but a pretty rotten profession, so I moved into Fleet Street before launching a publishing and printing enterprise with my wife, Ann - ex-RAM drama student. Many years of hard work culminated in the publishing and printing of seven monthly magazines, all in the field of education; it also resulted in three children, - one through Sibford/The Mount and two through Leighton Park. Retirement, - largely a figment of the imagination, has facilitated: a little more time in my wood-work shop, (Roland Herbert's influence); the delights of seven grandchildren and an ever-growing appreciation of Sibford's glorious countryside, (as well as the great wines of the Medoc). As one of our small children was heard to remark to a friend, when we established ourselves in Whichford more than thirty years ago: "We've moved to the place where God lives!"

Thankyou:

Wendy Finch. Although Wendy is no longer on the Committee, hers is still the first friendly and welcoming voice you hear when ringing the School Office, and as Office Co-Ordinator at the School, her knowledge of pupils and their parents is invaluable.

Julie Greenhill had served on the Committee in various capacities for the last fifteen years. The magazine could not be published without a short chronicle of her various roles, and a big 'thankyou'. Julie left school in 1983 and was first elected to the Committee in 1986. She spent three years as Membership secretary, six as Reunion Secretary, one year as combined Membership Secretary/Vice President, one year as President and a further year as Retiring President. The Association is indebted to her, especially for her role as Reunion Secretary; everyone knew her face and where to go if there was a problem, and although she was going crazy inside, the problem was always solved without the individual knowing what had to be done to solve it. Hopefully, Julie, it will not be too long before we see you back again; meanwhile, enjoy yourself and recharge your batteries for the future.

Vacancies: there are currently two vacancies on the Committee. If you are interested in serving the Association, in whatever capacity you can, please contact the General Secretary, *Lucinda Poulton*, (address p.48) for details of what is involved.

NOTICES:

Subscriptions: Have you paid yours? If you haven't, you will find a little reminder enclosed with this magazine! Subscriptions are due on 1st September each year and should be sent to the Treasurer, *Mike Finch*, (address p.48).

Membership Secretary's Request: Our aim is to maintain as accurate an address list as is humanly possible, but this requires your co-operation and input. Vital information: years at school, maiden name (if applicable), full postal address including post-code, telephone number and e-mail address. *If you move, PLEASE don't forget to notify us. Membership Address Lists are now available, on request.*

Queries, membership applications, address updates, requests etc should be sent to the Membership Secretary, *Raymond Bond*, (address p.48)

Special Reserve Fund: The Treasurer would like to remind members that we still have a small amount of funding available for use by a Recent Old Scholar. If you know of anyone who would like to apply for financial assistance to carry out some worthwhile project which may require additional funding, please get in touch. Or apply on your own behalf. Any applications should be made directly to the Treasurer, *Mike Finch*, (address p.48)

Magazine: The magazine is your 'vehicle' for passing information to other members, your chance to make contact, to bridge the years or miles. News of what you are doing, your travels, meeting up with other old scholars etc etc. We would like to know. Plans are already in hand for the 2002 edition, so send your news in as soon as possible. Latest 'copy' deadline is July 31st, 2002, (14th September for items relating to the Reunion). All material (preferably on disc / by e-mail, as a 'Word' document) should be sent to the Magazine Editor, *Ann Bond*, (address p.48)

Membership Leaflets: You will again find enclosed with this year's magazine, a membership leaflet, outlining the activities of the Association. What do you do with it?? If you are in touch with friends and acquaintances who are not members (ask them!), please pass the leaflet to them, and encourage them to join. If they have any queries, they should contact any of the Committee (addresses p.48) or the Membership Secretary, *Raymond Bond*.

History of Sibford School: Ted Milligan, the Quaker historian, has been writing the History of Sibford School. He has covered most of the period up to the mid-1960s but feels that it would be better to have a different author for the last thirty years. As announced at the AGM, *Mike Finch* has been invited by the School Committee to carry out this task. Mike would like the basis of his contribution to be personal recollections, so if any Old Scholar or friend of the School has some personal recollection or any suitable photographs that they would like considered for inclusion, send them to Mike, as soon as possible (address p.48).

NOTICEBOARD: The SOSA Noticeboard (in the main corridor of the Hill Building) is our link with current pupils, staff and visitors to the school. We change the display once or twice a term, outlining SOSA activities, aims and other information. If you have news of your activities, photos etc that you think might interest those within the School, please send them to anyone on the Committee (addresses p.48).

'Former Pupil Database': We now have names/dates for over 6000 former 'Sibford Pupils/Staff'. The records from 1892-1972 are more or less complete. 1842-1892 is now being worked on. 1973 onwards is still short of details. Can you help? Information should be sent to *Raymond Bond*, (address p.48)

SOSA is Appealing! SOSA efforts to support the School Development Appeal are continuing. Activities so far, and those planned for the future, are outlined on pages 22-25.

DIARY DATES:

SPORT - SOSA v School:

Football: the annual SOSA v. School Football match will take place on Sunday 17th, March, 2002. If you would like to participate - or act as a supporter - please contact Brian Holliday (address p.48)

?? Hockey: a suggestion has been put forward that the GIRLS might like to challenge the School to a hockey match, also on Sunday 17th March, 2002. This was a regular event in the past, but was discontinued due to lack of interest. Can we put a team together again? If you are interested, please contact *Caroline Mills* (Tel: 01295 722172) and the Committee will approach the School.

DON'T FORGET THE 'DAY REUNION' planned to coincide with the School's Open Day on Saturday 15th June, 2002, from 9.30a.m onwards. Bring a picnic, participate in the Group Photo. Have fun! Refreshments will be available for sale in the French Café, alongside the SOSA 'Hub'. *Please check with the School (01295 781200) before travelling, as this date may be subject to change.* SOSA contact: *Ann Bond* (address p.48).

The next Annual Reunion Weekend will be held from Saturday 24th August to Monday 26th August, 2002. Details will be mailed to you mid-year. Meanwhile, any queries should be made to the Reunion Secretary, *Ellen Salway* (address p.48)

Visiting Sibford from afar?

Old Scholars wanting to visit Sibford - perhaps for Open Day, School events, or even the next Reunion - might find useful the following list of local B&Bs which we have compiled for you. But please note that the Association has no links with any of the places listed; neither can we vouch for their style, price or standard.

Judith Hitchens, Gower Close, Sibford Gower;	01295 730348
The Bell, Shennington;	01295 670274
The Lampett Arms Hotel, Tadmarton;	01295 780070
La Madonette, North Newington;	01295 730212
Roberta & John Ainley, South Newington House, South Newington;	01295 721207
Barbara Taylor, Grange Farm, Swalcliffe;	01295 780206
Erica & Malcolm Brown, Partway House, Swalcliffe;	01295 780246
Ed and Hester Sale, Mine Hill House, Lower Brailes;	01608 685594
Maggie and Alan Witherick, Bow Cottage, Brailes;	01608 685056
Maggie and Richard Cripps, Agdon Farm, Brailes;	01608 685226
Janet Haines, Ascott House, Whichford, Shipston on Stour;	01608 684655
Shipston Guest House, Church Street, Shipston on Stour;	01608 661002
Diana Richardson, Tallet Barn B&B, Yerdley Farm, Long Compton;	01608 684655
The Red Lion Hotel, Main Street, Long Compton;	01608 684221
Eileen Whittaker, Butlers Road Farm, Butlers Road, Long Compton;	01608 684262
Southcombe Lodge Guest House, Southcombe, Chipping Norton;	01608 643068
Crown & Cushion Hotel, Chipping Norton;	01608 642533
The Peartree Inn, Scotland End, Hook Norton;	01608 737482
Sun Inn, High Street, Hook Norton;	01608 737570
Cotefield B&B, 1 Cotefield Cottages, Bodicote;	01295 264997

Please tell us if you know of any others. Contact the Reunion Secretary, *Ellen Salway* (address p.48)

SOSA Links with the School

Sibford School Open Day SOSA involvement, 2001



Saturday 9th June, 2001

With the kind co-operation of the School, we were able to augment our Open Day activities.

A whole classroom and space on the South Decking was made available to Old Scholars. This allowed us to make SOSA better known to staff, parents and pupils, and acted as a welcoming 'Hub' for visiting Old Scholars. Our thanks to Sue Freestone, Maggie Guy, Elizabeth Escher and Wendy Finch within the school, who made it all possible.

Sibford Old Scholars' Association

Saturday 9th June, 2001

Venus: SOSA 'Hub' - Room 1 and South Decking
PLEASE JOIN US - YOU WILL BE SO WELCOME

Timetable of Activities:

10.30 onwards: SOSA 'Hub' Open to Visitors: displaying the Past, Present and Future of SOSA - Information table; mini art & craft exhibition; archives; former pupil database; membership enquiries

SOSA BAZAAR: 'goodies' TO BUY - home-made cakes, biscuits and other produce (jams) plants; books; bic-a-brac; crafts

11.30: LAUNCH OF 'THE SILVER MILE' - we are collecting a mile of 5p pieces in support of the School Appeal - please help us reach our target (we need over \$5,000 coins)

12.00 to 12.30: SOSA Picnic - do join us

12.30 (prompt): SOSA GROUP PHOTO

SOSA has been supporting Sibford School in many ways for almost 100 years, and will continue to do so at every opportunity.

Every Visitor to the School's Open Day will have been introduced to SOSA and our activities, for we printed 500 'flyer inserts' (as shown above), one for every Open Day programme.



'goodies' for the appeal fund sales table

← President Mike Farr, Katie Holton (née Weeks) and Ann Bond start the 'Silver Mile' collection.



← 75 year-old 'Old Scholar' with 7.5 week-old 'Pre-Scholar'. The President with Caroline Mills' (née Bond) new baby, Dominic.



Sue Freestone receives 5p coins for the 'Silver Mile'



Old Scholars enjoying an 'Open Day' picnic on the South Decking





SOSA Links with the School:

SOSA Day Reunion 15th June 2002

Do note this date in your diary. This invitation is extended to all Old Scholars and former staff, whether SOSA members or not. See the School in action and help us to promote ourselves. Above all, we need your help!

HELP? What and Why?

Our 'presence' at Open Day is intended to promote our existence, which requires effort. Membership amongst the young is dwindling. In the past, SOSA frequently had the advantage of holding Reunions when the school was in session. This is no longer possible. How will current pupils and their parents, and staff, learn of our very positive activities if we remain just a name?

We can only impress would-be members (SOSA's future) if we can reflect a vibrant, multi-age atmosphere. HELP IS NEEDED from members whether you are 16 or 90 (or any age in between).

Hence our expanded involvement at next year's Open Day. Covering the Past, Present and Future of SOSA,

We intend to provide the following:

Past: Archives plus completed former pupil database

Present: Information Table - leaflets,

Reunion Programme, SOSA magazines (for sale); 'Join Here'; Tracing Missing Members;

Future: School Appeal - SOSA details, plus continuation of the 'Silver Mile' - we haven't yet reached our target!

We again want to run a SALES TABLE (the 'SOSA BAZAAR') to raise funds for the Appeal, and to 'draw in the crowds!' We need: wrapped home-made cakes and biscuits; other home-produce (jams etc); plants; good quality second hand books; art/craft items; good quality 'bric-a-brac'. If you cannot donate items outright, please price items so as to be able to donate 10% to the Appeal funds. The 'Bazaar' raised £164.70 at the 2001 Open Day.

For your own refreshment and enjoyment, why not bring a picnic lunch (although on-sale refreshments will be available right next to the SOSA 'Hub' throughout the day); and participate in our Open Day Group Photograph (12.30 prompt).

Join us; Help us; Meet and Talk; Have fun; Enjoy the school activities (programme available when you arrive) - and make this occasion a huge SOSA success.

PLEASE let us know what you can offer in the way of help during the day, and/or/plus items for the Sales Table. Even if you can't help or supply items, do join us in the SOSA 'Hub' on Open Day.

Phone (or e-mail) so we know what you can offer, by the end of May if at all possible.

(Tel: 01608 684385; e-mail AnnBondSOSA@aol.com)

Open Day and SOSA 'DAY REUNION' - 2002

**** INVITATION ****

*Saturday 15th June, 2002;
from 9.30 am onwards.*

Venue: SOSA 'Hub' - Room 1 and South Decking

*Date subject to change; please check with the School
after Easter, (01295 781200)*

Links with the School

The School v SOSA Football Match

This annual event is organised by **Brian Holliday**, who writes of this year's match: "There are always plenty of goals to enjoy in this fixture, and this year was no exception. Simon Barfoot - "I put the 'old' in old scholars" equalized a first-half goal with a thundering volley; but in the second half, the school scored more freely, and the final goal by Sunny Lo left the Old Scholars too much to do. The OS Keeper, Matthew Storey, had a real 'blinder' of a game, which helped the OS as their ageing legs tired. Fitness was more of an issue this year (for OS). In order to give more boys a game, the school suggested we use 'rolling substitution' - a bit like basket ball.'

If you would like to participate in the 2002 match, contact Brian early in the New Year, on 01295 780500. 'Rolling play' will be used again, to help those aged OS legs (!), but more volunteer players will be needed.

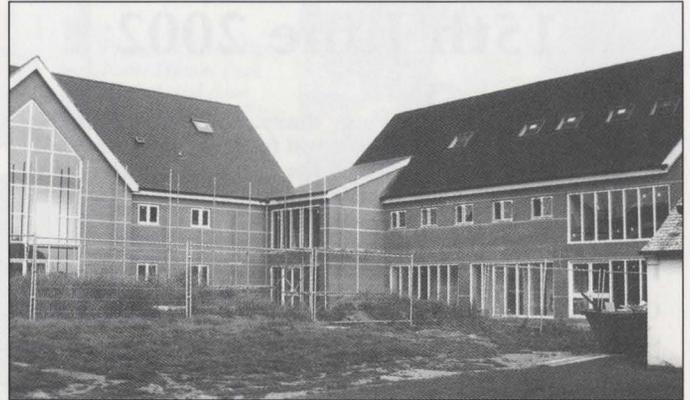
Farewell to 'well-known' Staff: many younger Old Scholars will have been taught by **Mike or Jenny Wollerton**, and/or by **Chris Cox**. All three retired this year. Mike and Jenny had been at the School for 35 years (that means they joined the staff in 1966), Chris for 17. We hope that, like many other former colleagues, they will join SOSA and thus maintain links with former pupils. SOSA wishes them well for the future.

Forging Links: *SOSA is currently looking at ways to create better links with current pupils and their parents. We will update you on progress next year.*

Invitation: STOP PRESS - just announced: the School is organising an 'Evening of Shakespeare set to music', appropriately on Twelfth Night, **Sunday 6th January, 2002**. Old Scholars are welcome. We have no other details, so ring the School Office (01295 781200) for information and tickets.

The Development Appeal:

Background: When it became clear that the continued use of The Manor was uneconomic, replacement facilities up at The Hill were considered in great detail. A completely new Art Department, Music Department and Swimming Pool were needed, to which, eventually, would



be added a new purpose-built Meeting Hall and a Theatre. The Art and Music Departments are now built and in use, the Pool has been started, but further funds are needed before it can be completed. Next will come the 'green oak' octagonal Meeting Hall and then the Theatre. However, neither of these can be started until the funds required for each has been found.

Progress on Fundraising Activities, *written for us by the Head, Sue Freestone:* 'As I write, nearly a year has passed since the launch of the Appeal on 1st October, 2000. Since then, there have been a myriad of fundraising events, and many, many donations from individuals and Trusts, which have brought us to a total of over £350,000. Two major trust donations have contributed to the total: £55,000 from the Southall Trust, and over £66,000 from the Nicholas Cann Trust. We are extremely grateful for these and all the other donations we have received, regardless of size. Future events will be advertised in the School Newsletter, so please keep a look-out and support when you can. If you wish to donate to the Appeal, please ask for a Gift Aid Form.'

(For either a School Newsletter, or a Gift Aid Form, please ring the School Office: 01295 781200; e-mail: Sibford.office@virgin.net.)

Breakdown of Costs:

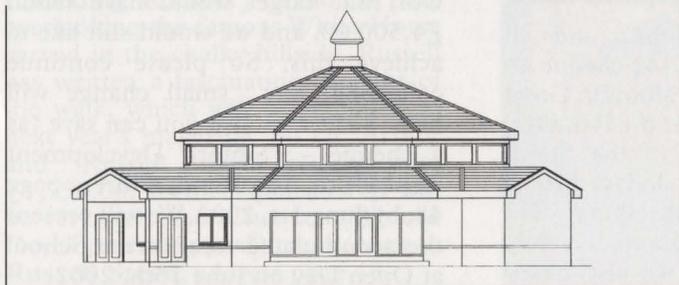
Music and Art Departments:	£1,800,000
Swimming Pool:	£450,000
Meeting Hall:	£600,000
Theatre:	£1,300,000
Total:	£ 4,150,000

Already raised: £2,350,000
(this includes the sale of the Manor)

STILL NEEDED: £1,800,000 !

SOSA continues its support for the Sibford Development Appeal. In addition to many individual donations, we have been active, over the last year, in a number of ways such as the 'Silver Mile' and 'Walking for Sibford' (pictures and details overleaf). Many OS supported the 'Blenheim Ball', and more activities are planned for 2002. Old Scholars really can make a difference, and we are currently preparing a 'personal contact' initiative, followed by an overseas appeal.

Donations for the next stage of the Appeal are urgently sought. On completion of the Swimming Pool, the beautiful 'green oak' octagonal Meeting House - which so inspired those of us who were at the AGM in 1999 when it was announced - can be started. An old scholar is personally involved: Peter McCurdy (1962-67) has an outstanding reputation for the creative use of 'green oak technology', as anyone who has visited London's Globe Theatre can witness. Please help the School to bring this exciting project to fruition.



Future Activities

'In the Swim' is an idea suggested at the 2001 Reunion by Janet Sewell (nee Eavis, 1943-48). So many former pupils learned to swim in the old pool at the Manor, that Janet thought a sponsored swim would be a good way to say 'thankyou' - and help to ensure that future scholars have the same opportunity. Any old scholar can participate. Swim in your local pool, or if you no longer swim, ask you children/grandchildren to swim for you! Janet has sponsorship forms available.



Contact her at 37 Hogback Wood Road, Beaconsfield, Bucks, HP9 1JT. Tel: 01494 672947.

For Sale. As part of the Appeal Programme, the School commissioned old scholar and watercolour artist, Nigel Fletcher (1965-70) to paint three views of the Manor. These have been made into 150 Limited Edition prints, each 13in x 18in; price £25.00 each unframed, or £50.00 each framed. They are illustrated overleaf (the magazine reproduction process cannot do them full justice) and make ideal presents for Christmas, birthday, wedding anniversary, or any other occasion.

You can order these from the Head's P.A, Sibford School, Sibford Ferris, Banbury, Oxon., OX15 5QL. Cheques made out to Sibford School.

Also illustrated overleaf are the first of a range of 'Sibford Memorabilia', which will eventually comprise key fobs, table mats, coasters, glassware, coffee mugs, wall plaques, and much, much more. Practical and useful presents, the proceeds from which will help to swell both School and Appeal funds.

(For details, contact Rob Phillips, Sibford Trading, Sibford School; Tel: 01295 781200,
e-mail: sibfordschool@dial.pipex.com.)

SOSA: Appeal Activities - 2001

Blenheim Ball

Blenheim Palace on a dark January evening is not as impressive as it might be if you could see out of the window, but still remains a far



grandier place to dine than I am accustomed to. I had a great time, but rather feel this was more to do with the company than with the 'ball'. The evening's dinner was interrupted at intervals by an auction of promises that made some of us feel poor and uncomfortable. For many people £75 tickets are themselves as much as they can afford towards an Appeal. It also appeared that a large number of rich



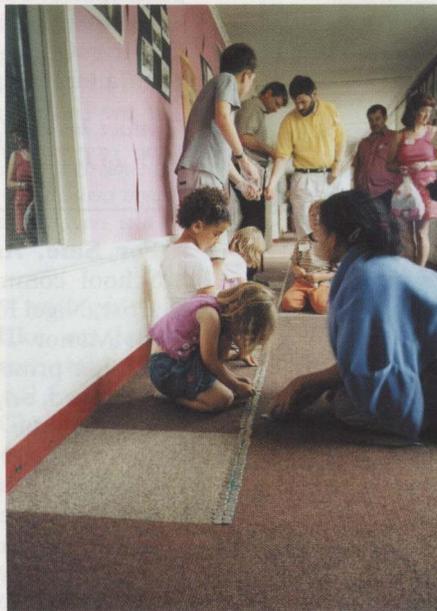
acquaintances, with little or no interest in the school, had been shipped in to spend their money. The dancing - which was informal and to pop music - was squeezed in at the end when we were running out of

time (it seems that the organisers had failed to note that we had to finish by 11.00pm). The highlight for me, however, was the renegade bunch of Old Scholars (accompanied by the Head, I believe) who imposed Rockets on a bemused hall of guests. However, those of us who went had a lovely time.

Michael Grimes, 1984-91

Silver Mile

Who would have thought that one's small change (5p pieces) could accumulate in just three months to



£1,300.00. But it did, and in September, we handed a cheque to Sue Freestone for that amount. Great fun was had throughout the Reunion, on hands and knees in the South corridor, laying coins along a line of tape. Apart from all those Old Scholars and friends who so diligently saved their 5p coins, we also heard



from many people who kindly sent donations towards the 'Silver Mile': Mr H.S. Burt, Terry Cemm, June Dawson, Alice Gutkind, Pauline Hooper, John Hughes, Ron Kennedy, Pearl Mayo, Jean Moore, St Albans Preparative Meeting (via Chris & Pat Grimes), Lilian Ward.

Thankyou to everyone who contributed, by coin or donation.

Our mile target would have raised £4,500.00, and we would still like to achieve this. So please continue collecting; any small change will help. Send whatever you can save (as a cheque - ('Sibford Development Appeal') to Ann Bond, address page 48, by June 1st, 2002. We will present the accumulated total to the School at Open Day on June 15th, 2002.

Walking for Sibford

Nearly two years ago, **Arthur Harrison** (1934-38) conceived the idea of a sponsored walk. He later teamed up with **Russell Steed** (1955-61) - then all their plans were delayed by the foot-and-mouth crisis. Finally, on Oct 5th, they were able to set off. Starting at Wormleighton Reservoir just north of Banbury, Arthur and Russell walked for seven days and 66 miles, along the route of the D'Arcy Dalton Way, part of which runs right through the School campus. The walk ended high up on the Ridgeway, south-west of Wantage. A few old scholars provided physical support: overnight accommodation, lunch at the Bishop Blaize (a favourite OS haunt) and a



Russell and Arthur on the 'D'Arcy Dalton Way' outside the School Dining Hall.



At the end of their walk Arthur receives a sponsorship cheque from Pat Grimes (right) and friend.

Limited Edition Water Colour Prints by Old Scholar, Nigel Fletcher. For Sale in aid of the Sibford Appeal.



Relaxing at the Blaize;



Sibford Gower Fields

The Manor



The Manor Courtyard

Below: Memorabilia available for sale.



champagne and fruit juice reception (including 'Rockets') in the car park overlooking the famous White Horse carved in the chalky hillside. Russell has written a fascinating account of the walk, which will be included in next year's magazine. So far, Arthur and Russell have raised over £1,750.00; further sponsorship will be very welcome. Cheques ('Sibford Development Appeal') can be sent to **Russell Steed**, address page 48.

Head's report to SOSA, August 2001

The past academic year has flown by. If life could get any busier at Sibford, it has. In addition to all the planning, implementing and monitoring which goes on in the course of daily life - the teaching, learning, challenging, stretching and reinforcing which we do - we have had the appeal and the development to embrace. On top of that we have had a record number of applicants for places at the school and we will start the year with over 340 students. In many ways in has not been an easy year, but it has been a rewarding one.

As the demands on my time have grown - it seems day by day - the need for a deputy has re-emerged. I am pleased to tell you that we have made an internal appointment. Maggie Guy, who has been Senior Mistress since 1998, will be Deputy Head from 1st September. Tony Skeath continues as Senior Master, Brian Holliday as Head of Upper School and Tracy Knowles has been appointed Head of Middle School.

At the other end of the continuum, three staff have retired this year who have been part of the 'Sibford Scene' for a long, long time. Chris Cox, who came 17 years ago as Head of Science and quickly became Head of Fielding House was promoted to the post of Director of Studies in 1997. He was much loved by generations of pupils, especially in his role as form tutor; characterised by his frank, open style, and a real fondness, and typically Sibfordian respect, for his tutees.

Mike and Jenny Wollerton also left us this year. Mike has been at Sibford for over 35 years; coming to teach games, taking over the running of Nansen boys in due course, and progressing to combine the teaching of maths with the posts of examinations officer and careers advisor. Jenny taught retailing and worked for many years as a classroom support assistant. Her warmth and genuine interest in her pupils, as well as her provision, with Mike, of the Tuck Shop, and later Top '86, (The Other Place, founded in 1986), endeared her to hundreds of pupils over the years. We have been privileged to work with Chris, Mike and Jenny, and wish them all happy and fulfilling retirements.

Our pupils have continued to delight and occasionally surprise us with their achievements. The sixth form have embraced the new advanced curriculum with little fuss and considerable success. We took part in a pilot scheme for the new key skills examination last year, so that when the real thing came along this year, they performed very well against national averages. The GNVQ programme goes from strength to strength. 100% pass rate at both intermediate and advanced level, with 50% achieving distinction and 40% merit - only 10% merely passed. Equally, our students achieved over 92% pass rate at A level in a wide range of subjects including English and History as well as our traditionally strong performance in the performing and creative arts. At GCSE, again the performance was good although due to

some missing coursework scripts, we do not know all of our maths results yet, so I can't give you statistics.

However, this continual improvement in academic performance does not mean that we have changed our emphasis here. Exams are still only part of life at Sibford, not the end to which we aspire. The emphasis continues to be on education with a capital 'E'. Learning how to live in society - to respect others' individuality and right to be - to be different. We continue to seek out talent, wherever it may lie and to build and enhance self-esteem through the nurturing and development of those talents. This does not mean only those with obvious talents such as a beautiful voice, stunning dramatic skills or academic excellence. We are driven by the belief, more than ever, that all are talented; and our pupils are sufficiently obliging to prove us right time and time again.



For the first time in many years, we had a junior and middle school musical production in the spring in the shape of 'Bugsy Malone'. Penny Spring, directed, joining forces with Jen Unwin as musical director. Pupils from years five to nine worked through the spring term towards an end of term production enjoyed by all. We have had a seemingly endless stream of GCSE and A level performances and the year culminated in another major musical - 'Cabaret'. This was rehearsed for just ten days from start to finish, with a cast of mainly years eleven and thirteen students who could have gone home! The production team - Simon and Angie Talbot with Matthew Talbot can be justly proud, as I am, of the excellent standard of dramatic and musical performance by all involved.

We have had our usual round of in-house concerts this year, with five winners in their categories in the 'Banbury Young Musician' of the year competition. The choir also took part in the Quaker Schools' combined performance of Benjamin Britten's 'War Requiem' in Ripon Cathedral at the end of the Spring Term. They enjoyed a wonderful few days as guests of Bootham, getting to know and working with pupils from all the English Quaker Schools. As always, members of the sixth form went on the Southern Schools' 'Foxtrot' at the beginning of the Autumn Term, and, also as always, they returned refreshed and inspired and gave us a wonderful account of their experience in Meeting for Worship. We have had other notable speakers at Meeting for Worship on Friday afternoons including David Puttnam - erstwhile film producer; and two Old Scholars - Dilip Sarker, recognised authority and author on the aeroplanes of the Second World War; and Kageha Marshall who addressed you earlier this weekend.

We held a Quaker Day here in June - the first of its kind to be held here, entitled 'Freeing the Spirit'. We spent the day considering the role of the arts in the lives of Friends and we were privileged to hear some inspiring speeches, especially that from Alec Davidson - co-founder and director of the Leavers.

Many Friends from around the country came to the school, and my thanks to Chris Lawson - School Committee - for the enormous amount of work he put into the planning and preparation of the event.

As in every year, Sibfordians have been out and about on trips to theatres, concerts, art galleries; to Manchester United football club, Rugby Internationals at Twickenham; Disneyland Paris; Orchard Close went on a French trip; there were two ski trips; OC went to the science museum for the night; some senior students went potholing in the Mendips; there have been trips to the ballet and the battlefields of Normandy - to name but a few of the exciting opportunities our pupils have had. These and all of the extra-curricular activities which run throughout the terms, happen through the energy, generosity and commitment of our staff. We are indeed fortunate in the people who work here, be they here for three years or thirty - their contribution to the wider life of the school is utterly remarkable, and such as I have not encountered in any of the other schools I have known!

Magazine: I know that some had reservations about the splitting of the magazine into a school version and one specifically for old scholars. However, I think few can argue with the success of the exercise. Both are wonderful publications of which we can be proud! My thanks to Caroline for all of her hard work on the 'Sibford Rocket'.

The Development: As you will have seen, the new art and music blocks are up and reaching for the skies. The windows are in; the electrics are in place. There is still a long way to go with internal fittings, but they should be ready for occupation after half term. The next step is the pool. Planning permission has been granted; everything is in place to start as soon as we get the last bit of money. We are determined not to over-commit ourselves financially and I commend the cautious approach of School Committee in this. However, we hope that we will have a new pool in the near future.

We are still working very hard to raise money towards the completion of the pool and for the rest of the development. I have been working with old scholar Peter McCurdy on the green oak hall which will be the next step - but we still have to raise £600,000 before we can contemplate starting to build. The appeal opened on 1st October, 2000, since when we have raised over £350,000 in donations and through events. It was lovely to see so many of you at the ball and at other fund-raising events, and my very grateful thanks to those of you who have given so generously, either personally, or through connections with trusts. The Southall Trust, through the auspices of Daphne Maw, donated £50,000 towards the pool - the largest Quaker trust donation we have received; and we have received many gifts from Preparative and Monthly Meetings - I know, often as a result of the backing of people here. My thanks to you. However, we still have a long way to go. If you have any ideas or any time to give the appeal, then please get in touch with me. I am happy to make presentations to Trusts or Meetings via your introduction, and

there are few things I will not do in the cause of Sibford School and its future development and long-term survival.

You will have seen in the foyer, limited edition prints by Nigel Fletcher - a well-known local artist and an old scholar. If you wish to support the appeal by purchasing one or a set, or even several sets of prints, please fill in the form and return it to the school. Equally, you will have seen our new financial administrator, Robert Phillips, with sample memorabilia for the Appeal. Please consider your Christmas shopping list before you leave Sibford this weekend.

This is the sixth SOSA reunion I have attended. Many things have changed at Sibford over the last five years - and that is as it should be. We have to respond to changing demands and in many respects we still lead in the field of educational development. In fact, I suspect that the Sibford perspective on the arts as a catalyst for social, educational and emotional development will be high on the national educational agenda within months. But some things do not change and never should. More and more parents choose Sibford because of its ethos - the care and respect afforded all members of our community, regardless of background. Our parents cherish the fact that their children are valued for what they are and they recognise that as a Quaker 'thing'.

I would like to thank Ann Bond for the tireless work she does on behalf of SOSA and the school. She is often to be found in school, updating the notice boards or preparing for an event. I am very grateful for all that she does for us and would like to draw your attention to the way in which she represents the interests of SOSA.

Sadly our dear friend, Jeanne Southam, died earlier in the summer. Characteristically, she was the first Old Scholar who approached me when I was appointed head of Sibford. She invited me to her home and made me welcome. She offered me the hand of friendship and gave me a taste of the warmth of the old scholars' community. Soon after, Vaughan sent me a copy of something he had written about the school - many of you will have seen it - 'The Sibford Web'. Clearly many, if not all of you, have been caught in its silken, invisible threads. The 'right' prospective parents also catch something of the 'Sibford magic' when they look around the school. They feel the sense of community and the buzz of a common purpose. What they don't necessarily realise is that part of the magic is created by the undercurrent provided by the love and continuing support of generations of old scholars, who come back year after year to reaffirm their affection for the old spider - Sibford School. Long may that continue!

Sue Freestone

(Please refer to pages 23 and 25 for more details on Sibford Memorabilia and Nigel Fletcher's limited edition prints.)

**The new Music and
Art Facilities
taking shape.**



Areas of Sibford which are of particular concern and interest to Old Scholars include the Cricket Pavilion and Peace Garden. This page reviews the background and present 'state' of each:

CRICKET PAVILION

The cricket Pavilion is to have a much needed internal refurbishment in the near future. This will be the first major make-over since it was opened in 1960. It was built as a memorial to one of Sibford's most revered Heads, James Harrod, who was headmaster between 1905 and 1930.



above: the completed Pavilion - 1960.

left: Old Scholars dig the first foundation trench.

below: Headmaster, Hugh Maw, opens the Pavilion in 1960.



The memorial was provided entirely by the generosity of the Old Scholars' Association and even more surprisingly - they also actually built it! Many Old Scholars gave up weekends and holidays to make it happen. The current SOSA Committee felt that it should provide a donation to support the refurbishment and this was endorsed at the Annual General Meeting in August 2001. With the help of a further donation from the family of James Harrod, SOSA is able to provide a gift of £1000. The Pavilion still provides a major facility to the School and to the local community.

Michael Finch (1949-1954)

PEACE GARDEN

The late Peter Baily, pictured on the left below, was the inspiration for The Garden of Peace, in 1989, following the sudden death of his wife, Janet (née Myall), also an Old Scholar (1954-59). Money which Peter donated became a focus for further donations from Old Scholars and a Trust was set up to administer it, with the aim of creating a suitable memorial garden. Mike Finch managed the funds and Nick Bennett designed the layout of the new garden, in a corner of an area of ground, given by the School, and sited between the then new Sports Hall and the Dining Room.



Many Old Scholars gave time and plants as well as money to the scheme. The garden was approved by School Committee and took shape during the autumn, winter and spring of 1992/93. Bulbs were planted during the next few winters.

The basic layout comprised a screening belt of mostly native trees and shrubs

which linked in with the newly planted screening for the Sports Hall. On the other side two sickle-shaped beds planted with trees and shrubs screened the Sports Hall and car park. The central area provided a calm interlinked grass area with room for seats, a rose bed, and a further seat facing outwards to take advantage of the lovely view looking to the south with the fields and hedgerows of the hillside opposite.

Two beech trees were planted: the first, in memory of Janet Baily, was planted by Peter Baily and members of his family near the entrance to the Garden; the other was planted to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the founding of the school in 1842. This tree was planted by all the past Presidents present at the 1992 Reunion, led by President, Daphne Maw. However the area is now going to be anything but peaceful, so a new site for an alternative Peace Garden is being sought. Once plans for the new buildings at the Hill have been finalised, a suitable area can be agreed with the School, School Committee and those involved with the original Trust which established the garden in the early 1990s.



Some Old Scholars have already volunteered to help with future landscaping and planting and a Quaker Garden theme has been suggested. If you would like to know more, please contact Nick Bennett.

Nicholas Bennett (1954-1959) Telephone: 0116 236 4206

SMAG - SOSA Membership Action Group Annual Report to the AGM - August 2001

The SOSA Membership Action Group has now been operational for just over a year and comprises Julie Greenhill, Ellen Salway, Tom Lane and myself; with help kindly given when requested from other SOSA members, and members of the General Committee. We exist to support and augment the work of the Membership Secretary.

Considerable work on the Membership Database over the last eighteen months by Wendy and Mike Finch, and subsequently by Raymond Bond, now facilitates quick access to a wealth of statistics from which we are able to glean useful information - not previously available, other than through the laborious interrogation of printed lists. Of a total SOSA membership of 762, it is sad to report that 61 members (some of them life members) are listed as 'address unknown'. Pat Grimes is busily pursuing these, and has already traced some, but we would welcome help from any member who can put us in touch with any of the others. Meanwhile, they are lost to the Association.

Our objectives: The Membership Group was formed in an attempt to combat the declining numbers of active SOSA members, and lack of new ones, and to analyse why this was (and is) so, whilst simultaneously putting into operation a suggested plan of action. This is essential for a financially healthy Association. As you will all recall, one of the Association's four objectives is 'The provision of assistance to the School wherever possible'. Although the word 'provision' does not cover solely financial assistance, money raised through subscriptions is vital to many of the projects we and the School wish to undertake. The other three SOSA objectives are equally implicit in all that we are attempting.

In our membership campaign, we are targeting: a) Former members of Old Scholars whose membership has lapsed; b) Former Pupils and Ex-Staff who have never been members; c) Parents of Pupils in the pupil's year of leaving, and these pupils themselves. Each of the above categories presents its own challenges and we have a different method of approach for each, ongoing throughout the year.

We also now have a good Enquiry System operating in conjunction with the School. All requests from former pupils for information on SOSA which the School receives are forwarded to us instantly. We respond with an

'Information Pack'; as we do for anyone who contacts us directly, and subsequently a 'Message of Welcome' to each new member.

As a result of all these various activities, we have this year generated the modest total of 16 new members. We extend on your behalf a warm welcome to: *Bronwen Lilley (née Quinton), Rosalind Mead (née Geering), Davy & Yvette Quinton, Margaret Rhodes, Wendy Salmon (née Holden) and Gerardo Sanchez-Reyes.* From this year's Leavers, we welcome *Dee Dee Booth, Abi Little, Alexander Martin, Rasmus Neilson and Johanna Russell.* *Paul Ambler, Ed Frost, Jonathan Pratt and Jonathan Tutte* have extended the ten year membership taken out for them in 1990 and 1991.

We are not, however, totally satisfied with what we have achieved in the last twelve months.

So what are our Concerns?

Primarily it is not the figures alone that concern us, but TRENDS in membership, particularly within the younger age groups.

The statistics now available to us reveal some startling facts which lead us to believe that the Association could experience problems in the foreseeable future.

1. A large proportion of our membership is elderly; 216 members are aged 60 and over, actually more than that if you include husbands and wives who did not attend the School as pupils.

2. We lack members in what I will describe as 'the active middle years'. Only 70 members exist from the 1955 to 1980 period - a quarter of a century which produced on average only 2.8 pupils per year. We need to specifically trace and encourage former pupils in this 35 to 60 age group.

3. Well over half the membership is in the under 35 age-range (420 members). This should be a healthy situation, but, with some notable exceptions, this age group seems less inclined to become involved in SOSA activities, or even in communicating.

4. Younger members whose parents took out ten or fifteen year membership as their offspring left school are in general not re-joining. We stand to lose between 25 and 30 members a year if this trend is not checked. We will be working next year on solutions to attract them back, but it could be a long recovery process.

5. Wasted membership: *please*, if you move, let us know and let us have your new address, so you can continue to receive your SOSA mailings. The majority of unknown addresses are in the 'young member' category.



6. But our principle concern is that less 'leavers' are joining. We have our theories as to why, and clearly the interests of young Old Scholars do need to be addressed. This is the hardest nut to crack, and causes us much heart searching. However, Sibford is apparently not alone in its current inability to attract 'Leavers'. Your Committee approached all other Friends' Schools whose experience in recent years has been much the same. We are working on it.

We are not short of ideas. We have prepared a Check List of ongoing activities which we are working through. Any input from you is welcome, at any time. But it is very time-consuming to put our marketing campaign into operation quickly and effectively and all our Concerns still need addressing. The Membership Action Group will be putting a proposal for 'The Way Forward' to the General Committee at our next Committee Meeting, in November. Our Task Sheet is constantly under review, new technology is a considerable asset and difficulties will be surmounted.

To end on a positive note: **Open Day.** With a complete classroom and adjacent outdoor space at our disposal, we had the opportunity to market ourselves to the School and its visitors. It became something of an **Old Scholars' Day Reunion** - great fun for those Old Scholars who were able to be present, and a particularly valuable exercise. SOSA no longer holds a Reunion when the School is in session, so pupils and parents only know of our existence as a name, not as 'real people' with an extremely varied range of skills and talents.

Both the School and the SOSA Committee seemed sufficiently impressed with the efforts of the Membership Group in organizing this combined Day Reunion and Promotional Venue that we will be arranging something similar at the School's Open Day next year. Details will be in the magazine. Do come.

Ann Bond

From the Archives: Remembering 1951 and 1976

'DISTANT DRUMS FROM 50 YEARS AGO'

1951 was a year of great expectation and a hope for better things to come. It marked the beginning of the Festival of Britain with a chance to finally put behind us the horrors of the Second World War and described by Herbert Morrison as "the people giving themselves a pat on the back." Major news events of that year.....

- Britain's longest running 'soap opera' "the Archers", commenced broadcasting in January 1951. Its creator and editor was Sibford's very own Godfrey Baseley. Little did he realise that it would still be popular and running in 2001!

- October 26th. Winston Churchill is Prime Minister again. At 77, he would be forming his first peacetime government after the Tories' narrow general election victory.

At Sibford, the new wing at the Hill had just come into use and life in the School had changed little from the previous twenty years. In many ways the building of the new wing probably heralded the first major step in revitalising the School after the stagnancy of the forties.

Here are some extracts from Sibford and Old Scholar life in 1951:

THE SCHOOL YEAR in 1951 (head's report).

The outstanding event of the year has, of course, been the opening of the new wing at the Hill. This has eased the working of the School a great deal. No longer do we have to use the Library and the Domestic Subjects Room regularly as classrooms. The new classrooms are well lit and sunny and the additional dormitory for boys has given them a bit more breathing space. The substitution of oil heating for coke and anthracite is proving a success too, though, of course, it has not yet been tested in a Sibford blizzard.

We have had many visitors. Undoubtedly the one whose name will be known best is Freddie Grisewood who opened the season for the Music Club. Many other distinguished artists followed him such as the Opera Players, who sang an abbreviated version of *La Bohème*; Eileen Croxford (cello); Phillipa Barnes (pianoforte) and the British String Quartet.

Other visitors came from distant lands, Rabemanantsoa (Pemba), William Oats (Hobart), Eulalia Allen (U.S.A.), Jonna Hauser from Denmark (here at the invitation of the Mabel Harrod Committee) and two boys from Sweden (sent under a scheme of the Swedish Ministry of Education).

Two parties of boys and girls went to France. The Easter Group did a week's sightseeing in Paris and ten boys went in Summer on a cycling tour in Brittany. In this they were greatly helped by a generous gift from S.O.S.A's Mabel Harrod Fund, which enabled them to have a slightly longer holiday and to make friendly contacts with the French people.

As I write this we have just concluded a successful Mock Election. The

'Hyde Park' speeches on the Prom were very good indeed and the three candidates had to address the whole school in the Gym. The Liberal's promise of increased family allowances was received with thunderous applause! (I suspect that some in the Lower School thought that it meant more pocket money!)

The results in the General Certificate of Education (G.C.E.) (the new name for the School Certificate,) showed once again that the standard of education provided is very good indeed. We may be proud, too, of our swimming. As usual nearly sixty boys and girls passed the Examination of the Royal Life Saving Society. We have had very enjoyable seasons at cricket, tennis, football, netball, rounders and hockey.

Old customs remembered with affection by past scholars are as much enjoyed as ever - Halloween Party, blackberrying (600lb. this term), Frank Butler the magician, visits to Stratford Theatre and Whichford picnics.

So Sibford travels on continuing to fill a valuable place in the world of education and to give to its boys and girls that outlook on life, which is perhaps best summed up in the word, service. Many interesting letters come from Old Scholars doing good work in the world. Recently I amused myself by summarizing the occupations they have taken up during the last ten years. At the head of the list stood Nursing with thirty-eight in the profession, then came Agriculture and Horticulture with thirty-five, Engineering with thirty-one and Teaching twenty-five.

(Arthur Johnstone)

SOSA in August 1951. (Extracts from the Reunion Report)

In the convalescent period at home following the 1951 August Reunion, I write with the warm feeling that this was a particularly friendly gathering, though I attach no significance to the fact that numbers were rather reduced compared with recent years.

President Jim Baily was, as always, the essence of that geniality and bonhomie which I would humbly say as a non-Quaker (and even a non-Old Scholar) make these gatherings the most deeply happy occasions of the cycle of years.

Travelling Ferris-wards on Friday evening we found the rain storms and the wind rather matched our feelings when on arrival there seemed very few Old Scholars on hand but going through the Archway there was at least colour. The whole playground and Prom was festooned with every kind of pennant, flag and ensign ever used in the Merchant Navy. A short while to get the "atmosphere", then, "come wind, come weather, who cares, if we get together". Especially with the prospect of Celia Law again cookhouse superintendent.

Saturday's dawning brought clearer skies. Breakfast gathered us, each taking stock of neighbour, each happy in anticipation. Words of welcome, a few notices read by John Coxon; desultory cricket on the



Group Photo 1951

playground then spun out time until the first organized sport: swimming under Philip Morris's jurisdiction. A deeper, greener, murkier water awaited the mere half-dozen participants. It seemed that most of us had recently bathed. Later, on the playground, we were introduced by Don Ryan to Softball - a comparative term - it being the commoner form of baseball played in the U.S.A. With Don using the amplifier for instructional purposes, several mixed sides gave a crowded Prom an interesting hour's spectacle.

A very good lunch fortified us to take part in the tennis tourney, the under 25s versus the over 25s cricket match, or just to spectate. On the field the under 25s XI, batting first, amassed 102 runs, of which Alun Edwards contributed 21, while Alan Williams took 3 wickets for 14 runs.

They couldn't quite defeat the elder brethren who, playing twelve men, had 77 for 10 on the board at draw of stumps - the game being saved to a large degree by a lusty unbeaten knock of 14 by one whose age approaches the side's total. In case he prefers anonymity I merely quote the initials E.P.K (Ed. note - Edward Percy Kaye, one of SOSA's early Icons!)

Supper time showed a marked increase in numbers and when the meal was over there came a sad note when Arnold Kaye told us of the long and serious illness of Leslie Cross, who having been Editor for some fifteen years, had been forced to resign that post. There was much sympathy for Leslie, whom we prayed would make a speedy recovery.

Then to the Gym, to see what entertainment the London Branch had to offer. A series of sketches and choruses made up what was generally agreed to be one of the best shows ever. John and Lilian Ward, Alfred Holland, Don Ryan and

John Taylor excelled themselves, but a new "returner", Jennifer Wilson and her swain Stanley were the backbone of the effort. (Shall we ever forget their Siamese twin act?) After this the now annual gift by Gordon Biggs of a pedigree dog was auctioned by Geoff Long to net £7 for the building fund. Hot drinks in the dining room followed and then away to the Elm with panther-like tread where ninety-one rocketed.

Sunday dawned brilliant and sunny (or so they told me). Breakfast was exalted with Bible reading by our revered James Harrod, who then recalled an event many years ago when Wilfred Southall brought his company to enact biblical scenes on the Gym stage for the enlightenment of scholars and whose son Kenneth and his wife Phyllis (a member of the School Committee) we were happy to have with us that day. (Ed. For those who love their Sibford dynasties, Kenneth and Phyllis Southall were Daphne Maw's parents!)

In the afternoon, about 100 foregathered at Traitors Ford. There was the usual fun with great iron kettles, jugs and cakes, chaff and chiding from the inevitable semi-circle around those who do the donkey work; there was no Selina by the way - only Philip Beckerlegge and his ancient brake.

At a full Evening Meeting, Dr Kenneth Southall spoke. Then came supper and then the Annual General Meeting. 'Reunion' brought long tales by Geoff Long, a poem by Stan Ewan and a repeat monologue and duologue by Jennifer Wilson and Stanley Swan.

Monday was dreary and stormy all day but we found our own amusement in gossip, casual dancing, table tennis and what you will. Margaret Carter, late School art mistress, gave a puppet show; Janet Eavis and Grace Beckerlegge did a fine effort in inducing tiny tots to do solo turns on the stage. It being impossible to complete the Tennis Tournament, a toss of the coin gave prizes to Edith Worrall and Eric Stewart at suppertime.

What we are pleased to call the Birmingham sub-branch, i.e. Sheffield and district, gave a stupendous first effort at entertainment. Kathleen Rice's known versatility was rivalled by Norman Hargreave - such adiposity, half-hidden by such recalcitrant underwear, fairly brought the house down - who will forget the mutterings of Stepen Stefanovitch?



Arthur Johnstone shows how it's done in the playground

To close the day (for Rockets were impossible) we had an innovation par excellence. Ye olde mayde Kath Rice, bonneted and dressed as from a picture book, conducted her rehearsed and costumed couples in old time dances and, to tunes by Ron and Barbara Quinton and band, they took the floor in steps old and gay, vigorous and sedate. Jennifer Lamb was voted best dressed lady and Basil Parker best dressed gentleman. Viewed from the balcony this scene was most inspiring in its vivacity and discipline.

Bed - early breakfast - and that was all.

Frank Rollett.

Among those present for the whole or part of the week-end were:

Francis Alderman; William Appleton; Elin, Jim, James, Peter & Roger Baily; Margaret & Leslie Baily; Doris & Reginald Barrett; The Beckerlegge family; Merle Beech; Jennifer Bland; Edith, George & Michael Bond; The Bottoms family; Alan Burgess; Daphne and John Canham; Margaret Carter; Nesta & Paul Caudwell; Terry Cemm; Roy Cheshire; Judy Cohen; Irene & John Coxon; Olive & Herbert Dalley; Brian Dancer; Bessie & John Dearden; Joyce & Martin Dodswoth; Frieda, Eric & John Dumbleton; Janet Eavis; Jean, Rachael, Dafydd & Alun Edwards; Stan Ewan; John Farr; Valerie Fello; Rosamond & Patrick Flinn; Derek & Peter Gaffee; Michael Gibbins; Hugh Gibson; Lorna & Pamela Gilbert; The Hargreave family; Alison Hargreaves; Ruth Harrison; James Harrod; Ian Hedger; Roger Hemsley; Alfred Holland; Brian Hooper; Carol & Jennifer Horne; Oswald James; David Jenkins; Arnold & Edward Kaye; David Laity; Jennifer Lamb; Celia, George & Sally Law; Elsie, Henry & Kingsley Lawrence; The Lewis family; Alan Little; Alice, Geoffrey & Tom Long; Helen Longford; John Lynch; A. Mallett; Mr & Mrs, Philip & Tony Manasseh; Alix & Keith Markson; The Mills family; Jean Moon; Geoffrey Moore; Philip Morris; Mavis Mutch; James Newman; Alex, Bernard & Humphrey Norman; Basil Parker; Ian, Janet, Marjorie & Ruth Parsons; Mabel, Wilfrid, Robin & Ian Pollard; Joy, Bill, Chris, Penelope & Peter Rann; Robert Ray; Kathleen Rice; Vera, Frank, Jackie & Lorraine Rollett; Alice, Elsie & Robert Rose; Anne Russen; Don Ryan; Michael Selby; Erwin Siefert; Phyllis & Kenneth Southall; Juliet Spendlove; Stanley Swan; Ann & Jane Sweatman; John Taylor; Hilary Thornton; The Trout family; Stephen Wall; Lilian & John Ward; Robin Webb; Margery Wells; Beryl Whittaker; Alan & Peggy Williams; Jennifer Wilson; Edith Worrell and Doris, Louis & Beryl Wright.



Lilian and John Ward selling OS 'Colours' to Mavis Stiles (née Mutch), Jennifer Graymore (née Horne), ??, James Baily Jnr and Philip Morris.

...and 'not such' Distant Drums from 1976 - 25 years ago.

Life at Sibford had changed dramatically since 1951 and Sibford was in its seventh headship under the benevolent care of Kenneth Greaves. The Sibford landscape had changed too, as the move from the Manor became

inevitable. By now most activities were at the Hill including a newly opened dining hall and kitchen. The boys had been housed in separate houses since 1960 and the much loved Gym at the Old School had been replaced in 1953. Here are a few Sibford tit bits from twenty-five years ago:

EXTRACTS FROM THE HEADMASTER'S REPORT

For the first half-term of the year I myself was off duty because of illness and our thanks are due to June Ellis and John Gilchrist who took on an additional burden of work and responsibility during that time.

Once again, the record of work throughout the School and throughout the year was good; and out of school hours, too, it seemed that more people were more usefully occupied for more of the time than has sometimes been the case. Many pupils serve on committees concerned with such things as the running of social events in the School, with social service in the neighbouring villages, with the management of the tuckshop and the bookshop, etcetera, and one hopes that opportunities for such service will continue to increase.

In the public examinations taken at the end of the school year the results were generally good. In the advanced level examinations it was particularly pleasing that all our geography candidates were successful; and in the CSE and GCE Ordinary level examinations, not only was the pass rate a creditable one but a substantial number of high grade passes were achieved.

Although there were no significant changes in the curriculum during the year there was good work done within the existing framework and some exceptionally fine work in wood and metal was produced in the workshops under the direction of Graeme Sagar and Stuart Hedley.

A feature of the year was the large number of expeditions and excursions. Sixth formers taking O and A level courses in Economics with Joanna Pring visited local factories; the A level geographers enjoyed a few days fieldwork in mid-Wales with Brian Holliday and Sue Bradley; and in the Easter holidays Jean Rudge and her husband took 16 members of her German classes to Southern Germany for a two-week holiday arranged on an exchange basis, their German friends returning the visit in the Summer Term.

Also in the Easter holidays, David Foulds and Jocelyn Radcliffe took a party of 26 children Youth Hostelling in Yorkshire, travelling in a coach driven by Mike Wollerton.

Other expeditions during the year included the outings of the History Society, led by Ken Francis, to Avebury, to Blenheim Palace, to the Houses of Parliament and to the 1776 exhibition at Greenwich. Our Upper Sixth Form went on the Friends Schools Pilgrimage to the birthplace of Quakerism in North Lancashire and Cumbria; we were represented also at Junior Yearly Meeting and one of our girls attended the Geneva Summer School. One of the most notable excursions, however, was the famous outing in the Summer term when the Friends of Sibford Society took 46 children - mainly those who cannot often have exeat with their parents - on a visit to Bourton-on-the-Water. "The best



Grace Beckerlegge - President 1976-7



Jim Bailly - President 1950-51

day out since I've been at Sibford," was the verdict of one small boy. We are truly grateful to the Friends of Sibford for the help and support that they continue to give us in all sorts of ways.

Thanks to the generosity of friends of Sibford in a less specific meaning of the phrase our premises were increased during the year by the building, in a magically short space of time, of our new dining room and kitchen block. The building came into use at the beginning of the Spring term in January and it meets our needs admirably. The Friends of Sibford provided curtains for the staff dining room and the Sibford Old Scholars Association gave curtains for the main dining-hall, complete with all necessary fittings.

It would have been wrong to accept so much from others without making a real effort to help ourselves and our own fund-raising events were organised in school during the year.

In connection with our appeal, our approach to an educational trust brought us a visit in the autumn by two of its directors. Several months later we were informed that, so impressed had they been by the work of our Remedial Department, that they had decided to offer us a gift of £30,000 to enable us to build a new Remedial Centre, and planning for this is in hand. This generous gift, the more pleasing for having been so completely unexpected, comes as a great encouragement and we shall strive to prove worthy of the confidence that has been placed in us.

I must emphasise once more that it is not my intention to increase the size of this department, nor to develop remedial work at the expense of other parts of the curriculum. It is in the Sibford tradition to cater - and cater successfully - for a wide range of educational needs and this we shall continue to do, maintaining a proper balance between our various activities.

In the field of Physical Education it was not an outstanding year but there were some good individual performances and some interesting developments. Our girls gained 39 awards for gymnastics and 117 awards for athletics during the season, several school athletics records were broken and Elsa Stuart reached the county finals in the Long Jump.

For the boys, the football season produced some good but rather mixed

results, with both Senior and Junior teams winning more games than they lost. A group of boys played in the county Rugby trial and Stephen Johnson and Adrian Martin were selected for the Oxfordshire Under 16 team.

In September the School began an Orienteering Club and members regularly attended local meetings. The initial popularity of the sport was shown when, at the end of March, the first School event was run as part of the House Eisteddfod competition and sixty boys competed.

Another innovation in the Eisteddfod, which seems to comprise a greater number of events every year, was the inter-House Quiz, based on the BBC's Top of the Form programme and very professionally presented by Geoff Higgins and the Social Committee. So closely were the teams matched that when even the replay ended with the scores exactly equal the outcome had to be decided by a sudden death play-off.

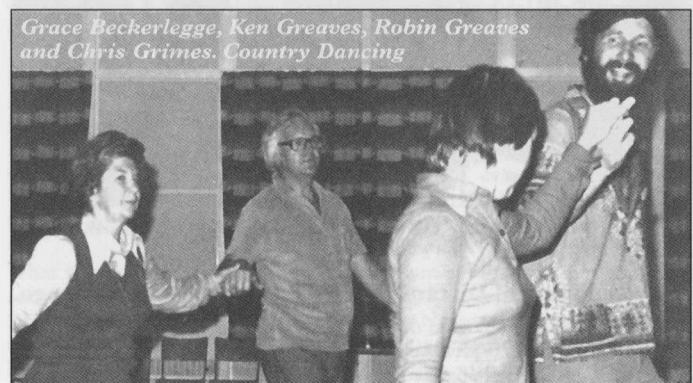
This was a good year for drama. A good standard of acting and direction, and once again Geoff Higgins gave us two memorable productions - Zigger Zagger in the autumn and, in collaboration with Tony Rye, the musical Oliver at the end of the Summer term.

At the end of the Summer Term Eileen Tate and John Gilchrist reached the time for retirement. Eileen Tate had intended retiring a year earlier but had stayed on to help us out of a difficulty - a sample of the off-hand generosity that was characteristic of her and for which we had so many occasions to be grateful.

John Gilchrist taught at Sibford for twenty-two years and was Senior Master for eighteen of them. His influence in the School was immense and there can have been few school activities, which had not benefited from his energetic leadership or his unobtrusive support. His retirement was suitably marked by the School Committee and by present scholars and on the last night of the Summer Term a large number of his present and former colleagues gathered in the new dining-hall to do honour to John and Vi, to thank them for their past service and to wish them a long and happy retirement.

Ken Francis has been appointed to succeed John Gilchrist as Senior Master.

Kenneth Greaves



Grace Beckerlegge, Ken Greaves, Robin Greaves and Chris Grimes. Country Dancing



Group Photo 1976



Norman Coxon and Grace Beckerlegge lead the walkers. OS Reunion 1976

From *'The Times'*, - February 25th, 1976

OBITUARY - LESLIE BAILY (at Sibford 1918-1921)

Mr Leslie Baily, a pioneer of British radio broadcasting, has died at his home in York. He was 69.

He will be remembered with affection by more than one generation of listeners for the BBC Scrapbooks which he, and in the early days Charles Brewer, created. They were judged by many listeners to be sound radio at its best. The first - for 1913 - was broadcast in 1933. As Professor Asa Briggs wrote in *The Golden Age of Wireless*: "The Scrapbook programmes satisfied the Englishman's love of nostalgic reminiscence, and at the same time drew on a powerful documentary element which earns them a certain place in the future interpretations of contemporary history..... in Freddie Grisewood, who was the narrator for the first two programmes, they were to find the perfect compère."

Baily was in many ways a man born for radio. Educated at the Friends School, Sibford Ferris, near Banbury and at Cheltenham Grammar

School, he later joined the staff of the Yorkshire Evening News at Leeds. In 1925 as a young wireless correspondent he covered the opening of Daventry 5XX, then the biggest broadcasting station in the world and the first long wave station.

He was strongly attracted to the new medium and its sense of mystery, something which he felt, and indeed is still felt, by those whose lives were wonderfully enlarged by its coming. He was responsible for a stream of features, plays and revues first in Leeds and Manchester studios of the BBC and then in London. The Scrapbooks were perennially successful and, as the years went by, took new directions - for example, in 1942 Baily came out with a series entitled *Everybody's Scrapbook*, designed to provide a link with the Empire; it was found that the formula pleased Canada and Australia as much as Britain.



His gift for turning research into lively scripts bore fruit in a number of other radio productions, which were concerned with Gilbert and Sullivan, Sir Ernest Shackleton, William Penn and Franz Schubert.

He married in 1928 Margaret Jesper; they had one son John, and one daughter June.

'From the Archives' was compiled by Michael Finch (1949-1954)

SOSA BRANCH REPORTS

Midland Branch - Presented by Hilary Haddleton (1947-1950)

On Saturday January 27th, 2001, thirty four Old Scholars gathered for the New Year Party. They all enjoyed a cold buffet lunch at Selly Oak Meeting House followed by a quiz, organised by Philip Morris. Rockets finished off the Party before they all went home.



The next New Year Party for the Midland Branch is on **Saturday January 26th, 2002 at 12.30p.m.** at Selly Oak Meeting House, Bristol Road, Selly Oak, Birmingham. All are welcome; do join us. *Please contact Hilary Haddleton (Midland Branch Secretary) on 0121-705-0462.*

London Branch - Presented by Christopher Grimes (1951 -1956)

Since last August the London Branch has held three events. In October 2000, seven members met in London to explore the Tate Modern. They had hoped to walk across the new Millennium Bridge, but of course couldn't. The Tate Modern building is an exciting place to visit in its own right: it is vast and was swarming with visitors. Having split up to view the Tate Modern, we met at strategic moments, lunch and tea times. Margaret Fairington was able to make use of her forgotten membership to take guests into the Private Members' area for a breather away from the crowds, which was a bonus for some of us. It was an enjoyable day with far too much to see in one visit and it was free. Some of the exhibits were difficult to appreciate but they made good talking points. A tip for anyone who has not been: the East Room on level seven is light, airy and uncrowded with magnificent views on three sides - and light refreshments are served there.



At the beginning of December 2000, the Branch held their Advent Gathering in St. Albans. Eleven of us met for a day at the Grimes' home and entertained each other with chat and quiz games after a buffet lunch. Another good time together.

Our third event took place on a beautiful Sunday in May when a record number (for us) of twenty met together in Amersham, at the invitation of Margaret and George Bunney. We gathered for Meeting for Worship at the Meeting House, then went to the Bunneys who welcomed us into their lovely house and garden and fed us a veritable feast at lunch time. During the afternoon some Old Scholars chose the option of a tranquil rest in the garden while the more able and energetic explored the environs with George. We were joined on this occasion by our President, Mike Farr, who brought with him Jim Hilling and William Norgrove. Margaret's sister Ann and husband Richard were visiting especially to be with the group. We had a great time reminiscing and were very grateful to Margaret and George for their generous hospitality and for giving us such a splendid time. At the end of the day Margaret donated all contributions towards the cost of the event to the Sibford Appeal. So thank you, Margaret and George, for that as well.

Further activities are planned for the Autumn and 2002. *Contact Chris or Pat Grimes (Joint London Branch Secretaries) on 01727 850521.*



above: London Branch members at the Bunneys.

Page 37:

left - top, middle and bottom: London Branch gatherings.

right - top and middle: Midland New Year Party.

bottom: London & Midland Branch members at the Bishop Blaize (SibfordGower) to support the 'Sibford Walkers', Arthur Harrison and Russell Steed.

inset: Arthur (top) and Russell (bottom).



Leslie Baily Address:

'From Nansen to Nandi -Two Lives, One Path'

My life began in a remote village in Western Kenya far away from the nearest town of Kisumu. Kisumu is situated along the shores of Lake Victoria. Little did I know then, how differently my life path would be, due to a tragic twist in circumstances. My father came from the Nandi tribe and my mother came from the Luyah tribe, both tribes were part of the Kalenjin tribe in Western Kenya.

Soon after my birth my mother died suddenly leaving my father to care for a tiny infant. For a time he struggled to find a mother replacement, asking relatives and friends to take on that role. Sadly for him this arrangement did not last very long so my father was forced to make an alternative plan. Life for everyone was very hard and poor and a new baby to look after added to the poverty. My father himself had no regular work, no proper home and he lived in rags. I became increasingly ill with the lack of food and in desperation and need my father carried me to a Quaker Mission Hospital he had heard about.

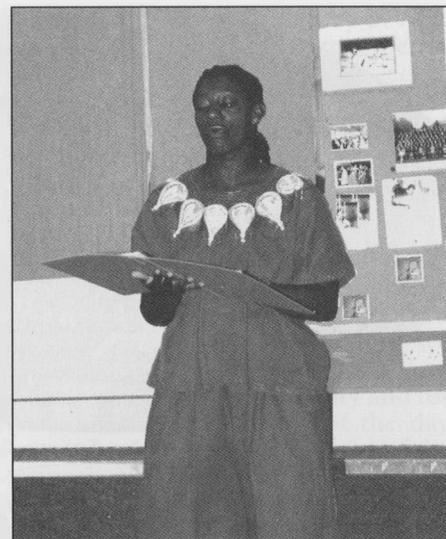
There I was left while my father went in search of work. In the Hospital at that time was an English Doctor who nursed me back to health and in time took me out of the hospital setting to recover in her own home. As I grew healthier my father's visits became less frequent. His anxiety about my survival vanished and I flourished. I was fostered and became part of the Watts' family. A year or so later my father made a painful decision. He agreed for me to be trans-racially adopted in order for me to continue being healthy and happy. I grew up as the only black child in an English family. I did not see my father again until over thirty years later.

I first came to Sibford at the age of

thirteen. I was in Nansen Girls, and a border for four years. One positive memory for me was the great sense of relief when I arrived to meet other black children who were in a similar situation to myself - a black child trans-racially adopted into an English Quaker family. When I left Sibford in 1978, I took away with me life long friendships which keep re-appearing in my life. An early memory of this was five months after I left, I was living in Africa for a short time. I received a letter from a boy still at Sibford telling me all the up to date news. I would like to share an extract of this letter with you.

"DECEMBER 8th 1978. Everyone of course says Hi! Oscar is having a wobbler because I am going to London tonight, and I am getting the great goodbye from the fifth form. Sarah had a cat fight today. Sarah accused Tabitha of eating her cheesecake, so Sarah took it out of Tabitha's hands and threw it into the middle of the road, (it sounds like a detective story). Tabitha chased Sarah up into our house (Penn Boys) into my cupboard. Of course Tabitha followed and was thrown out of the house by Mrs W. The hards, that is Phipps, GW, Butts, Collinson and Ferris threatened Tabitha. They said that if she touched Sarah again they would make Cheesecake out of her. Well, what an exciting last day for me. Now, Fiona would like to write to you."

I have always kept in touch with Sibford throughout the years. I have been back to the school three times. On one occasion I bumped into my housemistress for Nansen Girls, Miss Lemon. It was a brief meeting but in that fleeting moment I remembered exeat W/E, with the luxuries of hot buttered toast and cocoa, late TV, and cosy chats in her flat. What a treat that was!! I took part in several reunions in London, one time taking my cousin



who was at the school at the same time as me. He was thrilled to be joining in, having emigrated to Australia some years before. He told me he had a brilliant day seeing everyone and swapping stories which included Friday mornings Eggy Bread breakfasts and the high spot of the week, the school dances or hops!

A more recent event was in 1999 when I visited Kenya: I went on a journey of self discovery to learn more about my Kenyan identity. I stayed with a close friend who was in Nansen girls with me. We sat on her veranda overlooking the beauty of the Indian Ocean. As our children played and swam happily in the African sun, we were reminded of our teenage years in the same setting, enjoying the beach a few miles along the coastline. Here we were again, talking and laughing, remembering my sixteenth birthday: the day began with the girls in my dorm throwing me into a freezing cold bath, followed by the bumps in a P.E. lesson. I had thirty two cards as well as a homemade cake. A party ended the day with dancing in Nansen Girls Common Room. Incidents like these at Sibford, make our friendship what it is today - life long firm friends.

In 1995, I finally met the Kenyan father I

never knew. Although we did not speak the same language, we were still able to communicate with the help of interpreters. We were able to share in our very different experiences and discuss what had happened to us both. I was welcomed into the family as the daughter who was lost and now found.

The film you are going to see (“Kageha’s Story”) tells my story. I hope you enjoy it as much as I enjoyed making it. The film came about as a result of a family holiday video, which we wanted as a holiday memory. A very interested Quaker, who saw our filming, showed the original footage to a TV producer at HTV, who then asked me to be in a series about unusual Bristol families. “Kageha’s Story” was made by HTV in 1996 and shown in 1997. It went on to win the Bronze Medal Award at the New York Television and Film Festival in 1998.

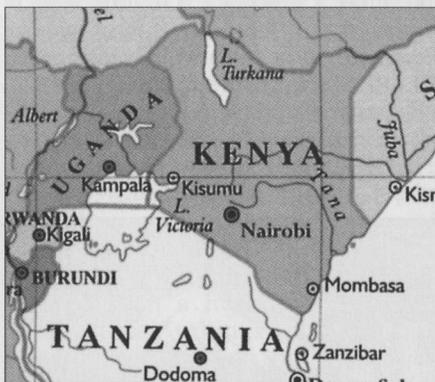
Most people take who they are and where they come from for granted. Take a person’s name, for instance. In this culture a name is given to a child and it doesn’t necessarily have to mean anything. In my case however, the name my natural mother gave to me meant a lot. The name my natural father gave to me meant even more. My mother, who was a member of the Luhya tribe, called me Kageha. This means, “little one”. Indeed I was a small baby and after she passed away it was feared that I would follow her in death. My father who is a member of the Nandi tribe and a Kalenjin called me ‘Jeruto’, meaning, “born away from home”. If only he’d known how true this would be to describe what happened to me.

In 1999 when I re-visited Kenya, my father changed my name for the third time, substituting Kageha which I was originally called for Chemining, which means the same thing, but in his tribal language. He insisted that I remember my new name as it had special significance.

My adoptive family were extremely

supportive throughout my journey, my mother even specifically seeking employment as a Professor of Tropical Medicine in Western Kenya, so that we could use my parents’ home as a base. For that I am grateful. I am also grateful that the re-union with my natural family took place and was successful.

Having two mixed heritage children helped me face up to what had actually happened in my life. They helped me find myself, and who I am now. I am a Black British woman who has been transracially adopted. One of the most important events in my life is finding out about my cultural identity in Kenya. I can now move on with my life and share in my celebration by encouraging others to have a strong sense of identity and self.



One of the places I visited was a Children’s Home in Western Kenya, near where I was born. Charles Mully, the founder of the home, had been an orphaned child who had grown up on the streets of Nairobi, but who had gone on to become the most wealthy and successful businessman in Western Kenya. He suddenly decided to give up his privileged life to help give opportunities to street children like himself throughout Kenya. He told me that he has 600 children under his care in two orphanages. He tries to give all the children the best start possible. He gives them food, shelter, an education and loving care. In Kenyan

culture adoption is not an option. A Kenyan family will take responsibility only for its own children. It is an alien concept for a family to adopt somebody else’s child. I know this from talking to a variety of Kenyan families. My father said that whilst he wanted to keep me but could not as he was too poor, other relatives could not or would not get involved in the plight of a child in need. Charles Mully told me that he would love to see this change at government level, as there are literally thousands of children abandoned or orphaned by Aids who will either grow up as street children, or who will only know institutional care in orphanages. I found this very disturbing.

I don’t think that I knew how important making the first film would be for me, until I came to make the second documentary. The impact of meeting my Kenyan birth father and his family was overwhelming, but it changed me. It was the start of a new journey defining identity in many different forms. The reactions of making a personal film of this nature has not all been positive. I have had to deal with other people’s distress, especially when doing talks for Social Work Teams and Adoption Agencies. This has helped me grow as I try new adventures. Making “Kageha’s Story” gave me the confidence to leave the Social Work Profession and embark on doing what I really want to do instead of what I thought I should do. Last month I qualified as a Play Worker.

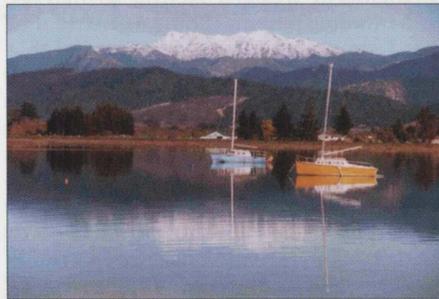
The second film you are about to see, “The Lost Daughter”, was made in 1999 after our second visit to see my birth father in Kenya. It explores my developing relationship with him and his family. It also looks at how the second time around my feelings for Kenya and its people have changed. Whereas my first trip to Kenya in 1995 was full of mystery, the second trip to Kenya in 1999 created feelings of excitement and wanting to learn more about my Kenyan identity.

Kageha Marshall (née Watts, 1974-1978)

Virtually all this news from the far side of the world has been gathered by e-mail, even some of the pictures. Information comes from old scholars who were at Sibford between the years 1934 and 1956. It is so easy nowadays to jet around the world (and many very young old scholars are doing just that, right now), that it is hard to understand what it must have been like all those years ago to leave England on a five-week sea-voyage and actually emigrate. It must have seemed a great adventure, the more so to escape the austerity of the war years, and afterwards, rationing ... food shortages ...

Roger Baily (1950-55) and **Anne** (née Tulk, 1953-58)) write: 'We left the UK in June 1965, sailing from Southampton on the 'Southern Cross' with our son Marc, just 17 months old. After a 5 week voyage to Wellington, New Zealand, we settled in Dunedin in the South Island, Roger working most of the time for Cadbury's. Stayed there for 10 years and had two more children, Cath and Paul. In 1975 we took the family back to UK for 5 months. During our stay we joined the rest of the Baily "clan" for the OS reunion that year, an event the children remember well! On returning to NZ we lived in Auckland for a year and then moved to Wanganui, in the lower North Island. Our reason for going there was to join the Quaker Settlement. We were among some of the early settlers and stayed for 11 years. It was a valuable experience where major decisions were relatively easy to make but the small ones, like who cuts the grass and when, were much more difficult! It was a superb environment for the children to grow up in. In 1986 we moved to Adelaide in South Australia, staying there for 6 years, returning to NZ in 1992. Since then we have truly settled! This time in

Motueka, situated near Nelson at the northern end of the South Island. We owned a bookshop for 6 years and



have now retired! Our house is situated on the beach overlooking Tasman Bay with Nelson in the distance at the foot of a range of mountains. Marc now has a son and daughter. Cath has a daughter who is a year old in September. Paul lives in Brisbane, Queensland. Greetings to all OS. We welcome visitors!

(E-mail: rogerann@world-net.co.nz).

This from **Elizabeth Bent**, known whilst a pupil as Anne Gray (1949-



**Under
Down
News from**

53) and later, as a teacher (1961-72) as Elizabeth Gray. Now domiciled in New Zealand, having married a New Zealand farmer. The picture of Mount Egmont says it all - it dominates the landscape and is the view from the ranch slider of our retirement home. It is fortunately extinct! I hope! We shifted into town after my husband's 75th birthday, having passed the farming on to the boys. I find it difficult to believe that it is 30 years since I left England, was taken to a pony club and met Les: the rest, as they say, is history. Having married a fifth-generation died-in-the-wool genuine Kiwi cow-cochie, the reasons I live away from England are obvious, and the chances of my return remote.

Sibford - AJ (whilst a pupil) and Jonas Fielding (whilst a member of staff) - holds a special place in my heart and if, occasionally, as I look across the flat paddocks of Waimate Plains (best country for cows!), I long for the soft rolling Cotswold hills and the 'green fields of England', no-one knows. What I miss most are kippers for breakfast!! I was last in England in 1999 but did not get to Sibford as the time I had at my disposal was spent at family occasions. The picture of Sibford painted for me by Joan Lawrence hangs on the wall as a constant reminder.

The purchase of a PC, designed to keep us occupied and interested in our retirement, is a real advantage because so many people with whom we like to keep in touch have one too. I would be pleased to hear news from any one who cares to write and if any folk are travelling this far, we have loads of room and are always pleased to have visitors.

E-mail: e&l@bitworks.co.nz

David Owen Cree (1950-55) writes: Have been living in Australia for 32 years - 12 years in Sydney and 19 in Melbourne. Took early retirement,



got out of the "rat race" and moved to picturesque rural East Gippsland, in Victoria. My wife, Bev, and I purchased an old school (1908) and spent 7 months restoring it. It is now a Bed and Breakfast with a difference. We are in a tiny village called Fernbank. Despite the vast distance from Sibford and the many years in Australia, my memories of Sibford and school colleagues are still very vivid. Where are the prefects of '55? Martin Edwards, Patrick Farmer, Peter Smart, David Gibbon, Richard Pallet "et al"? Our last UK vacation was in 1997 and we paid a brief visit to Sibford. We hope to return for the 2005 or 2006 SOSA Reunion. Would really appreciate hearing from members.

Email: david.bevcree@bigpond.com.au
Website: www.bairnsdale.net/oldschoolband/b

Elizabeth (Monica) Jolley (née Knight, 1934-40; known as "Beaky")



writes: I came by ship to Western Australia in 1959 with my husband, Leonard Jolley, and three children, Sarah, Richard and Ruth. The Committee of the (then) newly built library in the University of Western Australia invited my husband to be the librarian; so we made the long journey and are very glad that we did. I now have a small house in Claremont, Western Australia, newly built to replace an ancient but lovable original cottage which was burned in a dreadful fire a few years ago. I also have five acres of land in a place called Wooroloo, 70 km from Claremont. The photograph shows a part of the land where the Bush ignores the edges of an orchard. A very hot summer has left a very dry orchard, but the Bush is thriving. I used to keep geese and other poultry but am getting too old (I am 78) to do all that work!

Chris Phillips (1946-49) writes: I think I was seduced by the American movies that I saw in the Forties and Fifties; they seemed to depict California as a sunny playground where the beaches were always warm and beautiful, and college kids enjoyed such a healthy life style. I know these things are always romanticised, but an indelible wish was planted that someday I would get away from the English climate and enjoy my drug of choice and that was sun, sand and sea. So in the 1960s I became a 10 Pound Pom and emigrated to Sydney, Australia. Sydney in the 60's was not the sophisticated international city it is now, but it still didn't disappoint me. The sun was shining, the beaches and surf magnificent and there were the same kids I saw in the Hollywood movies, driving around with surf boards on the top of their cars. I have always enjoyed sailing (I am happy in, on or under the water) so in

the 90s, I cruised up the Eastern coast of Australia several times, to The Whitsunday Islands. Here I scuba-dived the Barrier Reef and enjoyed the life style such a place can offer. It made me realise that Sydney, like other large cities of the world, was full of traffic and the pace had become frenetic, so I moved North to Queensland with its slower culture. I found myself a block of land on the Sunshine Coast, and built myself a house. My block of land is over an acre in size and my house comprises 4 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, with a double garage attached. I have a 40 x 18 ft separate workshop in which I make furniture as a hobby - an influence of Roland Herbert's that has never left me.

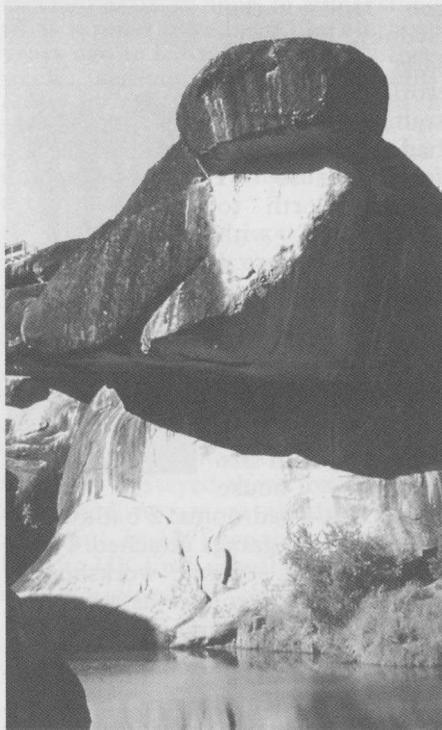
I often sail as volunteer crew on the Queensland Sail Training Association vessel. It's a 100 ft gaff-rigged schooner that takes out 24 school kids at a time on short voyages, to teach them the rudiments of sailing in the traditional manner. I still scuba dive on a local coral reef some 3 miles off shore and supplement my household budget with lobster. I tend my citrus orchard of lemons, oranges, grapefruit and mandarins, together with mangoes, paw paws, bananas. Sugar cane and avocados are all



grown locally. We are fast becoming an international tourist destination having the benefit of clean air, clean water and magnificent beaches where one can swim all the year round.

E-mail: cmbp@powerup.com.au

Pam Ramsey (néé Gilbert, 1940-



46) writes: In 1956 my Australian adventure began as I left England on the SS Morton Bay on a working holiday, first in Perth and then travelling on by sea to South Australia. In August 1957, my dream of being married to a farmer became fact and we lived and worked on the southern part of the Yorke Peninsula. In 1965 we sold out and moved to our new farm 'Wyreema' (30kms north of Warialda, NSW) with our four children. The family grew and we settled into life, work and rearing

and educating six daughters. We are 650kms north of Sydney, and west of The Great Dividing Range which separates us from the east coast. The countryside is undulating - farming and grazing (sheep and cattle) and cropping wheat, barley and oats; sunflowers, sorghum and legumes. Trees include eucalypts and pine. Rainfall on average is only 27ins per year, but it is known as a 'summer rainfall area': the creek which only flows with heavy rain has been known to cut us off from the main road.

Sadly, Ken died in 1998, but this is still a lovely place to live; my home, the place where I like to be, or the situation of circumstances which so often converge to be the same. I enjoy the space in the 1956-built timber home with iron roof and surrounding garden - the ride-on lawn mower to cut the lawn is my delight. Other garden features are roses, small pond, oleander bushes and citrus trees; the children's swing which now delights the grandchildren; bird life abounds too. I would welcome any old scholars who may be able to visit us.

(Ed. note: we have Pam's phonelfax number).

Norman Smith (1935-38) writes: I migrated to Australia in January 1939 and spent two years on farms, followed by five and a half years in the Royal Australian Navy. On discharge,

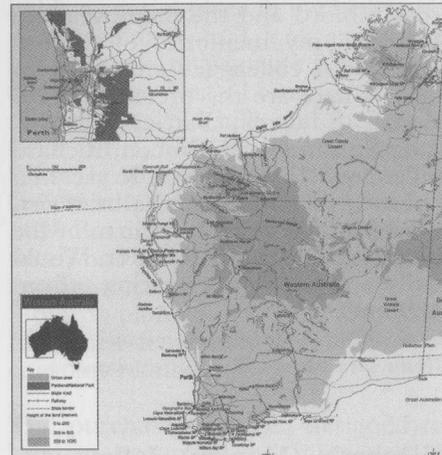


I worked first in retail furnishing and then with two timber-blind companies, retiring ten years ago. I lived for 35 years in the Sydney suburb of

Kingsford and later (on separating from my wife) in Summer Hill where I own a unit (flat) opposite a small park and just a few steps from my

Anglican church. I moved here 18 years ago to be nearer my work and my lady friend, Jean. Summer Hill is on the main Western rail line and is also serviced by buses (trams were discontinued many years ago). We have a supermarket and many small shops with nearby clubs, police station, fire station, several churches and parks, also an ambulance station and community centre. I am a sidesman at my church, treasurer of a branch of the Fellowship of Australian Writers, a Justice of the Peace, and have five medals for war service. I am very happy in my life. Having been here since I was 15 (I am now 78), I can't compare it with England; nevertheless, a little bit of my heart will always be there. Sibford made me what I am.

Jennifer (Jenny) Wilson (néé Lamb,



1940-45) writes: I left England in 1958 and went to Adelaide first where my husband was botanising, and in the 60's transferred to Perth. Life in Perth is kind to Seniors...we have a lot on for us...centres providing good meals and services, and good transport - the electric trains through the city are very handy.

I now live on my own and have 3 daughters presently living around Perth and one in Italy. I really am glad to be in Australia, lots of sunshine most of the time; and the big country is so interesting and varied. Yet as I write today (in August), it is at last looking wintry with gales round the coastline. I live near the sea and can hear it on a rough night. I miss the Sibford background with the walks and wildflowers, buttercups and primroses and the trees, the cuckoo and of course family and friends; but it has been a challenge fitting into the different surroundings. All good wishes with the magazine... I so enjoy reading it and remembering my school friends.

E-mail: jenrose@iinet.net.au

Otto Wolf (1939-45) writes: I left England to go to Australia as a result of my Uncle having emigrated; he told me that Australia was the country of the future. I therefore took the plunge and sailed on a cargo ship, landing in Melbourne (Victoria) in 1950 after a 5-week voyage.



Melbourne weather is fairly temperate with an average in winter of 13 C and in summer 25 to 30C; however it can reach 40C. When I first arrived, it was very conservative: shops closing Saturday lunch time, very few restaurants, very little entertainment except for the cinema.

There was a great deal of sport, clean air and beautiful beaches. I at first stayed with my Uncle and after 5 years moved into a house in new suburbs (which until then were orchards and market gardens). Houses, for a long time, were single storey, built of wood and brick. To give you some idea of pricing, the house I moved into in 1955 cost in those days \$8000 (£4000); it was sold in May this year after being renovated for \$327,000. Melbourne now is a modern city that has everything and is a good place to live in. When I arrived in Australia, I went into the Insurance Industry (General Insurance) and have worked in various areas. Today I work a 4-day week with Marsh Pty Ltd who employ 50,000 people world-wide. I will Retire next year which I think is about time. I still keep in touch with old scholars John Saunderson, Phillip Morris, Michael Farr and John Cookson who was a teacher.

E-mail: Otto.Wolf@marshmc.com

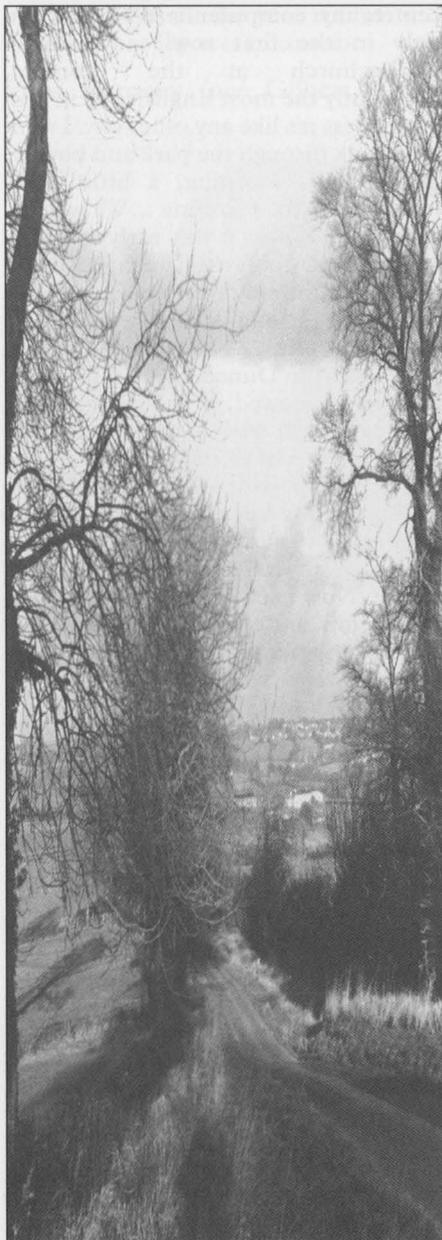
Now for news of two young Old Scholars who have been travelling in New Zealand and Australia; the items are gleaned from their e-mailed diary snippets.

Tom Lane (1992-95): I have been in Auckland, New Zealand since the end of April after spending a few weeks in Australia. I had managed to get a work visa before I left home and am currently working for an insurance company. I am planning to do a tour of both islands in February (which will be summer here), but in the meantime I'm saving up a bit of money before jetting over to Thailand in October, before returning to NZ & then onwards to the USA in April 2002. (*Tom is a SOSA Committee member but has kept in touch via e-mails throughout his stay in NZ*).

Alicia Hamel (left Sibford July 2000): from New Zealand, 25.05.01 ... It's sooooo cold. I am sitting here in what must be the world's largest internet centre; my computer is 64 and I am only in the first row. ... I am in Christchurch at the moment, apparently the most English city in NZ, but I guess it's like any other city. I went for a walk through the park and botanic gardens this morning, a little chilly when out of the sunshine ... We went to see Mount Cook, it was early morning and the snow was still fresh ... drove the rest of the way to Wanaka, over the Hans Pass ... one of the best drives I have ever done. ... Now comes the cold part: I went to Dunedin ... it rained and hailed and snowed, so the most south I have ever been was so bad that I could not even see out of my window, and to make things worse, there was no heating on the bus ... and a hole in the floor so that every time we went over a bump, snow would splash up into my face. ... Now I am headed back north to Wellington and Auckland; hopefully it will get warmer.

From Australia, 17.06.01 ... I am at Byron Bay, back-packers' Mecca ... staying at the arts factory ... really cool alternative hippy place with teepees to live in ... I have already seen at least five kangaroos, quite scary as they were bigger than me. I've also seen so many parrots - they are just everywhere; and a wombat, just about the coolest animal anywhere ... Sydney was great, every time you see the opera house and harbour bridge you can't help but be amazed. ... Surfing lesson tomorrow. 29.06.01: Just returned from camping on Fraser Island ... you wash the dishes in the sea (daunting as it is a shark breeding area) ... returned completely soaked as I did not see the huge wave that mysteriously appeared out of nowhere!

In Remembrance



Sadly, this year we recall the passing of so many Old Scholars, friends, former pupils and staff who have died since the last magazine was published.

PETER BAILY 1934-2001 (Sibford 1944-51), died on 25 July, 2001, aged 67. He was a member of one of Sibford and SOSA's best known families.

The following tribute has been written by members of his family: Peter, Son of Elin and James Baily, attended Sibford with his brothers Jimmy and Roger, following in the footsteps of their father James who had also been to Sibford. Peter was nicknamed "Flea" at Sibford, as he was the shortest boy when he first attended. Peter excelled at sports in spite of AJ telling him that he needed to spend more time on his studies. After leaving Sibford, he was called up for National Service but quickly registered as a Conscientious Objector and chose to spend the two years nursing. Peter then went on to pursue this avenue as a career and successfully qualified first as an SRN and then an RMN at Maudslay Hospital in London. This led Peter into Social Work completing an Applied Social Work Diploma at Southampton University.

In August 1963, Peter met Janet Myall at the Old Scholars Reunion, and were married at Dorking Friends' Meeting House in 1964. They went on to have four children, Rachael, Daniel, Ruth and Richard, who were all educated at Quaker schools. They moved from Birmingham to Sussex where Peter embarked on a career in Social Services.

Peter took early retirement in 1988 and in January of the following year took his family to Australia for 8 months, visiting relatives and exploring extensively throughout the country. In August 1989, soon after the family returned, Janet died suddenly. The Peace Garden at Sibford was Peter's idea and with the help of SOSA, was planted as a memorial to Janet and other Old Scholars.

Over the next few years, Peter developed a successful practice as a Psychotherapist and Training Consultant. He also had many adventurous trips overseas with his eldest son

Daniel. On a trip to New Zealand in 1995 to visit Roger and Ann Baily, Peter was introduced to Jan Kennedy and they began a new life together travelling between their respective families in the UK and NZ. Their many travels took them through Africa and the Far East. Throughout this time Peter continued his life long love of painting and drawing by gaining a two-year Art Foundation Diploma at Hastings College of Art, which he completed in June 2000. This culminated in exhibitions of his works both in Hastings and New Zealand.

Peter and Jan moved to New Zealand more permanently in September 2000, where very shortly afterwards Peter was found to have cancer. Peter and Jan married shortly before he died.

PHILIP BECKERLEGGE died on 3rd August, 2001 in Cirencester Hospital after a short illness. Philip will be remembered with affection for his strong wit and his panache for after dinner speeches which often left us in stitches at SOSA Reunions. Although not an Old Scholar, (but married to one of our former Presidents, Grace Beckerlegge), he was nevertheless an active supporter of SOSA and was its Editor on two occasions, the last being during the formative years of the Joint Magazine to which he brought a fresh and innovative approach.

MARY BLASHKO died earlier this year. She was a former member of the School Committee and was a good friend to the School and SOSA. *(A tribute will appear in the next edition of the magazine).*

ARTHUR DRING 1917-2001 (Sibford 1954-82) died on 30 July, 2001, aged 84, after a lengthy period of illness and growing infirmity. One of Sibford's great characters, his death also marks the end of an era of outstanding service to the School by Arthur and his late wife, Margaret.

Michael Finch has written the following tribute: Arthur was born in Nottinghamshire before he and his parents moved to Harrogate where his father was Head Gardener at the Police Convalescent Home. In the classic tradition, Arthur's skill as a gardener had been handed on by the influence of his father; Arthur was apprentice gardener at Harewood House where he learnt his trade.

It was whilst Arthur was at Harewood that he was introduced by his future sister-in-law, Olive, to his future wife Margaret. They married in 1944 and their only son, Tony, was born in 1946. The rest, as they say is history, as Arthur and Margaret spent over fifty happy years together as husband and wife. Arthur moved to Huddersfield and shortly before the Second World War, enrolled in the R.A.F. He was quickly posted abroad and spent time in Egypt, Palestine, Turkey and Greece, where he was shipwrecked and had to swim ashore. After the War, Arthur and Margaret ran their own market garden at Harlow Hill in Harrogate but they had to sell up due to Arthur's poor health and they moved to Harewood, Doddington Hall in Lincolnshire and then to Sibford in 1954.

The School estate was pretty run down when Arthur arrived but he set about, over the next few years, in transforming it into the splendid site that it is today. Arthur was a meticulous craftsman who would only settle for the best. His legacy is there for us all to see when we visit the School.

Arthur was a kind, considerate, gentleman - and to emphasise the point - he was a gentleman. He always put the needs of others before his own. Sibford has lost a great ambassador.

MARJORIE FIELDING died peacefully on 18 March, 2001. She was an Honorary Life Member, a former President of the Association and the widow of former Sibford Headmaster, Jonas Fielding.

June Ellis wrote the following tribute: Marjorie Fielding was loved and respected by generations of Sibford Old Scholars who valued her quiet calm kindness and her conscientious teaching and advice. Her support for Jonas was paramount in all his work and together they gave themselves in building the successful School we know today. Her influence and interest never waned and she was a welcome speaker at Meetings for Worship.

Her influence spread far beyond the School. As a member of Sibford Gower, and after retirement, Banbury Meeting, she was a source of encouragement to many. Her work as an Elder and in outreach for the Society of Friends is remembered with gratitude, as is her

excellent Ministry, which remained succinct to the end.

Marjorie never seemed to say "no" to a request for her help and few of us had any conception of how busy she was. She took an active part in many facets of village life, respected by other denominations and always building bridges. She made her home "a place of friendliness and peace" giving hospitality to many.

She even taught Greek to one of her former colleagues! An avid member of the Hook Norton Literature Society, she told the nurse on the day she was taken to hospital that she couldn't go because she was due at one of their meetings that morning! That was only a few days before she died.

At the core of her life was her family. She spoke with love and caring of each one of them, Anne, Rosemary and Howard, whom many of us knew at Sibford, were a great support to her, as were their partners and her grandchildren. Just before her death she enjoyed a holiday with Anne and John, returning to delight in the work which Rosemary and David had done on her home, to try to make things easier for her. She was fiercely independent and continued to work in her lovely garden but she knew she needed help and accepted it graciously and gratefully, from the many people who gave it and enabled her to live on her own.

Marjorie's funeral at Sibford Gower Meeting House was truly a Meeting to give thanks for her life. It was a wonderful reunion of family, former colleagues and pupils and other friends, including those from the Literature Group - a fitting tribute to a courageous and spiritual woman who was a scholar in such an unassuming way.

GEOFFREY GAZE died on 19 August, 2001, aged 88 years. Geoffrey was Senior Master at Sibford during Hugh Maw's headship in the late 1950's. Geoffrey had two children, Julian and Sally. Julian is a former pupil and both his and Sally's sons, Samuel and Joseph, are currently pupils at Sibford.

JOHN GILCHRIST died peacefully on 9th December, 2000, at the Horton General Hospital in Banbury after a short illness. John was one of Sibford School's great characters and served the School with distinction during four headships, between 1954 and 1976. He was Senior Master for eighteen of those years.

Although a strong disciplinarian he was much respected and loved by many generations of Sibford scholars. Most old scholars who knew him would be able to relate great stories of their 'brushes' with John. *(A tribute will appear in the next edition of the magazine.)*

PETER GUTKIND died on 17 February, 2001, aged 75. He was born in Berlin and came to England in 1939, as one of the Jewish child refugees, to join his architect father who was already living in England. Peter was an anthropologist, Africanist and a distinguished labour studies scholar who was committed to hearing and learning "from below". Peter researched and wrote for the oppressed and would chastise any who drifted away from such commitments. He was also a notable teacher who never wavered from a scholarship that opened up possibilities for both students and the subjects of his research. His wife Alice, whom he married in 1951 and three daughters and a son, survive him.

MARGARET HARGREAVE (né Herbert, Sibford 1934-40) died 30 April 2001, aged 76, after a long illness. She was a Life Member of SOSA and the elder daughter of the late Roland and Eva Herbert and sister of Ina Lamb.

WINIFRED HYDE (né Nicholl, Sibford 1920-25) died on 15 September, 2001.

ROSAMOND MORRIS (né Flinn, Sibford 1943-50) died 20th August 2001, aged 67, after a brave twelve-year fight against cancer. *The following tribute was written by Philip Morris:* I first saw Rosamond at the 1945 Reunion. Her brother Patrick and I were sitting in the balcony in the Old Gym at the Manor for Sunday morning choral when she and her sister Christine took their seats on the front row below - four little plaits in a row never to be forgotten!

Coventry born, Rosamond went to Priors Marston village school before starting at Sibford, aged nine. Her chosen career in floristry was prevented by an allergy, so she trained in institutional management at Shrewsbury working first at the Whittington Hospital in London before returning to Sibford as Housekeeper during Hugh Maw's headship. After raising our two sons, Chris and Steve, she worked in school meals until her retirement.

She lived frugally doing meals on wheels and generally caring for others. She chose to rest under 'Amy's tree' (Amy is our eldest granddaughter), which was planted to celebrate the Millennium in 2000 at Sibford Gower Meeting House.

NEVILL NICHOLLS (Sibford 1940-45) died in February 2001. His wife Doreen reported his death to us.

CHRISTOPHER PLUMMER (Sibford 1950-54) died on March 2nd, 2001 as the result of a heart attack.

Ruth Jones has written the following tribute. Chris's father, Hubert, was a staunch Quaker and his mother Winifred was an Attender. His father was imprisoned in the redoubt at Harwich as a conscientious objector during the first world war, a harrowing experience recorded in the diary he wrote at 21 (it is lodged at Friends' House). His father was also the Registrar for Luton and Leighton Monthly Meeting.

Although Chris had a strong fascination with the hat producing company his father owned in Luton, he chose to start working at Skefco's Bearing company after leaving Sibford. Chris then did his National Service stating his religion as a Quaker which caused a lot of ribbing but being a humorous person he took it in good heart. He then returned to Skefco's where his job had been kept open for him; from there he went to Vauxhall's working as a design engineer retiring early at 60.

After his divorce 25 years ago he devoted his time to his two much loved daughters but still made time for his many interests which included predominately his banjo playing in jazz bands at which he excelled. He also took up archery and enjoyed fell-walking over the years. He was very creative and meticulous when working with wood and this gave him great pleasure - the results were to be seen at SOSA's art and craft exhibition held in 2000 when we saw the banjo and archery bow he made entirely from his own design and materials.

Chris resigned his membership of the Society of Friends but still lived by its principles and became more of a pacifist as the years passed. He cared for others before himself and nothing for others was too much trouble for him. His sense of humour could never be bettered.

JEAN POULTON died on 6 April, 2001, aged 81. Jean, who was married to the late Lewis Poulton, was also the mother of Cindy Poulton and Fiona Hook. She was a much-loved figure within the Sibford village community having been, for many years, the District Nurse and Midwife. A packed congregation at a thanksgiving service at the Holy Trinity Church at Sibford Gower was able to join with Jean's family in giving thanks for her many gifts and qualities, not least of which was her endless kindness.

JEANNE SOUTHAM 1920-2001 (née Cottrell, Sibford 1930-37 *Paul Frampton has written the following tribute:* Sibford School and Sibford Old Scholars Association have lost one of their greatest treasures. Jeanne cried all the way to Sibford from Bristol in 1929 and laughed from the moment she arrived - she loved Sibford and Sibford loved her and often needed her sunny disposition.

Jeanne was the youngest of the Cotterells, a Quaker family; she was a sickly child and her parents were advised to find a 'healthy' boarding school for her. Sibford was the obvious choice being most like a Swiss sanatorium - open to the winds! Being a thoroughly selfless, practical person who enjoyed community life with a 'get on with it' attitude, Jeanne and Sibford were perfect for each other.

After eight years at Sibford, Jeanne trained as a Domestic Science teacher and taught in Gloucester, Dudley and Pevensey Bay. Through an extraordinary set of circumstances, perhaps with guidance from above, she was introduced to Vaughan the evening before he was to leave for America for three months in 1948. On his return, Vaughan proposed on Beachy Head and they were married in 1949, with the proviso that Jeanne should continue to attend SOSA Reunions and this she did throughout the 51 years of their wonderfully happy married life. Jeanne didn't just attend Reunions, she and her life-long friend, Irene Coxon-Smith, satisfied Old Scholars considerable appetites with delicious food - oh those cakes!

Arthur Johnstone discovered and encouraged Jeanne's love of singing, especially hymns; SOSA Choral and musical evenings, not to mention the W.I., were the beneficiaries.

Jeanne loved a good hymn.

She was SOSA General Secretary in 1946 until 1948, with Irene again from 1948 -50 and our President in 1985-86; Vaughan was allowed to come to the Reunion that year (!), with daughter, Joanna. Jeanne was also an Honorary Life Member of SOSA and was the founding Secretary of the South West Branch as well as serving on the School Committee for many years, gently keeping everyone on the right path. The local reunions at 'Dilkush' were quite something in a special house run by a special Mum and a redoubtable champion of the W.I.

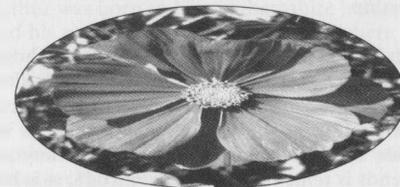
Jeanne Southam will be greatly missed by Sibford but more so by her husband Vaughan and three sons, Jeremy, Mathew and Andy. Her daughter Joanna, a gift to the boys from a belated honeymoon in Jersey in 1960, died in an accident on Safari in 1987. Jeanne managed somehow to come to terms with this and Vaughan's stroke ten years ago. I believe she did so by adding even more value to her own contribution to the lives of others - what an example she has been to us all. God bless you Jeanne - you were great!

MIRIAM TEBBS (1932-1937)

LESLIE TUCKER died peacefully on 5th June 2001, aged 84. He was Sibford's Bursar between 1960-65, husband of Joyce, father of Anne Evans and John, (both former pupils) and a grandfather.

ETHEL WRIGHT died peacefully on November 1st, aged 88 years. She was the widow of Brian Wright, and mother of Di Lloyd and Ian Wright.

GEOFFREY WRIGHT (Sibford 1913-17) died on the 1st January 2001, aged 98. Geoffrey was SOSA's oldest known member, and lived at Jordans. He was a great supporter of the School and, until comparatively recently, always attended the Sibford General Meeting held at the School in the autumn.



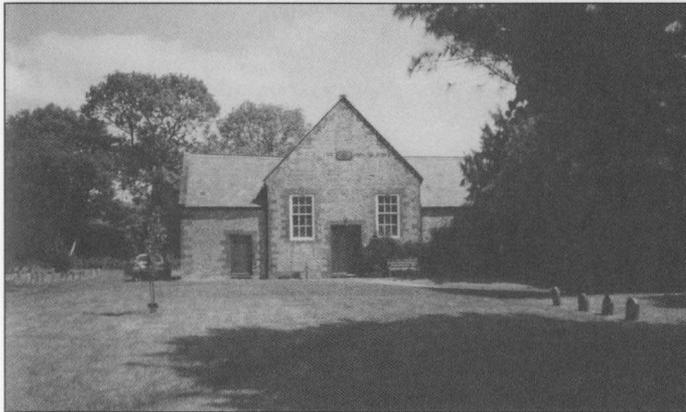
The Gower Meeting House Today



One memory that all Old Scholars, young or old, share is of Meeting in the Gower on Sunday mornings. The building remains, mostly unchanged and is still surrounded by its lovely burial ground where we can find the names of dear Friends whom we knew.

We still have Meeting for Worship each Sunday, probably still experienced in the same way, meeting in silence with

Friends ministering the spoken word when they feel called to do so. Some Meetings continue in silence throughout, some are interspersed by ministry. We have a Children's Class running alongside the main Meeting. At one time, the children joined us for the beginning of Meeting and then went off to their own activities; now they go straight to their activities and join us for the last 15 minutes. This works much better for them as they come in to a gathered, silent Meeting, and even the most restless toddler soon learns to become absorbed. It means, too, that older children can be prepared for what happens in Meeting. The number of children and young people varies from week to week and month to month.



The School comes regularly on Sundays, but in smaller groups than they did. There are not so many full time boarders, and pupils do not come on exeat weekends. They come house by house, usually accompanied by their house staff. At one time, they left at the end of half an hour, and we never had a chance to get to know them. Now we meet for 45 minutes on 'School Sundays' and they stay all the time, and can join us for coffee afterwards. Over the past few years, ties with the School have been made even closer and all pupils in the School, day pupils as well as boarders, come to the

Meeting House once every year to experience Meeting for Worship there. In return, members of Meeting join the School for worship at School on the first Sunday of each term. We all value the closer links.

One very noticeable change in the Meeting House is that it is warmer! We had an appeal a few years ago to which many past and present users of the Meeting House, including Old Scholars, gave generously; we can now sit comfortably in Winter without being huddled in layers of coats and scarves and gloves. Another change is that the former mens' cloakroom has been converted into a children's room; not only our own children, but the local baby and toddler group who use it weekly, all benefit.



Old Scholars after Meeting, Sunday 26th August 2001.

But the building is not all that there is to Meeting. We are a living worshipping Community and our witness goes on outside. Not having paid Ministers, we care for one another and many of us are active in areas of public and voluntary service. At present we are concerned with the plight of asylum seekers, and as a Meeting, are supporting a young Ugandan as he begins to rebuild his life. We also build our own spiritual and communal life by studying together, sharing in our business meetings and spending time away together. We often have fun!

So life goes on at the Meeting House. We meet at 10.30 a.m. now rather than at 11.00 a.m. as we used to. If you are ever in the area and would like to join us, you would be given a warm welcome.

Judith Weeks

Clerk to Sibford Meeting (and member of the School Committee)

SIBFORD OLD SCHOLARS' ASSOCIATION

Officers and Committee 01/09/01 until 31/08/02

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1) vacancy (until 31/08/04)

2) vacancy (until 31/08/04)



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Vacancy



*Sibford
through the seasons*

