

# SCIMITAR

ISSUE NO. 140



THE JOURNAL OF THE  
OLD FINCUNIAN  
ASSOCIATION

## OUR CHAIRMAN SPEAKS

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*Dear Old Fincunian,*

*Welcome to the latest edition of the Scimitar.*

*Joan Hill died in October. She was the first teacher I met at FCS, greeting a new intake of pupils in 1959, as the form teacher of '1G'. She was also the first teacher to give me a detention. On my second day she heard me talking after the 'third bell' had called the school into the hall for assembly. All I had said was thank you to someone for letting me go ahead of them but Joan was a stickler for rules, I had opened my mouth so a detention was the penalty! In our first year Joan took us for maths and a 'General Studies' period which, if I recall correctly, was all about how to behave and how to treat others - I hope I learnt something from those lessons.*

*On the 'administrative' front a thanks and a request. A huge thanks goes to all Old Fincunians who have recently made donations to the Association. Quite clearly without such contributions we would neither be able to produce and distribute our magazine nor part fund the Reunions. The request is to make cheques payable to:-*

**'OLD FINCUNIANS ASSOCIATION'**

*(not to 'The Scimitar', 'Godfrey Mann' or 'Janine Luke' - it causes the bank problems) and send any monies or cheques directly to Janine rather than me (Janine is a lot more efficient).*

*I hope you enjoy reading this issue of the Scimitar, remember you are all contributors so please continue to send memories, news, etc. to Les.*

*Best regards to you all,*

*Godfrey*

## COVER STORY

In the previous edition I published a piece dated 22 March 1990 from the Times Group Newspapers about a time capsule buried to remind future generations about Finchley County Grammar School and its descendant schools. You were quick to respond to tell me where it is now. **Godfrey Mann (1959/66) our Chairman was first :-** *'...the time capsule sits in a wall built around an indoor planting area inside the accident and emergency department at Finchley Memorial Hospital. It is marked by a brass plate mentioning Hillside, Manorside and FCS which came together to form Finchley Manorhill. If I recall it is to be opened in 2095. I have no idea what happens if the hospital is redeveloped in the next 100 years!...'.* **Sarah Prescott (1954/1961) was next with :-** *'...it is in Finchley Memorial Hospital. I don't know why this site was chosen. I think that at the time the capsule was prepared the hospital was having a new extension built to house, mainly, a minor accidents and casualty unit. In the waiting area there is a square brick area with plants inside and seats round the edge. On one of the walls of this area is a plaque explaining that the capsule is there. I can't remember the exact wording because it is a couple of years since I last saw it...'.* **Bob Payne, OBE., (1933/36) settled the matter by sending me the photograph which appears on the front cover. The photograph was published with the following text :-** *'YEAR 2091. A collection of memorabilia reflecting the life and work of the school has been placed in an air-tight container. There are articles of school uniform like a cap, tie and blazer badge as well as essentials of school organisation like a time-table, Merit note and a box of chalk! Each one of the final year's pupils has written an autobiographic 'pen portrait' and these, with a photograph, have also been included. It should prove a fascinating source of first hand evidence of what school was like. This Time Capsule has been placed beneath a 'planter' in the entrance to the Casualty Department at Finchley Memorial Hospital. This decorative feature is the school's permanent memorial and has been paid for by money raised by pupils and staff in a long series of events. A commemorative plaque records the school's 'gift' and instructions have been left to ensure the exhumation of the Time Capsule in the year 2091'. I will close this matter once and for all by reprinting an extract from the article in the Finchley Times in 1990 :-* *'...Going but not forgotten. A glass time capsule has been especially made for Finchley Manorhill School which is due to close in 1991. The design follows a similar one made for the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew.....The Old Fincunians Association has donated an old school tie, a prefect's badge, and a lock of president Jack Rawling's hair. Present pupils are preparing personal records of the capsule and want to preserve timetables, newspaper cuttings, chewing gum and teacher's nick-names...The school had opted for glass because it had a very long life and would not erode over the years.....This will keep the memory of the school alive.'* **I wonder what the future generations will make of that lot when they open it in 2091? A lock of Jack Rawlings' hair! Chewing gum! Still, I have to say that I would dearly love to be there when they open it.**

## BITS AND PIECES

Let's start with some early congratulations to John Young (1926/32) and Kathleen Young (nee Ward 1925/31). John writes to say :- *'...we hope to celebrate our Diamond Wedding Anniversary on 17 May 2001 while holidaying in the Lake District. This will be followed by a family party at a local hotel in Hoylake, Wirral, as soon as we return home. Although we are in our mid-eighties we are still blessed with good health apart from minor ailments due to "anno domini", and we are still able to play indoor-bowls twice a week in winter, drive our car, keep the garden in good order and generally look after ourselves. We both have fond memories of the Old School - Chas Carr the headmaster, and Chunky his dog, together with such masters and mistresses as Miss Davis, Miss Jacoby, Mr Gatenby, "Potts" Murphy, "Quilli" Mr Quilliam, Bill Howland and many more...'* Thanks for letting us know, John and Kathleen. Have a lovely holiday and at the party have a drink for us all. Eileen Daniell (nee Gregg 1928/34) was at the Old School about the same time as John and Kathleen, and congratulations are also due to her. She writes :- *'Somewhat belatedly I have written to Maisie Roberts following her request in the Millennium edition for news of some of her years....on leaving FCS I spent a year in France at a Training College in Burgundy, enabling me to become an Associate of the Institute of Linguists, followed by a year at the London Secretarial College. The "busy" life took me into activities in the City of London as a result of both my husband and father being Liverymen (Gold and Silver Wyre Drawers) - activities centred on the Palace of Westminster, from my husband's involvement in the Constituency of Hendon North, whilst myself for 25 years, active as a "Townswoman", serving on Central Council and various Regional Committees for 7 years. I have rather rambled on - perhaps one does when one's 59th Wedding Anniversary was reached last week.....'*

Another pupil at the school during that time was Gladys Rawlings (nee Macey 1930/35). *'...I am pleased to say that we are all set for our mini-reunion again in 2001. Molly Holbrook has offered her house and garden as the venue for our 2001 reunion. The chosen date is 16 June 2001 and the venue is 98 Lichfield Grove, Church End, Finchley, N3, which will avoid the awful August traffic and leave the Wimbledon tennis clear. Lichfield Grove is one road south of Finchley Central Station, i.e., a turning off Ballards Lane. I lived there myself when I was young and went to St Mary's School which is almost opposite. Last year I visited Vi Beazley in Sheringham, and another friend from my form, Hazel Macleod on the Isle of Arran. Then in October, Gladys Conway and I tested our staying powers by visiting Madrid and Santiago de Compostela. Wonderful experience. We did our own thing and got on famously, despite having no Spanish. While in Sheringham I saw Ken and Sheila Henley....I'm off to Tenerife next week visiting a friend, and hope to go to Sydney later in the year, so long as my arthritis allows me to do so. None of this is at all interesting to other Fincunians but I had to fill this page*

up somehow! Sorry I have no spectacular news and please excuse the awful typing. Only one finger operates on the right hand....'. Don't give it a thought, Gladys. If we only printed spectacular news there would be very few Scimitars published. We all want to hear from as many people as possible and we want to know what they are getting up to. Let us know how the mini-reunion goes this year so that I can publish it in the Autumn. Brigid Povah (1948/55) is a case in point :- *'The latest Scimitar produced a whole crop of names I recognised, especially those in my year - Mary Prokipchuk (nee Jacobs), Molly James (nee Delaney), Joyce Nasse (nee Fortune), Vivian Hand (Nee Pawle), Pat Cleleand (Nee Storey), Judith Roberts (nee Prince), Olive Lumley (nee Hughes)...*' Nothing spectacular in that, eh! Gladys? But it is just what Old Fincunians like to read - names they know and people they remember. If Scimitar does nothing else than jog the memory or stimulate happy memories, then it is a success. Peggy Hemmings (nee Emerson 1930/35) would support that view :- *'Just to say thankyou for the Scimitar. I thought it was splendid and thoroughly enjoyed it - I am certainly one of the oldies now! How amazing that so many members are still in touch with one another...'* So would Jack and Joan Wallis (1932/38). They have lived in Australia for many years :- *'Thank you for the latest edition of Scimitar....we were, as usual, very pleased to receive it and read about our old friends, old being the operative word because there are not many of us left now. I left FCS in 1936 and Joan left a couple of years later...'* So would Ann Phillips (nee Brooks 1953/58) :- *'...Thanks for the grand job you do keeping us in touch with each other...'* Peter Bond (1952/61) can vouch for the value of just printing whatever you lot write to me, spectacular or not :- *'Now aged 59 I made an appeal in the Finchley Times to hear whether any school chums were still alive. It resulted in Sarah Prescott (1954/61) sending me a copy of Scimitar No 137. She had read it and remembered reading my name on page 12. As a result I have had an extensive chat with Les Sharp, the Editor, and Julian Wild, who was in my class. We have arranged to meet up to renew old times thanks to the mention of my name in Scimtar...'* This is the third time this issue I have mentioned Sarah Prescott (1954/61) :- *'I received the Scimitar last week. Once again an enjoyable time spent reading it. It is always so good to read how people are getting on, even when there aren't very many from my year...I haven't written in the past as I never seemed to have anything noteworthy to write about. The whole of my working life spent in a small and little known department of the Civil Service. I was offered the chance of early retirement in 1998 - I am glad I took the opportunity....Thanks to everyone for the Reunion - yet another enjoyable occasion...'* So there you have it. It does not have to be spectacular, it does not have to be unusual, it does not have to be exciting. Just write IT down and send it to me, the address is on the last page.

The letter from Peter Bond in the previous paragraph tells how he advertised in the Finchley Times for news of Old Fincunians. That should no longer be necessary because we are now on the London

**Borough of Barnet's infoLINK information base about organisations and community groups. Our entry is available to any enquirer and reads :-**  
**SUBJECT: SOCIETIES**

**OLD FINCUNIANS** - *The Old Fincunians is an association of the past students of Finchley County Grammar School. It began as a school about 1904 and was swallowed up in a series of amalgamations with other schools in 1970 when the comprehensive system was established. Finchley County, Hillside and Manorside Schools amalgamated to become Finchley Manorhill but the Old Fincunians Association continues to exist. The Old Finchley County school building still exists and a reunion for past scholars is held there every second year. The next reunion is due on the year 2002.....The association produces a twice-yearly magazine, Scimitar, and currently has about 400 members.'* **My details have been provided as the contact point, but back to our "Bits and Pieces".** Colin Dean (1964/70) emailed to say :- *'...A new parent governor at my son's school, Cranbourne Primary, Potters Bar, is apparently a member of the Old Fincunians Football Club. Is it still going? His name is Alan Hunt. Does anyone remember him? I don't think he is from my time playing football and maybe he is not an ex-FCS pupil. I understand at the reunion that some Old Fincunians wanted to contact Gwyneth Davies. Well, her brother John, an Old Fincunian, lives at 51, Deepdene, Potters Bar, Herts....'* **Can anyone help? I believe that Alan Hunt does, or did, play for the Veterans team although he was never a pupil at FCS.**

**Ellen Hoster (formerly Cook, nee Broadbelt 1920/26) is one of our longest serving members :-** *'I see in the latest Scimitar that you would like the number and date of Life Memberships. Herewith a copy of my Life Membership Certificate No 164 dated 5 February 1962. I tried to photocopy a School Magazine dated 1926 which I kept because I wrote the criticism of the school play but the photocopy came out too dark. You will be wondering how I came to have such an old magazine and I have to tell you that I was at FCS from 1920 until 1926. I am nearly 92 and although a little unsteady on my feet, I am reasonably well. Doris Holmes (nee Rawlings) was EJR's sister and a contemporary and friend of mine....(See this edition's Lest We Forget - Ed.) I wonder if there are any more of the year 1920 still living? Many of those I knew are gone - Alec Sturdy, Leonard Adams, Beryl Richardson, Elsie Thom, Alec Bullen, to name but a few. I do hope you won't be bored by my account of so long ago but I think my education at FCS was the best thing that happened to me...'* **Far from being bored with your account of days gone by, we want some more. Please share some of your memories with us, teachers, sports, pranks, stories, etc.**

**Jim Hind (1926/33) also wrote about Life Membership, amongst other things :-** *'Congratulations on the most enjoyable recent Scimitar. Few names of my era, but there are fewer and fewer as the years go by!! After the mention of Life Members in the previous issue, I had a few calls to let me know they should be on any list possible. I was surprised to have, quite early, a few wishing to chat about old times. Because they arrived within a few days*

of each other, I awaited the rest, but was too optimistic. I intended to let you know the names of those who surfaced, but it got left for the time being, and as usual that was it! Belatedly here are the names of those who contacted me - Betty Conner (nee Plum), Daphne Duff (nee Payne), Olive Gems (nee Dewhurst), Muriel Grant (nee Lodge). The recent Scimitar had a request for anecdotes about Charles Vivian (please note, everyone, that Geoff Batten is compiling material to write a piece about Charles Vivian) I remember Viv very well...C W H Vivian, I believe. He was a good footballer, and helped boys similarly interested. He showed me how to take a penalty kick - "Eye always on the ball, and head immediately above it when you kick it". More useful advice (because I was never asked to take penalties) was - "Whatever you are doing, football, maths, or whatever, do it to the n'th degree. To do something 'roughly' would not do! To the contrary I think it was Harold Chalk (although it sounds more like Viv) who taught arithmetic, advising us that decimal points should be ignored in any calculation, and inserted when the final figures were produced....Peggy Hemmings (nee Emerson) wrote of Fincs sporting failures. I remember the annual Secondary Schools Athletics Meeting at Stamford Bridge, where Reading out-long-jumped everyone, and the rest of cheering "FINCS" until we were hoarse. Peggy may remember that her father (one of the world's gentlemen) on retiring from work, bought a new cricket bat. And mention of cricket failure against Woodside Park - I played in that match and remember it well. Old Fincs did lose, in fact they lost well before the match began. Cyril Rawlings, his brother Jack who was on leave from the army, Dickie Rutt, Reg Channon who was Captain. The reason we lost the match before it started was EJR standing on the dressing room seats, minus his army uniform, giving his own impersonation of army drills - maybe a liquid lunch had something to do with it! We had to bat first and the liquid lunch produced a batch of players asking to be placed lower down in the batting order for "health reasons". Dickie Rutt, our usual star No. 3 batsman, went from 3 to 11. Does anyone else remember that game? But OF's cricket was always fun. A 1938 cricket tour ended not far from the Sandringham Estate, with a hotel keeper threatening to call the police if EJR did not return the toilet seat which he was wearing on his head while conducting the community singing on the coach. One of the benefits of being old is that one can remember the days when sport was sport, not a business. No cricket leagues in the South, just matches which meant you could get out of the way for a little while...'

**David A Burgess (1950/57) writes :-** 'Having left Finchley County in July 1957, apart from memories which flash through one's mind of school teachers, friends, and various happenings, I have had little to do with the Old School except for one meeting with Mr Povah prior to my commencing lecturing in further education. Then last year my wife and I were at a friends 50th wedding anniversary party and I met Clare Vermeulen (nee Thomas). During a conversation we discovered we were both Old Fincunians. Clare told me about the reunion on 10 June and kindly brought me to the get-together. How marvellous it was to walk into the old hall and immediately spot Sylvia Croke

(1950/57), Mary Voaden (nee Towlson), and several other classmates. Later I discovered that some lived quite near me. What a pleasant surprise it was to meet Brian Cross, a friend of many years ago - I didn't even know he was an Old Fincunian! Thank you all for a very happy afternoon - I can't wait for the next one.'

**Dr Stanley Gilks (1946/53) sent a copy of his Life Membership Certificate No. 198 enclosed with his letter :-** 'Many thanks for the recent Scimitar. The challenges of producing an interesting journal which is easy to read, does justice to all who correspond with you and is not outrageously expensive, are formidable. I think the result is excellent and long may it continue.....In January 2000 I retired as President of the Finchley Probus Club having completed my twelve months in office. The club has 70 members and we meet at the Finchley Bowling Club in Etchingam Park Road, Finchley N3. My excellent predecessor was Alan Edwards (1933/38) and our current Vice-President who will become President in January 2001, is Elyot Rowland (1936/38). Finally, I was introduced into Finchley Probus by that wonderful gentleman Alec Sturdy, the son of the well-known FCS teacher (just before my time).....'.

**Vivian Hand (nee Pawle 1948/53) was distraught at not being able to attend the 2000 reunion :-** I really am sorry not to make it in June 2000 - yet again. The trouble is we always seem to be on holiday when the reunion takes place. I am particularly sorry this time because I understand quite a few of my "generation" - 1948/53 - made a special effort to attend. I would love to see the old school building again, to wander round and see how much (a little, I hope!) has changed. To see the Assembly Hall cum Gym once more - where we all sang the old school song so heartily and where we climbed (or attempted to) those dreaded ropes. To look out onto the playground and see once again where we won (and lost) our netball matches. Not least, of course, to meet up again with all of our contemporaries and see how many of us could recognise each other now we are no longer wearing our striped blazers and jammed on berets or caps. I will make every endeavour to attend the next one, particularly as it will be my first one....'.

**Peter Bond (1952/61) tried to send me an email with a note attached to it. Somehow it all went wrong but not to be outdone, Peter immediately sent me a letter which is 54 inches long on one page. That is a record :-** '...Can you supply any details of Ken Brockbank, now aged between 70 and 80. He went to school with my elder brother, John, now aged 76....I fancy he moved to the Midlands....Julian Wild was pleased to hear from me. We have both lost a younger brother and we are both aged 59. I have a dog and Julian has a family. We plan to meet up soon....Just to prepare him for the shock I sent him a photograph which clearly shows that I am heavily tattooed. I spend most of my time feeding tramps, mending their clothes and occasionally providing them with the use of my bath. I adopted a 22 years old junkie, pushed him through college, and at the age of 30 he now has a family and is senior dietitian at a prominent London hospital. Other proteges have been



less successful. Of one, the Oakwood Minister said "I think you have bitten off more than you can chew, but I admire you for trying". People know where to come, day or night, and it gets me company. If anything goes missing I have only to say and it comes back again'. You can read more from Peter on Page 4. He has a clear memory of his time at FCS :- '...Mr Jones (English), Jack Rawlings (Sports), Lucas (Religion), Cleare (History), Tempkin (Geography), Eldridge (Woodwork), Williams (Art), Jones (Biology), and the names of my classmates are gradually coming back slowly to my mind. Paul Lederman had health problems shortly after leaving, Derek Archer moved to Oslo, Tony McNeil became a freelance photographer for the Daily Mirror, Melvyn Pamplin was Head Boy, married and had children, moved to Boreham Wood and ceased to respond to my Christmas Cards, and became a teacher. Pat Edwards (Head Girl) met me for dinner at Charing Cross to say "Goodbye" as she was getting married. Anne Wallace for a few years kept me notified where PH Andrews (Chemistry Master who became a Methodist lay preacher) was giving sermons. R Goss (replacement Chemistry Master) set up home briefly with Melvyn Pamplin (leather armchair 400) prior to the latter's marriage. John Salmond (Physics) lived in Totteridge Lane, PH Andrews in Hampstead, and I paid them both a visit before moving to Fulham in 1963. I heard that Tony Saunders (the guitarist) was killed in a road accident a week after leaving school. Colin Bennet was doing a newspaper round at Amos Grove. Peter White (damaged back) was seen catching a bus there. Vivienne Ranson (ginger hair) probably married Graham Pearce, Peter Monk and Alec Roy come to mind but I have now news of them. For a time Tony Harvey kept sending me electric bits from chemist shop displays but as time went on, all contacts were lost. I had a year in a theatre with the Finchley Mumpers, ringing the telephone bell in a play called Harvey (the invisible rabbit) and got told off for making it go brr-brr in a play based in America which used a continuous ring, not a brr-brr! I came back here in 1973 and in 1988 bought the same house my ancestors had been renting....I went back to the school a couple of months ago and there is a housing estate on most of the football field whereas our other sports ground beside Woodhouse School (now a college) has lost its buildings and its name, but it still gets played upon. The school outside toilet is now part of the house that used to be occupied by Mr Foy. Most doors are fastened shut. A portico has been added to the boy's entrance, apparently now the only way in. I cannot recall whether the tennis courts survive...I had 14 Maths masters and mistresses from 1952 to 1961, or thereabouts. I cannot remember all their names but I do remember with affection a Mr J Samuels, who surprised me on my last day by informing me that it was his also - he was retiring. I remember saying that I had not thought him old enough....I was awarded the Carr Memorial Prize for Mathematics but I was the only contestant and didn't even know I had entered the competition. I entered the Civil Service, applying for the only job advertised on the school notice board. I started on pensions in Somerset House in the Strand, got moved to computers at Bush House, and finished on statistics at Shepherd's Bush. In my free time I organised office Scrabble competitions and inter-departmental chess competitions and some international chess for blind players. As a result I ended up being made Vice President of the entire

*Civil Service chess, of my own departmental club, of a club by the river, and life member of the Braille Chess Association. I CAN read braille if it is on only one side of the paper, but only very slowly. It is quicker to use the telephone, a tape recorder to send a cassette, or a computer to send an email....I wish I could remember more but old age plays great tricks on the memory...'*

**Thanks for that lot, Peter, all 54 inches of it! I am afraid I have no information at all about Ken Brockbank. Can any of you out there help?**

**Ken Henley (1930/35) writes :-** *'...The time has flashed by since June but we would like to say how much we enjoyed the reunion at the Old School. Unfortunately there were fewer contemporaries there than on previous reunions but we enjoyed the day very much. The food and drink were excellent along with the welcome and the singing of the School Song. Did you ever see a print of the photograph of all Old Fincunian Football First Team players? Taken in the "Girl's Playground" on 10 June 2000. I was there but did not recognise a soul. I played in the Secondary School's Old Boys Team that won the Championship in the 1938/39 season. The team was Percy Edwards in goal, me and George Stafford full backs, Jack Brazendale, Trevor Lloyd and John Eales half backs, Eric Dennis, Geoff Thorpe, Harold Smith, Fred Holbrook, and Jack Rawlings forwards. All except Geoff Thorpe (1929/34) were in the 1930/35 years. Sadly to my knowledge only five of the team survive...'* **If anyone has a print of the photo, please let me know.**  
**Roy Pritchard (1936/43) responded to my request for pictures by sending me a photograph taken at the June 2000 reunion during the singing of the School Song. Many thanks, Roy. In the previous edition Sylvia Croke (1950/57) wrote her amended version of the School Song. She liked my version of 'dusty gym' for 'lusty limb' and came up with two new last lines -** *'...All Hail to learning's blest abode  
To all beliefs and races, Hail'.*

**Anyone who was watching TV's Channel 4 on Sunday 14 January 2001 would have seen Derek Batten (1942/47) at his Northamptonshire mote or castle, a bit of a ruin that time has knocked about a bit. The castle, I mean, not Derek. Tony Robinson and the Time Team dug, scraped, measured, examined, sifted and did all the things that archeologists do. This will not surprise those of you who read Simitar issues 137 and 138 because Derek is a very enthusiastic archeologist. So too is Brian Rowland (1949/54), who writes :-** *'...It is great to see someone else, Derek Batten, has an archeological bent (comes from all that trowelling, I expect). I am a member of our local society being both librarian and membership secretary. At present I am trying to put together the history of a class III destroyer, HMS Goatland, which the local Rural District Council purchased in Warship week 1940, and now mostly forgotten by local residents. Whilst also co-writing a catalogue of all the pottery sherds ever found in the town of Axbridge, from about 200AD to the advent of "Woolworth Ware", in all about 30,000 items. They are not just local pieces, either, they come from China, Iran, North Africa, the Iberian peninsular, and nearer to home, Gaul...'*

**Brian was at the 2000 reunion :-** *'...Reunion was a great afternoon and I did try to speak to everybody I knew, and a few that I didn't. After all, some I had not seen since 1954, the year that Mac (Mr McNelly, French and Music) took us to Lugano in Switzerland. What a lovely man he was when one got to know him outside the school. Some, of course, like Roy Sharp (1949/54) I had spoken to only last year. Another name which has come up in the e-mail list is that of Dr Robert (Rob) Thorogood. He should be another of George Auger's 49ers for I am sure he was the same years as us, 1949/56. We used to meet up at the British National Model Aircraft Rallies at places like Waterbeech and Radlett. I think he was also the instigator of the only time I saw the School model railway running, one lunch time in the Physics Lab. It was only a single circuit with a loop but it covered three lab benches. What happened to it? The last time I saw it, it was dismantled under some benches in the woodwork room. That would have been in about 1953. Is it languishing in someone's garage or has it completely disappeared?...'*

**Well, does anyone know where the Old School model railway is now? I must say I have never heard of it before. I don't suppose anyone has got a photograph of it? Brian also liked Sylvia Croke's new version of the School Song :-** *'...A nice twist to the School Song. Again it brings back memories of "Mac" explaining to us, as first formers, that Dick Turpin was not a waiter in a cafe on the North Circular Road who "plied his tray", he was a highwayman who "plied his trade"....'*

**Joyce Stockwell (1946/52 nee Tansley) and her husband Geoff have lived in Canada for many years. They have been to Australia to meet up with some of the Oz Old Fincunians :-** *'...We flew to Australia and New Zealand on October 1st and came home in the middle of November. We visited Barry (1946/53) and Joyce Ackerman, saw Derek (1946/53) and Ann Woolley, and stayed with Charles and Maureen Verga (1948/55 nee Ritchey). Joyce and Barry met us from the train in Bendigo and showed us round their City. On the second day Derek and Ann arrived for lunch. Barry took Geoff and Derek to a Rotary Luncheon and Joyce took Ann and me to lunch in a very attractive restaurant in the park. Then it was back to their house where Maureen and Charles arrived for the trips down Memory Lane. Out came all the old photos and suddenly we were all 17 years old once again....Maureen and Charles took us back with them to Melbourne and kindly put us up for a few days in their beautiful home in Niddrie.....I have had a letter from Pam Lence (1946/52 nee Burge) asking when we are likely to be going to the UK next because she is trying to get as many of our class together as possible for another reunion. The last one was in 1991. She is hoping that some of the Oz Fincunians will come over to the UK for it....My invitation in the Scimitar for visitors has borne fruit this year and we saw Geoff (1942/49) and Margaret Lence here in September for a couple of days at the start of their trip across Canada. I always love having visitors from "home" and it's a bonus when they are OF's..'*

**Canada, meets Oz, meets UK! Keep telling us about it, Joyce.**

## SOMETHING A BIT DIFFERENT

Dick Russell (1947/54) must be the first Old Fincunian to write to me in Latin. Admittedly it was only the words in the heading but I failed Latin at GCE 'O' Level. *'Quo vadis Fincunians'*, he wrote. I think it means, 'Where the heck are we going?' Dick lives in Belgium and he has sent an e-mail in which he asks some contentious questions :- *'The reunion in June 2000 was a very happy event for me and I am sure that it was highly enjoyed by everyone who was there. The organising team deserves a very special vote of thanks for all their efforts. Despite the joy of the occasion, however, I am sorry to say that I went home with the sad impression that the inescapable demise of the Association is looming closer than ever before. I fear we are facing an inexorable act of nature that is clearly irreversible. With a heavy heart, therefore, I beg to suggest that it is now the duty of the few that are left to address this inevitability and take action before it is too late to ensure an orderly and honourable settlement of the Association's affairs. Surely this is better than to let the traditions we love fade away by default? The tragedy is that we have no successors to hand down our great legacy. The purpose of this message is to seek the views of Scimitar readers on the options open before us. Many issues have to be confronted :-*

- (a) Is it now time to officially wind-up the Association and declare the next reunion to be our last? If the answer to that is "Yes", what do we need to do?*
- (b) Who will cherish the FCS building when we are gone?*
- (c) Will the words and music of the School Song be lost forever?*
- (d) What will happen to our memorabilia? The thought of the Trafalgar remembrance painting ending up in a jumble sale fills me with dismay.*

*What do other Old Fincunians think?...'. Well, that's what Dick says. Is he a realist or just a pessimist? I hope there are a few of you out there who will respond. One Old Fincunian who can never be described as a pessimist is Bob Payne, OBE (1934/36). You will remember Bob on the front cover of the Autumn edition having just cleaned the War Memorial in the Hall with Norman Burgess (1933/38) and Kevin the caretaker. Bob has been trying to recreate the Register of Old Fincunian Life Members. '...You will recall that we spoke about the Life Members List which had, sadly, been lost with the passage of time and I have spent several enjoyable hours since June looking through Scimitars since 1964 (Issue 49), the earliest I have, to try to reconstruct the List. I have extracted 105 names between 1964 and 1986 and there have been no Life Members elected since 1986...'*

**Always willing to be helpful, I then scoured the pages of all the early editions of Scimitar with the exceptions of issues 19, 21 and 24 because I do not have them. Alan Scrine (1940/45) was also keen to help :- '...You asked about Life Membership. We started this in my time as Secretary about 1950/54 or thereabouts....I remember the first ones were Cyril and Jack Rawlings and Fred Holbrook. Probably also Gilbert Butlin. I remember we**

debated in Committee who should have Certificate No 1 and I am pretty sure it was Cyril Rawlings in recognition of all he had done for the Association before and after the War. You had to be thirty years old before you could become a Life Member - the sub was £3 (against an annual sub of 5/-). I got my certificate in 1958 or 59, and I think I was No. 30 or 31...'

**Brian Rowland (1949/54) wrote :-** '...I think I became a life member of the OF's about 1967 or 68. Just after I got married and moved to Somerset. I did not receive a certificate or a number, but I must have been accepted as I received a regular copy of Scimitar ever since. What we did used to receive, on a yearly basis, in exchange for our 5/-, was a membership card. Folded to a size of a modern day credit card, with a white outer cover in shiny surfaced card with the OF badge printed on it. Inside was a folded page listing all the officers of the committee and the various clubs with secretary's name. I have not seen one since I became a life member, or threw all mine away in the move of 1966...'

**Mary Voaden (nee Towlson 1950/57) was also quick to write :-** 'Re. Life Membership. I joined the Old Fincunians when I left school in 1957 and took out Life Membership as soon as I could. I paid £5 and, if it was when I turned 30 (10 December 1968) it would have been early 1969 or whenever renewal time came along. I don't recall being issued with a certificate. If I was, it has never turned up amongst my things - although I could probably find the cheque stub!! So if you go by number on certificates you must be underestimating the number of Life Members....'

**Many of you have written enclosing copies of your Life Membership Certificates and I thank you for that. All the available information has been passed to Bob Payne and he now puts the record straight :-** 'In a very old file I have a copy of the letter and AGM Agenda for the 1948 meeting. Fred Holbrook was Chairman 1947/48, I was Secretary and Gilbert Butlin was Treasurer. Item 9 on the agenda reads, "To discuss the proposal of Gilbert Butlin that Life Membership be introduced for members of 30 years of age and over....and if agreed to amend the Rules of the Association accordingly". It was approved at a Life Membership Sub-committee and I was elected Chairman for 1948/49 with Fred Holbrook as Secretary and Gilbert Butlin as Honorary Treasurer. I arranged for the "gratuitous" printing of the Certificates and the first were issued about a year later by which time Jack Rawlings had succeeded me as Chairman for 1949/50 and Alan Scrine was Honorary Secretary. Up to that time Chairmen only served for one year and William McDownie, who followed Jack Rawlings for 1950/51, was the first to continue in office after the one year term....We now have a composite list of Life Members but it is not complete, nor do we have all the certificate numbers. I hope that Life Members are willing to assist with the completion of the record and ask that they write or email to the Editor of Scimitar with the number and date of their certificate and their years at FCS. About 250 Life Members have been "elected" over the years but we have only 220 on the list so far...'

So here is the list of Life Members known to us at this time. There is no indication as to whether the member is alive and some of the numbers of the certificates are disputed. Some of you who have claimed Life Membership do not appear in the records we have found so far :-

1. Mr L P NICHOLLS
2. Miss Marlon BENSKIN
3. Miss E TAYLOR
4. Miss I TAYLOR
5. Mr E HOLMES
6. Mr D COSTELLO
7. Mr Cyril P RAWLINGS
8. Mr W F HOLBROOK
9. Mr L W P COLLYER
10. Miss N FOREMAN
11. Mrs Olive GEMS (nee Dewhurst 1929/35)
12. Mr R C ASHBY
13. Mr C DUNN
14. Mr A W H DEWEY
15. Mr Robert A PAYNE (1934/36)
16. Mrs Molly POWELL (neo Holbrook 1929/35)
17. Mr A R STILWELL
18. Mr P GIBB
19. Mr H PIBWORTH
20. Mr F HAYNES
21. Dr C M RUBENS
22. Mr J PRIDEAUX
23. Mr Eric FISK
24. Mr V GUMSLEY
25. Mr Idris C MURPHY (1919/25)
26. Mrs M E COLLIER
27. Mrs E ETHERIDGE
28. Miss Betty REDHOUSE (1923/28)
29. Mrs Margaret BRYSON
30. Mrs J M GREENING
31. Miss Marjery HUGHES
32. Mr G N ROSS
33. Mr M S HENDERSON
34. Mrs B LAWRENCE (nee Dent)
35. Mrs M MERRY
36. Mrs M KATTE
37. Mrs Lilian REED
38. Mr H E H GABRIEL
39. Mrs Helen COOPER (nee Sturdy 1924/30)
40. Mrs G MURRAY
41. Mrs Audrey PAYNE (neo Bradford 1935/41)
42. Mrs M MANNING
43. Miss R PURPHY
44. Mr R H SPETTIGUE
45. Mr C A SANDON
46. Mr T E PICKERING
47. Miss C DOWDALL
48. Mr C F J POPE
49. Mrs H E POST
50. Mr A R ADAMS
51. Mr F C EMERSON
52. Mr L A MOWTON
53. Mr Cedric G BLAKER (1924/30)
54. Miss M Y A FINDLAY
55. Miss K NICHOL
56. Miss H M OULET
57. Mrs J M GREGSTON (nee Oulet)
58. Miss Elizabeth M KILLIP (1929/35)
59. Mr Gilbert J TALBOT(1924/29)
60. Miss E G HOLMES
61. Miss A M LESLIE
62. Mr P ROYSTON
63. Mrs Joan HANHART (nee Bremer 1936/42)
64. Mr D G CARR
65. Mr R W EDWARDS
66. Mrs W M A EDWARDS (nee Balch)
67. Mrs Vera SHEFFIELD (nee Payno 1931/36)
68. Mr George WHILLANS
69. Mr H J DARK
70. Miss C H DOLLIN
71. Miss S BUCKERFIELD
72. Mr W R BURTON
73. Miss K MIDDLETON
74. Mrs M ROWLING
75. Mrs Daphne DUFF (nee Payno 1934/39)
76. Mrs Mildred L JONES
77. Miss Betty NEWTON-JONES (1933/38)
78. Miss Adelino E SMITH (1918/24)
79. Mrs Doris K SCOTT (neo Richards) (1913/18)
80. Mr Jack WALLIS (1932/38)
81. Mr K POPE
82. Mr L S HIND (1926/33)
83. Mr J F KILL
84. Mr S C RAWLINSOIN (1932/37)
85. Mr A J WILSON
86. Mrs L Jean WILSON (neo Beaumont 1933/39)
87. Mr S A SPAUL
88. Mr Douglas C WARD
89. Mr J HARRINGTON
90. Mrs A HENLEY
91. Mr E J RAWLINGS (Staff)
92. Mr Bernard John WEST (1935/40)
93. Mr Stuart S BRUNDELL
94. Mrs J WYATT-JOHNSTON (neo Orton)
95. Rev Roy DEASY
96. Mrs S N GIBSON
97. Mrs A PEELING
98. Mr H E EDWARDS
99. Mr E SHIPLEE
100. Mrs G HALL
101. Mr P OSBORN
102. Miss N SHARP
103. Mr Jack EMERSON
104. Miss G F WRIGHT
105. Mr F DOLLIN
106. Mr Clifford CRANE
107. Miss F HANCOCK (1941/46)
108. Mr F HARVEY
109. Mr Douglas G BAGG (1919/25)
110. Mr G STANFORD
111. Rev David J CHAPMAN
112. Mr Peter G CHAPMAN (1940/44)
113. Dr W F HILTON
164. Mrs Ellen HOSTER (Broadbelt)(nee Cook)
178. The Rev Brian CROSS (1939/45)
194. Mr William SEGAL (1945/48)
198. Dr Stanley GILKS (1946/53)

The following are Life Members but we do not know the Certificate Numbers :-

Mr James F REEVES (1945/50)  
 Mr Richard SEYMOUR (1939/44)  
 Mr Les RICHARDSON (1944/49)  
 Mrs Marjorie PRINCE (nee Hind 1923/30)  
 Mr Richard M RUSSELL (1947/53)  
 Mrs Cicely SMALL (nee Boyd 1934/39)  
 Mr & Mrs Alan SCRINE (1940/45)  
 Mr Brian SMITH (1944/49)  
 Mr E STEVENS (1945/51)  
 Mrs Doris M SEYMOUR (nee Eloy 1938/45)  
 Mrs Doreen COGHILL (nee Page 1042/48)  
 Mr Eric FRIEND  
 Mr Derek BATTEN (1942/47)  
 Mr Richard COLOMB (1947/52)  
 Mrs Betty M CONNER (nee Plumpton 1946/51)  
 Dr Stanley CORNFORD (1944/51)  
 Mr John C DECKER (1942/49)  
 Mr Richard Will DRAPER (1954/61)  
 Mr Douglas FOORD (1927/32)  
 Derek L A SMITH (1935/38)  
 Mrs Muriel GRANT (nee Lodge 1940/46)  
 Mr Dennis HALL (1941/46)  
 Mr Peter A S HALL  
 Mr Barry IRONTON  
 Mr Derek HUMBERSTONE  
 Miss Sarah PRESCOTT (1954/61)  
 Mr Michael ISAAC (1943/47)  
 Mr Geoffrey JACOBS (1945/50)  
 Mrs Elaine KEMP (nee Barker 1955/60)  
 Joan LINFORD-JONES (nee Spriggs 1948/53)  
 Mr Richard MARTIN (1954/61)  
 Mrs Margaret MESSAGE (nee Halsay 1944/48)  
 Mr Leslie MILLER (1932/38)  
 Mr William MOAT (1930/35)  
 Mr John MOUNTAIN (1941/48)  
 Mr David M W MUIR (1943/48)  
 Mr Ronald C NEWMAN  
 Mr Melvyn PAMPLIN (1952/59)  
 Mrs Janet A POPE (nee Munday 1954/59)  
 Mr Malcolm W HERRING (1954/62)  
 Mr Trevor LLOYD  
 E ABSON  
 R HOLMES  
 J E C MOSE  
 A E D PIERCE  
 D PETFORD  
 G B SPARY  
 E E EVANS  
 Mr Christopher FOOKES  
 G FOOKES  
 John HOLMES  
 V HUDSON

B HUBBARD  
 D HARRINGTON  
 Mr George A AUGER (1949/54)  
 S VICKERS  
 D BELL  
 E G BELL  
 Mrs Shirley LYNDHURST (nee Lodge)  
 Mr Harry SAUNDERS (1944/52)  
 O J ROBERTS  
 J GORMAN  
 W A C WHITE  
 Michael KITCHINER (1946/53)  
 P J SQUIRES  
 Miss Hilda STURGEON (Staff)  
 Frank RICHARDSON  
 Miss Elaine A PEELING (Staff)  
 J B LAWRIE  
 B PIDWORTH  
 Mrs Marjorie DOE (nee Tangyo)  
 Mr S C STANFORD  
 Mrs Pat TRY (nee Draper 1944/49)  
 Mrs Sheila TURNER (nee Hurlin 1938/43)  
 Mrs Mary VOADEN (nee Towilson 1950/57)  
 Mr Roger WEBB (1948/55)  
 Mr David WHILEY, BEM.,  
 Mr Derek WOOLLEY (1946/53)  
 Mrs B BARRY  
 Mrs A CLAYTON  
 Mr A C DEEPROSE  
 Mr John F BEAL (1953/60)  
 Mrs Clara GRENFELL (nee Burgess)  
 Mr Brian NICHOL (1948/53)  
 Mr Fred A G PAYNE (1939/42)  
 D J ARCHER  
 Mr Eric DENNIS  
 Mr Richard NICOLS  
 E MOUNTAIN  
 Mrs P J JACKSON  
 Mr Barry FURR  
 B FINBOW  
 Mr Len PILDITCH  
 E L AYLWARD  
 Mr Runil SHAH  
 Beryl EASTOE  
 Marjorie SAUNDERS  
 Mrs Janet SAUNDERS (nee Winwright)  
 Mr Barry E L ACKERMAN (1946/53)  
 Dr Dennis G Weaver  
 Mrs Marion WEAVER (nee Warwick 1940/46)  
 Mr Kenneth TAYLOR (1943/47)  
 Mr James BARBER

**Bob finishes his letter on a controversial note :-** *'...It would be helpful if all existing Life Members would check the list and if the details are incorrect or their name does not appear, write or email to the Editor providing their Certificate number and its date. In this way the list will be kept up to date....It does occur to me that as we have had no Fincunians leaving school since the early 1970's our youngest members must be around 35 years of age and, under the old rules, they would qualify for Life Membership. It would be super if all existing Ordinary Members over 35 would apply for Life Membership enclosing a modest Life Membership Subscription, say £50 (i.e., 10 times the annual subscription of £5). This would give our funds a good boost and provide stability of finance for the foreseeable future....'* **Well, that is fairly controversial and should get you all fired up! I am not sure how many of the existing Life Members are still in the land of the living and I can see a**

number of difficulties with Bob's suggestion, but before I stick my oar in, what do you lot think about it? Does it go some way to finding an answer to some of those questions posed by Dick Russell at the beginning of this chapter? None of this has been placed before the Chairman or other officials so you could say Bob is just flying a kite at the moment. Perhaps he is just testing the water. Let me know what you think.

## MONEY MATTERS

Sylvia Croke (1950/57) writes :- *'...I would like to know when subscriptions fall due. Mary Voaden couldn't tell me. She said she just sends it when she thinks of it. I think you would do better if we all knew there was a specific date. I am not saying we would all stick to it but it could go into our diaries as a reminder. I think 1st January is a good time. It is easy to remember. Perhaps there is a date already in which case it could not change but I think it needs putting in Scimitar every year under "Money Matters"....'* OK! Everyone now write in your diaries that on 1st January every year you must send loads-a-money to Colin and Janine Luke...or elsel. If only it was that simple, Sylvia. We really rely on the good will of our members - some send £5 as annual subscriptions, some send donations (sometimes quite large), some send nothing at all! Publication of a Scimitar sometimes triggers them off. Mike Tomlins (1947/52) spent his entire working life in banking so he should know a thing or two about money :- *'...I was a contemporary of our worthy Editor and for a large part of the near fifty years time since then I have been paying my OFA subscription by banker's order, a practice encouraged by Treasurers at that time....My bank statements show that my payment goes through each year on 1st September. I seem to remember reading in one of the more recent "Scimitars" that the Association's bank or building society is unable to provide details of those who pay in this manner, which no doubt accounts for the fact that my name never seems to appear on any of your lists....I do find it odd that they can't provide you with such basic information necessary for you to know who has remitted money, and I reckon "they could do better" if pressed. Anyway, I am enclosing an additional donation....With very best wishes and grateful thanks to all that work so hard in keeping the OFA going.'* You were indeed a contemporary of mine, Mike. Remember the Subbuteo competitions? You won the cup, I recall. Anyway, your name is now in print as is that of John Young (1926/32) who sent a similar letter and donation. Our Treasurers send a very big thank you to the following :-

'Subscriptions & Donations very gratefully received since last Scimitar up to 1 March 2001

Beryl Tripp  
Bob Thorogood  
John & Kathleen Young  
Ellen Hoster

Valerie Birch  
Sylvia Croke  
Joy Bigwood  
G. Pinches

Ann Phillips  
Hazel Lence  
Colin Cummings  
Ian Thomas



Ken & Sheila Henley  
Gladys Rawlings  
Mary Dark  
Bill & Sheila Segal

Rita Lofts  
Gladys Jarman  
Sheila Henneman  
Geoff Batten

Joan Spurgeon  
Trevor Harwood  
Ann Anderson  
Mike Tomlins

*As always we cannot survive without you and your kind donations.*

*Just to remind you that subscriptions are due on 1 September each year and are currently £5.00 per annum'. Please send all monies to Colin or Janine Luke at 79 Northumberland Road, New Barnet, Hertfordshire, EN5 1EB.*

## LEST WE FORGET

**Norman Burgess (1933/38)** once again has represented us at the Remembrance Day event at the Old School on 10 November 2000. This year he was accompanied by **Michael Holton (1939/46)**. Norman, you will recall, was one of the stalwarts who cleaned the War Memorial in the Hall last summer. He has represented us at Remembrance Day events for as long as I can remember and he always sends in his report for publication in *Scimitar*. This year there is more than the usual touch of sadness and melancholy :- *'The price label on the wreath box read 13/6d. Thirteen shillings and six pence in 'old money'. There must be some Old Fincunians who only just remember old money. It was high time we bought a new wreath. I was able to trace one at the North Finchley Branch of the British Legion and the price was agreed with our Treasurer. As I stood in the Hall waiting for the time to come I looked at Michael Holton standing beside me remembering him as Head Boy during 1944/46. Out of all the ex-pupils of this Old School so full of memories, triumphs, tragedies, laughter and tears, there was just two of us. Just two of us and a wreath bought at the time when old money was currency. I looked up at the names displayed on the War Memorial and a feeling of loneliness crept over me. And then things started to happen. There were the noises of doors opening and a low buzz of muted conversations. There was an important conference of Head Teachers from Special Schools being held at the Old School that day so at 10.55 am the Hall started to fill with teachers, admin staff, education advisers, school inspectors and local councillors. A hush descended upon the Hall and I accepted the invitation to lead the thoughts of everyone present. I held the Remembrance Book from the Memorial Library Room and read out the names known so intimately to me. It was the 60th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain - the time when so many of our scholars made the supreme sacrifice. "WE WILL REMEMBER THEM", encompassed those who laid down their lives in the First World War. It was extremely moving because my wife, Betty, and I had been to the Field of Flanders just seven weeks previously as we sought out the grave of her uncle at Prowse Point Military Cemetery for the first time. Perhaps before November 2001 we can let everyone know the date of the next Remembrance Day event at the Old School so that all Old Fincunians who live near enough, can be*

*present. It is a great personal honour for me to carry out this poignant event - an event which must never fade into unimportance. Finally, I must pay tribute to the London Borough of Barnet for always emphasising the significance of a remembrance event and the two minutes silence is observed in all of the public buildings. Please say that I shall see some of you at the event next year.....'*

**For some reason I feel uncomfortable at reading Norman's words. They provide us with food for thought. Since writing that report Norman has let me know that the next Remembrance Day event at the Old School will be on Friday 9 November 2001.**

**Pam Gillilan (nee Johnson 1930/35) has written to say that her brother, David A Johnson (1932/36), died suddenly at his home in Hornsey on 8 January 2001 :-** *'...After leaving school he studied architecture, then during wartime he qualified as a fighter pilot. On leaving the RAF he decided on a change of profession and became an inspirational and pioneering teacher of design technology. He was a keen sailor, for some years Commodore of the Spring Lea Cruising Club. He leaves a widow, a son and a daughter (Maureen Laurent (1957/62), formerly Johnson, also an Old Fincunian), grandchildren and a great-granddaughter...'* **Gladys Rawlings (nee Macey 1930/35) writes :-** *'...David was one of the younger members of our group but he came year after year to our mini-reunions and he very much enjoyed them. We are the poorer for losing such a good friend....'*

**Gladys also wrote to inform us of the death of one of her form mates, Sima (known as Cynthia) Horn ((1930/35) :-** *'...Sima died in August 2000 aged 82 years. I went to a memorial meeting at Avenue House organised by her husband where tributes, including one from me, were paid to her. It was a moving experience. She had a brother and a sister (older than her) who distinguished themselves scholastically (University, etc.), Joshua and Judith. Sima was Jewish and very talented. She was my friend for 70 years. Always known as Cynthia, her name, Sima, means "Joy". She married a Lithuanian named Leo Kruks and she taught him English. The other thing about Sima at school was that she was a smashing actress. She appeared in school plays and later at the Unity Theatre. A sad loss to me...'*

**I have heard that Gladys Conway (1928/33) died at the turn of the year but I have no further details. Sheila Segal (nee Rawlings 1945/48) has written :-** *'...I am enclosing a fitting tribute to Doris Holmes, written by her daughter.....'* **It reads :-** *'The death occurred on November 11th 2000 at the age of 91 years, of Doris Kathleen Holmes (nee Rawlings), elder sister of Cyril and Jack (EJR). Doris attended Finchley County High School from 1920 to 1927 and trained at Whitelands Teacher Training College from 1927 to 1929. She then taught at Ilford and Becontree until her marriage in 1936 when she and her husband Dick, known as Harry, moved to Leigh-on-Sea in Essex. Apart from a couple of years in Totteridge during the war, she lived in*

the Leigh area for the rest of her life. She was a very active person, particularly in musical circles : she accompanied several choirs for many years and entertained various local groups. For the last four years of her life she was cared for in an excellent nursing home; severe arthritis confined her to a wheel-chair but she remained very alert, and continued to the end her interest in sport, stamp-collecting and crosswords. She still maintained an interest in Finchley County High School, despite living a long way away, and she enjoyed reading Scimitar. She had kept her maroon FCS hatband as a memento of happy days at school, and her daughter now has this in safe keeping! She was much loved and is greatly missed by all her family'.

**In November 2000 I received a very sad and saddening letter from Bruce Hill who lives in Fowey, Cornwall. Bruce is not an Old Fincunian but he is the brother of Dora Elizabeth Joan Hill, better known as Joan Hill, the girl's PE teacher at FCS from 1946 to 1970 :- 'I am afraid I have very sad news. Joan passed away in October in her 84th year. She died from a massive heart attack, and I found her on the floor of her bedroom when I got underway at breakfast time....I am not at all sure that Joan got around to replying to your very nice letter of 13 August....Joan had a very active correspondence with Scimitar, old school colleagues, and relatives, in many parts of the world. She was very proud of the fact that many had done very well. About three weeks before she went on her way, Connie Fozzard came to tea, and we had a very pleasant afternoon....Many bundles of letters, Christmas cards, etc., now have to be sorted out and this will take time. From the enclosed Service Card at the Glynn Valley Crematorium, you will see that all being well I hope to organise a Memorial Service at Lescrow, and this will be in the early Spring of 2001.....Only a few close friends and relatives attended the service which was taken by a real old Cornish Methodist Minister. I am now well into my 80th year and there is much to do at this end....'. Vivian Hand (nee Pawle 1948/53) writes :- '...Miss Hill, as we all knew her, had a great influence on my life because it was through her that I really came to appreciate sport and the meaning behind it, so much. It was through Finchley County and Miss Hill that I first "fell in love" with Wimbledon. I can remember clearly, although a mere school child of 14 years, or so, seeing those ivy covered walls and immaculate green lawns for the first time and how the whole atmosphere filled me with awe. Even now I can see "Little Mo", sadly no longer with us, on that sacred No. 1 Court (now gone!). Thank you, Miss Hill, for those treasured memories. On the "indoor" side I remember distinctly one particular gym lesson. It was the end of term and it was here that I learned the craft of Miss Hill. She divided us all into three groups - the "energetic", the "not quite so", and the "non-energetic". Eagerly I opted for the last group - much to my horror! Did she put us through our paces - the dreaded rope, the horse buck - you name it, we did it, there was no escape! Well done, Miss Hill, you read me like a book! So I say farewell to a lady who influenced my life more than she ever knew - a quiet lady dressed in navy blue shorts, navy blazer, spotless white blouse, and short, neat haircut. Thank you, Miss Hill, and "Goodbye!". Vivian added these words :- (Whether you print my letter is neither here nor**

there; I cannot let her go without showing appreciation from an old pupil).' And Caroline Corkindale (nee Sivers 1957/64) emailed from South Australia to say :- 'I am sure everyone reading this sad news will pause from the here and now life to remember Joan Hill and her enormous influence on our school days. I am so glad I went to see here two years ago...'. And it is not just the girls wishing to pay their respects. Geoff Batten (1947/54) writes :- '...Joan Hill is remembered here because her exhortation "Come along girls", has entered the Batten family sayings. I understand she remembered me talking to her when she was waiting for her Green Line bus to go home after school....I do remember her being very annoyed at the way we "bent" the spirit, if not the strict rules, when we Sixth Form boys played the girls at net ball. We were able to throw the ball from our end of the court to the girls' end where a very tall lad called Broadbent was waiting to drop the ball into the basket. Not done, apparently. Joan Hill took an interest in the boys as well as the girls. I remember her quizzing me about the treatment I was getting for my back troubles and enquiring what I was going to do after I left Finchley County. As I write this I am looking at a photograph of someone called Hicks winning the 440 yards at a very wet Sports Day in 1954 - I came second. Joan Hill is standing by the winning tape in a very fetching plastic mac....'.

**Maureen Verga (nee Ritchey 1948/52), from Australia, concludes with a verse entitled simply "Memories of Joan Hill" :-**

*Joan Hill - a special lady  
who is already sadly missed  
by the likes of her friends Down Under  
to say the very least.*

*We all have special memories  
of Joan in bygone years.  
"Head up - chest out -  
shoulders back" - the orders  
bringing attention from pupils and  
peers.*

*Joan had that special talent  
of knowing who was who.  
After years of speculation  
you felt she cared for only you.*

*Her memories of yesteryear  
were incredible, it's true,  
each individual she met  
felt one of the chosen few.*

*Joan's letters were another thing  
that helped keep us all in touch.  
We all spent time translating them  
but treasured them very much.*

*Her letters travelled round the world  
to places far and wide  
informing us of Old Fincs happenings  
a strong bond keeps us tied.*

*We all doubt now in present time,  
C.P.'s the latest trend  
that the likes of such much loved letters  
have sadly come to an end.*

**R.I.P Joan.**

## AND FINALLY.....FAXES & EMAILS

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