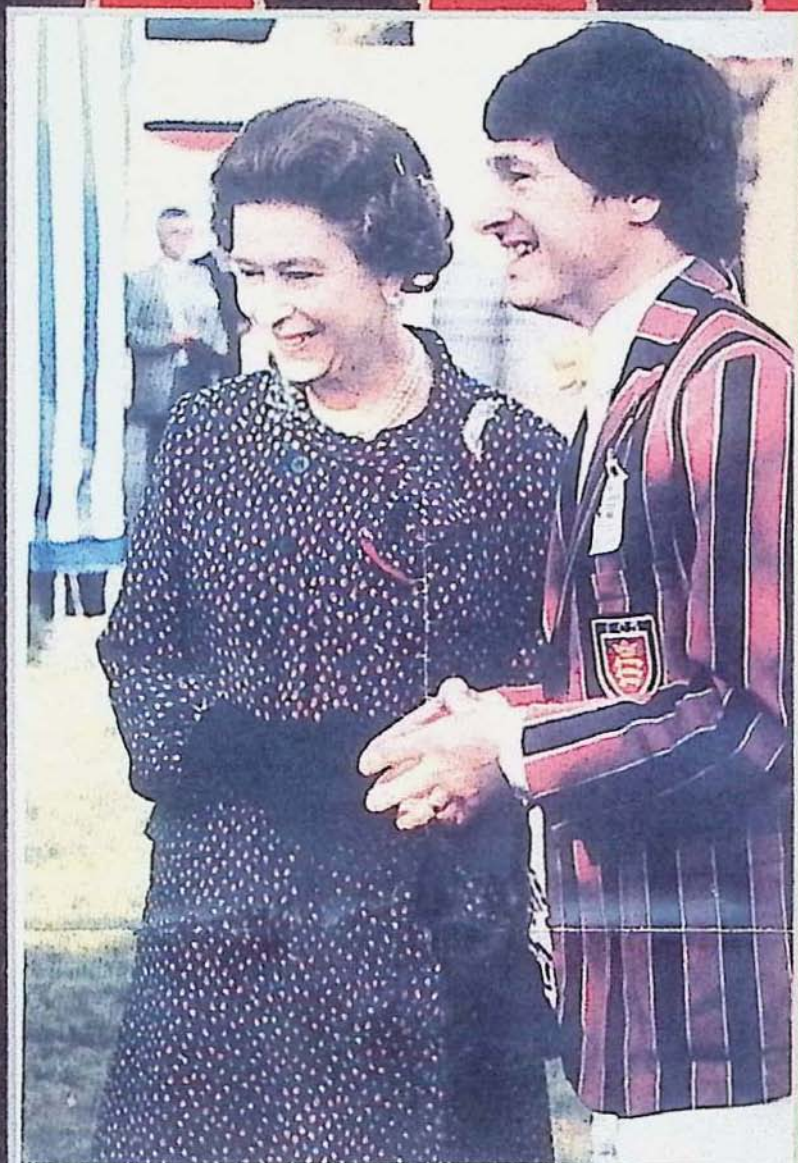


# SCIMITAR

SPECIAL REUNION EDITION

WINTER ISSUE NO. 157



**One is always surprised by the people one meets  
at an Old Fincunians Reunion, isn't one?**

## OUR CHAIRMAN SPEAKS

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Dear Old Fincunian,

Welcome to this special edition of the Scimitar. Les volunteered to produce this issue while the recent Reunion was fresh in his mind – so who am I to say no!

The weather was very good - it seems one of the few dry days this year - and the buffet was first class and plentiful. The venue was a little 'scruffy' (I had been promised that various refurbishment work was to have been completed in time for our Reunion) but I know that all who attended had a great afternoon. Moving from group to group all I seemed to hear was "*do you remember so and so?...do you remember when?...*" I even had someone ask me if I knew the whereabouts of someone who had been in their year – the individual was standing a couple of yards away! Hark how the shout and laughter ring.

I was particularly pleased to be able to spend a couple of hours with four of my classmates (Nigel Downer, Roger Hooker, Graham Tomlin and Janet Trollope).

Some 145 Old Fincunians indicated that they would be coming to the Reunion. Unfortunately 16 were unable to make it but to our surprise and delight some 25 others turned up 'out of the blue'. The School song was sung with vig'rous strain. Luckily, it was not followed by the traditional call for Mr Jones and the self instruction to "dismiss" so for another hour reminiscences held majestic sway.

Finally, all present agreed that they were prepared to allow us to release names and addresses and in particular e-mail details to the membership. In this way we hope that those wishing to arrange get-togethers for their respective years will be helped in the contact process.

I wish you all a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

Best regards,

*Godfrey Mann*

## REUNION 2008

A School Reunion at Woodside Park on the 20th of September 2008. It wouldn't be the same. How could it be the same? Yes, I know, people are more important than places, but I must confess that in past years for me the run up to a reunion was filled with anticipation of once again occupying the class-rooms, the halls, the passageways, the corridors, the staircases, the play grounds, and even the toilets, all of which, when put together, made up the fabric of the Old School. No more would I be able to look up and stare at the clock which never told the time and in its latter years did not even have any hands on its dial.

For me school still means that place opposite the open air swimming pool.. That's where it belongs. For me Woodside Park means cricket. Yes, there is a tenuous link with the Old School because of the cricket matches between the School and Woodside Park. Woodside Park for me means playing cricket for and against Woodside Park, nothing to do with School . So on 20 September 2008, on the journey to Woodside Park I kept repeating silently, *"It just wont be the same!"*.

Not a promising start to the reunion, you might say. Not a bit of it because without the distraction of the Old School building, throughout my two hour journey, the closer I got to the venue the more I concentrated on people. There would be memorabilia, of course, and old uniforms to grab attention, but I walked into the room with a spring in my step ready to face the people and immediately I started to look for faces I recognised.

The first person I noticed was a short, rough looking guy with a fearsome scowl and a dark green pullover. My simple question, "OK?", was met by an even deeper scowl and a grunt. Probably a Head Boy from the past.

Undeterred I stood and looked around. The room was well lit with windows and like the Old School Hall, there was a stage across one end and a cloak-room off to the left. A bar was hidden discreetly through the cloakroom. Young ladies were laying out plates of food but Godfrey Mann (1959/66), our Chairman, was the first person I recognised, and Colin Luke (1963/70) was next. I commandeered him to help me put up the trestle tables for the photographs and memorabilia displays. By then people were beginning to arrive in ever-increasing numbers, so I persuaded Bryan Goulding (1947/52), his wife Barbara, and various members to assist me in my work of pinning up panoramic school photographs.

There was that man again still wearing a scowl and the green pullover. 'Can't see my year's photo', he grunted. 'What year is that?', I asked, but he was already wandering off.



**In my first walk around the room I discovered that someone had put in place a coloured picture of Irene Wallace (1947/5) who lives in Canada. Irene could not be with us, but her picture was telling us she wished she was here and inviting us to make contact. Geoff Batten was standing nearby and I guessed that he had put the picture there but as I approached his group seemed to be all talking at once. One said '*...I want a copy of your biography of Charlie Vivian...*', but at that point Sheila Knowles (nee Jones 1941/47) pushed an envelope into my hand. Ever since the Spring 2008 edition I have been trying to get you to identify "*the lady in the white hat*", who is standing in the group pictured at the War Memorial on 11 November 2007. Sheila Knowles was confessing that it was she, and in writing, too!**



The sun was streaming in through the open patio doors and the noise in the room was increasing minute by minute. The photos and memorabilia were attracting a good crowd. Harold Maxwell (1938/40) was pouring over them in his seemingly endless search for school contemporaries, *.....particularly Sam Britton and Charlie Carter.....*; he said as he chatted to Sue Wolf(1963/65). At that time my brother, Roy Sharp (1949/54) whispered into my ear, *'Want a drink. Les?'*. I was really enjoying the day and life was good.



Mary Dark came through the patio door and waved her one good arm in greeting while nursing her heavily bandaged one, injured while attending a W I function. More to the Women's Institute than Jerusalem and home-made jam, then!

Many ex-pupils of FCS have never joined the OFA and then, many years after they left school, someone shows them a Scimitar. Alan Ross (1948/53) is fairly typical of many and is not a full member. *'...Until today I did not know how to get Scimitar. I do now and my cheque will be off by snail mail on Monday. Thanks for the back number of Scimitar. I have not only read it, I have devoured it.....'*. But no time for him because one of my Form, Pat Grainger (nee Davies 1947/53), was asking, *'Can you tell me where our classmates are ....?'*. I made some nervous comment about Pat's hobby, *'.....Are you still doing the cross-stitch weekends?'*, and led her to where I could see Geof Batten (1947/54) still surrounded by contemporaries - Ray Bishop, Dick Colomb, Barry Ackerman, Joan Ridley, and others. Geof saw Pat and his eyes lit up, raising his arms towards the ceiling he welcomed her into the group.

Ray Bishop (1947/52) saw me and rather guiltily started to explain why his idea of a Class Reunion on the ski-slopes of France had not yet

materialised so I mumbled something about "...next year then. No pressure...", and moved away towards Stan Gilks (1945/53), Mary Darke, Barry Ackerman, Jim and Doreen Williams (all 1946/53) who were sitting around a table laughing and giggling.



Barry should get a prize because he has travelled from Bendigo in Australia and attended more reunions than most of the UK members living in North London.

Barry saw me and didn't mess about. '*...The Old Fincunians in Oz have still not received the Autumn 2008 edition of Scimitar. They blame you, so what are you doing about it?*'. Like Tommy Cooper I magically produced four copies of the missing edition and presented them to Barry. I had to think quickly on my feet. '*When you get back to Oz, tell 'em these are special and I wanted them delivered by hand.....*', I said as I quickly made my exit towards Alan Rayment (1939/44), George Auger (1949/56) and Derek Nichol (1945/51). They were talking about cricket, almost reverently nodding as their stories of leather on willow unfolded, so I moved on towards the splendid display of food.

There was hot and cold food, minted potatoes, salads, dressings, cold meats, little quiches, sausages, sausage rolls, French bread, sandwiches, and loads more. A small orderly queue was systematically inspecting the fare and the hot lasagne was proving to be very popular.

And then I found Sheila Segal (nee Rawlings) surrounded by puddings - chocolate gateau, fresh fruit arranged in a sort of cornucopia, two sorts of apple pie, a beautifully iced gateau, a great big jug of cream, and still more. She said, '*I'm only sampling it*'. '*Smile for the camera!*', I said mischievously.



By now Alan Rayment had met up with Brian Cross (1939/45) and they were deep in conversation. Before I could speak to them Tony Curtis (1951/58) spoke to me offering a copy of Scimitar No 154 which I had asked for in the last edition. *'I've already received one from Peter Monk.....'*, I started to say, but Tony then produced Scimitars going back to edition 147. Although I looked hard, No. 155 was not there. Why did I do that? Because Carol Barker (nee Austin 1953/58) wants that one.

Alan Scrine (1940/45) and Arthur Scrine (1929/33) were busy at the photos and when they sat down with their family, Bettine, Pamela, and grand-daughter Samantha; Alan Rayment joined them. He was bobbing up all over the place.

Someone asked me if Ron Dadd (1943/45) was there. I didn't know so I started to look for him. I wanted to see him because I know he is trying to trace some of his school contemporaries, *'.....any of the ex-pupils who joined in September 1943. I started in 1B, as being really an East Ham refugee, Mr Chalk and his colleagues didn't know what to make of me. Later I moved to 1A and subsequently 2A, following the 1943 Christmas examinations, so I should be able to recall anyone from that intake. The only names I can remember from those days are Bernard Walker, Betty King, Yvonne Miller and Janet Green. Something a bit Freudian there perhaps. There were also a brother and sister whose surname was, I believe, Halsey, or something like that. The teachers' names that I remember were Miss Peeling (English), Miss Jacobe (French), and Mr Hillman (Chemistry).....'*

Instead of Ron Dadd I found Tony Curtis again. *'Look, don't take this wrong, Les, and I know I have returned a pile of Scimitars to you already, but would you*

*like this copy of The History of FCS?.....'. I resisted the temptation to ask Tony what he thought he was playing at giving away my precious publications, one by one, but I knew that there is a demand for The History which is now out of print. I accepted Tony's offer graciously.*

The patio doors were open and some members had moved outside but I noticed that they did not wander far from the doors in case they missed something. Ian Gunter (1946/53) and Janine Luke (nee Turner 1963/70),



with others, were just outside the doors enjoying the warm sunshine while happily chattering away about who knows what.

On one side of the open patio door was a table loaded with cups and other sporting trophies and a book of photographs including one of my hero, George Robb, a teacher from Crist's College who played football for Finchley and for one game made the full England international team. The other side of the patio door sat Connie Fozzard (1945/52) with a constant stream of people stopping to chat with her. We chatted for a while.

Geoff Lence (1942/49) was reminiscing, '*.....when I was a member of Woodside Park Club I played tennis with Alan Humberstone most Sunday mornings, so I am delighted to be here again today.....'*. Geoff's greatest sporting love is soccer and he still watches the Old Boys football matches, '*...I saw Old Owens play Aloysians at Highgate in a cup game a couple of months ago. I was very impressed with Owen's play and sportsmanship. Not so Aloysians. Owens deserved their win.....'*. Geoff's brother, Ron Lence (1939/46) and his wife, Pam Lence (nee Burge 1946/52) are regular reunion attendees but they could not be here because they were travelling from a holiday.



Nearby I could hear Bryan Goulding (1947/53) explaining how he nearly had to leave his wife, Barbara, at home. *'My car only holds five persons and in my usual generous manner I offered to bring Derek Geaves (1941/47), his wife Carol Geaves (1947/52), Brian Harris (1949/55) and his wife, Barbara Harris. That would have meant five in the car leaving no room for Barbara, my wife.....'* It turned out that Derek and Carol, Brian and Barbara Harris, were unable to attend, so the Goulding family arrived intact. Bryan was never any good at maths!

Charles Hale (1929/34) was having a great time but was sorry there were no name labels. At that moment I spotted the first school blazer. I guessed who would be wearing it - Elaine Kemp (nee Parker 1955/56). She was standing on the exact spot where the sun streamed in through the open doors lighting up her Old School blazer beautifully. I took a picture of Elaine standing with Geoff Lence (1942/49).



By now the noise in the room had reached crisis levels and with my hearing aid battery beginning to run down I was having difficulty hearing what Elaine was saying. But there is nothing wrong with my eyes and there was a straw bonnet floating towards me, and under it was Joan Ridley (1947/54). At all of the reunions I have attended Joan always wears a different hat and they always look good. Although Joan removed her bonnet, I took a picture of her standing with ex-classmate, Pat Grainger (nee Davies 1947/53). *'There are no other girls from our Class here today, which is a pity.....'* Clearly they were both disappointed.



**Walking about through the dense throng was Bob Payne (1934/36), on his own this year. Bob was not at the Old School for long, but we have no greater supporter of the OFA than he. Remember Bob and Norman Burgess (1933/38) putting us to shame when they erected and climbed a scaffolding to clean the old War Memorial? Remember the memorable and so appropriate voice of Bob at the dedication of the new War Memorial? Nobody does a Remembrance Day better than Bob.**

**Bryan Goulding (1947/53) was looking very happy.** *'What a wonderful day we are having - the weather, the food, the venue, and the company of so many friends and acquaintances from our past....Other schools express sorrow, sadness, and envy because they do not enjoy the same facilities as we do - to meet and communicate with our contemporaries.....The fact that there are so many people here today speaks for itself.....however, everybody whether they are here or not, appreciate that none of this happens by chance. It's all down to the hard work of the few.....I do not drink but if I had a drink in my hand I would propose a toast to Godfrey, Colin, and Janine for such a splendid reunion.....'*

**George Auger (1949/56) had shed his cricketing group.** *'Many thanks for the reunion. It was as much fun as ever. I very much hope it was not the last one - not all the intake years have sufficient numbers to hold separate functions. Take my intake year for example - only two here today...'*

At this time George was in a group and Gerry Pinches (1953/61) was just in the process of taking a picture. From the left it features Chris Barker (1952/58); Derek Nichol (1945/51); Bob Thorogood (1949/56); Sheila Segal (nee Rawlings); George and Pauline Auger; and Bill Segal (1946/51). I was particularly happy to see Bill Segal looking so well after a year or two of bad health and surgery.



Jean Keep (nee Hume 1944/48) was telling everyone who wanted to listen that this was her first reunion since leaving the Old School and Bernard Klug (1951/56) had a similar message although he did not leave school until 1956. Mike Try (1944/49) and Pat Try (nee Draper 1941/45) had been on holiday in Yorkshire which ended today so they had made a pretty rapid transit of the M1 to be here. Several people asked me if I had seen Marian Jacobs (nee Mundy 1955/62). I was able to tell them that she and her husband were in Tanzania doing some voluntary work, something they have been doing ever since they retired.

I managed to speak to Brian Mitchell (1945/50) and his wife Pat. I reminded him that when we were at school we lived in adjoining roads in Finchley Central. For ten minutes, or so, we were completely lost to the world as we recited the names and peculiarities of most of the residents of Elm Park Road and Dollis Road. That area of Finchley Central in those days was a haven for Finchley County School pupils - Les and Roy Sharp, Brian and Denis Mitchell; Roy and Eric Sim; Irene and Rita Wallace; Gerald and Roy Wilson; Brian Bradfield; Carol Castle; and a few whose names escape me.

**My brother, Roy Sharp (1949/54) whispered in my ear, 'Want another drink?'. I replied, 'It's my turn - let me get you one...'. The man wearing the scowl and the green pullover was listening and he chuckled, 'That's why he offered you a drink - so you would buy him one...'. Who is that guy?**

**Roy was picking off his intake year, one by one. '.....I've met seven from my year so far.....and Bob Thorogood has once again flown across "the pond" from America for the occasion.....We all meet up from time to time and those present today seem to be the nucleus of the dedicated 1949-ers...'. I remarked that some intake years were not so fortunate. One or two years have only one representative, and many years have only two.**

**His group was standing by the school panoramic photographs and I was puzzled to see he was studying, not his own years picture but the photos from the 1970's. '...Look at the boy's long hair! And what about those short skirts?.....It's not just the sixth form girls but the female members of staff too!.....' It sounded like a description of St Trinians but Roy followed up with, '...We all had the benefit of a better and broader education than is currently on offer....'. He looked up and saw me watching. '...I am sorry if you think that I am just another Grumpy Old Man.....Anyway, it is a very pleasant surprise to find that the Old School building was not an essential ingredient in the recipe for a successful event. The atmosphere here at Woodside Park is as convivial as at any of our previous reunions that I have attended. The excellent weather is contributing to what is already a very sunny occasion....'.**

**I marched over to the bar and I passed Wilf Eynon (1953/59) and Derek Dickens 1962/64) who were standing near to the memorabilia. Nearby was Wilf's sister, Carol Knott (nee Eynon 1960/65).**



At that moment Gerry Pinches arrived with his camera and took pictures, and that reminded me Carol has only just joined the Association. I walked over to speak to her but before I reached her someone, I believe Rose Jones (nee Humberstone 1948/53), told me that Vivian Hand (nee Pawle 1948/53) had not been able to get there. I wondered if I would receive one of Vivian's wonderful letters explaining why! I hope so.

And suddenly I was surrounded by twins.

There were John and David Telford (1955/62) and there were Brian and Denis Mitchell (1945/50). According to the Telford twins you can tell the difference between them because John is the one whose name appears most in the "Black Book". David admits to a few "Detentions" but nothing else. All I know is that after the event I sent a picture and a letter to John Telford only to be told that it was David. Fortunately when I see the Mitchell twins together I can recognise which one is which, but when they are apart I give up.

Is Gerry Pinches' picture of Denis or Brian Mitchell? I have no ideal



Roy Pritchard (1936/43) was standing with a younger man over by the display of photographs. It was Alan Hilsden who is the son of Harry Hilsden (1910/1916). Harry is no longer with us and Alan is not an Old Fincunian, so I felt quite good that Alan had chosen to be with us today.

At that moment I thought I overheard Ken Edwards (1934/40), who was sitting with Stan Gilks (1946/53), talking about *"The National Front"*, but as I stood earwiggling I soon worked out they were talking about *"The National Trust"*.

I wondered if it was time we started giving out the School Song sheets and approached our Treasurer, Colin Luke (1963/70) but he was in deep conversation with Dick Colomb (1947/52) so I took a photograph instead.



I started to make my way around the room handing out the School Song sheets and I noticed that people were beginning to sit down in groups around the numerous tables.

Alan Rayment was still patrolling the room - he must have covered a few miles - and it seemed that there was nobody in the room that he had not spoken to.

I collared him and made him promise to send me his thoughts, feelings, etc., about the day. *'You can be sure of it, Les. I will try to fit it in during the quieter moments of writing my memoirs. I am so glad this event was arranged and that I came.....'*

Standing nearby were Stan Gilks and Barry Ackerman, both of 1946/53 vintage. Gerry Pinches was there again with his camera.



Barry was telling Stan about his life in Australia, '*...quite different from Finchley where water is taken for granted. In Australia we have to worry about where tomorrow's cuppa is going to come from.....*'. Eavesdropping as I was, I realised that they had not seen each other except for a handful of times in the past fifty years, yet they were chatting and nodding as if they had never been parted.

Stan Gilks moved on to Jim Williams (1946/53) and they almost immediately started to talk about medical matters until they were joined by Mary Dark (1946/51) and Ian Gunter (1946/53). The conversation turned to another reunion, the 1946 Intake, which was to be held at Mary's home a week later. Ian also remembered the fact that yours truly was the goalkeeper that let in a soft goal against Woodhouse thereby losing the Mayor's Cup.

I followed Stan across the room when he was greeted by Olive Lumley (nee Hughes 1948/53) and she gave him a photograph of a young man playing the piano in a small band. '*....That is my uncle George Gilks playing the piano in a band probably at the Stanley Hall at Tufnell Park some time around 1935. What a lovely surprise!...*'

The tables were beginning to fill up with empty plates and the scowling green pullover was slowly making his way around the room clearing up.

Everyone seemed to be relaxed and content although one or two were making comments about the noise level. I smiled because to me the noise level was the sound of happiness and excitement.

**For a while I got the impression of being in a Tea Shop as people tucked in to the food and drink, but not everyone was sitting down**

**Many were too busy talking even to eat. Barry Ackerman was certainly making the most of his trip over from Australia.**

**He had found a School Sports Programme which mentioned him.**

*'...It is really great to find so many of my era, late 1940's and 1950's....', he said.*



**Not only talking, eating and drinking was going on. There were still some active members as lively as ever. It was easy to track them down just by following the sound of laughter.**

**Rosemary Hill (nee Ashdown), Ann Phillips (nee Brooks) and Ann Nicholas (nee Slater) all 1953/58 were having a great time, and on orange juice, too!**

**Gerry Pinches was there to capture it on film.**





**Chris Barker (1952/58)** had a smile on his face all afternoon and from time to time his laughter could be heard above the general noisy hubbub.

See him on the left.

For some, like Les Stitchbury, Geoff Lence, and Derek Batten, all of 1942/47 vintage, and Dennis Hall (1941/46), a reunion is something to be taken seriously.

See them below being serious!





**And then above the babble of excited conversations we could hear Godfrey Mann, our Chairman, standing on the stage trying to make himself heard. It took a minute or two but suddenly there was a hush as Godfrey said a few words encouraging the audience to answer back. In that way we learned that there is an undeniable demand for another reunion within the next two years; they were unsure about the venue; everyone was enjoying the day immensely; everybody wanted to sing the School Song; and as Godfrey cannot sing I was expected to lead the singing. Gerry Pinches captured the moment with his camera.**



**Here you can see the gathering listening intently to Godfrey Mann and were quick to answer back - not heckling, you understand! Or are they all just waiting for someone to buy them a drink?**



The Old Fincunians were in no mood for half measure. "First two verses?", I said. "All four!", was the firm response. After three false starts, one of the girls sang us a tuning note and we were away. Everyone had a song sheet and everyone was singing. I was singing too, but my conducting resembled a paralysed penguin, but we all ended the musical interlude with the loudest "Hail!", Woodside Park has ever heard. 'No hail today - lovely sunshine....', said the green pullover with the scowl. 'Who is that?', I asked Colin Luke, but by then the scowl and the pullover were gone.

So that was the end, was it? Not a bit of it. The members rejoined their groups and carried on talking, eating and drinking as if nothing had happened.

Someone, I think it was Janine Luke, started to give out "Doggy Bags" of food. There was Brian Andrews and his lovely partner, Eirian Elias, making for the door clutching their '....special issue luxury Old Finc's doggy bag.....it will go down well with a cup of tea as we make our way home to Wales.....wonderful occasion...we enjoyed it greatly....such warm and dry weather too....total of eight people from the "class of 1965 to 1972".....haven't met up for a while now, so today has prompted us to arrange a reunion of our own.....I should have done more before the day to try to encourage more to attend but never seemed to have the time to get around to it.....'.

A startled voice behind me was saying, "Seen Ken Edwards? To misquote the Bible, he has picked up his chair and walked!", and there was Ken standing up pushing what I thought was a "...zimmer frame...".



Ken would have none of that. *'It's a seat - a portable chair - I have been sitting on it all afternoon. It folds down into a chair - very comfortable, too - when you stand up it unfolds into a sort of platform on wheels - a shopping trolley..... zimmer indeed!....'*

If you look at the bottom picture on page 3 you will see Ken sitting in his magic chair which, of course, is not a zimmer frame.

Quite rightly, Ken loves his mobile, collapsible chair, and his only regret is that if he had shopped around a bit more he could have got it cheaper.

There were plenty of people still eating, drinking and most of all, talking. Here are Eddie Bassant (1962/70), Frank Edwards (1962/69), Stan Gilks (1946/53), and Barry Ackerman (1946/53). Have they no homes to go to ?



As I drove home I had plenty of time to ponder on the question as to whether the day had been a success.

**Fact 1 - The school ceased to be FCS in 1971.**

**Fact 2 - The building was not used as a school after 1984/5.**

**Fact 3 - The War Memorial was a significant feature in our school and later lives.**

**Fact 4 - The membership had become used to having the building and the War Memorial available for functions.**

**Fact 5 - We have a dwindling membership which can never be replenished.**

**Fact 6 - The building and War Memorial were demolished in 2004/5**

Then I asked myself the question, "Given just those six facts, would it surprise you if I told you that the Association continued its biennial (roughly) reunions at a new (strange) location in 2008 and that over 130 turned up?"

I was convinced that the day had been a success.

After the event Bill Segal (1946/51) and his wife Sheila Segal (nee Rawlings) wrote :-

*'.....I think this reunion is the best yet! Two things struck me. First, the venue Woodside Park club - when I was the Old Fincunians Social Secretary many years ago, the OF's used the club many times, e.g., dances, New Year celebrations, etc., and many of us were also Club members - it is central, in Finchley, handy for rail and road travel.*

*Second, the size is ideal for our numbers (which will not increase), plenty of room, adequate bar (not overcharged), parking not too bad with free availability on adjacent roads. The catering was excellent with more than enough for everyone.....The memorabilia was not well lit, and with my "not so good eyes" I struggled to identify much.....It is always (for me) emotional to sing the school song but much enjoyed....'*

**That last sentence is praise indeed. In my reply I wrote :-** *'.....I felt a bit awkward having the lead in to the School Song thrust upon me. It happened like this. Godfrey said, "We are going to sing the School Song". I presumed he would start it off and lead it. After his announcements and getting me onto the stage, he announced the school song, turned to me and said, "I can't sing, over to you, Les". I think it worked out OK! but nobody does it like your Dad, Sheila.....'*

**I refer, of course, to Sheila's Dad, the famous EJR (Jack Rawlings), Sports Master, Teacher and Spin Bowler extraordinaire, and School Song conductor magnifique. Who said I failed at languages!**

**Sheila continues :-** '....Most of those I spoke to said how much easier it would be if everyone wore a name and year tab. One or two of the really elderly could have been approached more easily for a chat if one was able to pinpoint their year, I feel.....Personally, I would have liked an extra hour to continue.....'.

**Compare that letter with the one written by Dick Colomb (1947/52):-**

'.....The reunion was very well attended and full marks plus grateful thanks to Godfrey, Janine, and Colin for all their hard work. I think it might have been preferable to start a bit earlier, say 12.30pm, which would have resulted in less food being wasted. More people might have seen it as a lunch opportunity rather than just a snack. The food was, I thought, very good.

The School Song was well sung but possibly a little too early as despite Godfrey making it clear that it was not a signal for us to go, many of us did.

The venue was OK! if a bit stark, and Woodside Park Club's staff were very helpful. I would certainly go to another reunion there.

Our year (1947 Intake) was well represented and I do hanker after another separate 1947/52 reunion at some time in the future.....'.

**Joan Ridley (1947/54) was disappointed that there were few of her class mates present:-**

'.....Thank you for the photo of me and Pat Davies. As you realised, we were the only old girls from our class. I did meet up with a few others that I knew from other classes - Jean Robinson, Rita Matthews, and Sylvia Pates. Sadly, apart from Geof Batten, most of the other school mates couldn't make it.....I did manage to stay with Sheila Hatfield for a few days in Brixham during the summer.....I was very pleased we ignored the suggestion to only sing two verses of the school song. The end of the fourth verse becomes more relevant as the years go by.....The day ended at dinner with Geof Batten and his wife Margaret in the evening when we caught up with the news. Geoff and I go back two school generations as my Mum and Dad were at school with Geof's Mum! The same applies with Dick Russell.....'.

**Now then. What does Joan mean by her cryptic reference '....The end of the fourth verse.....' of the School Song? Why are those words '...more relevant as the years go by.....'. Can you remember the words of the fourth verse?**

**Mary Dark (nee Howard 1946/51) thought :-**

'It was very good to see so many at the reunion, and it could not have been a better day. I was a bit disappointed with the venue. I know it is extremely difficult to find suitable premises, but I thought it was dingy, with insufficient

seating and very poor amenities - no locks on the loo doors!. I would have thought that in the Woodside Park area it would have been a little grander. That said, it was great to see so many there and to catch up with old friends.

As a suggestion for the future, is there a hotel which could provide a lunch for, say 120, at a reasonable cost? This could obviate hiring a hall and arranging for catering which is a lot of work. I understand there was a lot of food left over. We used to have an Old Fincunians Dinner every year, but this became less popular and I think more people would now prefer a lunch, especially in the warmer weather....'.

**Ken Edwards (1934/40) and his wife, Rita, somehow managed to miss the singing of the School Song :-**

'.....as far as the Reunion is concerned we thought it was highly successful. We arrived either too late or left too early as we missed the School Song.....

Not surprisingly I did not see anyone of my era but still found people to chat to. Stan Gilks was the only one there that I actually knew and that was through the local Barnet National Trust Association.....

We were pleased to see how well it was attended and congratulations to the caterers too.....

We thought it was a good venue, too, although I originally thought it was the Old Finchleians site as our grandson had played cricket there. Anyway, it did not take long to get it sorted out.....'.

**Stan Gilks (91946/53) was brief and to the point :-**

'General comments,

- food excellent
  - did not have time to study the memorabilia
  - school song: you can't have a reunion without the school song
- venue: OK apart from the acoustics which were terrible...'

**Barry Ackerman (1946/53) was over here from his home in Australia and he had a difficult choice to make. Should he attend the School Reunion on 20 September, or should he attend his own Form Reunion on 27 September. In an ideal world he would have chosen to go to both events but his itinerary time scale did not permit that. He chose the School Reunion :**

'.....Thank you for sending me the photograph of the reunion . It brought back memories of a very enjoyable afternoon.....Perhaps living so far away from Finchley the reunion is more important to me than those who see their old school friends regularly in the area where they live. I am also lucky in that so many of those attending are from the 1940's and 1950's and....it was great to meet each and every one of them.....Some thoughts about this year's reunion:-

- *The memorabilia—everyone likes to look through the old photographs and programmes to find their name mentioned. It pleased me so much to see my name in the sports programme after winning the mile and half mile in my last year at school.*
- *The School Song—I have never heard it sung better*
- *The food was excellent but like the venue is unimportant; who has time to eat with so many to talk to.*

*Thank you to all those whose hard work make these reunions happen and for binding us all together through the Scimitar.....'.*

Many of you have requested that Scimitar includes a list of the members who attended the reunion should be in Scimitar. Your wish is my command, but beware. My list is based upon those members who paid for a ticket but quite a few of those did not turn up on the day. We have done our best to exclude the non-attenders so here we go :-

Ken AMPHLETT (1949/54)  
 Ann ANDERSON (neeTHOMAS 1950/55)  
 Brian J ANDREWS (1965/72)  
 Peter ANDREWS (1949/56)  
 George AUGER (1949/56)  
 Janet BANKS (neeTROLLOPE 1959/66)  
 Carole BARKER (nee AUSTIN 1953/58)  
 Chris BARKER (1952/58)  
 Eddie BASSANT (1962/70)  
 Derek J BATTEN (1942/47)  
 Geoffrey BATTEN (1947/54)  
 Jim BENNETT (1956/63)  
 Ray BISHOP (1947/52)  
 Sheila BURBIDGE (1950/57)  
 Naomi BURGESS (1961/66)  
 Robert CATLING (1950/56)  
 Ken COLE (1958/65)  
 Richard COLLINGS (1963/70)  
 Richard COLOMB (1947/52)  
 Barbara Ann CREEGER  
 Rev Brian CROSS (1939/45)  
 Anthony S CURTIS (1951/58)  
 Andrea CUSHING (nee STYMAN)  
 Mary DARK FRSA (nee HOWARD 1946/51)  
 Max DAVIS (1954/62)  
 Derek DICKENS (1962/64)  
 Brian DODDINGTON (1962/69)  
 Nigel DOWNER (1959/66)  
 Joy EDELMAN

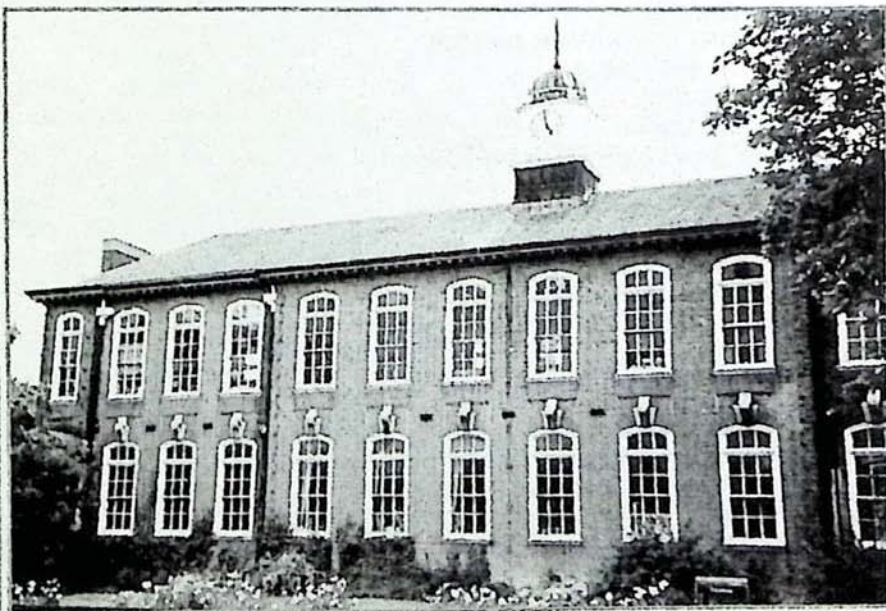


Kenneth EDWARDS (1933/40)  
Frank EDWARDS (1962/69)  
Wilf EYNON (1953/59)  
Susan FLETCHER (nee LAMERTON 1959/64)  
Elizabeth FLOOD (1942/46)  
Constance E FOZZARD (1945/52)  
Dr Stanley GILKS (1946/53)  
John GINN (1961/67)  
Bryan GOULDING (1947/53)  
Pat GRAINGER (nee DAVIES 1947/53)  
Edna GRANT (nee DONALDSON 1940/45)  
Sylvia GRIFFITHS (nee PATES 1947/52)  
Ian GUNTER (1946/53)  
Charles G HALE (1929/34)  
Dennis HALL (1941/46)  
Margaret HALLETT (nee BENABO 1936/43)  
Simon HART(1965/69)  
Kathleen HENDERSON (nee DAVIS 1945/50)  
Rosemarie HILL (nee ASHDOWN 1953/58)  
Roger D HOOKER (1959/64)  
Anthony HOSIER (1955/60)  
Barbara ISAAC (nee GREENSREET 1941/45)  
Karen JAMES  
Peter A JOINER  
Paul JONES (1960/63)  
Rose JONES (nee HUMBERSTONE 1948/53)  
Jean KEEP (nee HUME 1944/48)  
Elaine KEMP (nee BARKER 1955/60)  
Ivor J KITCHENER (1944/51)  
Bernard KLUG (1950/55)  
Carol KNOTT (nee EYNON 1960/65)  
Sheila D KNOWLES (nee JONES 1941/47)  
Susan KRANTZ  
Alan LAMERTON (1956/63)  
Sylvia LANCH (nee LISS)  
Jo LANSDELL (nee CARSON 1954/59)  
Pat LAWRENCE (nee WARNER 1945/49)  
Paul LEDERMAN (1955/60)  
Geoffrey LENCE (1942/49)  
Ruth LESIRGE (nee BRANDLER 1955/63)  
Rita LIDSTONE (nee MATTHEWS 1949/54)  
Jean LINFORD-JONES (nee SPRIGGS 1948/53)  
Rita LOFTS (nee MANN 1951/56)  
Colin LUKE (1963/70)  
Janine LUKE (nee TURNER 1963/70)  
Olive C LUMLEY (nee HUGHES 1948/53)  
Godfrey MANN (1959/66)  
Richard MARTIN (1954/61)

Jenny McVAY (nee TILLER 1950/55)  
Brian F MITCHELL (1945/50)  
Dennis MITCHELL (1945/50)  
David MONRO (1965/72)  
Anne MOSSACK (nee LEIGH 1966/71)  
David MUNRO (1965/72)  
Derek NICHOL (1945/51)  
Ann NICHOLAS (nee SLATER 1953/58)  
David NUBEL (1958/65)  
Wendy O'SULLIVAN (nee BURGESS 1962/67)  
Joyce PAIRPOINT (nee BALL 1945/50)  
Robert A PAYNE, OBE. (1934/36)  
Ann PHILLIPS (nee BROOKS 1953/58)  
Alex PIKE (1962/69)  
Gerald PINCHES (1953/61)  
Pamela PIKE (nee HAYHOE 1965/72)  
Janet A POPE (nee MUNDAY 1954/59)  
Molly POWELL (nee HOLBROOK 1929/35)  
Sarah PRESCOTT (1954/61)  
Miriam PRYKE (nee MIKELSONS 1965/72)  
Wilfred Roy PRITCHARD (1936/43)  
Alan RAYMENT (1939/44 )  
Joan D RIDLEY (1947/54)  
Joyce ROBINSON (nee LIGHTFOOT 1953/58)  
Julian ROSENTHAL (1959/64)  
Alan ROSS (1948/53)  
Lionel ROSSINGTON  
Philip SAGE (1965/71)  
Gillian M SCHAFF (nee HAMER 1951/58)  
Gail SCOTT-THRING (1962/67)  
Alan SCRINE (1940/45)  
Arthur SCRINE (1929/33)  
Joyce SCRINE (nee LAVINGTON 1945/50)  
Bill SEGAL (1946/51)  
Sheila SEGAL (nee RAWLINGS)  
Roy SHARP (1949/54)  
Les SHARP (1947/52)  
Joan SPURGEON (nee LIDDELOW 1949/54)  
Leslie STICHBURY (1942/47)  
Philip SYLVESTER  
David TELFORD (1955/62)  
John TELFORD (1955/60)  
Ian THOMAS (1953/60)  
Christopher THOMAS (1950/55)  
Margaret THOMAS (nee JOBSON 1958/65)  
Dr Robert THOROGOOD (1949/56)  
Graham TOMLIN (1959/66)  
Tony TRIPPICK (1956/61)

Pat TRY (nee DRAPER 1941/45)  
Mike TRY (1944/49)  
Kenneth TURNER (1949/56)  
Rod TURNER (1967/70)  
Sylvia VICKERS (nee GRIFFITHS 1947/52)  
Janice P WESTERN (nee ACKERMAN 1949/54)  
Jim E A WILLIAMS (1946/53)  
Doreen WILLIAMS (1946/53)  
Gerry WOODWARD (1950/56)  
Helen WELCH (nee CROFTS 1951/57)  
Miriam WOOD (nee WHITEHEAD 1959/66)  
Sue WOLFF (1963/65)  
Geoffrey WONNACOTT (1966/73)

That list does not include all the spouses, partners, relatives or friends who were present. Thanks for having us at your place, Woodside Park. Yes, I know some people missed the Old School building and thought you were a bit dingy, that you were a bit gloomy away from the windows, that you had no locks on the doors of the ladies' comfort zone, and more, but perhaps those people should just ponder on what our Old School could have offered us on the day - no walls and no roof! What you provided was a place for us to meet, for us to talk and for us to remember, and that is what matters. Almost on the first page of this edition we recognised that it is people that matter and I believe that the Old Fincunians Reunion of 2008 proved that once and for all. The School is gone, long live the School!



## ANOTHER TIME , ANOTHER PLACE

Just one week after the Old School reunion in Woodside Park, the 1946 Intake had their own get-together in Towcester, Northampton. A splendid lunch in La Strada restaurant was followed by much talking and laughing in the home of Mary Dark (nee Howard 1946/51). Those present were :-

**Stella Vallis (nee Napier) and Stan  
Betty Conner (nee Plumpton) and Dennis  
Ian Gunter and Margaret  
Joyce Stockwell (nee Tansley) and Geoff  
Jill Laver (nee Billington)  
Audrey Bruce (nee Turner) and Robert  
Jim Williams and Doreen  
Kipps Ruskin and David  
Stan Gilks and Barbara  
Don Cording and Jeanette  
Brian Laxton and Val  
Mary Matton (nee Lowen) and John  
Pam Lence (nee Burge) and Ron  
and the hostess, Mary Dark (nee Howard).**

**Stan Gilks (1946/53) :-**

*'.....It was marvellous. I can't get over the fact that we can still persuade 14 original form members to meet up. There was undoubtedly something rather special about Finchley County School.....'*

**Mary Dark said :-**

*'....Len Tebbutt had to cry off at the very last moment for family reasons.*

*It was great to see Joyce (Tansley) and Geoff Stockwell who were over from Canada, and Jill (Billington) Laver over from France.*

*I had several letters from those unable to come: Alison (Peeling) Long had hoped to come, but failing eyesight means she has had to give up driving. I heard from Audrey (Jackson) and Derek Humberstone, who were unable to come but sent their regards. Joy (Harradine) Bull wrote to say she was unable to come. She seemed to think that Barry Ehrlich had died several years ago. Phil Cook sent his apologies, as did Daphne (Searle) Gibson.*

*I wrote to Don Wakefield, and he replied saying that reunions were not for him, but he had many happy memories of schooldays.....'*

**The 1946-Intake Reunion for 2009 has already been booked for 6 September so make a note in your diary.**

## AND FINALLY

I send my humble apologies to our members in Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Their copies of the Autumn 2008 edition somehow took over eight weeks to reach them. I know, "Must try harder and could do better", or maybe I am just too mean to pay the full Air Mail rate? It was a bit ironical because the Autumn edition was all about our overseas members.

Geof Batten (1947/54) and I are researching a man called Arthur Gordon Davies. There is a chance that he was educated at Finchley County School in which case he would have been there from 1928 to 1933, or thereabouts. If that is correct then he would have been in the class of Olive Gems (nee Dewhurst 1928/33) and Margaret Roberts (1928/33) but there may be others out there who might remember him. If you do recollect the name, Arthur Gordon Davies, then please let me know either by :-

telephone - 01635 253124,  
email - Lsharp8030@aol.com,  
snail mail - Top Copse, Tile Barn, Woolton Hill, Newbury, RG20 9XE.

Arthur Gordon Davies is no longer with us but his career was pretty terrific. From his obituary we know that he attended a school in Finchley High Road, but the school has never been named. If it was FCS then we can be quite proud to have produced such a man and I can tell you all about him.

Now that you have agreed to share your email addresses with other members I will be publishing the list, as I know it, in the March 2009 edition. In the meanwhile, if anyone wants to know the information, contact me as shown above.

Don't forget, we will be gathering at the New War Memorial on Tuesday 11 November 2009 at about 10.30am to lay a Remembrance Wreath on Armistice Day. All are welcome to join in - no food, no drink, just Remembrance.

So that brings us to the end of this special edition. 317 copies sent out to members. The next edition will be out mid-March 2009 and the normal chapters will be there, Cover Story, Puzzle Pictures, Top of the Class, Money Matters, etc. so the deadline for letters, pictures, and cuttings will be 1 March 2009.

Have a very merry Christmas and the happiest of New Years. Bye for now.

*Les Sharp*