



Christmas 2010

Old Wymondhamians Newsletter

Welcome to the second issue of the Old Wymondhamians e-news. As mentioned last Christmas, this will not replace the hardcopy Spring Newsletter but we would like to keep you posted during the year and this would seem to be a popular and effective way to do that. We would be interested to know if you agree?

This year has been another eventful one for the College, with many reasons for joy as well as one or two for sad reflection. As you will read later, 2011 is set to be an exciting and hectic year for us all as we celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the College and we hope that the Old Wymondhamians will play a key part in our plans for the celebrations.

Enjoy your reading and feel free to [email](#) us your thoughts!

Word from the Principal

As I write, I have just had confirmation that the Secretary of State for Education has made an Order approving in principle the application of the College to become an Academy early in 2011. As the College enters its sixtieth year it is clear that we will also be beginning a new chapter in the history of the College. Whilst as an Academy we will remain proudly part of the family of Norfolk schools, we will be able to use our independence from some of the more pettifogging aspects of state school bureaucracy and regulation to chart our own course through what could be some very choppy waters in the next few years. I believe that we can be confident about the future without being in any way complacent or self satisfied. Our job is to build on our past successes in a way which moves the College forward without ever losing touch with its roots.

The Sixtieth Anniversary Year will in itself be an opportunity to revisit and celebrate those roots and we hope that the programme of activities and events will provide all Old Wymondhamians with at least one opportunity, if not many more, to engage in something of interest and enjoyment at the College or associated with it. In April, events kick off with our Trail Blazer Day for all those who joined the College in April or September 1951. We already in contact with a large number of our original students, but if you know of anyone who has been missed so far, do please let us know.

In addition to our celebrations, the College will see some other significant events next year. Our new International Centre will be opened on Speech Day in July. This building, adjacent to the Library, will house our Modern Foreign Languages Department and provide a hub for our links with the growing number of partner schools across the world. September will also see the final adoption of our new College uniform. It is not radically different to our previous uniform, but the blazers have a more sophisticated cut and, very much at students' request, house colours are brighter and more apparent than before. All in all our Sixtieth year looks to be one to remember.

The main focus of our celebrations is about fellowship rather than finance, but we will be taking the opportunity of the Anniversary to launch two fundraising initiatives during the year. The first will have a target of £250,000 to renovate the ground floor of the Water Tower and to convert it into a student social centre. Many schools now have a facility for students to socialise outside their own boarding house and students themselves have identified this as something that is currently lacking at the College. The Water Tower Social Centre will incorporate the Tuck Shop and a student run cafe facility as well as, we hope, a display and exhibition space for students' work. The development will secure the future of one of the College's most iconic structures and improve the experience for students in the future.

The second fundraising activity will seek to improve our ability to provide boarding education for those who would benefit from it, irrespective of parents' ability to pay our (still modest) boarding fee. I am very much aware that over the years, the College has transformed the lives of very many students whose parents were required to contribute very little, if anything, for their board and lodging. Unfortunately, providing bursary places is something beyond the resources of the College itself and the Local Authority has long since stopped supporting students' boarding fees at the College. As an Academy, the College will receive some modest contributions from the Secretary of State to a fund to provide support for families in financial hardship. We want to augment that with a proper Bursary Fund, administered by the Wymondham College Trust, which can begin to make meaningful grants to offset the costs for those that need to board at the College but whose parents are on modest incomes.

More details of both these schemes will be available in the spring. I do hope that you will consider contributing to either or both of these initiatives. More than that, however, I hope that our Anniversary will be a catalyst to the re-establishment of a great deal of fellowship between former students and staff of the College and the College as it is today.

Finally, may I pass on my thanks to the very many former students who were in contact with the College following the tragic and untimely death in October of Mr Andy Boorman, the Director of Boarding. Andy made a huge impact on the College and its students and the messages of condolence that came from all over the country (and indeed, the world) were a great source of comfort to his friends and colleagues at the College and, of course, to his family. The kind sentiments and fond recollections of so many were very moving.

I should like to take this opportunity to wish you a peaceful and happy Christmas on behalf of all at the College. I hope to see you in 2011.

Melvyn Roffe
Principal

Chairmans Greetings from Mike Herring

Another year and another letter from your Chairman. I think I am the first Chairman to be sentenced to a three year term and therefore it is somewhat unusual that I can look back on last year's contribution for inspiration for the current year.

The first thing that I notice is that my photograph shows me to be drinking a glass of red wine with what appears to be sparkling samphire (a fine old Norfolk delicacy) sticking out of the top of the glass. I have no memory of this photograph being taken, which may be saying something about my memory or possibly about the quality of this particular mixture!

This year saw another first in that we held our inaugural reunion in the USA. Not as well attended as the previous overseas one in Melbourne, but the small group who attended had an excellent evening at the Doubletree Guest Suites in Boston; a hotel I can strongly recommend to any of you travelling in that area.



One of the reasons for the small turn out is that whilst we know that we have in excess of 100 past pupils in the USA only a small number of them have kept their e-mail addresses up to date and therefore it is impossible to contact them in real time. If any of you recognise yourselves in this description please do go to our website <http://alumni.wyomondhamcollege.org> and update your details.

Bob Rowell's golf day is becoming an Old Wyomondhamian institution in its own right and this year over 60 people sat down to the post game dinner. There is no need for you to play the game, or even like it, to book in for the dinner at Sprowston Hall Hotel. Only 20 of the 60+ diners actually played golf this year. You will be pleased to know that I returned to form this year and once again was awarded the prize for "the greatest endeavour" i.e. the worst score!



Herring not convinced that choice of 5 iron by caddy/coach is the correct one! The look of bemusement is that of 'Junior' Steve Read.

The summer saw an excellent College v Old Boys cricket match which was narrowly won by the Old Boys. I must admit this success was partly due to the loan of a few current pupils to make up the Old Boys numbers. Their performance suggested that they were keen to show the first team what they were missing. I hope that we may see a repeat of this fixture in the

coming year.



I will not go into the details of all the events lined up for the 60th anniversary year in 2011 as they will be well chronicled elsewhere in the newsletter, but everything is starting to come together for a very exciting year. A message to our many overseas readers who may be planning a visit to the UK in 2011 - have a look at the programme of events and see if you can make your visit coincide with one of them. It would be a pity to miss out on what will be a memorable celebration for the College.

Over the past few years the Old Wymonhamians have managed to accumulate a small cash reserve thanks to the efforts of 100 club organisers. I am pleased to report that we have made a donation of £3,000 towards the costs of setting up the College Heritage Trail – more on this to follow.

And finally, with my Nostrodamus hat on, I will predict that in 2012 we will see the second of our regional reunions and that it will be in the SW. I will go further and predict that it will be in Bristol. I will leave it to another Chairman to report on whether my predictions eventuate.

This is probably my last “Chairmans Greeting”. It has been a thoroughly enjoyable and rewarding time with two overseas reunions, the first official regional reunion and the college archives well on the way to being catalogued. Possibly the best result is somewhat more intangible but I feel that the Old Wymondhamians have become much more integrated into the life of today’s college, and hopefully, with things coming into place, have an even greater role to play in the future.

By Mike Herring

Reunions

Many groups are planning to organise a get together at one of the 60th Anniversary Celebration events at the College in 2011. Certainly a number of year groups have booked a table at the Diamond Ball in June feeling that this would be an ideal opportunity to catch up with each other and provide a chance to re-visit their old ‘stamping grounds’. We would be

delighted to help you with planning a reunion in any way, so please do contact either [Caroline Hall](#) or [Jackie Glenn](#) to discuss it further.

1951 “Get-Together”

A very small “get-together” to celebrate the 70th Birthdays of a few of the 1951 joiners to Wymondham College was held on Thursday 9 September. We all met up and enjoyed a very nice lunch at the Premier Inn near the Show Ground in Norwich.

Although a small gathering we had a really good time talking about old times and remembering all the good times we had together. We shall certainly meet up again in the future.



The names of the people on the photo are as follows: Looking at the photo – left hand side – Far end – Rita Wright (Lucas) Patricia Howard (Marsh) Frances Chaplin(Willimott) Timothy Briston : Right hand side – Far end – Ruth Chase (Brown) Ann Kelly (Read) Glenda Sewell (Angell) Melvyn Simms.

Norfolk Show

A staggering 82 Old Wymondhamians came to visit us on the stand at the Norfolk Show this year, we were touched by the huge interest you all showed in what was going on at the College. We had a good contingent from 1951 and a very encouraging number of OWs from 2000 up to 2008, and all years in between. We love to meet up with you all each year and very much hope that we shall welcome even more of you at the Show in 2011.



Don't forget to put next year's show in your diary. 29th and 30th June 2011. We will be in the same spot, look out for our flags. The stand number will be advised nearer the time.. The Concert and Jazz bands will be performing and we will have the arena party and runners again too.

60th Anniversary Celebrations

We hope that most readers will, by now, be aware that the College will be celebrating a very important anniversary in April 2011. We have planned a number of events to mark the 60th Anniversary and hope that you will be able to attend one or more of those over the coming months. Just in case you have not received your copy of the 60th Anniversary brochure please click on the link to find a copy.

<http://www.wremembered.co.uk/pdf/WC%2060th%20Celebrations%20A5%20Master.pdf>

We shall be sending you more details of the various events as the year unfolds.

The celebrations will be launched with the Trail Blazer Day on 8th April 2011, to which we have invited as many of the 1951 joiners as we are in touch with. If you joined Wymondham College in 1951, or know someone else who did, and you have not received an invitation then please contact [Caroline Hall](#)

Tickets for the Diamond Ball on 4th June 2011 are selling fast so please do get in touch to book yours before it is too late. More details about the Ball can be found on the Wymondham College Remembered website

<http://www.wremembered.co.uk/pdf/60th%20Ball%20Poster.pdf>

Obituaries

Norman Canty (1953-57) Norman taught at Wymondham College from 1953 to 1957 before moving to Derbyshire, the Midlands and Hertfordshire to further his career. He finally retired to Norwich at an early age but, 10 years ago, he and his wife Dorothy moved to Harrogate where they could be close to members of their family. Sadly Norman passed away suddenly on 14 June 2010 at the age of 88.

Jane Marter (1958-65) It is with much sadness that I have to report the death of our sister Jane Vivienne Marter on the 5th January 2009. She died peacefully at Cedar Court Care Home, Wigston, Leicestershire after a 12 year battle against Alzheimer's disease. Jane now rests in peace at the Horsham St Faith's Crematorium Memorial Gardens just outside Norwich." Jane always spoke affectionately about Wymondham and all the friendships she made in Westminster House. She loved playing sport and often regaled us with stories about the Hockey 1st XI's team mascot, the much-travelled and much-loved, multi-coloured "Gonk".

Tony Marter 1958-64 and Lizzie Rothero (nee Marter) 1965-72.

A Tribute to Tom Eaton OBE, TD, DL. (Oct 13th 1918 – Jan 19th 2010)

A Wymondham College Governor for many years and Chairman for his last two terms. Tom Eaton was also a Trustee of the College 1996 – 2009.

Wymondham College was threatened with closure in the mid eighties. By chance this came to the attention of Tom Eaton, lawyer, who at the time had no connection with the College.

Having been wounded in action whilst serving with the 4th Battalion Royal Norfolk Regiment, and surviving three years as a prisoner of the Japanese in the notorious Changi POW camp in Singapore, Tom would once again be called upon to raise his game. His Charitable Trust connections, legal guile, and a burning desire for justice, would be brought to bear in helping some very determined governors and parents, led by Principal Ron Wolsey, in the ensuing battle against those who dared suggest Dr. Lincoln Ralphs' famous experiment should be terminated. The battle was duly won, and one day hopefully the full account of this saga will be recorded.

Tom immediately joined the Board of Governors, and eventually became Chairman. His interest in the College never waned, and it was his foresight which was instrumental in ensuring the Wymondham College Trust was maintained in preparation for the day when its use as a financial vehicle could benefit the College and its students. He served as a Trustee up to his 90th birthday, and his last day as a Trustee was spent at the College, inspecting the new Lincoln Sixth Form Centre. The pleasure this gave him was a joy to see, and a fitting reward for a man who had done so much for the College.

Tom Eaton became a City Councillor in 1947, and was influential in planning the future of a war damaged city. He was a councillor for 24 years, and Lord Mayor of Norwich 1957/58. A freeman of the city, he became so well known in its affairs that many chose to regard him as "Mr. Norwich"

Tom's other great interest was in the efforts to set up and continue to honour the sacrifice of the many US servicemen who lost their lives in WW2 whilst serving from the airfields of East Anglia, and through these efforts came his long association with the Memorial Trust of the Second Air Division USAAF, and the building of the original American Memorial Library in Norwich in 1963. By 1994, he was Chairman of the Memorial Trust's Governors, and was about to stand down, when fire destroyed the Library. Tom was active once again in ensuring that the Memorial Library would have a new home within the Forum, which was opened in November 2001, and houses the 2nd Air Division's Roll of Honor, archive film and other material.

Tom's other commitments were:

President of the Norwich Far East Prisoners of War Association,

President of the Norwich Society,

Solicitor and Trustee of the Norwich Freemen charity,

President of the Norfolk and Norwich Law Society in 1966/ 67

Deputy Lieutenant of Norfolk in 1971.

A Trustee of the Town Close Estate Charity for 60 years,

Founder member and the inspiration behind the creation of the museum of the Royal Norfolk Regiment and Royal Anglian Regiment in Norwich. This Museum was a national pioneer of the concept of embedding regimental museums within the County Museum service.

Mr. Eaton only gave up his practising certificate as a solicitor, and partnership in Overbury's, the Norwich law firm, in 2005, aged 87. He specialised in conveyancing, probate and, during his long service, he worked for many of Norfolk's farming, land owning and business families, setting up and managing their trusts, and providing a host of other legal services.

By David Spinks

Sports Shorts

If you would like to see what all our sporting students have been up to then please click on the link to go to the College Newsletter where you will find the 'Sports Shorts' as well as the rest of the College news.

<http://www.wymondhamcollege.org/assets/uploads/resources/2010/12/fe7bb00c-967f-4538-9e71-6dd61bbd17d3.pdf>

We have also included some dates for key sporting events in the **Dates for your Diary**.

Dates for your Diary

1 st XI Football v Wymondham High School (County Cup) at home	12 th January 2011
Old Wymondhamians AGM	5 th February 2011
Mair Cup Music Festival	6 th February 2011
PSA Quiz and Supper Evening	4 th March 2011
Spring Concert	3 rd April 2011
Trail Blazer Day (for 1951 College Attendees)	8 th April 2011
Diamond Ball	4 th June 2011
Golf Day	1 st July 2011
Reunion with BBQ	2 nd July 2011
Service of Thanksgiving in Norwich Cathedral	13 th October 2011



Wishing you a very happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year