



Magazine of the Old Scholars of Kingswood Grammar School

## *Editorial....*

No. 1 - Spring 1992

You may remember that at the reunion in April 1991 we held a raffle which was designed to raise funds to finance a Newsletter. This is the first of what we hope will be a regular publication which will keep you in touch with others who are Old Scholars of Kingswood Grammar School, and its successor, Kingsfield School. We need to know what you think about this venture, and about the future of any Old Scholars organisation.

At the present time the Kingswood Eatonian Society is the only formally constituted association for old scholars, having taken over the assets and workings of Kingswood Old Scholars Association (KOSA) some time ago. The current name of the Eatonian Society serves to perpetuate the memory of Major Eaton, the first headmaster of the school in 1921. As Major Eaton retired in 1949 and passed away at the age of 84 on 20th April 1971, there must now be at least one generation of old scholars who never knew him.

Maybe the time is now ripe to resurrect KOSA, or maybe some other name, which might more fairly represent what we are about. In deciding what our objects are it would be important that we remember Mr William Haskins, first Chairman of Governors, who was the chief instrument in the founding of the School, Major Eaton, the first Headmaster, and the early members of staff who laid the foundations of future traditions.

## *What do you think?*

## *Questionnaire....*

So that we can take into consideration what you think you will find a questionnaire enclosed. Please take time to complete this, add any other contributions which you would like to be included in the next or later editions, and pop it in the post to me. You can see that the sort of things we would like your views on are:

- How many meetings annually?
- What kind of meetings - dinners, lunches?
- Should the meetings be for each decade or open?
- Do we want speakers?
- Do we want a Newsletter?
- What should it be called?
- What kinds of articles should it contain?
- Are you prepared to support actively an association?

[newsletter.dtp]

## *Your Committee...*

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Here are your committee members who will be pleased to answer any queries which you may have about the organisation or who will be happy to hear your suggestions for the future. Let them know what you want of an old scholars association:

Fred Baber (1921-26) President, 70 Beechwood Road, Fishponds, Bristol,  
BS16 3NT Tel: 654520

Peggy Bolt (1938-43) Madam Chairman, 293 Badminton Road, Downend,  
Bristol, BS16 6NU Tel: 564020

David Peacock (1928-36) Secretary, 1 Frenchay Close, Downend,  
Bristol BS16 2QX Tel: 659000

Frank Rawlings (1939-43) Treasurer, 74 Oakdale Road, Downend,  
Bristol, BS16 6EA, Tel: 561050

June Long (1939-45) 5 Clevedale Court, Downend, Bristol,  
BS16 2SG, Tel: 567910

Frank Stephens (1930-35) 44 Amberley Way, Wickwar, Glos.,  
GL12 8LP, Tel: 0454/299221

Mike Bendrey (1951-56) Editor, 26 Overndale Road, Downend, Bristol,  
BS16 2RT Tel: 565689

Kenneth Meek (1940-45) Historian, Stepping Stones, 1103 Bristol Road,  
Selly Oak, Birmingham, B29 6LX Tel:021/4755490

## *An Appeal...*

Thanks are due to Old Scholar Mrs R Pearce now of West Drayton, Middlesex who has lent us some very early copies of 'Kingswood Chronicles' through her nephew, Dave Wall, who is also ex-KGS. We are anxious to create a complete set of the publication, and our missing copies are numbers 13 (surprise, surprise!) which is for July 1937, 15 and 16 (1938 and 1939). We have number 17 which is dated 1941/42, but number 18 is also missing, which may have also been published during the war. Copies 19 to 29 we also have, but no copies since 29 dated December 1959. Is it still published? If not, when did it cease publication? The early editions are all described as 'Vol. I No. X', but it seems that no-one was quite sure how many copies constituted a volume, so the volume number was conveniently dropped later on.

If you can help supply the missing volumes, please send them for photocopying to the Editor who will be pleased to refund the postage and return them promptly, registered or recorded delivery if requested. Many thanks in anticipation of your response.

## *Madam Chairman writes...*

### A MESSAGE FROM MADAM CHAIRMAN

Dear Old Scholars,

It gives me great pleasure to be part of the initial launch of the Kingswood Old Scholars' Newsletter.

This was conceived last year, and its launch has been made possible by the support of the Eatonian Society, motivated by the excellent response at the old Scholars' celebration of the School's 70th birthday held in April 1991 where there was a record attendance of over 350.

The Eatonian Society has held many Annual Dinners and luncheons in the post-war period with great success. However, time is not on our side, and the Committee feels that there is now a need for greater communication with the vast numbers of Old Scholars who would like to belong, but who may not even know about us.

During the life-time of Kingswood Grammar School many hundreds, if not thousands, of scholars were educated in beliefs, disciplines, moral standards and codes of behaviour, as well as receiving excellent academic grounding, something which is often lacking today. This has given us an "eliteness" which should not be wasted, and can, by fellowship and communication with one another, be of mutual benefit.

To develop this theme we need more information, which only you can provide, if we are to go forward. So please, please, complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it to Mike. Only in this way can the Kingswood old Scholars' Association grow and not decline, giving the vast silent majority what they want from our Association.

I am looking forward in anticipation to seeing you at future events, the first of which has already been organised. The Annual Luncheon on Saturday, 3rd October 1992. Tickets are limited to the first hundred who apply.

Already things are on the move. Ken Meek is busy writing the history of the School. An excellent endeavour, and I am sure that he would be delighted to receive any historic information which you may consider relevant.

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking the Eatonian Society Committee, and in particular Mike Bendrey, for its efforts in getting the Newsletter started. Hopefully, this will be the first of many issues. Please give the Editor your support, after all it is your Newsletter.

*Peggy Bolt*

## *The President...*

It is indeed both a privilege and a pleasure to be afforded the opportunity to contribute a few lines to the first issue of our Newsletter.

As one of the first intake to the school in 1921, I can still recall vividly those happy early years and the many pleasing memories of the activities of the Old Scholars' Association with its affiliated clubs, Football, Cricket, Tennis, Hockey, Cycling and Drama, which most of us joined upon leaving school from 1926 onwards.

As there were no predecessors, we had the great advantage of knowing everyone and the early days of the Association simply continued to cement the friendships and relationships made at School. The Headmaster, Major Eaton, had been elected as our first President, and we received every co-operation and encouragement from the School, including liberal use of the buildings and playing fields.

This is neither the time nor the place to attempt a detailed history, but suffice to say that, unfortunately, the early enthusiasm was not maintained over later years and attempts to revive interest in activities following the War and the change in Headmaster/President, were not particularly successful. The last reunion dinner was held on 21st March 1958 and the Association was formally wound up in 1977.

The emergence of the Eatonian Society which followed a celebration dinner arranged to mark the retirement of Mr B. H. Sammons in 1966 is a story in itself, and is much too involved to recount here.

It was quite apparent from the numbers attending the Diamond Jubilee celebration and even more so at the 70th anniversary at the School in April 1991, that there is a strong desire for the continuance of an Association for Old Scholars, and it will be for you to decide its form, its name and if you will give it your full and active support by completing the enclosed questionnaire. Please reply as honestly and as quickly as possible.

*Fred Baber*

## *Computers...*

With the information generated as a result of past reunions, and the information which is available from the Old Eatonian lists, we have set up a database of the old scholars of Kingswood Grammar School. If you would like your information included on the database, please send the Editor your name, maiden name (if applicable), years at KGS, address and telephone number.

If you would like information about anyone we may have on the database, please send me a stamped addressed envelope with your query, and the Editor will be pleased to check the information which we have.

## *Memories....*

Frank Stephens (1930-35) writes:

"In the early 1930s, probably about 1932, Sir Thomas Beecham visited Bristol to conduct a symphony concert in the Colston Hall one evening. In the afternoon immediately before the concert a rehearsal was held in the Colston Hall to which representatives of many Bristol schools, including Kingswood Grammar School, were invited.

I recall the hall being packed with schoolchildren and how impressed we were when the orchestra assembled on the platform, followed by the very impressive figure of Sir Thomas, complete with goatee beard.

Sir Thomas raised his baton and the first movement commenced. We children sat enthralled and in utter silence. At the end of the movement we clapped vigorously to show our appreciation, whereupon Sir Thomas with raised baton in his right hand slowly rotated anti-clockwise through 360° and, as he turned, the clapping subsided. Complete silence ensued when his turn had been completed. Beecham then lowered his baton arm, and the second movement commenced!

With hindsight it could be that we young people had anticipated GB's entry into the EEC, as I understand that clapping after movements is the norm in Europe."

## *Where....*

are they now?

Where are those friends which we made at school? With the best will in the world, we plan to maintain contact but as the years go by we lose touch. We may be able to help. Let us know who you would like to get in contact with, the last time you met, the last known address, and we'll put the details in the next Newsletter. If we are successful, let us know the good news!

## *Lunch....*

The next Annual Lunch of the Kingswood Eatonian Society will be held at The Barn, Overndale Road, Downend on Saturday, 3rd October 1992. If you wish to be included get in touch with :

David Peacock, Secretary,

1 Frenchay Park Close, Downend, Bristol, BS16 2QX Tel: 659000

FIRST COME FIRST SERVED - ACCOMMODATION IS LIMITED

## *An Obituary...*

It is with considerable regret that we read in the parish magazine of the Church of St John the Baptist, Frenchay that Miss Watters passed away towards the end of last year. The announcement read:

**'MARGARET WATTERS**

'Miss Margaret (Peggy) Watters died on Christmas day 1991 in her 93rd year.

'She will be remembered for her 36 years at Kingswood (Grammar) School teaching English, although her subject was History. She was proud to be sent a regular birthday card from Sir Bernard Lovell who was one of her pupils. She and her sister, Eileen, lived at The Little House, Frenchay until they moved to Kirriemuir. Although she was brought up as a Scottish Presbyterian, she and her sister were regular worshippers at St John Baptist Church, Frenchay.'

The Editor writes:

Many Old Scholars will remember Miss Watters, known by the epithet 'Polly', as the rather dour disciplinarian who ran the School Library with various pupils who helped with library duties from time to time. I still remember feeling ashamed as she lectured the whole of my form, of which she was form mistress, about some particular group misdemeanour long since forgotten. You could have heard a pin drop as she laid down the law in those (to us) broad Scottish tones, leaving no doubt about the sort of behaviour which was expected of pupils who attended a good school, meaning us. I also remember being told frankly that I didn't deserve the relatively high mark that I had received in the exam, as my low term mark indicated that I wasn't working all of the time.

She was indeed a formidable lady!

## *Extract....*

The following is an extract from 'Kingswood Chronicles' of 1925. Miss Dare is now living in Clifton aged 84, and when phoned to ask her permission to reproduce the article she said that she enjoyed travelling and had just come back from a visit to Australia via Hong Kong. After leaving Kingswood she went to Bristol University to read honours French and English, and then taught in Bristol schools until her retirement. Whilst at Kingswood Secondary School she lived in Staple Hill opposite the Portcullis Hotel, and had previously attended Staple Hill Junior School, which was just over the road from where she lived. The article which she wrote all those years ago captures the spirit of a different age. Hope you enjoy it:

## *Over the Hills and Far Away...*

The sun coyly hid her face when we met, eager and hopeful for what the day might bring; but before reaching Temple Meads her beams added fresh zeal to our enthusiastic spirits. We decided to train to Winscombe, walk over the Mendips to Blagdon, and after tea return through Rickford Combe to Burrington Station.

No great adventure befell us on the railway route, though we sympathised with one of our party who left his stick on the train. Five minutes from Winscombe Station we left the dusty highway for the green of Shute Shelf Hill, and began our ascent of the Mendips. Though the climb was steep, we were repaid on reaching the summit. Every breeze whispered adventure in our ears; the gloriously free air of the countryside delighted our senses; the beauty of the distant fields of Somerset, which in their dim expanse stretched before us, would have made blithe the saddest of spirits.

So we happily scampered over the fresh turf, while overhead the skylark - ethereal minstrel! - sang her song of freedom. Such surroundings gave us appetite, and, lighting upon a burrow sheltered by the projecting rocks, we dined.

Then we prodded across high downs (inhabited by wild horses), crossed fields and stiles, jumped streams and a treacherous marsh, until we rested full in face of Black Down.

Opposite us, on the slope, played the tiniest of rabbits, that scuttled one after another about the hill, and later, frightened by our arrival, scampered to safety. This part of our journey was the most difficult and the most beautiful. It lay over withered bracken until we reached the heather and the whortleberry of the summit. Sitting here, we could see the Bristol Channel - "that sulky, old, gray brute" - and the towns that fringe its coast.

We were soon at Blagdon, where we had tea, and, doubly refreshed, continued our walk. seeing the fine Perpendicular tower of Blagdon Church close at hand, we spent some time examining the interior, airing our Knowledge of Latin and Gray's Elergy. Satisfied with this we started out for Burrington. No one could wish for prettier country than that through which we passed. On either side were delicately tinted hedgerows and slopes of budding trees, at whose foot lay masses of primroses. We stopped to admire the imitation of a Swiss mill, its lake and waterfall, surrounded with flowering rhododendrons.

We had gathered but few flowers, and so, arriving at Burrington with time to spare, we explored, and soon found as many as we could wish.

And then came the rain and hail; the sun, our companion till now, deserted us as if angered at the too sudden approach of night. [nox noctis. f Ed.]

But we did not suffer; the station was close at hand. We spent the time chatting and laughing, sorting and bunching and tying our flowers; and, when the train came, we found delight in song till the journey's end.

I. DARE, Vi Extract from *Kingswood Chronicles Vol.1 (No.2) July 1925*

## *Postscript...*

This is really a postscript to the 70th birthday reunion. What an amazing occasion it was...350+ was more than I could have expected in my wildest dreams, at least twice as many. We made some mistakes...bar too small...kept you waiting outside for name tags...perhaps too much formal chat...more places to eat. But in spite of all this, we hope you enjoyed yourselves, and we'll promise to do better next time!

Very many thanks to all those kind people who wrote to express their thanks, and if these were an indication of the evening, it was probably a success. Some things I failed to do, so I hope to right those wrongs now.

Hedley Powell (1965-73) of 4B Copley Road, Chorlton, Manchester, M21 1WT couldn't attend, but would be pleased to hear from anyone who remembers him - Tel: 061-8819210.

Dr David Hilling (1947-54) was also unable to attend, but wrote a very pleasant letter of regret passing on greetings to all those present. David described himself as Head Boy 1953/4, Supply Teacher, July 1958, Assistant Caretaker, Summer vacation 1958. His address is 4 Torrington Road, Berkhamstead, HP4 3DD Tel: 0442 862935.

John Purnell (1943-48) of 49 Harrowdene Road, Upper Knowle, Bristol BS4 2JJ asks if there is any news of Margaret Lenthall of the same class who was reported to be in Turkey. If that's true, he writes, her children would be unique in Turkey for she had red hair! Just imagine, a ginger Mullah! He was unhappy about not getting an attendance list (which I would be happy to supply-Ed), but regrets not meeting Bob Weeks and John Powell on the night.

News from Margaret Wills (nee Reece) (1955-62) who is now married to a musician, is a professional player and teacher of the cello and double bass, has son David (trombonist), and daughter Naomi (double bass and oboe).

Which reminds me that Eric Hilton, Head of Music for many years, lives at Severn View, Grovesend, Thornbury, Avon.

Hilda J Chart (nee Lewis) also could not attend the reunion, but sent her best wishes to any of the 'Old Originals 1921+' Her address is 124 Abingdon Road, Standlake, Nr Witney, OX8 7RN.

George Butcher who taught English in the 1950s also sent his regards, and the last time I saw him he was living in active retirement in Stoke Mandeville.

Barbara Yates (nee Teal) (1936-1939) lost touch with KGS friends when she went on to Clarke's College, and mentions Muriel Hicks who went on to Girton.

There were others, but lack of space this time means that we have had to hold some things over until next time. If you have some news which you would like to be included, please write to me. It's up to you.....

*Mike Bendrey*



# Questionnaire...

1. Name \_\_\_\_\_

2 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Maiden Name \_\_\_\_\_ Years at KGS \_\_\_\_\_

4. When last did you attend a reunion? \_\_\_\_\_

5. How often would you like to see reunions take place? (please tick)

Twice annually \_\_\_\_\_ Annually \_\_\_\_\_ Every \_\_\_\_\_ years

6. What kind of meetings would you prefer? (please number in order of preference)

Dinners \_\_\_\_\_ Lunches \_\_\_\_\_ Dances \_\_\_\_\_ Buffets \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_ \*

If other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

7. Would you like to have appropriate speakers? yes/no

8. Would you like a Newsletter? yes/no How often? \_\_\_\_\_

9. Could you suggest an appropriate name? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

10. What kind of articles should it contain? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If you have an article to be included in the future, please enclose it with the questionnaire.

## THE FUTURE OF AN OLD SCHOLARS' ASSOCIATION:

11. I would prefer the Kingswood Eatonian Society to continue independently: yes/no

12. I would prefer an additional old scholars' association to be formed? yes/no

13. I would prefer a single old scholars' association to incorporate the Kingswood Eatonian Society: yes/no

14. I would suggest the following name for an additional or single old scholars' association:  
\_\_\_\_\_

15. Do you wish to be sent any further Newsletters? yes/no

16. Do you wish to be sent information on future meetings? yes/no

17. I would be willing to contribute an annual subscription to cover future costs of production:

Up to: £1 \_\_\_\_\_ £2 \_\_\_\_\_ £3 \_\_\_\_\_ £4 \_\_\_\_\_ £5 \_\_\_\_\_ (please tick)

Please return as soon as possible to:

Mike Bendrey,  
26 Overndale Road,  
Downend,  
Bristol BS16 2RT

Many thanks for your help

[Question.dt2]