

# The Old Croydonians' Association

THE ASSOCIATION FOR EX-PUPILS OF THE BOROUGH AND SELHURST SCHOOLS

<http://www.TheOldCroydonians.org.uk>

## Record of the Annual General Meeting, held at The BRIT School on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> July 2015 at 2pm

### 1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence.

The Chairman welcomed all to the AGM. There were 18 apologies for absence and 2 did not show. 42 members were present.

### 2. Minutes of the previous AGM

These were accepted.

Proposer: Derek MAURI  
Seconder: Yvonne SMITH

### 3. Matters arising.

(a) **Archive access.** The archives were now offsite at the Museum, so it was no longer possible to consult them without prior appointment. [At the end of the meeting Anthony STELLING said that he volunteers at the Archives and could undertake research for the OCA. The Chairman would follow this up with him.

**ACTION: Chairman/Tony STELLING**

(b) **Website.** In response to popular demand, the webmaster had now removed the function which caused the left-hand menu to follow the reader scrolling down the page. Both the Brit School and the Crescent School had recently been asked to put links on their sites to the OCA site but had not yet done so. Graham DERRIMAN has suggested last year that the Brit School students, who studied web design as part of their curriculum, should be invited to assist with managing the site. There had been no response yet from the BRIT School to this suggestion.

(c) **Future events.** The Committee were always looking for ideas and encouraged suggestions from members. Feedback forms for this AGM included a section for such suggestions. [A draw took place at the end of the AGM and the winner whose feedback form was drawn received a copy of the book 'Croydon in the 1940s and 1950s'.]

### 4. Reports.

#### 4.1 Chairman.

(a). SP would step down at the 2016 AGM to continue a five year contract with the Salvation Army to teach IT skills to mature students in Northamptonshire. He felt that the time was right a fresher vision for the OCA.

(b) Much energy had been expended on the new membership model. Of the previous 500 or so members, about 170 had to date signed up for the new £12 annual membership. There had been half a dozen resignations. One person had challenged the new membership model [of which more later under 4.4.]

(c) The Association had produced various publications, the most recent of which was the World War I commemoration book. This was available for £5, of which £1 went to the Royal British Legion. The excellent 'Croydonians' book by Isabel MacLEOD was now free of charge.

(d) The Association was still trying to build relationships with the two successor schools but relations were already good. In the old Boys' school the Scholarship and Honours boards had been recreated and they now hung in the old assembly hall.

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Chairman: Steve Palmer

Membership Secretary: Roger Hill - Honorary Treasurer: John Munday

Committee Members:

Valerie Heathorn - Richard Chatterjee - Cortland Fransella - Margaret Ziolek - Ian Herbertson

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(e) Peter and David JUNIPER had successfully sought to track down the small plaque originally displayed in the School Hall, from the old Boys' school with the lines by Sports Writer, Grantland Rice and donated by pupil A E Rylance (1931-1937).

*"For when the One Great Scorer comes  
To mark against your name,  
He writes – not that you won or lost –  
But how you played the Game."*

They had eventually found the original in a private house in south Wales and had taken detailed photographs which would permit its reconstruction. After discussion with the current Headteacher, the replica would ideally hang in its old position, (or as near as practically possible) in what is now the Crescent Primary School.

(f) The search was on for similar items from the Girls' school. Wendy GILBERT was sought for help on the trail of the Honours Boards/School Captains' Boards. All former members of the Girls' school were invited to put up ideas for items which might be replicated.

**ACTION: Valerie HEATHORN**

(g) In his first year on the committee, Bob SMITH had worked on building the relationship with the Archives held by Croydon Council. He had also worked on the relationship with the Croydon Advertiser and the Croydon Guardian.

(h) The Chairman thanked all who serve as Volunteers and who had provided valuable assistance - notably Peter JUNIPER, Tony PORTER, Margaret ZIOLEK, Brian ROOTE and Keith WHITHAM. He encouraged others to put themselves forward for the committee itself, or join the group of existing volunteers. He especially urged former members of the Girls' school to do so.

(i) The Chairman said that the committee had spent some time trying to develop a longer-term vision for the OCA, after present members were no longer around. This included making best use of the new £12 annual subscription. [See item 9.]

## 4.2 Honorary Treasurer.

(a) The accounting year had now been changed to 01 May-30 April, which meant that accounts could henceforth be presented at the July AGM immediately following the end of the accounting year.

(b) In 2014 he had closed the former Nationwide account and moved everything to Barclays, so that the OCA now had full online banking.

(c) There were three pending items in the 2014-2015 accounts (magazine, honours boards and WWI book) which would now be shown in the 2015-2016 accounts at the 2016 AGM.

(d) Two members present had had problems trying to set up annual standing orders in favour of the OCA with Santander Bank, whilst others who also banked with Santander had had no problems. [After brief discussion it was agreed that Direct Debits were not a viable alternative.] Members to contact committee if they continue to experience problems (especially with Santander accounts)

**Action: Affected Members**

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(e) The 2014-2015 audited accounts were accepted:

Proposer: Reg WHELLOCK

Secunder: Ian HERBERTSON.

## 4.3 Magazine Editor.

(a) The May 2015 edition had been larger than usual at 84 pages. It had been printed on finer paper to enable it to be posted at a lower rate. General approval for the magazine was expressed by those present.

(b) Mike FLEET commented on the variable quality of the photographs in the magazine and wondered if photos should be used on the website only. The editor explained that the variation arose from the difference in quality of the originals submitted, ranging from high-resolution digital images to photocopied images in hard copy. Editor to check quality of future photographs

**Action: Editor**

(c) Dave FOSTER noted that there were some photos of OC teams etc on the Friends Reunited website which were not on the OCA site of in our magazine. Webmaster would follow this up.

**Action: Webmaster**

(d) Currently the Editor had only 18 pages towards the May 2016 magazine. As we normally aimed for 60 pages, he hoped to receive more material.

**Action: All Members**

## 4.4 Membership Secretary.

(a) There were now two versions of the membership list, one alphabetical by surname and the other chronological by year of attendance. Addresses were not shown.

(b) Anyone wanting to contact someone on the list had only to contact the Membership Secretary who would supply the postal address or pass the message on to the person concerned. Some discussion of this followed, with some asking why the lists could not contain full address details. The Membership Secretary explained that, firstly, there were data protection issues; secondly, that the lists had only ever contained postal addresses and never telephone numbers or email addresses; and, thirdly, that the number of requests that he received each year for such messages to be passed was below ten and was entirely manageable.

(c) Those present were asked to write, on the list available at the AGM for this purpose, which of the two lists they wanted (either or both) and whether they wanted it in hard copy or by email.

**Action: Interested Members**

(d) The total number on the list was now 547, made up of 152 'girls' and 395 'boys'. This was 14 down on the previous year. 6 or 7 new members had joined and there were 4 temporary members present on this occasion in order to tour the old Girls' school.

(e) Of the 547 members, 486 were 'old-style' life members, 45 were paying some residual subscription rate and there were 3 honorary members – the heads of the two successor schools and Mr RA SMITH, last Head of the Boys' school. 13 were 'missing'. Of the total, 14 were former staff members, including Mike FLEET who was present.

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(f) The outlook was not good. The rate of loss would inevitably rise. Over 200 of the 547 were aged 80 or over, only 8 were under 50 and there were none under 45. There was no doubt that members valued the opportunities for nostalgia that the Association provided but the three issues of membership, financial viability and Committee membership all needed to be addressed.

(g) The previous year the Committee had proposed a two-phase strategy: the next 5-10 years and beyond 10 years [for the latter see item 9].

(h) For the first phase the Committee had proposed and the 2014 AGM had endorsed a new single membership with standard annual subscription of £12. Only 173 had paid to date. Even this small number guaranteed a predictable and increased income and showed active interest. If all members did likewise, the financial position would of course be concomitantly stronger. The aim was to achieve at least 250 annual subscriptions of £12. That was, however, less half of the previous membership. What were the implications of this reduced membership?

(i) One current life member said that he had received legal advice on the cancellation of the life membership *category*. The Committee felt that one way to address this issue was to introduce two categories of membership:

- 'Sustaining membership' (£12 per annum)
- Membership with reduced benefits (such as old life members).

The views of those present were sought. The committee would discuss them and bring a proposal to the 2016 AGM. Meanwhile, no member would be deemed to have lapsed, even if they had not paid their new £12 annual subscription by 01 January 2016.

**Action: all Committee - next meeting**

(j) In the subsequent discussion:

- Mike KEITCH thought that the legal point was arguable. He belonged to another, much larger association which had done the same as the OCA. That said, we should be pragmatic and adopt the proposal for two membership types suggested above.
- Ian HERBERTSON said that if the material circumstances had changed so that the contract could no longer be discharged, previous arrangements were voidable, contrary to the view of the member who raised the query.
- Pat WEBB said that she had paid her life subscription and, at the age of 83, she agreed with the stance of the member who raised the query. She suggested that perhaps people of her age, who for historical reasons would not have the financial resources of younger members, should not be expected to pay the annual £12. Perhaps membership types could be determined by age. She, for example, would not object to paying something to defray postage costs.
- Margaret ZIOLEK said that she was personally happy to pay £12 per year.
- Derek MAURI said that the OCA should spend nothing on any legal advice without a decision by the AGM. This received general informal assent. He added, as a Trustee of the Crescent School, that that school is planning to become an academy with pupils from ages 4-18. If this happened, it meant that in the 'beyond 10 years phase', the OCA might indeed start to receive new, young members as they left school.

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## 4.5 Webmaster.

(a) SP had done the job for 10 years now and long-term needed a younger person to maintain the site. The site receives some 50,000 visits per year, not all OCs. As an example of the importance of our presence on the Web, he had, for example, been sent old silver sports medals by a dealer who had received them in a house clearance and had located the OCA via the Website before sending them to the Chairman. Three 'girls' present at this AGM had found us through the website. Another old girl had asked through the website if it might be possible to track down a poem from the 1950s written by a fellow-pupil; It did prove possible and she was delighted. The website was now the OCA's shop window and the more that members went on to the site, the higher up the search engine ratings the site would climb.

## 5. Adoption of Reports.

All the reports were adopted.

Proposer: Steve COLTMAN  
Secunder: Elizabeth VEASEY.

## 6. Re-Election of Auditor.

This was agreed and Ian PARK (Honorary Member) was duly re-elected

Proposer: Graham DERRIMAN.  
Secunder: Mike FLEET.

## 7. Election of Committee Members.

Three new volunteers came forward to serve on the committee:

- Cortland FRANSELLA
- Ian HERBERTSON
- Margaret ZIOLEK.

All were elected unopposed.

Proposer: Derek MAURI  
Secunder: Reg WHELLOCK.

## 8. Proposal for revised Association Rules.

The AGM agreed to postpone this to the 2016 AGM.

## 9. Future of the OCA.

(a) The Membership Secretary sketched the long-term possibility of a charitable educational trust which could give grants and bursaries to assist pupils with their studies. Members might bequeath sums to such a trust.

(b) He noted that the Brit School had some wealthy former students who might be prepared to donate to such a charitable trust.

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## 10. Future Events.

There was no formal discussion of this item but members were urged to come up with ideas.

## 11. Any Other Business.

(a) Brian SELF asked that the AGM should take note of the fact that Roy WINNETT had been honoured with a lifetime award for services to sailing, presented to him by HRH The Princess Royal. Robert GOLDSMITH, also present, had also been honoured with re same award. Those present expressed their congratulation.

(b) Cortland FRANSELLA noted that some Committee members lived a good way from London and wondered if it might be possible to make some sort of contribution towards their out-of-pocket-expenses. David FOSTER proposed and Robert GOLDSMITH seconded a motion that this should constitute a Notice of Motion to the 2016 AGM. This was duly approved.

(c) Ann KERRIDGE then proposed and Dave FOSTER seconded a further motion, that the Committee should be authorised to make interim payments so that those affected should not have to wait another year before receiving any reimbursement. This too was carried.

**Action: all Committee - next meeting**

There being no other business, the AGM concluded at 1615.