

## **MINUTES The Old Alfredians' Club Summer Dinner and AGM 2017**

**The Summer Dinner 2017 was attended by:** N. Doody 1953-58, W. Downs 1953-60, J. Nichol 1954-59, J. Wilkins 1954-59, J. Moland 1954-59, D. Williams 1957-65, A. Downs 1958-62, D. Ross 1964-71, A. Snowdon 1964-71, C. Snowdon Guest, P. East 1965-72, M. Haddrell 1969-76, C. Haddrell Guest, A. Mathewson 1969-76, S. Smith 1969-76, J. Brett 1969-76, R. Martin Guest, S. Mears 1970-77, S. Trinder 1971-78, R. Taylor 1976-83.

**Apologies were received from:** A Knight 1932-45, M. Booker 1937-42, G. Baker 1940-52, G. Wall 1943-46, E. Winning 1944-47, J. Mayall 1944-52, R. Evans 1949-54, P. Simpson 1950-57, R. Harris 1952-58, P. Turle 1954-59, G. Mabbett 1975-77, G. Holliday 1971-78, J. Haddrell 1943-48, M. Haddrell 1994-01, L. Martin 1996-03, M. Stevenson 1943-48, B. Harris 1943-49, P. Nias 1968-75, S. Spiers Executive Director, D. Harrison 1944-50, D. Robson 1947-51, R. Kearvell 1953-59.

Mike Haddrell welcomed the gathering, thanked members for their attendance, said grace and, after dinner, proposed the Penney Toast to absent friends making particular mention of his great friend Paul Underhill (1968-75) who passed away suddenly in March. Deputy Headteacher Chris Boyle proposed the toast to the Old Alfredians' Club. He explained the current building works taking place at King Alfred's to make the transition from a three site to a two site school with a target completion date of January 2018. Those present had access to a written summary with pictures of completed buildings and architects' images of projected work. Andrew Snowdon replied with the toast to King Alfred's School reflecting on the lives of two members of staff who gave long service to King Alfred's School and have recently passed away: Harry "Todd" Middlebrook and John "Fred" Pulley. He recalled Harry's imposing figure with short back and sides and a double-breasted demob suit; firm but fair he was always interested in his students and cheerful. His real name was Harry, only used by students; he was Todd to family and friends. As Head of Lloyd House he commanded great loyalty from his team of prefects. "Fred" would always be associated with the Combined Cadet Force and the armoury with its distinctive ambience of blankets, tents and well oiled Lee Enfields; it was suggested that his nickname might owe something to Fred Karno's Army. An occasion on Shap Fell was recalled when Fred inquired of his charges whether a spare cigarette might be available. Only Balkan Sobranie and Black Russian were offered, gratefully accepted by Fred who didn't care "if it was Red Chinese". Andrew's recollections prompted formal and informal anecdotes about the teaching of Mr Middlebrook and Mr Pulley both of whom were regarded with great respect and affection by their students. Bill Downs recalled the excellent dinners provided for many years to the Old Alfredians by Claudia Middlebrook, at which Todd was invariably present in supporting role. Andrew concluded by noting the role of Dean Butler in the Anglo Catholic movement of the nineteenth century, after whom Butler House was named, and the recent development of the Convent on Denchworth Road hosting offices and staff facilities for the school. The Minutes of the last AGM were tabled and accepted on the proposal of Richard Taylor, seconded by Bill Downs. Steve Smith gave the Treasurer's Report, mentioning the funding of the memorial bench for G.S. Keen, the much-appreciated regular donations from life members and the unfortunate cancellation of the Christmas Dinner for which some members still await refunds. The Treasurer's Report and the accounts were accepted on the proposal of J. Brett, seconded by Andrew Mathewson. The dinner marked the end of Mike Haddrell's two years as President and, there being no President Elect, he proposed that Steve Mears (1970-77) be appointed President with immediate effect. His appointment was seconded by Andrew Snowdon and passed nem. con. Steve accepted, gratefully looking forward to serving the Club and noting that he now understands why his predecessor was in such a hurry to buy him a drink at the start of the evening. Membership of the Committee was confirmed on the proposal of Mike Haddrell, seconded by Neil Doody: President S. Mears, Sec. & Archivist M. Haddrell, President Elect Vacant, Treas. S. Smith, Auditor G. Holliday, Membership Secretary R. Taylor. Committee: D. Gibbons, G. Mabbett, D. Ross, N. Doody, D. Williams, S. Trinder, Marcus Haddrell, Andrew Mathewson. Mike Haddrell concluded the evening with reflections on the excellent talk given at The Beacon on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> June (formerly the Civic Hall) by Professor Sir Christopher Ricks. The Professor, an Old Alfredian, (and former classmate of John Haddrell et al) gave a compelling, entertaining and highly learned talk on literature in the light of Bob Dylan's recent award of the Nobel Prize. He was interviewed on stage by sixth-form students regarding his memories of King Alfred's during the war years and the evening concluded with a short video presentation of reminiscences by his contemporaries. This event was the inaugural lecture in an annual series named after Sir Christopher Ricks to support and encourage the most able students at King Alfred's. The second is scheduled for the autumn of 2017 and will feature TV Historian Janina Ramirez.

### **The Winter Dinner 2017 was attended by:**

D. Harrison 1944-50, Doody 1953-58, R. Kearvell 1953-59, B. Downs 1953-60, B. Hunt 1953-60, J. Nichol 1954-59, J. Moland 1954-59, J. Wilkins 1954-59, D. Williams 1957-65, A. Downs 1958-62, B. Fitchett 1958-63, D. Ross 1968-71, S. Mears 1968-75, M. Haddrell 1969-76, S. Smith 1969-76, A. Mathewson 1969-76, J. Brett 1969-76, G. Hill 1970-77, Shaun Smith 1972-77, R. Taylor 1976-83, C. Haddrell GUEST, R. Martin GUEST, C. Boyle SCHOOL.

### **Apologies were received from:**

AJ Knight 1932-45, G. Baker 1940-52, T. Winter 1942-49, G. Wall 1943-46, M. Stevenson 1943-48, J. Haddrell 1943-48, J. Mayall 1944-52, P. Henderson 1947-50, P. Clare 1947-52, R. Evans 1949-54, P. Turle 1954-59, K. Edmonds 1954-61, G. Glover 1957-63, A. Snowdon 1964-71, D. Kent 1966-73, S. Donald 1967-73, N. Capelin 1968-74, N. Dunn 1969-76, H. Wilcock 1972-79, S. Trinder 1971-78, R. Machin 1984-91, M. Haddrell 1994-01, L. Martin (Haddrell) 1996-03, S. Spiers SCHOOL, D. Haines, G. Edgington, R. Overall.