



KING EDWARD'S SCHOOL
BIRMINGHAM

GAZETTE *Insight* Spring 2008

Forward

*"Where the knocks are hardest;
some to failure some to fame?"*

Perhaps. But such facile school-boy humour is not appropriate here, or now.

Vol. 1 No. 1 of the revamped Gazette.

To recap briefly: it has been decided to experiment with one full-blown magazine per year. It will be published in October and will include School and O.E. news, reports on events and sports, letters, original work of all kinds and a full, proper obituary section. At this Spring-season a Newsletter will be sent out, hopefully presenting a summary of activities and results, an interim report from the Chief Master and the Chairman of the Association, any interesting letters or articles that are of immediate attention plus a short 'hatches, matches & dispatches' listing.

The small editorial committee undertaking this 'translation' is necessarily feeling its way. To start with it will be making bricks without straw but it is hoped that people will rally to the cause and will send in material/copy (to the Editor c/o the School please) of their own free will, without having their arms twisted. Any item will be welcomed and it can come from anyone involved with the School or Association – pupil, teacher, O.E., wife or mistress, even the jobbing gardener who has purloined an Association tie to keep his trousers up.

We want to breathe life into the magazine and Association and to forge closer links between the School and the Old Edwardians.

The style and content of the Newsletter are not written in stone. This first edition does not represent how things will always be. No. 1 has had to 'make do' with what was to hand and what could be commissioned at short notice. What follows in later editions will be a matter of trial and error and will depend upon the good will and enthusiasm of the readership. But the steering committee believes the contents here indicate the quality and range we are looking for and point us in the right direction. Hopefully they will also inspire people to 'have a go'.

From the Chairman



Dear Old Edwardians,

This is the first issue of a Gazette in a new look, an abbreviated Spring edition which will share the annual mailings with a more substantial magazine in the Autumn. My thanks to Michael Parslew and John Wheatley for their work in designing and editing this edition, and working

towards the (literally) bigger picture. The closer links between the Association and the School, which I alluded to in December, continue to strengthen. We have agreed with the Chief Master that his new Development Office will soon take on much of the administration previously done by volunteers on the Committee, arrange to print and distribute our magazines and make available space at school for our editor to be in the thick of things. I am delighted with these changes, one effect of which will be that some of the Association's (now surplus) investment income can be used for Assisted Places which will be suitably OEA badged.

Michael observed in June last year that 'the times, they are a-changing' and we are indeed changing with them. We are adjusting how we operate the OEA machinery, and that is allowing us to help the School directly with funding, moving it back towards the pure meritocracy it was, not so long ago. I am keen to widen the appeal of the Association to more of you so that there is a desire for and a benefit from engagement. The

autumn Gazette is our shop window, one route to achieve this, so please give Michael as much as possible to fill it with.

We are likely to maintain our name and address details on-line in future, with hard copies available upon request, reflecting the increasingly electronic media. We also plan to digitise past copies of the Chronicle, allowing perusal of delightfully dated words and images and doubtless the odd embarrassing photo. More details to follow.

David Corney has kindly offered to organise this year's Biennial Dinner on 19 September – any drumming up of support will be gladly received. I look forward to a sea of faces – waiting for me to sit down and let the Chief Master delight you with his School Report.

James Martin

Find out about Old Edwardians, events and more inside ...

Old Edwardians Gazette: March 2008



Stuart Birch started teaching at King Edward's in 1970. After a year he made a break for freedom, only to be sucked back into this infernal machine in 1973. Since then, for 35 years, he has been, amongst other things, the Master in charge of Basketball. During those 35 years Stuart has coached sides to national success, even national championships, year upon year. Stuart will retire at the end of this academic year, so the word went out that there should be a basketball event to commemorate these 35 years. And lo, in early March, about 70 old boys came back to play in an all-day tournament. They ranged in age – and mobility – from Alan Homer, Stuart's first basketball captain in 1970, to the players in this year's school team. The day served to commemorate not only all that Stuart had done, but also how much each one of those who came had benefited from what he had done. Everyone had formed friendships and memories and, perhaps, a lifetime's enthusiasm for a sport in that Sports Hall under Stuart's guidance. And so it came to pass that, at the suggestion of the present team, the sports hall, built only a year before Stuart's arrival, will hereafter be called the Stuart Birch Sports Hall.

Stuart may be irreplaceable but he has to be replaced. In the process of looking we came across two exceptional games coaches. So, we got both of them. The new Director of Sport will be Chris Johnson, a Loughborough graduate who has played Premier League rugby for Leicester, Northampton and Rotherham, and the new Director of Hockey will be Michael Johnson, a Loughborough graduate who has played international hockey 179 times, played at 2 Olympics and won medals at European and Commonwealth championships. And there has been one further change in the coaching of sport: Martin Stead, after 20 years' responsibility for school cricket, has handed this on to Lawson Roll. We even have four new artificial nets at Eastern Road, and Dennis Amiss, who lives on in Eastern Road, as unpaid coach and umpire.

So, there is change and, I hope, progress in sport here, and it will remain a central priority. However, it's not only in sport that there has been change. After two years of grandiloquence, we are even starting to do some of the things about which I have talked. In 2010, the school will introduce the International Baccalaureate for our Sixth Form, perhaps the biggest academic choice we have made in 50 years. We have spent over a year looking at IB and we think that it is more exciting, a better preparation for university and for life and we see in the schools that we have visited a genuine sense of curiosity and intellectual life. And IB is linear so that the first year of the Sixth Form is not polluted by public examinations. In the end, we are weary of A levels, too, and we don't see them improving as the government enters increasingly on nano-management.

These days, the school's stated aim is

'to make available to the widest possible range of able boys an educational experience that is the richest, most diverse, and most exciting possible in an atmosphere that provides support, encouragement and care for everyone, pupils and staff, here. We want our pupils to love coming here and to go from here prepared for all that human life has to offer.'

We just happen to think that, in academic terms, IB gives us the best chance of fulfilling that aim. It's a big step, and it's even a risk, but, as I said last time, we may need to dare to be wise.

The aim set out above emphasises not only excitement, but also accessibility 'to the widest possible range of able boys' and we have been striving very hard in the last two years to make a difference here, too. In January 2008 the number of applicants at 11+ was over 500, a record figure and 35% up from 2006. More importantly, the changes we introduced to the Assisted Places Scheme continue to have an impact, in that applications for Assisted Places have more than doubled in two years. Most importantly, we now have not only the demand for places, but also an increased supply of funding: the Foundation invests nearly £1m a year on Assisted Places and scholarships, but individual Old Edwardians – and the OEA itself – are making a substantial difference by their generosity. In the end, all of this means that we are attracting and being able to support more of the brightest boys and that is fundamental to our purpose and success. As you will know, none of this is taking place because of the increased scrutiny of the Charities Commission: after all, the school has been doing such things for centuries. However, it is clear that this school being open to anyone, whatever their family circumstances, is the strongest bulwark against any assault on our status.

This is a start, but it is only a start, on the road to accessibility. As we travel further, so we will increasingly need the support of former pupils. Recently there has been massive progress in bringing the OEA and the school closer together. So, in the next few months, the school will take upon itself responsibility for all the administration and organisation of the OEA through the creation of a Development Office. The school will also take on the cost of running the organisation so that there will no longer be any need for any OE to pay to be a member of the OEA. We just want people to be in touch with the school and the OEA. If that is what we want, we also have to do something about it and, in the last six months, a GAP year

student has been in search of the lost boys of King Edward's. In that time he has found contact details for over 800 of the lost and there are a further 500 who dwell out there in the Limbo of Friends Reunited. Other routes are more direct and personal as Richard Coombes, winner of the Bache Memorial in 1975, is proving by trying to gather his generation. Even though I don't usually do commercials, I would urge anyone who left in the early 70s to be at the Old Mitre in Hatton Garden on Thursday 19th June at 7pm.

All of this is central to the future of the school, but for the pupils the school is lived in the perpetual present and that present is more diverse, and exciting, than ever. Even in this, the shortest of short terms, there has been a production of *Romeo and Juliet*, a wonderful return to the newly refurbished Town Hall by the school orchestra and choir, the Under 16 and Under 18 water polo teams both reaching the national finals for the first time, the Army and RAF contingents both proving to be amongst the best in national competitions, our chess team (coach Malcolm Hunt OE) in the last 8 of the national competition. There was even a trip for the Art specialists to Venice, led, reluctantly, by the Chief Master. It's dark lonely work, but someone has to do it.

John Cloughton
Chief Master

On The Giving Of gifts

Richard Feynman is credited with the observation that any field that has to have “science” in its name is probably not science. Certainly too much of “social science” is pretentious and tendentious twaddle. The epistemology of science depends not on providing plausible explanations of the past but on predictions, and especially the prediction of the outcome of experiments. But Feynman was too restrictive in his concept of science; experiments are not always possible and advances can be made through heuristic patterns perceived by objective and systematic observation. The social anthropologists’ conceptualization of the “gift relationship” is an example.

The gift relationship comprises the social and moral significance of giving in the whole range of societies and circumstances. Gifts may symbolise status and esteem, of giver and recipient; they may generate or repay obligations, and substitute for service or duties. Economic historians tell us that societies “evolve” from gift exchange to barter to cash. But as Eliot pointed out, in the popular mind “evolution” can become a means of disowning the past. The gift relationship is more about psychology than economics; it transcends and outlives the banal particularities of trade.

An important feature of the gift relationship is that one’s self-esteem depends less on what gifts one receives than on the value, in the eyes of others, of what one has to give. One of the cruellest things we do to older people is to tell them, by thought, word, deed, and legislation, that they have nothing to offer that society values. We do not want their work, their advice, or their conversation. I used to tell medical students that doctors doing home visits should not always decline an old lady’s offer of tea and cake in order to “save her trouble”. It is often a far greater kindness to become an appreciative guest rather than remain an official visitor, however authoritative and well-intentioned.

It is true, indeed, that ancient complexities of the gift relationship have been largely obscured in economically developed societies by the role of cash. In societies where money

has not yet become the universal proxy for exchange of goods and gifts, the explanatory power of the concept is unobscured. It explained, for example, why a man I met on a coral atoll in the South West Pacific had only one arm. At a wedding feast a few years earlier he had felt that his gift to the happy couple had been insufficiently appreciated by them and he expressed his distress by slashing his arm with a machete. He severed the brachial artery and resourceful friends applied a tourniquet just below the shoulder and radioed to Samoa for a doctor. Alas, the inter-island steamboat bearing the doctor never arrived. It had been intercepted by pirates and was found some months later drifting as empty as the Mary Celeste somewhere off Fiji. My acquaintance’s arm went the way that arms do under the influence of unrelieved tourniquets.

The story was disturbing, not least because I had just arrived on the inter-island steamboat from Samoa. It was also an indicator of how the medical research team of which I was there as a member would need to enlist the participation of the islanders. It would not be a matter of material inducements but of explaining how greatly we, and the world at large, would value the information the research would yield. We brought gifts for the islanders as custom demanded, but our priority was to explain how highly we and the wider world would value what the islanders would be giving to us. (In the event, our work in the South Seas was to provide one of the first cogent indications of the effect of dietary salt on blood pressure.)

But, with the gift relationship as with everything else, the devil can be in the detail. One of my duties was to draw up a census of the islanders, and I did this by systematically visiting their huts at night when everyone would be at home. The islanders kept indoors after dark out of respect for the many spirits that stalked the night, including those from the sea. It was strictly tapu to leave any fish uneaten on the island overnight since the roving spirits of the deep ocean would then find out what had happened to some of their friends and wreak vengeance on the canoes next day. More importantly, the nights were

haunted by ancestral spirits – *aitua* – who might not like strangers such as pale-skinned and over-tall medical researchers. Wherever I went after dark therefore I had to be accompanied by a retinue of little boys to reassure the *aitua* that I was a respected guest and not a demon or a slave trader. Ancestral spirits of those particular islands had good reason to dislike slave traders.

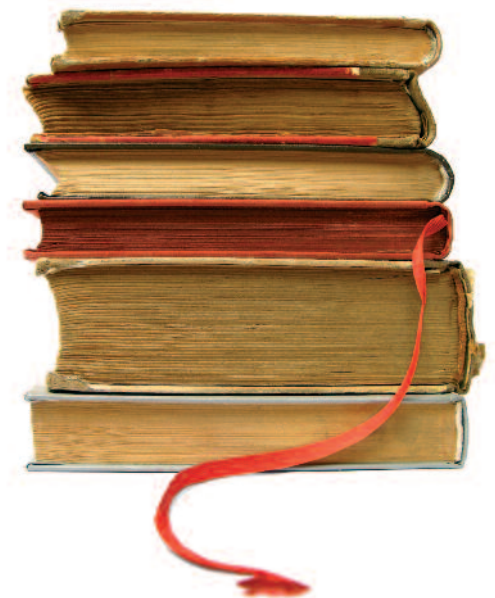
At each house, the rules of hospitality demanded that I be offered a coconut from the family palm-tree. The gift relationship, as I initially understood it, required that I should accept. At each hut I would down some three quarters of a pint of fluid with expression of admiration for its equality and flavour. After the first half dozen visits, ineluctable physiological processes would intervene and require that I repair to look upon the surf. In this I had to be accompanied by my retinue of increasingly excited small boys. There we would stand in a moonlit line with the boys whooping with delight to see whose trajectory was the most impressive and whether they could beat the English doctor. So inhibiting was my embarrassment that most of them could.

This continued for some nights until the anthropologist in our research team took me on one side. The islanders, he told me, were astounded and somewhat alarmed by my insatiable thirst for coconut milk. They were worried indeed that I might be unwell (they had also heard, of course, about my trajectory problem).

It would certainly not be proper, he agreed, to decline the offer of a coconut when visiting a family hut. On the other hand, in the tradition of island hospitality the gift relationship required merely a nominal sip and a handing back of the coconut with formulaic thanks.

I was grateful for the gift of this information and the giving of it must have greatly enhanced his self-esteem. That, presumably, was why he was laughing so much.

Talking of gifts, there are cheerful rumours that the Old Edwardians Association may be thinking of doing less for a small minority of the Old Edwardian diaspora and more for the School. An excellent idea, but as spawn of Brummagem shopkeepers we shall want to know exactly what our money is to be used for. We shall also need to be reassured that the school deserves our beneficence. Those of us with memories of bygone *anni mirabilis* have felt rather queasy at the Chief Master’s recent joy over GCSE results while the School sank to 73rd in dumbed-down A-levels. How has this slide into mediocrity come about? The Board of governors must accept some responsibility and perhaps some dead wood could be trimmed there. It should also be asked if some of the teaching staff might be more appropriately employed elsewhere. None the less, a significant problem may be that fees are high enough to prevent some talented sons of indigent or ungenerous parents from entering the school. In its heyday King Edward’s was a minor Republic of Letters, where sons of professors or dustmen could live on equal terms in mutual respect for ability. The School’s recent performance raises the dismal possibility of infiltration by the rich but second rate....



There are three reasons why schools like King Edward's need to exist outside the State system. The first lies in the dangers of a State monopoly of education that are terrifyingly obvious to all except the apparatchiks and jobsworths of our over-engineered society. This is not an issue of Party Politics; modern politicians of all parties will use any means they can to suppress dissent that may unseat them. We do not live in the best of all possible worlds and it is important that our children are not brainwashed into thinking that we do. Independence of thought is a spear-wall against tyranny.

The second issue is the need to provide a setting where the brilliant but socially vulnerable can develop their potential. This is particularly a boy problem. Males and females do not differ in average intelligence, but the variance, and the tail on the distribution in both directions, is larger in boys than in girls. So is the prevalence of social vulnerabilities arising along the continuum from autism to Asperger's to NFB (normal-for-boys). It is not uncommon for extreme brilliance and vulnerability to go together, and to comprise a miserable endowment for a boy unprotected from the jealousy and incomprehension of his less talented fellows. A UNICEF report last year revealed that British schoolchildren are significantly more unpleasant to each other than are the children of any other of the nations studied.

In the State system of education we risk sacrificing some of our brightest young minds on the altar of a spurious inclusivity. Selective independent schools can and should provide the supportive ambience where the precious national resources of scholarly, technological, and artistic brilliance can be nurtured.

The third reason for independent education has to do with values and priorities. The nation and the wider world are in sore need of people dedicated in practice as well as theory to seeing the Common Good. Our aristocracy is degenerate, our Church has lost its way; our elected representatives are mired in sleaze and deceit. More than ever, in Yeats' famous words, do we see the best lacking all conviction, while the worst are full of

passionate intensity. For generations born into a world that is merely on the make, schools like King Edward's can instil and foster an ideal of honest service. Society needs a leavening of active and significant individuals incorruptible and unswerving in their pursuit of a better life for all. We must not talk of an élite – Orwell's dreary sheep will bleat – rather let us think of Men of Good Will.

Wipe your hand across your mouth and laugh. Put it this way then : many of us owe King Edward's School a debt for a quality and meaning in our lives that our parentage and fortune alone would not have given us. We received a gift and we owe one. If the School is to recover its sense of mission and is to reach out to the underprivileged, it must be able to offer free access to all of appropriate merit. Old Edwardians ought to lead the way in providing the means for this. Ultimately, support should be in the form of scholarships free of the means testing that is degrading to both donor and recipient. But we must start somewhere, and soon.

John Grimely Evans

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Thank you for the interesting December issue of the OE Gazette. The Chief Master's account of the school's achievements, including the musical talent, makes us prouder than ever of KE, one of the finest schools in the country. I was especially interested to read of plans for a "new look" Gazette and the main object seems to be the need to create stronger bonds between the school and OEs, with a view to raising money for Assisted Places on which the future of the school depends.

I have been through a similar situation with my old College, Peterhouse. For many years College finances have been deteriorating and the outlook worsened when Labour announced that it was going to phase out the grant for Oxbridge colleges. Peterhouse has a large endowment but depends on the yield from this to keep afloat; the yield contributes over half the annual income of the College. It is imperative to modernise College facilities. So in 2000 a new Fellow was appointed as Development Director and one of his key functions is to strengthen the bond between the College and Petreans of whom over five thousand are alive. Going up to Peterhouse now means becoming a Petrean for life.

Right at the core of the bonding between College and Petreans is the annual re-union, called the Gathering, which takes place over a weekend in July. It is an opportunity to meet old friends, wallow in the beauty of the College buildings and gardens, indulge in nostalgia and talk to the Master and Fellows. The College now puts on an attractive programme which can include an architectural tour by a Professor of Art, a tour of the Gardens by the Head Gardener, a concert by the organ scholar, a tour of the Fitzwilliam Museum, a visit to the new Library, lectures by Fellows and distinguished Petreans and a meeting of the Peterhouse Society.

I have been attending Gatherings for 25 years, generally travelling by car with one or two Petreans who live near me. We arrive in time for lunch on Saturday for which the College erects a marquee on the Fellows' lawn and for which our ladies are invited to join us. Children and grandchildren can join us in the marquee for Sunday lunch. Dinner in Hall, for which there is no charge, is attended only by graduates of the College. Some travel up from London just for the dinner but most spend the night in College rooms.

If such a programme was set up by KE, perhaps accommodation could be provided by the University of Birmingham. It is a magical weekend and really does make us feel like members of the College.

I suggest that KE considers putting on a similar programme. I believe that future generations will look back on the period 2001 – 2007 as one of the blackest in British history when the nation consumed far more than it produced and went on a borrowing spree to pay for it. The worst element is the trade deficit which for the last ten years has grown by an incredible £10 billion every year, stark evidence that Britain's top priority must be recovery in global competitiveness. The future of the nation depends on the best talent in the land being given the chance to go to schools like KE and develop their full potential.

This is a good time to start building a new kind of active partnership between school and OEs.

Yours sincerely

Frank Glyn-Jones (1941)

Dear Editor,

I write for several purposes. First, to send you warm greetings and every encouragement to keep up your valiant Editorial efforts.

Secondly, some news. The most important thing is that my father, at 86 is in good general health despite having had a couple of mild strokes and still singing in his church choir and playing the piano. After a post-retirement Babylonian episode of some 25 years in Yorkshire he moved into a pleasant retirement home in Deddington, just across the Cherwell valley from us. His mobility is an issue but he is in good spirits.

As for me, my captivity was 28 years chained to City of London law firms. This period was not without interest of various sorts, including travel and close encounters with major companies in various sectors and with governments. This period left me with high blood pressure but great interest in how legal systems work, and how current ones might be improved. I am fortunate enough to be able to indulge these latter interests, having been an Associate Research Fellow at the Centre for Socio-Legal Studies, Oxford for the past 5 years.

The University have just kindly made me permanent with an ad hominem appointment to a Fellowship, and head of the research unit in civil justice systems, where we have an exciting agenda of analysing changes in dispute resolution systems and advising governments on what they ought to do. One churns out various books.

On rare occasions I am lucky enough to be able to escape to, or even sing in, New College Chapel, where the choir is simply heavenly. Otherwise there is very little time for singing these days, which is a pity, since I used to do a lot with The Sixteen when young and still do the odd oratorio solo. But I support Jeremy Gray's wonderful work as Chairman of Bampton Classical Opera – www.bamptonopera.org, well worth a visit!

I have kept myself out of mischief (well, not really) with various other jobs. I am Chairman of the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee and Vice-Chairman of the Association of British Healthcare Industries. PSNC represents the English community pharmacists on NHS matters, and we are currently negotiating new opportunities as the government shifts power further from secondary to primary care (White Paper last week). ABHI represents medical technology manufacturers, a Cinderella amongst the more familiar drug companies, where the task is to encourage the government to arrange national systems to enable the development and take-up of innovative new technologies. My function in the latter is partly to advise on appropriate regulatory structures within EU law and NHS arrangements. I have just been asked to join the Board of the UK Panel for Research Integrity in Health and Biomedical Sciences (RIO), which is part of Universities UK and covers all university medical research, liaising closely with NHS management and industry. Never a dull moment. But I fear I'm going to have to give something up, as time is too scarce.

Thirdly, and this is the reason that spurred me into writing, a couple of points struck me in the last Gazette. There were various references, including by John Cloughton, to developments in education, quality, relevance and funding. The argument encompasses the need to maintain quality in education, that this costs money, and that the government has imposed a wrong-headed testing approach in secondary education, which limits schools' ability to develop individual brains and inquisitive personalities. It is clear to me, as a member now of a leading academic institution, that the A level system does not provide sufficient development for students' brains and also that government (of whichever colour) intends to privatise funding of education.

I expect the currently limited ability for universities to charge top-up fees to be (maybe gradually) extended so that the best institutions will privatise as soon as possible.

One is already seeing schools opting towards the IB in order to give greater freedom. I suggest that schools should give careful attention towards establishing endowments that are of sufficient size to permit them to operate free of government both on a private fee-paying basis and to offer scholarships and fee reduction to pupils of ability whose parents have limited resources. The KE Foundation is fortunate in being well placed here, and I am sure that the Governors have considered this issue, but my perspective is that it is urgent, and greatly in the interests of establishments and pupils. Of course, further endowment, as we are seeing now with large appeals by Oxbridge, that will bring independence from reliance on government funding and hence much unnecessary oversight, needs support from alumni, parents and local sources.

Kind Regards

Yours sincerely

Dr. Christopher Hodges MA PhD FSLAS

Puzzle Time

It is very much hoped that the Newsletter will not just be "full of high sentence" but will also include the light-hearted, off-beat, quaint and/or curious. Here is our starter.

The widow of the late S. Gorton Green (1928), whose full obituary will appear in the September edition of the Gazette, has very kindly sent us the examination papers he accumulated during his time at the School. The first were the Entrance Examination papers he sat in 1922 and we are publishing two of them for readers' delectation and as a direct challenge to their wit and wisdom.

There might even be a small prize for the best submissions. And the worst. Attempts to the Editor c/o the School.

And — no cheating! We rely on Edwardian Honour (!!) that people will not resort to the internet, reference books or any other devious means to find the answers. Best handwriting please. [Some of you will remember when the stricture was : 'No ball-point pens; fountain pens only are allowed.']

King Edward's School, Birmingham

HIGH SCHOOL ADMISSION EXAMINATION.

November, 1922.

ENGLISH HISTORY.

- 1.—Write down in one column the names of any *eight* English Kings between 1066 and 1837. Against each king's name put the date of accession and one important event in the reign.
- 2.—Give some account of these men :—Alfred, Marlborough, Knut (Canute); and these events :—the War with Spain in the time of Elizabeth; and how Canada came to be part of the British Empire.
- 3.—Give some account of our dealings with Ireland from the time of Henry II to the present day.
- 4.—Give a short account of *either* a poem you have read, *or* a picture you have seen, which describes any event in English History.
- 5.—Write a list of *five* events in 1922 which you think will find their way into future history books.

King Edward's School, Birmingham.

HIGH SCHOOL ADMISSION EXAMINATION.

November, 1922.

ENGLISH.

- 1.—Name the Parts of Speech. Give a definition of each, and also compose simple sentences to illustrate each Part of Speech.
- 2.—Show that groups of words may be equal to Nouns, Adjectives and Adverbs.
- 3.—Give the Abstract Nouns which correspond to the following words :—wise, see, strong, deep, foolish, free, slay, absurd, long, dark.
- 4.—Write down the comparative and Superlative of the following Adjectives :—good, red, truthful, late, bad, gay, rough, hot, frugal, much.
- 5.—Distinguish between :—emigrant, immigrant : eminent, imminent : loath, loathe : efface, deface : principle, principal : corpse, corps.
- 6.—Distinguish between Simile and Metaphor. Give an example of each, and change the one to the other.
- 7.—Correct the following sentences :—
 - (1) He had no sooner gone when his brother arrived.
 - (2) He advocated the division of Austria from Hungary.
 - (3) There never was a time when Europe stands more in need of good advisers.
 - (4) The excitement ran highly at the news.
 - (5) I am writing on behalf of Miss Jones whom I understand once taught your daughter.
 - (6) I was rather impressed by the matter of the orator than by his manner.
- 8.—Give an example of the use of the following constructions :—
 - (1) A collective noun with a plural verb.
 - (2) A transitive verb with a double object.
 - (3) A gerund governing an object.
 - (4) An adverb modifying a preposition.
 - (5) A prepositional phrase with the force of an adverb.
 - (6) A subordinate conjunction introducing a conditional clause.
- 9.—Write a letter to a boy friend who left England a month ago for a school in France.

Harrow to give £40m of free places to boys from poor families

By Graeme Paton
Education Editor

HARROW School is trying to raise £40million to provide free places for boys from poor families in an attempt to shed its image as a school for "sons of the very rich".

The move follows new laws that threaten to strip private schools of their charitable status if they fail to provide a "public benefit".

Barnaby Lenon, the head teacher of the £26,445-a-year boarding school, said that the wider "political environment" was unlikely to tolerate schools which were perceived as elitist.

"There is a strong case for assisting talented children to achieve their potential by enabling them to go to independent schools," he said.

"Bursaries are an excellent way of transforming the lives of worthwhile young people. We aim to raise £40million between 2006 and 2012 for this purpose." Harrow's plan follows the decision by other

leading independent schools to open their doors to more children from poor homes.

Many are moving money from academic scholarships, which often go to pupils of wealthy parents, into means-tested bursaries.

Eton College is raising £50million for bursaries to make the school more socially diverse. However, others are going even further. St Paul's School for Boys, west London, hopes to offer all places purely on merit within 25 years. It is aiming to raise £250million to fund the programme.

Dulwich College in south London is attempting to open its doors to pupils irrespective of their parents' ability to pay within 15 years.

Writing in the *Harrow Record* magazine, Mr Lenon said: "In a wider context, the political environment is unlikely to tolerate a school which is only available to the sons of the very rich."

He said he was not singling out the change in charity laws, but admitted that few families

"could begin to afford" Harrow fees. "Harrow will be socially narrow if assistance cannot be given to some middle and lower income families," he said.

"The Harrow education is partly about the sort of friends you make at school: it will be a much richer education if the pupil population comes from a broad spectrum of society."

The school already provides places that are almost free for 21 boys. Bursaries at Harrow range from £4,000 per year up to the value of full fees.

The 2006 Charities Act puts an onus on charities, including 80 per cent of private schools, to prove they are benefiting the public.

Rosie Chapman, of the Charity Commission, said earlier this year that she did not expect there would be widespread problems passing the test. But she said that schools that failed to comply would be stripped of their charitable status, which is collectively worth £100million a year in tax breaks.

Births, Marriages & Deaths

We regret to report the deaths of the following:

S. Gorton Green (1928)
C.M. Thomas CBE (1948)

Their full obituaries will appear in the Autumn edition of the Gazette

Editor's Note: News of births, marriages and deaths is becoming ever harder to come by. I shall be most grateful if anyone hearing news of O.E's in any of the categories will let me know c/o the School. Many thanks.

From the Editor



In trying to assemble this piece, I feel a bit like Christian at the beginning of *'Pilgrim's Progress'*: *"And behold, I saw a man clothed with rags, standing in a certain place, a book in his hand, and a great burden upon his back. I looked and saw him open the book and read therein; and as he read, he wept and trembled, and brake out with a lamentable cry; saying, 'What shall I do?'"*

Now, here, we [that's the generic, not the Royal, "we"], are starting out on our own pilgrimage and I have no idea how it will turn out. Or what to do. Or what to say. To pursue the literary metaphor further, we are setting out without the benefit of scrip of joy, bottle of salvation or gown of glory; all we have are a staff of faith and hope's true gage.* Make of all that what you will.

And lest I be accused, yet again, of following the florid Asian manner, I will attempt to put on the Ciceronian style and use no art at all. I shall keep in mind Gertrude's reproof to Polonius: 'More matter with less art.' So, to the 'matter'.

When you have read the articles in this first Newsletter you will be well aware that something really and truly is 'hup'. The OE Gazette is transmuting. It is changing in style and content and tone. But not out of perversity. Its changes are the outward and immediate manifestation of a much wider change that is being undertaken to suit the times, the economic realities, the altering circumstances of the Association and the School.

The penultimate paragraph of the Chief Master's report spells everything out; the way is clear and the meaning plain. Challenges are being faced up to and the problems confronted.

At the conclusion of my editorial for the last Gazette, [December 2007, pp.5/6], I raised the question of what

"the role, purpose, function of the Editor should be." I even invited answers. Unsurprisingly, none were forthcoming. However, at this moment in time [a detestable phrase but appropriate – 'at this moment in time'], I am confident of what I have to do. As the Editor of The Gazette, and therefore representative of the more public face of the Association, if only by circumstance and misfortune, I firmly believe it is my right and my responsibility to comment upon what is about to take place.

And, with these obligations in mind, it is clear to me that the changes outlined by the Chief Master are inevitable. And far-sighted. And wholly right.

For too long the Association has had about it a lethargic ambivalence that have been counter-productive. It has been for Old Edwardians, but only those who are prepared to pay to members; those who are not have been cast into outer darkness. It derives from the School but, for too long, in too many respects, it has had little interest or involvement in it.

'Streetsbrook Road' epitomises this ambivalence. (I use inverted commas because the name symbolises the Association as a formal body and its social existence and the sports centre for the teams that play under the Old Edwardian nomenclature. It is our own species of camel.)

'Streetsbrook Road' was purchased and established with the best of intentions and the worthiest of motives. It was the answer to the refugee situation the Association found itself in when the club rooms in Paradise Street closed down and coincidentally it seemed a fitting way of commemorating Old Edwardians who had died in the World Wars.

But that was then; this is now. And 'Now' is a very different country. 'Streetsbrook Road', in the terms of its original concept, no longer really exists; it does not relate, except to the sports fraternity and the traditionalists. It is anachronistic and inaccessible; so far removed in time and place to the majority of OEs that it is irrelevant.

Such a statement may seem disloyal and unworthy of the Gazette's Editor. If that is felt to be the case, I apologise to those whose feelings are hurt. But I firmly believe there comes a moment when the Editor has to fulfil the third role postulated in the December editorial – to "actually and actively set the pace, create the image, project his own concept of what School and Association should be about". And I am equally sure that that moment is Now.

Now – the School is willing to take on the cost of running the OE organisation; in effect and reality paying the membership fee. We must not just be grateful for this generosity, we must applaud it wholeheartedly. Because it has nothing to do with saving money, has everything to do with finding ways of sustaining the interest and talents that all OEs

possess, in an inclusive and not an exclusive fashion. Too many boys leaving the School do not join the association or quickly stop subscribing; thus we lose both contact and the benefits of their capabilities. It is salutary to note that many of the most successful OEs mentioned in Notes & News, several of the most generous OE benefactors to the School, are not members of the O.E.A. – and never have been. And probably never want to be in its old 'exclusive guise'. £7 may not be an exorbitant charge for membership of the O.E.A. but why should a former member of the School have to pay anything? He has already worked his passage.

Let us be honest – The Membership Application that has appeared regularly in the Gazette since the dawn of time epitomises the old regime and is a monumental piece of Blimpishness, which was on its last legs in the 1950s. Nearly 60 years ago. That was then; this is now.

Now – under the new dispensation, the Gazette too can fulfil a proper role. In various ways and at various times, it can be recorder, reporter, chronicler, literary and social magazine. It can report the School and be a channel for the fund-raising. And it will have a proper base; not the Editor's home address – ignorance of which has been a good excuse for not contributing, but the School – whose address even the most witless of OEs should be able to remember. Set aside e-mails, web-sites, telephone numbers; they are merely sophisticated modi operandi: a piece of paper, an envelope and a nub-end of pencil will be enough. And, of course, a stamp! Thus, hopefully, the magazine will cease to be a quirky, extraneous, esoteric irrelevance and will become one of the several useful organs of communication.

Now – because of the changes, the Association can be a proper focus for all Old Edwardians. It can keep people in touch, within and across peer years; it can sustain friendships; it can energise fund-raising and promote other activities that will support the School as it adjusts to its refocused role and function – and the threats that face it in a competitive world.

Now, Now, Now – here are three significant changes. And they bring to the fore a bigger issue that needs to be addressed. The time is now right for the vexed, unspoken question, that has lurked in the cupboard for far too long, to be dragged into the open and openly discussed. And resolved once and for all. What should be done with 'Streetsbrook Road'?

Thanks to the Chief Master's generosity, the Association, and de facto the Gazette, will soon have a proper 'centre' in the School. Of course, it will not be a bona fide 'club' as were New Street of The Clef; or as 'Streetsbrook Road' was intended to be. In these changed and changing times that is no bad thing. Its great asset will be that it is the place that 97% of OEs can identify with; it has, or will have, all the facilities for modern inter-connection; it is the natural focal point for future development.

The days of 'clubs' and 'club rooms' are long gone. Economic pressure and a changed ethos have ensured that. 'Streetsbrook Road', a brave venture in its time, has outlived its purpose. It is off the beaten track. Even in wildest dreams it cannot be called 'attractive'. It provides a base for a minority of Association members and little else. We have to face the fact that it is out of date and time. In the fashionable terminology, it is 'The Elephant in the Room', recognised but not discussed. "If we ignore it, it will go away."

There are several arguments, apparent rather than real, why this view might be adopted. There is the question of covenants and gifts. There is the problem of accommodation. And there is the always delicate subject of 'Remembrance', which was the why and wherefore of the ground's first being. These are not lightly brushed aside. I am acutely aware of the tension. But I have to say that they are not real issues; they are more a smoke-screen dividing us from the truth of the situation, put up in hope to prevent reality breaking through.

Covenants and gifts can be adapted. Accommodation is flexible, even fluid. 'Remembrance' should be a matter of faring forward rather than ringing the bell backward.

'History may be freedom. See now they vanish, The faces and places, with the self which, as it could, loved them, To become renewed, transfigured, in another pattern.'

Might not, could not, should not 'another pattern' be the realisation of the value of 'Streetsbrook Road' in financial terms? It has served one purpose; let it now serve others. Sell up and invest: to support would-be Edwardians with grants and scholarships and bursaries: perhaps to help leaving Edwardians, faced with paying their own way through university, in the same measure: and certainly to assist with the refurbishment and further development of the School's facilities which have been neglected for far too long.

Could there be better ways of making the founding principle of 'Streetsbrook Road' serve the widest present-day Edwardian community? Could there be better ways of fulfilling the idea of 'Remembrance'?

"And he brake out with lamentable crying, saying, 'What shall I do?'"

The answer, for all Old Edwardians, is 'Plenty'.

This is just the Beginning.

Michael Parslew