

The Old Altrinchamian

THE OLD ALTRINCHAMIAN 1997-98

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Annual Reunion Dinner

Camaraderie and conviviality were enjoyed by over one hundred Old Boys, members of staff and some current sixth-formers at the Annual Reunion Dinner on Friday 27th February 1998. Again held at Ringway Golf Club (where some Old Boys have made distinguished contributions to that organisation), a splendid meal was served featuring roast beef and Yorkshire pudding as the main course.

President Peter Morton presided, conducting business and maintaining order with affable efficiency born of long experience. Welcoming the new Headmaster, Mr David Wheeldon, to the Dinner, Peter was pleased to present him with a donation of £600 from the Association to the School's Discretionary Fund, which provides travel funds and other help to boys at School. Another presentation was made at the Dinner: the Charles Laver Golf Trophy to David Smith, winner of the Old Alts competition at Heyrose Golf Club in June 1997.

The toast to the School was proposed by former Headmasters Keith



At the 1998 Dinner: (left to right)
*David Wheeldon, Ron Howarth, Ted Englefield,
Peter Morton and Derek Hilldrup*

(Photo by Denise Laver)

Nodding, whose teaching career at the School began in September 1953. Drawing on his four decades at the School, Keith reminisced entertainingly about numerous former pupils, now attending the Dinner as Old Boys. He recalled Bill Bickers, his immediate predecessor as Headmaster, who had passed on to him his no-nonsense "Notes on Headship". However, Keith felt, whoever was Headmaster, the essential character of the School remained much the same. He invited us to raise our glasses in a toast to the School, an action in which all participated.

Replying, David Wheeldon thanked the Association for the donation to the School's Discretionary Fund. Having seen the Old Boys' Association of his previous School flourish and grow under his Chairmanship, he hoped to assist in strengthening our Association by helping to attract and recruit pupils at the time they left School.

David outlined his hopes for the future of the School, which at latest count had 929 pupils, with a 200-strong 6th form. He praised staff and pupils, acknowledged the excellent site, but admitted the buildings left a lot to be desired. He spoke of his ambition to improve the accommodation and get rid of the dreadful "dountables" (Portakabin classrooms). He needed to raise £250,000 for 8 new classrooms, and further funds after that for a Technology Centre and a Sports Hall. This called for great entrepreneurial effort by all concerned.

Applauding the switch to Grant-Maintained Status, David felt this move was the best thing to have happened to AGS in its whole life. He was a strong supporter of GMS and of selective admission policy, but by Parliamentary

