

OLD ALTRINCHAMIANS



Magazine 2022

President: position vacant

Chairman: Christian James, 10 Ledward Lane, Bowdon, Cheshire. WA14 3AD

Golf Secretary: Christian James.

Secretary and Newsletter Editor (retiring November 2022): Antony Perrett, 3 Abbey Close, Bowdon. WA14 3NA. 0161 929 4383

Treasurer and Membership Secretary: Ken Webb, 4 Keswick Drive, Bramhall, Stockport, SK7 1DJ. 0161 439 4583

Football Section Secretary: Brian Clark

Annual Dinner Organiser: Stephen Perrett, 65 Langham Road, Bowdon, Cheshire WA14 3NT. 0161 941 5053

Alumni Relations Manager: position vacant

Dear Old Altrinchamian

Welcome to the annual Old Alts Magazine.

The school has largely returned to normal this academic year after the debilitating effects of the pandemic. Teaching through a screen is a distant memory and pupils are very clear about the benefits of being taught 'face-to-face' in school. The co-curricular activity programme is in full swing with plentiful concerts, and drama productions all on offer. A Little Shop of Horrors in November was the first piece of live theatre at school for 18 months and the audience made the most of it. Competitive sport has also made a welcome return, and once again AGSB have excelled in a number of regional and national tournaments across a wide range of sports. The community is making up for lost time and I am delighted by the pupils' enthusiasm for learning and for seizing the many opportunities.

A levels and GCSE exams returned this summer and the big picture is that after 2 years of school assessed grades, we have returned to more normal times with an outstanding set of results. At A level, 91 % of grades were awarded A*-B and we enjoyed a 100% pass rate. At GCSE 87% of grades were at 7-9. We are extremely pleased with the 2022 results. It is easy to forget that over the last 2 years, Yr.11 and 13 endured lockdowns, school closure, remote learning, school assessed grades and occasional waves of infection. An unprecedented context created more uncertainty for everyone, but thanks to a clear and level-headed approach by teachers, technology to repair the cracks and sheer hard work, our students have come through with flying colours.

The School continues to place real onus on improving Alumni relations and it was pleasing that we welcomed a number of Old Alts back to School last year to talk to and inspire our current students. If you have any ideas or anything you would like to see happen for Old Altrinchamians, please get in touch with Margaret Brickell – Head Master's PA via email: mbrickell@agsb.co.uk.

I do hope that you enjoy reading through this magazine and finding out more about the school and its alumni.

Graeme A Wright,

Head Master



Message from the Chair of the Association

Dear fellow Old Altrinchamian,

Welcome to the 2022 Old Alts Magazine, I hope it finds you, your friends and family all well.

As I write this (Monday 5th September 2022), it's the first day of the new year at Altrincham Grammar. A day of great excitement and anticipation for the boys, their parents and of course the staff. And after the recently announced A and GCSE level exam results, I think everyone should be feeling very optimistic about the year ahead for the school.

So it's a time for looking forward, but also a great opportunity for us to reflect on the past 12 months for the Old Altrinchamians. After the last couple of years of cancelled events, it was great to be able to get together at a number of events. We were finally able to host the Annual Dinner in March and it was a great success, as Old Alts spanning over 60 years gathered at Blanchflower in Altrincham. The atmosphere was relaxed and lively, with amazing food and service. On a poignant note, it turned out to be the last time most of us would spend an evening with the wonderful ex-teacher Roger Cleland who sadly passed away a few months later in June.

Being invited to address the Year 13 (Upper 6th) Leaver's Breakfast, hosted in the school canteen is always a joy. After the torrid times this year's cohort have endured, it was hardly surprising they were a tad lively! An amazing group of students who have endured so much, and still delivered outstanding results for which we should all be very proud. As the water bombs started to appear, I cut my address short and bid them farewell as they no doubt headed to Wetherspoons to discuss Sartre, spatial maths and Stella.

The annual Golf Day at Chorlton GC was another great success – all the details are in this edition. With a combination of Teachers, Pupils, Parents and Old Alts, it was again a superb day and looks to getting bigger each year. If you are keen to get involved, please contact me directly Christian.james@ifagency.co.uk so we can include you in next year's event.

A massive thank you to Antony Perrett for pulling this magazine together. After a number of years as the editor, Ant is hanging up his highlighter pen (?) as he starts a new personal life chapter in rural Shropshire. Thank you so much Ant, you've done a brilliant job, keeping up a vital tradition and handing over the mantle in great shape for the next editor (tbc). Please remember that every newsletter back to 1945 is available at www.oldalts.com.....well worth a rummage.

And finally....thanks to all the Old Alts committee for their time and support for the Association. With all the doom and gloom news around right now, it's easy to feel down and disconnected. With their help and dedication, we are here to keep Old Alts connected and up to speed with the school and each other and that feels more relevant and important than ever.

Christian James

Chair, Old Altrinchamians Association



Message from the Editor

Dear all

Welcome to the 2022 magazine. Or as I have been calling it, the “Dave Smith” issue (you’ll see why when you read it).

In some ways this issue of the magazine marks a return to normal, in the sense that I am reporting an annual dinner - a feature missing for the past 2 years due to you-know-what. I am also continuing the move away from current news items (since this can now be more reliably found on the website - see www.oldalts.com - plus the social platforms: Facebook, Twitter, et al), and instead continuing the trend of introducing more items of an editorial nature.

I have received some very positive (and zero negative) feedback resulting from this change of direction so I hope you continue to enjoy the changes.

There are a couple of items in this magazine that I am really hoping will become a regular feature for future issues: for some time now I have heard Old Alts talk about their formative musical experiences, and more especially the school bands that were around whilst they were at school. Dave Smith #1 has kindly written a piece about a school band he was a member of - The Traks - to get us started. I'm hoping that this will motivate other readers to contact us with their school band stories - no matter how lurid (within reason). The first ‘live’ rock band I ever saw was the Surgical Supports playing in the 6th form common room - I honestly can’t remember much about the music, but the occasion made a huge impression on me.

Dave Smith #2 wrote a piece for us about Scouts at the school - a very long-term association which many of you may have enjoyed. Again I’m rather hoping this may motivate any ex-scouts (*does one ever become an ‘ex-scout’ ?*) to regale us with your Scouty-tales for future issues.

Even though I have been taking the Magazine in a new direction, a few months ago I was reminded of earlier versions when Jane Forster, daughter of a long-deceased OB (Anthony Armstrong Eckersley) contacted me to say she had found some issues (dating back to 1939) of the school magazine - incorporating the OA’s section - whilst sorting through her father’s possessions. I’ve included a piece about these issues later in the magazine as I thought it was really interesting to see how they have changed over the years.

There is another big change coming too - this is my final issue as Editor. I’ve been doing the role in one form or another since 2009 and I think it’s time to let someone else have a go. I must say I’ve really enjoyed producing the magazines during my time and am forever indebted to the many contributors - so a big “thank you” to you all. I’m not yet sure who will take over the role (if you are interested, please contact Christian - I’m sure he’d be very pleased to hear from you). I’ve made a lot of changes during my tenure, and I hope I’ve left the magazine in a good state for my successor to pick up - though of course whoever takes over will have their own ideas and put their own stamp on it. Quite right too.

So as I sign off I’ll make my usual plea for content - please feel free to send any contribution to me and I’ll forward it to whoever is the new Editor (antonyperrett@gmail.com).

Do remember that current and (many) past newsletters can be downloaded from the website any time you like.

Antony



Annual Dinner 2022

After a Covid-enforced 2 year break, the Old Alts annual dinner sprang back into life on March 4th, at Blanchflowers restaurant in Altrincham.

Deliberately with a new format (new venue, smaller numbers, fewer speeches, less formality) the Committee has received some pretty favourable feedback, so elements of the new format will most likely be repeated in future years.

Special mention must go the Blanchflowers restaurant and staff – the food and service was really excellent (dare I say it – a significant upgrade on recent dinners), and the price was pretty reasonable too.

A little over 50 guests and staff attended, which was just about right for the venue and meant a proper noisy, jovial atmosphere – exactly as one would hope and expect from such an event. There was a palpable sense of excitement at meeting up with old friends after our enforced absence.

There were some traditional touches too: Our Chair, Christian James, welcomed guests, lit the Reggie Thompson candle, and we all took a moment to reflect on the past couple of years – especially those no longer with us.

Christian's speech was disappointingly/mercifully short (delete as applic.): thanks went to Stephen Perrett for organising the dinner, Colin Bamford for helping keep the Association communications going during the past couple of years, Larry Bode for reminding us of the importance of the Arts to the Association and Gill Williamson for tirelessly helping promote the Association amongst the current school population.

Christian also announced the major event in everyone's sporting calendar. Forget Wimbledon, the FA Cup final, Royal Ascot and the British F1 Grand Prix. Drop everything for Wednesday 6th April when the lumbering might of the Old Alts sports teams take on the fearsomely-competent school teams. Reported in this magazine.

Headmaster Greame Wright replied on behalf of the School, commenting on how far folk had travelled to be present. We had guests from as far away as Wilmslow Warwickshire Somerset and Sidney, Australia (which rather won the prize for furthest travelled).

The School is in rude health with a great and still-growing reputation. Impressive numbers leave to Oxbridge and Russell-group universities in the UK, and increasingly the American Ivy League too. But the school has always been about more than academic excellence – helping boys develop great character is what helps AGSB stand apart.



The school continues to shine in music, debating and of course sport – with a real breadth of sports offered, and at a high standard too.

The school has re-introduced a ‘House’ system, which is bedding in nicely – thanks to House sponsors for the part they play in making this possible.



The School continues to grow: by 2025 there will be 7 entry forms and around 1500 pupils. This growth is supported by new building projects, and a plan to reinvigorate the school playing fields. There will be some fund-raising events in May and June 2022 to support future school development plans.

Finally, with a hearty “thanks” to the Association, and especially to all guests, speeches concluded. Raffle prizes included alcohol, alcohol and er (you guessed it – more alcohol). Ticket sales raised £455 which will eventually find its way back to the school in form of a donation or purchase of some special equipment.

An excellent evening’s fun – see you all in 2023.



The Trax

Dave Smith contacted me to say "In answer to the appeal by Brian Clark in the 2020 newsletter, yes I remember The Traks"

Brian asked: *"My old second XI Captain, Spring Williams (except going by recent photos he was never captain at all!!!) has encouraged me to bring up the topic of music. So I am attaching the card of the TRAKS. Anyone remember them? The lead guitarist was at AGS and I think other band members might have been. This would have been 65-67 when everyone was the next Clapton. I remember seeing them play a dance in Hale Barns but that was my only memory of them in concert...."*

My best friend at school was Mike Holbrook-Jones and we played together in Mr Sugden's Under 13/14 & 15 football teams.

We both loved the Beatles music and I discovered that Mike played a set of Premier drums and had formed a band called The Goblins who rehearsed in a timber garage at Mike's house in Leigh Road, Hale which was renamed "The Voyd". The other two members were Ian Dyson and fellow AGSB Robin Downs (aka Dobbin). Mike said I could join his band if I had a guitar. I quickly persuaded Malcolm Heywood, a classmate who had 2 guitars, to sell me one of his and that is where it all began....

When Robin and Ian left (due to musical indifferences) we recruited fellow AGSB classmate Brian Booker and a Manchester Grammar schoolboy Ray Buckley. The band changed its name to The Traks (Mike's idea) and we started playing covers and standards, "Bye Bye Johnny", "House of the Rising Sun", "Still I'm Sad" & "All or Nothing" spring to mind.

We played at local parties and dances and rehearsed in our cellar in Elm Road,

Hale or at 1st Hale Scouts hall at Hale Methodist Church. We once went into the church when no one was around and Ray played the organ run down at the end of "Sha La La Lee" which sounded fantastic! We also recruited a lead singer Chris Simms who was a year older than us and we entered a talent competition at Runcorn British Legion Club and came first to win the £10 prize. Graham Tomlinson, who was in my brother Terry Smith's year, had by this time replaced Ray on bass, and we played "Wipe Out", "Honey Don't" and "Leaving Here" by the British group The Birds (later to change their name for obvious legal reasons but featuring Ronnie Wood on lead guitar).

Altrincham Guardian heard about our success and wrote a small article which gave names and ages. Chris who was 17 at the time was most upset fearing he wouldn't be allowed back into the Griffin until he was 18.

Mike left AGSB after 5th form "O" Levels and went to study at North Cheshire College (now South Trafford) and then on to Birmingham University. He eventually taught at Durham University and published:- Holbrook-Jones, M.R. Work, industrialization and politics: a study of the work experience of spinners, coalminers and engineering workers, 1850-1914. PhD thesis, Durham University, 1980. Sadly he was diagnosed with bowel cancer and died in 1984. Brian Booker became the manager of the Altrincham branch of the Skipton BS.

As a band we changed our personnel and name as often as we changed our underpants. The Beatles influence was inevitable. "Revolver" was a game changer and I remember going around to Clive Ball's house in Hermitage Road having finished all my "O" level exams and hearing the "Sgt Pepper" LP on



The Goblins. Robin Downs, Ian Dyson, Mike Holbrook, David Smith

repeat while everyone else was revising, going to sit final exams and drinking strong coffee. (I went out to get another pint of milk.) Gordon Peake invited me round to his house where he played Arthur Brown's "Fire" and Jimi Hendrix "Are You Experienced". Inevitably we changed our names to 3rd Stone From the Sun and played at the Stamford Hall with The Mindbenders who had just had the No. 1 hit "A Groovy Kind of Love". The concert was incidentally commissioned by John Crowther and a friend of his John Reesby and we were the supporting act. (We even let them borrow our extension leads!). We then became The Blue Max and registered with agents, bought a group van that none of us could drive. We started playing regularly at NW clubs and pubs and such prestige venues as Warrington Co-op Dance Hall, Sutton Manor Miners Club and doubling up at the late night Bus Stop Club in Piccadilly.

Driving duties fell to our Dads until we recruited John, a milkman from Flixton who drove our van and played a wonderful L100 Hammond organ highlighted in a glorious rendition of "America" and "Rondo" by The Nice.

I was in 5th/6th form studying A level Art with Arty Mills, French with Mr Porter and GED with George Thornton. I remember vividly when we played at a Cheshire Country Club and the stripper asked if we could play a foxtrot for her act. We quickly improvised a 12 bar instrumental but we had to shout at Graham who had stopped playing his bass when she faced us with her back to the audience, winked and took off her bra. Graham froze.

In the words of the late George Harrison "All things must pass". We played many memorable gigs, some for entirely the wrong reasons, and we supported some good bands. Zoot Money's Big Roll Band at Liverpool John Moores University (featuring Andy Summers later of The Police fame). The Zoo at Worsley Court House and The Flower Pot Men at Mr Smith's, Manchester.

In 1970 I was finishing my first year at Manchester School of Architecture and realised I needed to start settling down to my studies and Mike was off to Birmingham University so we sold the Marshall 100 Watt PA system, Shure and Beyer microphones and a Watkins Copycat Echo unit to a fairground owner. We split the receipts and kept £20 back to spend the next 1 or 2 weeks each night in the local pubs till it was all gone.

Musical activities were put on hold while Mike and I completed our studies. Sometime during the late 70's Mike invited me over to Northumberland to guest as lead guitar with his group The 105 Fat Band (named after a band member's moped number plate). We rehearsed on the Saturday afternoon and I had to improvise lead guitar parts to their set list. We played that evening at Ashington Working Mens Club famously the home of our World Cup Heroes of 1966, Bobby & Jack Charlton.

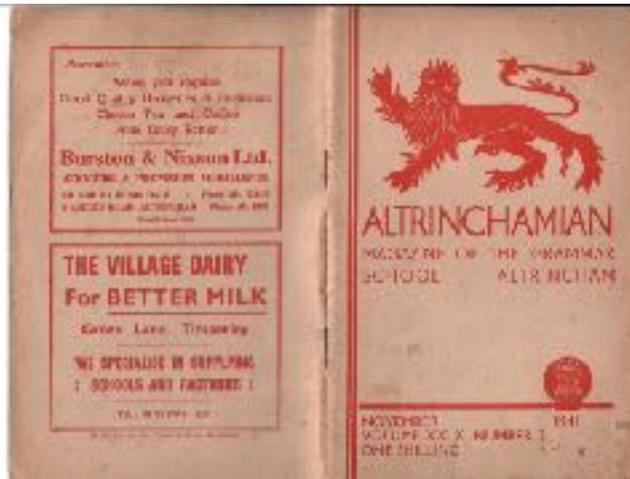
I was once again hooked and set up a band with a fellow architecture student Tom Freake, his brother Keith and Ian Baskeyfield on drums. Naturally we called ourselves Freake Storm. Mike knew he had terminal cancer and asked me to find a good home for his Premier drum kit. By this time I had been working as a conservation officer for GMC. I had contacts with Greater Manchester Youth Association and they put me in touch with the Liverpool Crawford Arts Foundation who ran a centre for local disadvantaged teenagers. Later that year we took his wife, Gill, to a multi-arts performance centred around Mike's drums. It was a fantastic event, we were all in tears. Mike would have been proud. RIP 1950-1984.

David C Smith RIBA



Times Past

(A Look at School Magazines from the 40s)



Jane Forster very kindly contacted me recently with some old copies of the 'Altrinchamian' magazine she had found. I received editions from 1938 to 1941. Apparently she had been sorting through the possessions of her late parents (father: Anthony Armstrong Eckersley who attended AGSB in the 30s and 40s, and who died in 1996), and was keen that the magazines did not simply go to waste. Thanks Jane.

I confess that I've never spent much time looking at these old magazines in the past, but Jane's gift gave me cause to do so for the first time in earnest. They are a lovely glimpse into times past and maybe this short review will jolt memories for some readers.

So here is a summary of what I can gather about the Altrinchamian.

- The Altrinchamian magazine is originally a publication of the school, but it incorporated a section for Old Alts. As far as I can tell the Altrinchamian became exclusively an Old Alts publication in 1959. The publication name "Altrinchamian" started to fizzle out in 1999, after which it was mostly referred to as the 'Newsletter'
- The Altrinchamian magazine was published several times a year (3 editions per year in the 40s, 2 a year in the 50s then from the mid-60s seems to have reverted to an annual publication)
- The magazine used to have a cover price - in the edition shown it is 1 shilling: equivalent to £2.50 in today's money - although inflation does funny things to prices - maybe more relevant is that the magazine used to cost the equivalent of nearly 3 pints of beer. There stopped being a charge for the magazine when it became an Old Alts publication in 1959
- As an Old Alts publication the magazine has waxed and waned somewhat - from a 5-page edition in 1959 to the multi-section, colourful and informative tome of today (*ahem*).
- Some of the original sections remain intact: mostly to do with sport, but early editions were concerned with administration too - e.g. changes of address.



Anthony Armstrong Eckersley in school uniform

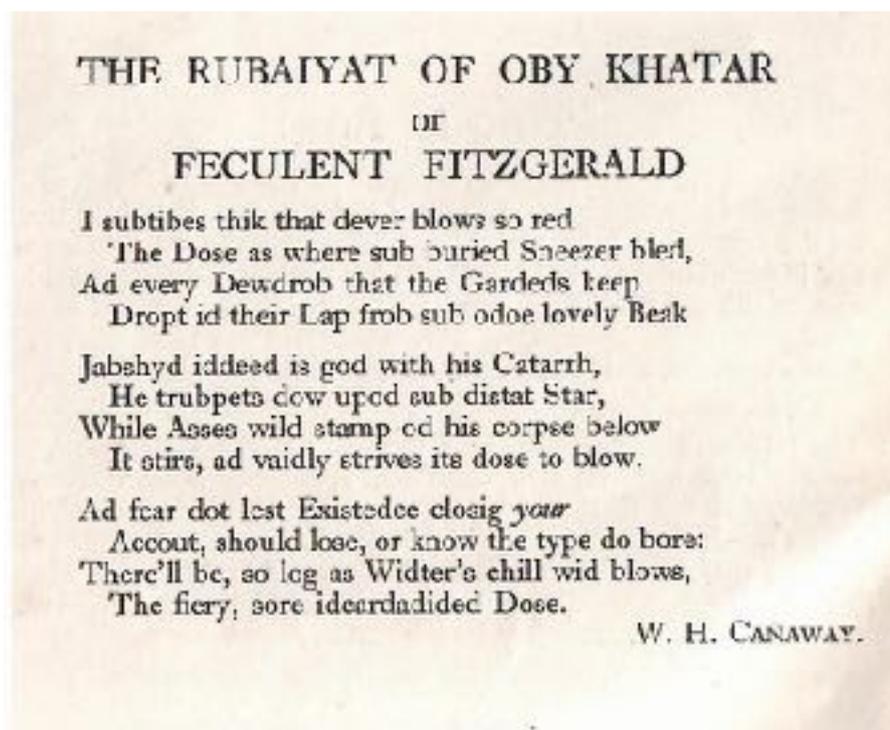
Specific to the 1941 edition shown above:

- It is 42 pages, 17 of which relate to Old Alts content
- As a wartime edition there is plenty of material covering the schools contribution to the war effort
- There is quite a lot of poetry, including a piece called 'Feculent Fitzgerald' about a lad with a snotty nose (see below)
- There are lots of sports and academic results listed.
- The magazine clearly generated some revenue through advertising (E.g. the back cover shown above). There is also advertising from
 - Burgons' groceries and provisions
 - J Whipp, plumber and glazier
 - Malley and Adamson, opticians
 - Smith's, stationers (became WH Smith)
 - Horne Brothers, school outfitters
 - Shields, school outfitters
 - James Galt, stationers and booksellers
 - Charles Pennington, joiner and builder
 - A. E. Cassin, butcher (high-class)
 - HDK, trailers
 - Holdings, chemist

Do you remember any of these ? Penningtons the builder was around in Hale until quite recently.

The Old Alts portion of the magazine had the following sections:

- List of committee members (there were 22 committee members, plus representatives for sports !)
- 'Notes' containing general news about the School and Association
- Social activities containing news about bridge drives, sporting fixtures and dances
- "We have heard" containing letters from readers, mostly serving in the armed forces in this edition (for obvious reasons)
- A list of Old Alts on active service - contains approx 160 names
- A list of Old Alts taken prisoners of war - contains 5 names, rather depressingly
- Lists of Old alts engaged with Home Guard and Civil Defence
- Change of addresses, engagements and marriages (but no deaths, oddly)



Scouts at AGSB

Remember the scout hut half-way down the exit to Heath Road ? Me too. Dave Smith (#2) has been closely involved with scouting at ABGS for many years - here's his piece about scouting past, present and future. If any of you former Scouts are inspired to share your memories, then please contact me. Ed.

Most of you will recall the Canadian hut type building (the one with the totem Poles!) on the school grounds and many of you will have been through it as a Scout during your school days.

The Scout Group was established in 1913. Funds were raised by the scouts, and Scout HQ (designed by one of the Scout's parents) was completed and opened on 1st October 1932.

The Hut

The Hut had some serious fire damage in 1975 which took two years to repair and was totally reroofed in 2012 after a large fundraising effort. It is currently being refurbished/ upgraded with a new staircase to replace the vertical loft ladder to the stores, a kitchen and toilet upgrade, a lighting update and the garage refurbished. It remains an iconic building with its stags' heads and memorabilia and a great place to hold meetings.

Membership

The Group has consistently been one of the largest in the Altrincham District, with currently c140 members (incl. Leaders) delivering Scouting to the highest standard for 5 – 18 year olds across the Beaver, Cub, Scout and Explorer Scout Sections. Many of the Leaders over the years have also assisted at District and County level and many ex-Scouts have gone onto lead groups in other areas of the country and be part of the Armed Forces.

Originating as a Scout-only section, and initially led by schoolmasters with up to 90 boys on the register, the sections of Beavers and Cubs were added in 1990 when 8th Altrincham amalgamated with us. With local Guides also meeting on a Monday night, the building regularly has a weekly throughput of 100 youngsters.

Affiliations

The group has (had) many affiliations with other groups including 3rd Blakedown in Kidderminster, 8th Kilmacolm Guides, Garwolin District (Poland) and 56th Leicester with whom we ran competition camps in the 50's.

Camps over the years

The group has had the strength and depth to regularly provide both participants and service team members to the World Scout Jamborees (held every 4 years worldwide) and other Moots. In the early days, Scouts used to trundle a trek cart to Hale Station, alight at Cuddington and pull/push it to camp at Sandiway. These days transport is more minibus and luxury coach.

Regular Easter camps, half term hiking weekends and a weeks' camp at Whit are held. Since 1973, the latter has been held at Stock Park, Newby Bridge, on the shores of Windermere. The site owners have recently allowed us to install a Totem Pole by the Officers' fireplace.

The group has always maintained the highest standards of Scouting Tradition, and is one of a remaining few who retain the ability to “Greenfield” camp with just a water tap to hand (and portaloo’s these days for environmental reasons), using fires to cook on and building bivouacs and going wild camping.

In recognition of members ability to show “general backwoodsmanship and the ability to survive in the outdoors” Woodcraft names were awarded from 1929 to worthy individuals (by a democratic vote on nominations by members already holding such a name). The name given reflects some traits of the individual concerned and since 1929, 513 names such names have been awarded which are displayed in HQ. “Green grass growing in the water, Rikki tikki tavi and Thunder cloud” are more esoteric examples – you know who you are!

The Group has organised its own International Camps, going to Norway in 1986 and then Kandersteg in 1988, 1998, 2008 and 2013. The 2013 trip had 100 attendees, with the objective that every 11 – 16 year old member would have the opportunity to go. Sadly, Kander 2021 had to be postponed due to COVID.



Kander, 2013

Celebrating Success

The strength and quality of the leadership team has led to many youngsters achieving the highest award as a Scout by becoming a Kings/Queens Scout. The group can lay claim to at least 40+ such achievers with the latest two in 2021. The Duke of Edinburgh’s Gold Award has also been achieved by many.

Various members of the leadership team have also been formally recognised by the Chief Scout as having provided “above and beyond” service over many years.

Centenary Celebrations

The group celebrated its Centenary in 2013 and held a day’s celebration event at which several previous members were in attendance. Here’s a link to the article and pictures from the day www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/gallery/gallery-scout-group-celebrates-century-3416847 and below is a group photo of leaders and youngsters at the time:



The Future

The Scout Association is the largest youth movement in the world with 38 million members across 216 countries and the World Scout Jamboree held every 4 years, has 45,000 in attendance, so it is flourishing.

There is, and has always been, a shortage of adults/leaders, but there remains a very strong willingness from youngsters to participate. With Bear Grylls as our Chief Scout and co-opted ambassadors of the likes of Chris Evans, Julia Bradbury and Tim Peake the aspiration for growth and supporting young people to get out there and take part in outdoor adventure is in place.

Our group has a strong leadership and support team with a good number of younger leaders now heading up the Sections. All sections have healthy numbers so the future looks good.

In signing off, I would like to invite any Old Alt to get in touch, whether enquiring about membership for any family member or simply wanting to have a tour round HQ, please do so via our website:

Link to our website: [3rd Altrincham Scout Group \(3rdaltrinchamscouts.co.uk\)](http://3rdaltrinchamscouts.co.uk)

Yours in Scouting,
Dave Smith, (Mountain Elk)
AGSB 1973 - 1980

Sports Reports

Golf

Chorlton GC was the host of this year's golf day (Thanks to Scott Meakin for organising/hosting). The format of this event seems to have settled on school matches alongside Old Alts/parents all playing together - a formula that guarantees lots of attendees and works rather well. A full house and sunshine greeted the intrepid golfers who enjoyed an excellent day at a very well-presented golf course.

Overall winner on the day was pupil Jones Barton, scoring 41 stableford points.

For the Old Alts there were 3 players on 38 points, so on a card play-off the top 3 were:

3rd - Christian 'lucky Jim' James

2nd - David 'not again' Stephens

1st - Scott 'my course' Meakin

A selection of photos from the day, below.



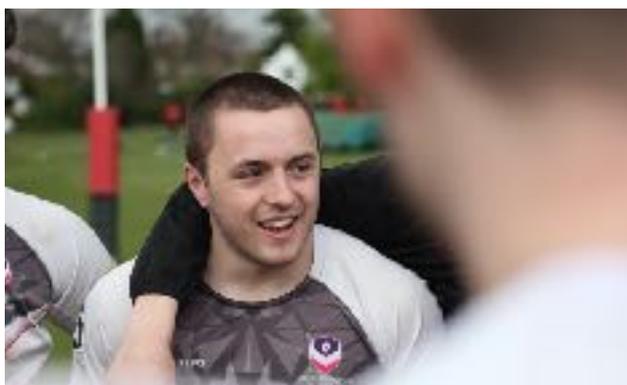
School vs Old Boys Matches

6th April saw the annual Rugby and Football matches between the school teams and Old Boys team. Honours even this year:

Rugby: 34-14 to the Old Boys. Man-of-the-match trophy awarded to Dan Haslett

Football: 6-0 to the School. Man-of-the-match trophy awarded to Angus Bailey

A selection of photos from the day ...



Bits and Bobs

Most of our miscellany goes onto the internet these days, but I do occasionally get some items that I think are worth putting into the magazine ...

Former pupil Tom Bracegirdle captained the England team at the World games held in Alabama during summer 2022. Tom received some sponsorship from the Old Alts to help with some of his equipment costs. The game is dominated by our stateside cousins and sure enough the final was a USA vs Canada affair. The British team competed for the Bronze position against Japan and were narrowly pipped after extra time.

More information here: <https://worldlacrosse.sport/article/canada-claims-gold-medal-after-dominant-campaign-at-the-world-games-2022/>



I was contacted by Gareth Blazey, a guitar collector who had acquired an old instrument with potential links to the school, and with which Gareth would like some help in filling in some gaps in the instrument's provenance.

Gareth acquired the guitar from the wife of a deceased Old Alt, Andy Wake. Andy used to run a record label in the 1980s and was apparently friends with Ian Brown and John Squire of the Stone Roses. You can see from the pictures below that the guitar may well have belonged to John Squire.

Do any readers know anything that might help Gareth ? You can contact him directly on info@a2online.co.uk.



Obituaries

Roger Cleland. 7th October 1944 - 27th June 2022

Born on the 7th of October in 1944, in Gatley Nursing Home to Harold and Clara Cleland, Roger was younger brother to David. The family lived in Romily and Styal until Roger was 5 years old when he moved to Heald Green along with his mother and brother.

Roger attended Styal primary school and then Etchells Primary school in Heald Green. On passing his 11+ exam, he then attended Moseley Hall Grammar School in Cheadle. Roger enjoyed his schooldays, and played both football and rugby for the school teams.

In 1963 he went on to study French at Westminster Teacher Training College in Oxford and completing 3 periods of Teaching practice in both primary and secondary.

Whilst at college Roger played football for their 1st team and he was also cast as 'Koko' in the college production of Gilbert and Sullivan's 'The Mikado'.

Over the years Roger played a lot of football, often playing for local teams wherever he's been living at the time, at home and abroad. When spending time in Paris studying at the British Institute, he played football for an ex-pat sports club - Standard Athletic Club.

In 1966 Roger was awarded the Teaching Practice prize; he also spent a year in Sisteron in the Basses Alpes department of France, working there as an Assistant; and again, while there, he played football for town team. Over the years Roger became quite the 'Francophile', he loved France.

On his return to the UK, Roger took up a teaching post at Altrincham Grammar School for Boys; and that same year, on the 13th of November 1967, Roger and Jennifer became engaged. They went on to tie the knot on the 17th of August in 1968, beginning their married life together living in Lymm.

Roger's sporting pursuits continued, playing football for Old Alts FC; but he was also introduced to sailing; he was taught by the 6th Form students, and Roger went on to run the school sailing activities for the next 30 years. He and Jennifer also enjoyed holidays at Pwllheli in Wales, staying in Jennifer's parents' caravan there.

In 1972 Roger became a proud and loving Dad, with the birth of their first child, Julie.

A couple of years later he went on to participate in a teacher exchange programme, and Roger completed a school year in Bayeux in Normandie. The following year, in 1976, their family was completed with the birth of Stephen.

Roger was later introduced to what would become another of his sporting interests, when he learned to ski while on a school trip - he was hooked and would go skiing every year for next 34 years. When he later completed a spring term on teacher exchange in St Marcellin, near to Grenoble, Roger's family also learned to ski.



In 1982 Roger trained for and ran the Manchester marathon; later going on to also run in the London marathon, the Potteries marathon and the Leeds marathon.

Over the next decade he enjoyed many camping trips all over the UK, as well as in France and Germany, having bought himself a 6-man tent.

Sailing remained a huge interest for Roger and for 12 years he acted as Chairman of Cheshire Schools Sailing Association. Along with Jennifer and Stephen, he started travelling all over the country, Topper sailing; later becoming Topper Class Chairman in 1995, which he continued to do for 4 years, after which he became Topper Class International Chairman.

Roger had also progressed in his career, having been appointed Deputy Headmaster in 1994; and then, when retirement was on the horizon, Roger decided to join Antrobus Golf Club, as it seemed to him the thing to do as you approached retirement! It was around this time he also completed the Coast to Coast walk along with his brother, David.

Roger and Jennifer went on to enjoy his retirement with activities like walking Hadrian's Wall; as well as buying a 27-foot yacht, which was moored at Pwllheli Marina.

Unfortunately, though, in 2016 Roger was diagnosed with chronic kidney disease, and deciding against a kidney transplant, he underwent dialysis in 2019. Around this time, he and Jennifer bought their caravan at Rhosneigr, where they enjoyed spending as much time as they could.

Roger is a much loved and deeply missed husband and father, as well as grandfather to Rachael, Matthew, Joshua and Evie.

Roger enjoyed a very full and active life, filling his time with many sporting activities, with sailing and skiing being his main hobbies, though also playing a lot of football, cricket and for a time running many of the activities along with colleagues from school. He'd been a Manchester United supporter from being a young boy and used to enjoy going to lots of their matches.

He was a man with a good sense of humour, and always very giving of his time, both to his colleagues and friends, but also to those he taught – giving up most of his Saturdays and parts of his holidays to take students sailing.

Roger will be deeply missed by so many – his family, his friends and colleagues, and all those who have loved and valued him as a part of their lives.

Stephen H. Jennings. 7th September 1949 – 30th August 2021

Stephen arrived at Altrincham Grammar School for Boys in January 1961 after a family move from Worcester. He progressed well at the school and ultimately achieved entry to University College, London to study Geography. Graduation with a Geography degree led to his decision to specialise in town planning which he proceeded to do by enrolling at Liverpool University on a master's degree in Town and Regional Planning. He was able to put this to good use in his first full-time job at the Newham Council Planning Office, in the early days of Canary Wharf.



Stephen and Jenny Hill were married in 1975 and within weeks of getting married they extended their honeymoon into an "overland" trip to Australia. Having survived the trip, they settled in Perth. Stephen spent several years working in the State Planning Department of Western Australia and then they moved to Halifax, Nova Scotia where Stephen undertook an MBA at Dalhousie University.

For most of the 1980s the family was based in the Perth area where Stephen continued planning activities in Perth and Fremantle. In the 1990s Stephen took up a lecturing post at Curtin University which continued for many years until he moved to run a small cattle farm in the south of Western Australia. He finally returned to Perth to retire near to close family members. He is survived by two sons and three grandchildren living in Perth.

Peter John Smeaton. 1st March 1949 - 24th November 2021

Mike Grisman. Died 3rd January 2022

(Some words extracted from an email received from Mike's Old Alts friend, Ed Ma)

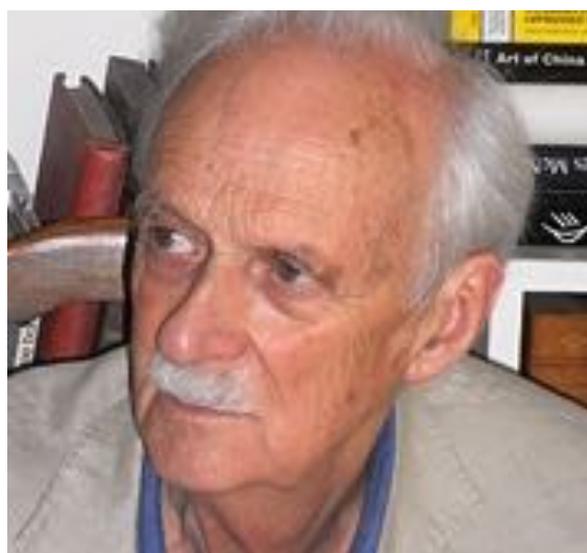
"I attended from 1976-83 - though I'm not sure if he didn't come to AGS a little later. Although not a great academic by any standards, Mike was always a cheerful and life and soul of any party and remained so all his life. He sat his A Levels but did not gain entry to Birmingham where my brother Geoff and I both attended. Mike set up his own business selling Leisure Equipment.

Although we lost touch for a number of years, we were reacquainted through "Friends Reunited" at which point I was a proprietor in a Guest House near Keswick with my wife. He and his wife Rose, came up to stay with us a number of times. He had moved to Devon many years previously and we visited Mike in November last when he had already been diagnosed with terminal cancer - which sadly had been left undiagnosed and untreated during the pandemic.

I have the fondest memories of Mike, especially the times we shared at AGS; of times spent playing whist or table tennis in the 6th Form Common Room (previously the Old Gym), policing The Griffin as a "responsible and vigilant prefect" and his mischievous sense of fun. I will miss him greatly."

Prof. Michael Waller. 1934-2021

David Michael Waller was born in 1934 was brought up at Church Bank on Richmond Road Bowdon and became an outstanding student at Altrincham Grammar School (1946 to 1954). He studied Humanities at the University of Oxford and Russian in the Army and at Manchester University. Michael married Manon Lallée in Lancaster in 1970 and they had two daughters, Nadia and Florence. He became Professor of Politics at Keele University and its first Director of European Studies. He was co-founder of the Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics, and of the Journal of Environmental Politics. He published many articles and books. Micky, as he was known to his friends, also played the violin and sang. He completed his mother Isobel's biography in 2021 and died aged 87 in October 2021.



Richard Morton. Died 11th April. 2022.

He attended AGS from 1944 - 1961 from where he gained entrance to Leeds to study Botany and Agricultural Science gaining a BSc(Hons). He enjoyed his time at the School where the ethos of hard work and play suited his determined can do/will do/must do attitude to life.

He was a well liked and respected pupil and enjoyed playing Rugby and Cricket (both of which became passions for the rest of his life.) He became a well known individual in the farming and social life of Cheshire. He cared deeply about his profession and the industry it served.

Richard's early years on the family farm in High Leigh gave him a solid foundation to develop his love of farming. His highly successful farming business took flight when he acquired the tenancy of Dairy House Farm, Dunham Massey. Despite all the ups and downs of farming he never lost his hard work ethic and determination to see things through. He was one of the first in the area to breed "rare varieties" of pig and plant rape seed oil.

He became a preferred supplier of potatoes to PepsiCo and Walker's Crisps. He also diversified into providing stabling for some horses which quickly developed into a highly successful livery. He was proud of his association with the Knutsford Young Farmers Club and very supportive of hard work that they put in to help farmers in difficult times.

When time allowed he enjoyed many varied interests from fly fishing, game shooting, Rugby Union, F1 Racing, golf and family holidays.

All who knew him have great memories of being in his company and coming away feeling the better for it. Hospitality at the farm was legendary where he, his late wife Margaret and his three children entertained their guests handsomely.

Richard died suddenly after a short illness.

He will be sadly missed by all who knew him especially his children and grandchildren

Andrew Colin Lee. Died 24th April 2022.

Born in Sale, Andrew attended AGS from 1958 to 1963 where he enjoyed both the academic & sporting aspects of the School. He was an excellent footballer and cricketer. As a result he became a long time supporter of Manchester United & Lancashire CCC.

Andrew decided upon Law as a career during his time at AGS & once he had taken his GCSE "O" levels he decided on a different route to achieve his aim by taking his "A" levels through a correspondence course with Wolsey Hall, Oxford. He achieved the necessary grades & so went to London College of Law & served his articles with the chief Solicitor of Blue Circle Industries in London where he worked until 1980.



Following this experience he concentrated in Company & Commercial Law. He joined Tarmac Construction & later Tarmac Quarry Products as Deputy Divisional Solicitor based in Wolverhampton. In 1992 Andrew moved to Balfour Kirkpatrick & then to Balfour Beatty as Company Solicitor based in Derby.

In 1999 he worked part time at Manchester City Council until his retirement in 2007. He chose to travel there by train because he loved looking out for potential spots to go walking as he was a keen fell walker especially in parts of Derbyshire, the Lake District & Wales.

Andrew maintained his love of sport playing Squash in the Staffordshire League & was a regular Snooker player at a local club. He also managed a local football team in which his son, David, played.

He was also involved with the Parent Teachers Association at the Primary School attended by his two children Sarah & David.

He loved the outdoors & enjoyed many family holidays in the UK & France in the touring Caravan he owned. He & his wife Hilary adored their family time together as well as living near Gnosall where the outside was close by. Their children were regular visitors with their families & this was very important towards the end of his life as a major support for Hilary.

Andrew will sadly missed & always lovingly remembered by all who knew him.

Brian Dickenson. Died 29th July 2022