



OLD MITCHAMIANS ASSOCIATION



THE MITCHAMIAN MAGAZINE

NO. 3.



MITCHAM COUNTY SCHOOL PREFECTS. 1950-51.

part 1



THE BULLETIN BOARD

Alistair G. Milne is Hon Secretary of The Mitcham Conservative Club Ltd.

Shonagh McAulay is now working with a Food and Agricultural Organisat'n in Rome, Italy.

Lesley Hills is living in Zululand, South Africa.

Mary Holland is a librarian at Quaker Inter'n'l College in Birmingham.

Ernest Potter works for the Bradford L.E.A. as advisor on special education.

Anyone knowing of the present whereabouts of Doreen Coleman, last heard of breeding dogs at Sanderstead, please advise the Editor.

Marcella Housden (Mostell) has been appointed to the Board of Governors at the Fowan High School for Girls.

Pamela Hedges husband, Rt; Rev'd David Wilcox has been appointed Bishop of Dorking.

Raymond Norris MBE, represents Comfin (Commodity and Finance) Ltd in Carribean Area.

Heather Christie was last heard of on Vancouver Island. News of present location is sort. Advise Editor.

Shelia Weavis married judge and now lives Washington USA.

F.G. Day is Treasurer of The Mitcham Conservative Club.

Doreen Spencer married Dance Band Leader & now lives on Long Island in United States.

Ann Walters SRN., SCM., retired after variety of jobs during 20yrs nursing due to illhealth about 2 yrs ago. There is no such word as Cant... You can do it!.....

Miss Dinn apart from her car crash had successful op for cataract, left eye on 11th March 85 and also Hernia op on 16th July 85. Waiting for op on right eye cataract.

Mollie Neeld 31/37 lives with husband at [redacted] Ancaster, Ontario.

Jessie Bailey seeks news of Beryl Feasey & Leslie Vyse. Via Editor please.

John Ockenden is Chairman of Computing Services Association.

Jean Eppey, married and is living in Australia... Mrs Nichols, [redacted] Victoria, Australia.

One of the Jover Bros..... RAF & JULIAN JOVER who used to have a top Music Hall act is understood to be Car Dealer in United States. Any news to Editor please...

Valerie Stubbington (Mrs Anand) is now the Editor of a house newspaper for an engineering group and has written and published four books since 1976.

D.F. Powell, MA, FRICS, FRITPI, is a Chartered Surveyor.

A.J. Doig's son Clive is a producer with BBC Telev'n and writes in Radio Times each week "C.D.'s Brainbox". Congratulations to Eric Pillinger on his recent marriage.. Lucky Chap!..

Roy Green is Youth Training Scheme Co-ordinator for the Enfield Area.

Eileen Barnden and her H'bd run a landscape-garden firm in Canterbury.

Valerie Tolchard is a senior underwriting assistant to an insurance company.

Margaret Saltwell will be returning to U.K. this Sept after many years in U.S.A.

Pam Helps 52/56 is living at [redacted] Kingsford [redacted] NSW, Australia. Welcomes letters.

Derrick Donovan is Man; Dir. of Carlton Carruthers du Chateau Ltd. A major N.Zld, Advertising Company.

Miss Webb, Mrs Raven.. has two grown-up children. Her married daughter runs, with her husband, hotel in the Swansea Area.

Don Carter, [redacted] Auckland, New Zealand enquires about Jack Shiers.. Advise Editor.

Mary Treverton is married to a Vicar.

Rev. Dr. Marie Isaacs was ordained into the Baptist Ministry some 20yrs ago & still serves as Minister at weekends. Lectures full time at Heythrop College, London, where most students are R.C.

Joan Lewis, SRN, SCM, spent 3 years nursing in Zambia. Is now married to John Bell, a widower with two children & they now have a daughter. Is taking Open Univ. Course.

Jacqueline Monnard is still working as a Chiropodist.

Hilary Hunt has left the Langfrank High School that she taught at for some yrs. Await her new address.....

Items for the "Bulletin Board" should be sent to the Editor.. Please keep them short! Please don't forget to let us know of any changes to your address... Thank you.....

THE MITCHAMIAN

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Please excuse any errors,omissions and accept that we do not seek to offend or be critical to any person either living or deceased.

A big "Thank You" to all who have sent in contributions and articles. They help to make for a wider interest and please let us have more...There must be a some item on which you can put pen to paper!

To avoid confusion..Please not that this issue is No.3. The No.1 had a plain white cover. No.2. had a yellow cover with the photo of Cricket XI of 1949.

A FEW COPIES OF ISSUES NO.1 & NO.2. ARE STILL AVAILABLE AT 75p EACH (Inc Post.) Please let us know if you want one and it must be on a 'first come first served' basis. Complete your set now.....

COMMENT

The past year has produced no less than THREE HUNDRED new contacts with Staff and Pupils from the two schools. Many of them from Overseas, one of these rang with such excitement at a contact after over 25 yrs. Another O.M. rang me and set a record for the longest ever phone call I have had. It lasted over 4 1/2 hours!

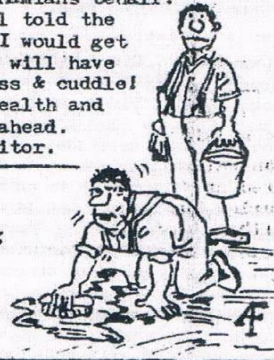
There are still a great deal of O.M.'s who are not in touch. The local papers helped to locate nearly 30 recently and we have had instances of brothers and sisters who have not thought to mention their own kin. Only a day or so ago I was told of one of the Ladies whose Mother and Father were on our list as O.M.'s but had not told us of their daughter. The Members List is under way..Please let us have any names etc now so we may include them..

Our new feature.. "The Bulletin Board" can include your message next time..If you let me have it. Please help with any requests this time if you have information.

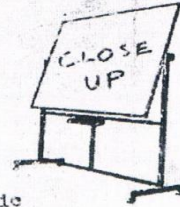
To those of you who have commented on the Reunion Date coinciding with Easter it is something that was not realised could happen when we fixed the last Saturday of March as a fixed date for the Reunion as far back as 1982 after comments that May, as it was held then, was a bad date. Hall was booked in 1984 for this year and none of us expected Easter so early. We were not alone in the problem..A well known and prestigious Motoring Club, of which I have been a member for many years also made the same mistake. Some of you have welcomed a chance to combine the Reunion with family visits so it is a mixed blessing.. "You can never please everyone". Thanks for all your kind wishes and appreciations for efforts put in on Old Mitchamians behalf.

I wonder if you all told the Prime Minister if I would get a medal! Perhaps I will have to settle for a kiss & cuddle! Wishing you Good Health and Happiness in year ahead.
Arthur Freakes, Editor.

"I say Doug"...
"Yes Ron"
"There's something about scrubbing floors that's more satisfying than propping up the bar"....



Close-up column



MISS JOYCE PEARCE. O.B.E., M.A.,

In her last letter to me on 6th February 1985, Miss Joyce Pearce asked to be remembered to anyone whom she knew in the rather traumatic war years and afterwards when from 1942 to 1948 she was Senior History Mistress at Mitcham County School for Girls.

Even though she was, I understand, at that time, already suffering from illness she made it clear that she had "quite a lot of "archives"; photographs and magazines and will, as I am clearing them out, package them for you."

Sadly on the 15th July 1985 at the age of 69 she was to pass away.

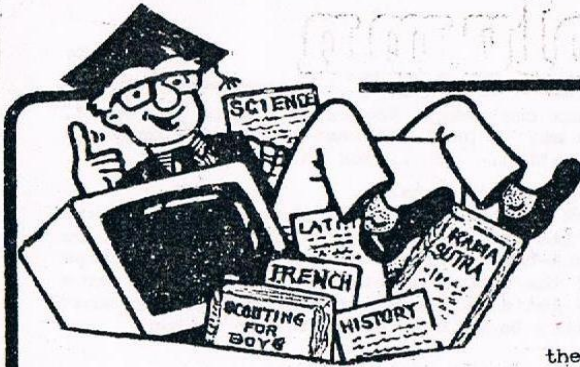
To those who knew her at M.C.G.S., she was a popular teacher with strong pacifist ideas who held a sixth form conference at her mother's house, Ockenden, in Woking to which no less than sixty schools sent representatives and then went on to form, after a visit to Eastern Europe, when she saw the horrors suffered by refugees in camps, the "Ockenden Venture". She had, in 1951, persuaded the people of Woking to pay for 17 refugee children to have a holiday at Ockenden as a Festival of Britain gesture and the experience of escorting the children "home" to their dreadful camps, changed the course of her life.

Two Polish and three Latvian children were taken back to Ockenden to live and learn to speak and read English. Within two years one had passed nine "O" levels. The others also gained so much from their opportunity to enjoy schooling and happy community life with such contrast to the stark past, orphaned, and having experienced both concentration and displaced persons camps. These five were the first of over One thousand to follow in their footsteps. In 1963, Ockenden, which was a registered charity began to take refugees from places other than Europe and now stretches its activities to Pakistan, Sudan etc. There have been Hungarians, Czechoslovakians, Vietnanesse Boat People an many others.

Having met Miss Pearce on more than one occasion at Ockenden I know, only too well, how hard she worked, how much she became looked upon by the children..as a real mother.... She gave them, with her unceasing efforts and great compassion, the warmth and comfort that they so desperately needed. She got dozens of people to work voluntarily to help her and Ockenden now has, at least, twelve houses across the U.K where refugees can make a new start in life. Over the years many hundreds of people have been involved and have given their services willingly.

Miss Pearce received two major recognitions for her work: An O.B.E., awarded for her services to humanity and a programme in the series "This is your Life" devoted to her and her great efforts but I feel certain that the reward that this modest, humane, deep thinking lady valued as much, if not more, were the letters, visits and phone calls that she got from "her children" from all over the world. Truly a person whose saintly qualities will live on for ever with those who, were privileged to know her. Editor.

A number of Old Mitchamians and former staff, including Miss Dixon, Miss Mostel, Marie Newton, Alma Newton etc; attended the Memorial Service at Westminster Abbey and many more have written to express sympathy. Sadly it is the much beloved Miss Margaret Dixon who probably feels the loss of Miss Pearce more than any Old Mitchamian as she has for many years lived and worked and served on the Executive Committee of "Ockenden Venture". Miss Dixon, was at the last report received from a Lady O.M., as alert and vigorous as ever although not as mobile as in the past. Regretfully we have not been able to get her to come to a reunion but she always expresses great interest in the Old Mitchamians and the many, many girls that she met in her years at Mitcham. As Marie Newton 1940/1946 now, Mrs Cobb, of [redacted] Bexley Kent, [redacted], said in a recent letter
"How lucky we were to have had a woman of such calibre to teach us" .. and I am sure you would wish me through these columns to extend all our best wishes to Miss Dixon and to express the wish that perhaps, one day, she might, if we could arrange transport, find it possible to make perhaps a short visit to a reunion. She is, indeed, another lady, whom all girls of her long era at the school hold in the highest esteem and with whom many have remained in touch over the years since leaving school. Editor.



Light up the past

An article that throws some light on a different aspect of the days of school teachers.

The writer, a long serving Master at Mitcham Grammar School for Boys, was also instrumental in the establishment of a unique link between the Girls and the Boys Schools. While evacuated with the Schools at Weston he met, courted and later,

in 1941, married Miss E.V. Clarke, a Mistress at the Girl's School, who on the return, after evacuation, became in her married name, a Teacher at the Boys School. The first and, I believe, the only person to teach in their own right at both schools. (Editor).

A MAN SEVERE HE WAS, AND STERN OF VIEW... By William T.J. Purbrick. M.A. (Cantab).

(There are no prizes for identifying members of the Boy's School staff, most of whom flourished in the 1960's. In any case, what is said "in the vino" is not necessarily "Veritas".)

Three times a year, at the end of term, the Second Master considers the departures among his colleagues; X is taking the giant step into the unknown realms of retirement; Y's rather comfortable armchair in the corner will find another occupant; Z is deserting the pedestrian increments of Burnham for the rat race of the industrial world.

Some schools exact termly premiums to cover retirements, moving-on presentations, marriages and other Acts of God; in other schools the Second Master collects the required thank-offering according to some democratically agreed decision arrived at ten years before by a largely different set of members. 2/6 for Adrian, 2/6 for Barry and, of course, 2/6 for sherry. The bitterness which the payment of 5/- may provoke is mollified by the 2/6 which everyone enjoys.

On the last midday of term, with the early dismissal of school allowed by a willing Headmaster, a lazy euphoria settles decently over the staff. The Second Master knows that some cynic may play his remarks back on a tape and reveal their barrenness but after all, seen through two glasses of sherry, his jokes will probably pass muster. He must forget nobody - students on teaching practice, foreign assistant (e)s - and he must, like Bolingbroke "regreet the daintiest last". Parody too, if he can; the Georgian Poets may do; he probably learnt them when he was at school, and he has never understood the new fangles stuff of Eliot and his like; a retiring colleague is seen as muttering..

"I must go back to the Isle (of Wight) again to the chalk and the Alum sands, And all I ask is a goggle-box that fires in all three (four now) bands"

Literary references can be useful. Many readings of Macbeth "Have reinforced the conviction that Harper cries" "Tis time His time!" and if a colleague so-named is retiring it does no harm to mention the point. One Richard Bateman, according to Wordsworth, left the Lake District to make a Whittington Fortune; the victim may be going in the reverse direction to Ambleside, but it will serve. Bastard French is useful. It has been pleasant to have somebody "domnant un coup de pied contour du lien" ("picking round the place" for the illiterate.)

The marriage gift is an essential. Privately, the Second Master may wonder to himself whether some of his more ineligible lady members of staff may have placed adverts in the Times Matrimonial Supplement:-

- Continued next page -

— LIGHT UP THE PAST —

WANTED..as soon as possible, MAN to learn husbandry. Master of Hearts preferred. Appropriate Head of Household Allowance may be paid. Interest in Domestic Subjects, e.g. Washing-up, an additional qualification. Box No. xxxxx

But the Marriage portion like the Leaving gift is payable.

The Headmaster may be invited to present the prizes. He and the recipients, are well advised not to say much. By this time the audience is either slumberous, or keenly alive to the approach of the lunch-hour deadline at the local inn. Perhaps there is one exception to the rule-- if the school caretaker is retiring after a long period of service he will, firstly get a better parting gift than most staff can expect and, secondly, he will probably be able to speak better about the school than anybody else in it.

The Headmaster himself may be retiring or moving on. This is a rather more ticklish situation. Perhaps as good a gambit as any is to compare him slightly in his favour with former Headmasters; e.g. X used to make a note of what he had to do to improve the school, but he put the note in his pocket, and at the end of term, found it as treasure-trove only when he cleared his pockets, by which time it was out of date; Y used likewise to make a note but two days later, when he came to look at it, he couldn't read his own handwriting; but our present Z writes nothing down - he just remembers it, and that ladies and gentlemen, is most rewarding. To say that the School and the Staff are terrified of what the Old Man will dream up next is high praise and can end on the assurance that "Mitcham's Boss is to be Eastfield's brain." At this juncture the Second Master may profitably point out that he himself has applied for promotion in his time, he has come back unsuccessful and has to be content with his present "pis-aller" kind of job, simply because it is a "je ne puis aller anywhere else" kind of job.

And lastly the obituary notice of a school caught in the inexorable march towards Change..The proud story of the Old Boy who, having parted company with the school because they no longer saw eye to eye, shortly after his departure burgled a shop, but was caught because he had left his school cap with his name legally in it, at the scene of the crime..O temporal! O mores! Those were the days! The march of progress moves us elsewhere.

And we find another home,
Comprehensively new!
With boys as modern, but hairier, *
And Staff to match, ehew!
And I daresay it will do.

(*Amazingly, fashion prevented this from happening.)

"UNLUCKY FOR ONE". ARTHUR FREAKES.

One of the many humorous items that I recall from days at Mitcham Grammar School was one that happened in the playground during morning break. A group of us were standing talking when Frank, one of the group, accidentally stepped on a spider that had chosen the precise moment that he, Frank, had changed position to run out of its hideaway in a crack in the brickwork.

"Hey, Frank" said John, another of our group, "you shouldn't have done that!"

"Why not?" asked Frank. "Because spiders are lucky," came the reply.

I recall Frank's smile and the shrug of his shoulders as he replied with irrefutable logic, "that one wasn't".

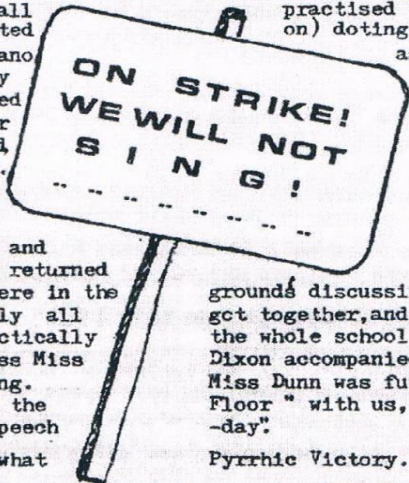
Another "Unlucky For One" incident occurred one snowy day when in complete disregard of instructions a number of pupils were playing snowballs in the area just outside the Woodwork room. Try as I can I cannot recall the name of the unlucky boy who, in true "custard pie fight" style threw a snowball at another pupil who was standing outside the doors and who of course promptly ducked, enabling a dead shot snowball to land firmly on the face of a certain master who chose that exact moment to open the door. I recall that the master failed to see the humour of the incident.

MITCHAM GIRLS

"THE DAY WE WENT ON STRIKE".....JACQUELINE MONNARD.

Whenever Old Girls of the mid-1930's era meet, the one experience that is bound to be relived is "The Day We Went On Strike".

Our popular Music Mistress, Mrs Francis had left, to be replaced by a humourless, unsympathetic type of woman. Speechday approached - the highlight of the school year-and as usual we all practised the programme of songs to be presented (or foisted on) doting (or long suffering) parents, accompanied on the piano as always by our hard-working Miss Dixon. The day before Speechday the new Music Teacher announced that she would bring her own accompanist for the occasion. We were shocked, disgusted, and indeed for Miss Dixon. We were above all, very sorry. We felt that she had been "used", then insulted, and it was more than we could bear.



I went home for lunch and to Miss Dunn. When I returned were gathered everywhere in the letters. We eventually all signed by practically Dunn, stating that unless Miss Dunn, stating that unless Miss absolutely refused to sing. Assembly and "Cleaned the will be no songs on Speech We felt it was a somewhat

wrote a letter of protest to school groups of girls grounds discussing the events and writing got together, and what we called a "Round the whole school was presented to Miss Dixon accompanied us on Speechday, we abs-Miss Dunn was furious. She called a school Floor " with us, finally announcing "There -day".
Pyrrhic Victory...

Miss Dunn was evidently determined to exercise her authority, but I feel that she should have been proud of us! After all it was she who instilled in us the virtues of loyalty and initiative! Did she ever confide any such feelings to Miss Dixon, I wonder?

Well it wasn't exactly a Pyrrhic Victory after all. The "Interloper" left at the end of term (did she go, or was she pushed?) and was replaced by the friendly and classically beautiful Miss Moody.

Miss Jacqueline Monnard..1933/1939... Mitcham, Surrey.....

"MY NEW SCHOOL".....BERYL JEFFS. 1936.

"One of the most delightful things about the County School I thought, was the entire absence of boys - boys that pushed and shoved and shouted, as they did at my other school. At Sherwood Park School I had a most tiresome boy sitting next to me, who covered my frock with blots and pulled my hair and was always trying to push me out of my desk".

Mrs Beryl Smith, Worcester Park, Surrey.

"TALL STORY".....

Describing a visit to the Baths Hall on 5th February 1935 to see two films, one of which entitled "Climbing Mount Everest" there was a report in May 1935 issue of Girl's School Magazine... "told of the attempt made in 1933 to scale the highest mountain in the world, and although the expedition did not reach the top, it succeeded in establishing a camp at 274,000 feet, 700 feet nearer than the point reached in 1924"... "Heaven only knows on what, could it have been a cloud, as that made them about FORTY SIX plus Miles above the Peak!

BIG BOOBS

Believe it or not, there are other kinds of "Big Boobs" than those that one used to admire when they adorned the developed young bodies of the girls at Mitcham County School for Girls...The following examples are examples of that fact!

Commenting on the 1976 Oxford-Cambridge Boat Race, Robin Marljar of the B.B.C. in directing attention to the differing styles of the crews advised "Look at the way Oxford are rowing, they're much smoother in the water. Cambridge on the other hand, well you can see their cox jerking backwards and forwards with each stroke".Is that what's meant by winning the toss?....On the same race, after Robin Marljar's priceless effort, London Broadcasting's Steve Rider solemnly announced that: "The Boat Race has been won by Oxford and second were Cambridge." Do the losers of the F.A.Cup only come second!

Commenting on Sir Ralph Fiennes epic journey around the world from north to south, an I.T.N. Newsreader managed "Sir Ranulph has finally reached the North Pole today" and then went on to inform that "This completes a journey of 500 miles across the ike-tic arse cap".

An article in the West Lancashire Evening Gazette reported, "An M.P. today appealed to the miners of four counties to drop their mean and selfish attitude" ..

An unfortunate misprint in Manchester Evening News October 17th 1972 resulted in an advert referring to Lynne Cotgrave, one of the paper's Tele-ad girls appearing in the following form: "You never know who you are going to speak to next," says Lynne, who enjoys her daily contact with the public'.

Jimmy Hill managed to make an unfortunate statement when commentating: "Nigel Sturmer-Smith was crapped seven times for England at scrum half," and described All Black Colin Mead as "Sort of player you can expect to see emerging from a ruck with the remains of a jock-strap between his teeth."

The Duchess of Bari in a letter to her husband dated May 31st 1493 translated by Julia Cartwright and published by Dent in 1899 managed "All these figures mounted the tribunal in the centre of the hall and danced round Justice and after dancing for a while their balls exploded" ..

A Saturday afternoon Radio Announcer astonished his listeners with the statement that Chelsea had been awarded a free-cock on the edge of the penalty area and that Welsh rugby star Gareth Edwards was putting France under severe pressure with his cooking!

An Australian Boarding House recently displayed the following notice:
"Will residents please refrain from attaching items to the walls with Durex as this causes the paint to flake when the items are removed"...The O.M. who passed this on to me said "He thought you usually flushed them down the loo" until he realised that "Durex" is the brand name for a type of sticky tape in Australia.

"The right tool should be used for the job...Tools should, as far as practicable be kept dry and in particular, every precaution should be taken to prevent water reaching the interior of the tool".

"All tools should be cleaned regularly and those in constant use should be given special attention....Grinders should run at controlled speed"

Extract from "Use of Powered Hand Tools" issued by British Rail's Accident Prevention Service..

"In the sixth form we've been trying to get uniform done away with. I think we'll soon be down to the boys just wearing a tie and the girls a grey skirt. Daily Mail.
"However I am no longer a new girl, and have experienced three years of life at this school. I sadly fear, however, that my "poking head" still "pokes"...A girl writing in the 1936 edition of the Mitcham County School for Girls Magazine and who commented that during her first lesson at the school on 14th Sept 1933, which was gymnastics, she had been told she had a "poking head"....

At an office which shall remain nameless the following notice was taped to the photocopier.. "The typists' reproduction equipment is not to be interfered with without the prior permission of the Manager." .. Did he often refuse permission?