

HOMEFIELD SCHOOL

Old Boys' News 2011



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Dear Old Boys and Friends

This is our first annual Newsletter. I hope you will enjoy reading it and keep emailing us your news! I hope we will have a bumper edition next year!

Sabine White

Old Boys' and Friends of Homefield Reunion Dinner 2011



Old Boys and Friends of Homefield Reunion 2011

It was wonderful to see so many Old Boys and Friends of Homefield reunited under our grand marquee on Friday 1st July. Ninety guests enjoyed once more Terry Grace's delicious supper, relaxed and caught up with recent news.

It was great to have the majority of last year's leavers return and see them compare news on their new schools. It certainly did not seem one year that they had left. They also enjoyed a quick game of football on the field.

We also welcomed back a sizeable group of King's College students, now about to enter their last year before going off to university. They had a lengthy tour and asked to return later that week to meet staff and pupils.

We also had several tables of Friends of Homefield parents and of course our table of Old Boys who still remembered attending Homefield when it was also known as *The Limes*.

Here are some of the guests' comments:

Just a quick email to say thank you very much for organising Friday! It was great to see yourself and Mr Mowbray after so long, and thank you very much for the tour. It was amazing to see how much the school has changed, as well as what has stayed the same!

Many thanks for a wonderful evening on Friday - I thought it most successful. Everyone on our table thoroughly enjoyed themselves and vowed to attend next year.

Thank you to all those who attended, and we hope to have the pleasure of your company next year!

Attendees: Mr A Bloye, Mr J Thomas, Mr G Bilton, Mrs C Brandreth, Mr and Mrs Tyler, Mr and Mrs Holmes, Mr G Maxwell, Mr and Mrs Bruggemann, Mrs Chen, Mr I Bhatia, Mr Park, Mr and Mrs Sotiriou, Mrs R Ravic, Mr Dhingra, Mrs C Kliger, Mrs E Jelicic, Mrs B Penfold, Mrs A Arman, Mrs S Bailey, Mr J Bracewell-Milnes, Mrs D Atkinson, Mr and Mrs Gardner, Mr A E Jeans, Mr B Kibble, Mr and Mrs James, Mr and Mrs Gibson, Mr and Mrs de Meza, Mr C Lynch, Mr and Mrs Sumner, Mr J Patel, Mr G Garbis, Mrs Oki, Dr Jones, Masters: D Sun, F Meyers, R Pugalia, D Kalognomas, J Brandreth, J Tyler, Q Afghan, B Turner, D Turner, R Yip, G Hewetson, C Chen, D Park, P Sotiriou, M Sotiriou, A McNair, M Ravic, B Dhingra, F Khan, T Messent, A Cheung, O Malik, A Adejokun, C Crowley, S Yip, J Atkinson, W Gardner, M Vasili, W Hykin, H Hovell, A Sharma, D Jones, F Baig, W Holmes, H Harischandra, E James, A Taylor, O Ogunlana, L Ogunlana, R de Meza, M Lynch, J Sumner, F Oki, T Oki, B Tangney, D Jones.

Old Boys' News and Recollections:

Our oldest known Old Boy came all the way from Monmouthshire for the reunion dinner in 2009; Major Robin Medley, OBE, attended Homefield from 1927 to 1935. He later joined the army in the Second World War in September 1939, only aged 20, and was one of the lucky survivors of Dunkirk.



Major Robin Medley, in conversation with his great, great cousin, Homefield teacher, David Medley

Jonathan Bell (1950s)

We were delighted to receive a visit recently from Mr Bell and his wife and had pleasure in showing them round the school.

Some Recollections of an Old Boy

“That is how my life at Homefield Prep began”



Jonathan Bell - Dressed for his first day at Homefield - 1949

Being deposited by my parents as a new boy boarder at Homefield Preparatory School in 1949 was a daunting experience for a 9 year old boy from Australia and one which I shall never forget.

I recall that I was determined to deal with the occasion manfully and accordingly any inclination to show emotion or any sign of tears was to be rigorously resisted – if I failed, Mother would be reduced to floods and, whatever else, that had to be avoided at all costs!

It soon became apparent that I had set the bar very high for myself and I was on a razor's edge. As we arrived at the school, speech was becoming increasingly difficult. Time seemed to be flying past faster than ever before. My dread of being left alone in foreign surroundings with no friends was swiftly becoming a reality.

It was then that I first met Matron, a most kind and motherly woman of whom I would become very fond during my time at Homefield. Matron's many years before the mast clearly left her in no doubt about the demons that I was then confronting.

My parents reassured me that they would visit me at the very first available opportunity, bid me farewell and then clopped off into oblivion down the linoleum covered floor of the main entrance hall.

Matron slid her hand into mine and drew me towards another equally bereft youth. "Here's someone you might know" she trilled brightly, "he's from New Zealand."

The naivety of Matron's 'helpful' remark amused me greatly and I began to smile. It was the tonic I needed. That is how my life at Homefield Prep began – and a very happy chapter of my life it proved to be.

Sadly for Mr Walford, I never quite emulated the illustrious feats of Don Bradman who had toured in England in 1948 but my lifelong love of cricket certainly took root at Homefield where cricket was then the religion.

I always love returning to beautiful England and this time I am much hoping that I will be able to visit the school in the spring of 2011 – it will be my first visit to Sutton since leaving Homefield to complete my education in my native Australia.



The wizened 'Old Boy' today

Bjarne Sumelius (1956 – 1959)

I was at your Old Boys' event 2 years ago. It was fantastic to be there after 50 years. It is a pity that I will, not be able to attend this year. I have reserved the date for 2012. I have so many fond memories of the school back in 1956-1959 playing in the cricket teams and football teams. It would be a blast to see some of the guys in 2012. My best regards to everyone in those teams.

I have now retired from my hotel and restaurant career and I still play cricket for Helsinki cricket club.

My brother Christer also attended Homefield and has fond memories.

David Rymill (1974 - 1983)

David is still (since 1993) an archivist at Hampshire Record Office in Winchester. In addition to taking turns dealing with searchroom enquiries and the arrival of archives, his responsibilities include coordinating exhibitions and lunchtime talks, supervising the volunteers' scheme, and editing the office's 'friends' organisation's newsletter. Outside work, he has nearly finished a second local history book about Worcester Park, which he hopes will appear in the autumn of 2011. The photograph shows David with two colleagues on the Record Office's stand at a recent centenary event in the Eastleigh Rail Works.



David Rymill at Eastleigh Rail Works

Hiroshi Ishida (1980 – 1983)

I joined Mr Patrick's class in 1980 and the time at Homefield from April 1980 to the summer of 1983 gave me so many things that I still appreciate, even when I could not speak a word of English! My teachers taught me how to work in a team in games, especially when competing against other schools, providing me with confidence.

I was good at Mathematics, Geography and Science and was encouraged to be creative in Arts.

I now work for the Bank of Mitsubishi Tokyo UFJ in Tokyo, Japan, and I had an opportunity to work on a project from 2009 – 2010 at its subsidiary called Union Bank which is an American bank in San Francisco, California, to enhance the global anti-money laundering measures of both banks.

My role at Union Bank required good communication skills between the Americans at Union Bank and the Japanese working for their parent company in my home country, and an innovative mind in order to protect the bank and the society from the illicit acts of money launders and terrorists. I strongly believe that a lot of the basic skills and confidence to pursue my work had been developed at Homefield and feel that if I hadn't been at Homefield I would not have had this exciting opportunity to work for two countries.

I can promise you I will visit Homefield within the next few years and would love to see the school and the boys there.

Jonathan Isaby (1980s)

After Homefield and King's College School, Wimbledon, I read Modern Languages and Linguistics at the University of York, where I was deputy editor of the student newspaper and chairman of the university Conservative association. These twin interests of the media and politics have dominated my life ever since: upon graduation in 1999 I joined the BBC as a political analyst in their Westminster newsroom; in 2003 I went to work as a reporter for the Daily Telegraph; and in 2008 I became the first UK journalist to leave the "mainstream media" to work full-time in the blogosphere as Co-Editor of ConservativeHome.com, Britain's leading Right-of-Centre political blog, where I remain to this day. I also regularly get the opportunity to pollute the airwaves on TV and radio as a political pundit and in 2008 co-wrote the only book about Boris Johnson's victory in that year's London Mayoral election, Boris v Ken: How Boris Johnson Won London. I married Claudia in September 2010 and we are currently living in Kingston.



Jonathan Isaby & Claudia

Stephen Rymill (1985 - 1994)

Stephen read computer science at Jesus College Cambridge and stayed on to do a doctorate, his thesis being on the simulation in computer graphics of human behaviour, especially in the movement of crowds, using a psychological basis. Since 2006 he has been a programmer at Frontier Developments on the Cambridge Science Park, specialising in the representation of artificial intelligence. On 18 December 2010 he married Liz Belson in Holy Trinity, Cambridge, the church where they met; it was a white wedding in more ways than one as there was a heavy fall of snow between the service and the reception.

George Cheetham (1991-1999)

Attended King's College School, Wimbledon. Presently studying Dentistry at Leeds University.

Toby Lyndham (1991-1997)

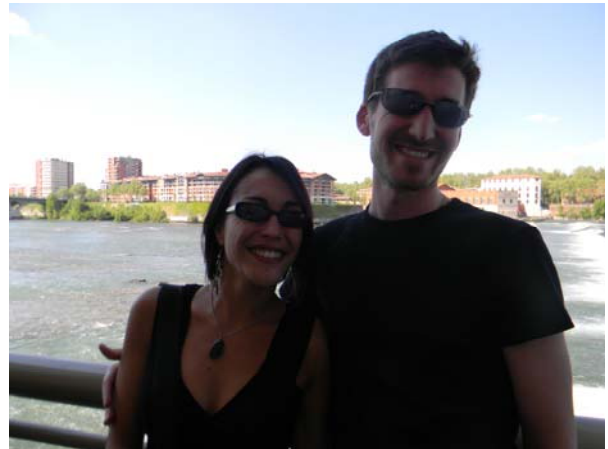
Attended Whitgift School. Presently studying Medicine at Birmingham University.

Jonathan Sullivan (1991-1999)

Attended Trinity School, then moved on to Portsmouth University. Presently being trained to become commercial Ship Captain.

Philippe White (1991-1999)

Attended Trinity School, then Sheffield University (MEng in Mechanical Engineering). He took a gap year enjoying being a ski rep in France, in Les Arcs, then a surfing season in Biarritz before heading for Toulouse for a position of "Ingénieur" with *Sud Ingénierie*, a sub contractor for Airbus Industry. Presently working on Airbus 380 and 350 and enjoying the Toulouse life style.



Philippe enjoying Toulouse

Nicholas Impey (1990s)

I graduated from Durham last summer having gained a 2:1 Hons degree in French and German. During my year abroad I spent 9 months as a language assistant in Hamburg and 2 months working in a solicitor's office in Paris. Truly a terrific year! I am now studying Law at the College of Law in Guildford. An interesting but intense course. I hope to start practising in 2013.

Luke Battersby (1991 – 2001)

After a gap year of travelling throughout Europe I am now at the University of Surrey studying Law. I wonder if that was what Mr Mowbray ever predicted I would eventually end up doing?. Playing squash and enjoying myself a little too much but life is great! Fondest wishes to everyone at Homefield.

James Barbour (1990 - 1996)

James has been working at Rolls Royce in Derby for the last 3 years, including a 'graduate scheme' lasting 16 months. He works as a Commercial Officer which essentially means working on the business side of things, creating deals, negotiating contracts and managing customer accounts, which James finds enjoyable, though the demands can be quite draining. James works in Civil Aerospace which means he's involved in selling jet engines for large civil aircraft, his main customer being Cathay Pacific (based in Hong Kong).

James now has a son, William Joshua born in August 2010 and he is enjoying life as a parent of an active baby!

James and his wife have a passionate interest in bible translation and have recently been accepted for membership of Wycliffe Bible Translators. They will study full time in High Wycombe between August and December this year; James will study linguistics so as to become a Bible translator and Ruth will study literacy to assist in her involvement in reading/writing and social development projects. Early in 2012, the family plan to move abroad for a two year assignment to

learn on the job from experienced professionals in an existing language project.

The Sugiura Family (1990s – 2000)

In February, we had the pleasure of welcoming back the Sugiura family, from Japan, whose 3 boys attended Homefield 11 years ago.



Mr Mowbray with Mr and Mrs Sugiura

Genki, who was a talented sportsman, went on to St John's School, before studying in America. He is now 26 and works in Tokyo. His brother Yui, 24, is now also working in Tokyo and their younger brother, Guy now, extraordinarily, 19! is at college in Japan.



Genki, Yui and Guy Sugiura

Among many other reasons for fond reminiscence of Genki's time with us, was a stunning long-distance goal which he scored in the final of the Surrey Preparatory Schools' Soccer Tournament at Charterhouse. Genki, conspicuously, was proudly sporting a pair of brand new, and freshly polished, boots. (An early validation of the Start Smart policy!)

The family was in the United Kingdom for only a very short time and it was gratifying to realise that they had made it a priority to come and see us.

It was lovely to see them and to show them round the school as there has been many changes in the last eleven years. We were also able to give Mr and Mrs Sugiura an Old Boy's tie for each of their sons. They were, of course, invited to attend our Old Boys and Former parents' reunion on the 1st July, should they be in the country again.

The school recently received this delightful email from Genki: *I deeply appreciate you giving us the beautiful Old Boys' tie and was very excited to hear about Homefield from our parents since I graduated in 1999.*

I am also surprised and glad to hear that you remember the long-distance goal which I scored in the final of the Surrey Preparatory Schools' Soccer Tournament.

I still remember that I polished my football boots before the final match!

My life in Homefield School was a precious time. Thank you so much.

Genki Sugiura

Christopher Barrie (1995 - 2004)

Christopher is now in his second year of a French and Arabic Degree course at Oxford. This year he has spent half the year in Syria, studying at the Institut Français, and is now in Egypt (Cairo) studying at the Institut there. I am sure you can imagine that this is quite an experience! Chris was living in Old Damascus, in the biblical Straight Street, until the FCO told all Britains to leave. Last week he was in Tahir Square where all the nascent political parties are literally setting out their stalls. As a parent, it is not the easiest of times, but for Chris it is an opportunity to see history in the makin and learn first hand about the complex political situations.

Information supplied by Mrs Mandy Barrie – May 2011

Christopher Wilcox (1995 – 2004)

I'm just about to start my third year of medicine at Cardiff University Medical School, after two years crammed with lectures and cadaver dissection! Whilst keeping up with the work load, I've also managed to enjoy the Cardiff night life and play regular gigs and parties with a jazz ensemble I run.

Ian Wilcox (1996 -2006)

My brother Ian, who left Homefield in 2006, has just finished at KCS and starts at Manchester University in September, studying Psychology. His main extracurricular interest is rock guitar, which should be no problem at Manchester!

Joshua Allen (1996 – 2006)

Joshua left Homefield School to join Epsom College where he became 'Head of House' of Frost House.

Always an extremely keen cricketer, Joshua scored 600 runs in one season which is the highest score ever recorded at Epsom. He will receive a special award at Lords Cricket Ground next year. He plans to take a gap year, playing cricket in India before going on to University to study Law.

Alexander Siba (1996 - 2006)

Alex is currently studying Economics, computing and theatre studies at Epsom College and is hoping to go to York University to study TV and Film Production. He has done a great deal of backstage work at Epsom College and amateur theatre and kept up his percussion to become Head of Music (thanks to Ms Allardyce!).

Information supplied by Mrs Siba

The Greenhalgh Family

Some news from Jerome (1999 – 2004), Felix (2001 – 2006) and Henry (2005 – 2006):

Jerome has finished his IB exams (high level Maths, Physics and English, standard level: French, Chemistry and History) and will get the results on the 6th July. He would like to read mechanical engineering at Bath (asking 36/40 which is absolutely mad) or Newcastle (asking 34/40). If he does not have enough he can re-sit exams in November and will take a gap year.

Felix is currently doing his IGCSEs and is thinking he is already on holidays!

Henry will start those next year.

Boys enjoy Switzerland. Felix has played for the international Rugby Swiss team in Berlin (!!!), Henry has long hair and loves his sports still but works well at school.

The international school where they are (Collège du Léman in Versoix) deplores the fact that the GCSEs have gone down so much and to our amazement we noticed Jerome had to catch up 1 year of maths last year in I B1 and he might therefore not get into Uni this year....

We often think of all of the teachers at Homefield and wish them and the rest of the staff a very nice holiday!

Regards

Mrs Caroline Greenhalgh

Toni Oki (1997 - 2007)

Appointed as Vice Captain of King's College School, Wimbledon in May 2011 and described as "a wonderful advertisement for Homefield and a testament to the education which you provide in their prep school days and which is carried on here at King's". *Mr A Hall, Headmaster, KCS*

Information supplied by KCS, Wimbledon

Andrew Cowan (2000 – 2003)

Thank you for your letter about the Old Boys Reunion. You mentioned that you would like news about what some of the old boys have been up to, and I thought you might like to know that I was recently awarded the title "UK Young Engineer of the Year 2011". For more details about the competition and what I have been doing, see web links at http://www.soton.ac.uk/mediacentre/news/2011/mar/11_24.shtm

and

http://www.thebigbangfair.co.uk/viewitem.cfm?cit_id=384535

As well as being an ambassador for engineering, the prize also includes trips to the Roque de los Muchachos Observatory in La Palma, and to the NASA spacestations in the USA. Please do pass on my best wishes to Mr Mowbray and also to Mr Mallett (who taught me ICT and DT).

Kwadwo Sarpong (2000 - 2005)

"I seems like just yesterday that I was a student at Homefield School. I completed St John's School last year and thoroughly enjoyed my time there.

I have just finished my first year reading BSc Sports Psychology and Coaching Sciences at Bournemouth University. I have extremely fond memories of my time at Homefield School."

Harjas Shinmar (2001 - 2007)

Promoted to Captain of the King's College School, Wimbledon. Described by KCS as "a wonderful advertisement for Homefield and a testament to the education which you provide in their prep school days and which is carried on here at King's". *Mr A Hall, Headmaster, KCS*

Information supplied by KCS, Wimbledon

Patrick Broe (2002 - 2008)

After leaving King's College School in December 2008 to return home to Australia with his family, Patrick completed his last two years of Senior School at Anglican Church Grammar School (Churchie) in Brisbane. In his final year, he became Captain of Cricket, Vice-House Captain, Prefect and was awarded full colours for academic achievement, cricket and AFL. Patrick was a recipient of the Sir Donald Badman medal for cricket excellence and Religion prize. He also toured South Africa as Captain of the 1st XI in January 2010. He is now attending the University of Queensland, studying Law and Commerce and is enjoying it very much. Patrick has some part-time jobs tutoring and casual work in a law firm. Patrick came back to London for 3 weeks at Easter in 2009 and caught swine flu! He hopes to travel to the UK again in the future and is expecting some of his UK school friends to turn up this year in their gap year – for some reason the Barrier Reef and all those tropical islands are incredibly popular!

Information supplied by Mrs Jenny Broe

Christopher Broe (2004 - 2008)

Christopher left Homefield in December 2008 to return home to Australia with his family. He has been at the Anglican Church Grammar School ever since. Chris is currently a class captain in Middle School (1st year High School) and takes part in all the opportunities school can offer. He really enjoys French and may be going on a trip to New Caledonia with the school next year. Chris has continued his love of cricket and has been selected for teams that have played in State cricket championships for the last 2 years – Toowoomba in 2009 and as Vice-Captain in Cairns and Charters Towers in 2010. He is still a big hitter but those windows at Homefield now remain safe!" Chris is coached at school by Mr Ian Greig, who is a former England County and Test player and brother of former England Captain, Tony Greig. The newest addition to our family is our 10-month old German Shepherd pup Atticus, who is much loved by everyone, but dops an enormous amount of hair!



Information supplied by Mrs Jenny Broe

Jack Tyler (2001 - 2010)

Jack joined in September 2001 just before his 5th birthday and left last summer in 2010, aged 13!

Jack joined Trinity School, Croydon, where he has enjoyed his first year settling in. He played for the U14s A team in rugby, continuing his passion for the game and retained his place with the Harlequins/Surrey Rugby U14s squad. He has joined the Naval sector of the CCF and is learning to scuba dive. He is also inventing much in his DT classes and has rediscovered his love of drawing!

Information supplied by Mr and Mrs Tyler

Omar Malik (2004 - 2010)

Omar has settled in well to life at Dulwich and has built on the strong sport foundation he gained from Homefield. Omar has been selected for the London Schools Athletics Championships, competing for Dulwich College and has been selected to represent Southwark in this year's London Youth Games. Omar has continued to play for Surrey badminton and the Dulwich College badminton team. He has also found time to play for Battersea Ironsides rugby team and they came joint first in division one of the league. The Dulwich College rugby U14 team won the Kent Cup this year.

Omar is also enjoying art and he is thriving academically thanks to the strong grounding gained at Homefield.

Information supplied by Mr Malik

Joining our Old Boys' community this year are our U6th Form leavers:

- Ben Adey
- Umar Ahmed
- Christopher Allen
- Adam Araim
- Khalil Baoku
- Nishant Bommayya
- Gregory Bragg
- Hugh Brandreth
- Konrad Cheung
- Jonny Coekin
- Oliver Darroch
- William Dennis
- Dominic D'Mello
- Indran Duraisingam
- Samuel Goodman
- Thomas Gunningham
- Jamie Hughes
- Nathan Inkester
- Nicholas Jelcic
- Wajid Khan
- Marcus Melconian
- Huw Morgan
- Jack Newton
- Peter O'Brien
- Ju Hyeok Park
- Rushil Patel
- David Sandler
- Kishan Sharma
- Joel Sokolowski
- Harry Sprunt
- Tristan Taylor
- William Trefusis
- Joshua Vincent

And to finish our first edition, a little Homefield History!

Views of Homefield School Past



'The Limes'



The Dining Room at 'The Limes'

HOMEFIELD PREPARATORY SCHOOL

1870 – 1996

Homefield School was founded in 1870 by the Misses Rose, two sisters who had previously run Mulgrave School. The original establishment was in Mulgrave Road, virtually opposite Sutton Station, where there is now a row of shops, which were added on in the early 30s. In 1872 the school moved to Park Road, which runs from the east end of Grove Road down to the Cheam Road – the site is now known as Homefield Park.

BOMFORDS

In 1882, one of the young masters on the staff, Mr. W.J. Bomford, bought the School. In the following year he married and shortly afterwards took Holy Orders. Having run the School for some sixteen years, the Revd. Bomford died suddenly in 1898 when he was only forty two. His wife courageously continued as Principal, appointing as Headmasters, first Mr. Carroll and later Mr. Bradley, who was Headmaster for ten years. In 1910 he was replaced by Mr. Harry Gray.

GRAYS AND WALFORDS

In 1912 Mrs. Bomford sold the School to Mr. Charles Walford and Mr. Rupert Gray – not related to Harry Gray – both assistant masters at Highgate School. At the outbreak of the 1914/18 War Mr. Gray joined the Army, winning the MC in Mesopotamia. Mr. Walford stayed on to run the School. During the war years, he acquired both the playing field in Western Road and 'The Limes', a large Victorian house in Grove Road, adjacent to the Homefield site. After the War, Mr. Gray emigrated to Canada and Mr. Walford continued as Headmaster until his death in April 1953.

Homefield had thrived under Walford for over forty years. As Graham Sutherland, the artist and portrait painter recalled in his preface to the School history, "Homefield had the marks of a miniature Public School and one of the better Public Schools at that. It was intimate and friendly, yet its structure and atmosphere was such as to prepare the boys for sterner things to come."

Mr. Walford's niece, living in South Africa, inherited Homefield and her husband, Charles Fortune, a schoolmaster and well-known broadcaster, took over the running of the School in September 1953. The Fortunes did not settle easily in the UK and suddenly decided to return to South Africa, announcing the shock news in the Easter Term 1954 that Homefield would close at the end of the Summer Term.

HOMEFIELD FROM 1909 – 1915

G Allan Whitelaw

I arrived at 'Bomfords' in 1909, at the age of six, with Mr Bradley as Head, but a year or so later the running of the School was taken over by Mrs Bomford, with daughters Connie and 'Dor', in her bath-chair to assist. Her son, Jimmy, was the third senior boy when I arrived, with Leo Fraser the fourth and Ian Ettles, fifth. Evans was second, but I cannot remember number one except that he was very dark, looked ill and had, I believe, a leg-iron. Mr Hollis was one master and second, I think, was Mr Dawson – to look after a total of some forty boys.

We arrived at School through the double front drive gates, and turned left into the approach to the playground. The road entrance, as then inbuilt, used to house the compost heap surrounded by a tall privet hedge. Mr Walford had the Park Road refenced, with a tall gate for the boys' entrance, thus leaving the house frontage private.

The 1914 War was more or less a thrill to most of us as children, the reflected glory of our friends and relations, but the sadness and mourning of the loss of so many, was not really understood. We made the most of every moment, doing 'war work', swapping mementos such as Army Regimental buttons, pieces of shrapnel and such-like bits of rubbish which were so much prized. We even learned to drill in 1915 with broom sticks for rifles, drilling and forming fours, complete with 'Arms drill' – under Captain Freebourne if I remember correctly – all of which stood many of us as a basis for the real thing later on.

I would also mention Fernand Van den Berge, who actually lived with us in Cedar Road until he went to Uppingham. He

became a first class goalkeeper and when he returned to Brussels in 1922, he played for Belgium for many years.

I hope that some of these comments, read in conjunction with C J Barnard's letter, which I have read and re-read with so much interest, may add to the memories of the early members of Homefield School.

HOMEFIELD FROM 1912 – 1919

C J Barnard

Recollections of curious incidents at Homefield are very vivid in my memory, even to my zealous use of blotting paper on my first day there. I thumped my blotting paper very loudly, connecting the process somehow with the noise made by the clerks at the Post Office, stamping letters and documents.

The First Form mistress – Miss 'Dot' Bomford, was very patient and kind-hearted. She was a cripple. I do not think she was at Homefield for very long after 1912. I believe there were two other Miss Bomfords, but I only remember Miss Connie Bomford, a very energetic lady who taught drawing and steered me through a number of Royal Drawing Society Examinations. I have a number of the certificates still.

Mr Walford had preceded me by one term and held the headmastership jointly with Capt Gray until the outbreak of the War in August 1914, when Capt Gray left for active service.

The First World War commenced and ended during my years at the school, although I was not actually present on either August 4th 1914 or November 11th 1918. On the first of these dates an elder sister died and none of us went to school and on Armistice Day I was at home with a cold. I can remember returning the next day and glancing at my neighbour's exercise book (not for the purpose of cribbing, of course), and saw that it had been decorated with flags of all nationalities.

The war, of course, had a pronounced effect on the school in a variety of ways. First of all there was the departure of a number of masters who had joined up and their replacement by older men and also more mistresses. There were numerous flag days when we were warned to bring our pennies the next day and line up to pay them into the collecting tins. Then there came a number of boys from France, Belgium and Russia – the result of the German invasion of their countries. I often felt sorry for them. It seemed that despite the language difficulty they were expected to be up to our standards.

HOMEFIELD 1914 – 1919

Bob Danvers Walker

STAFF

The Headmaster at the time was Charles Walford, and one of the teachers was Connie Bomford. I will always associate an enormous history book with 'Connie'. On entering the classroom she would bang it down on her desk to launch the lesson as though it were a bottle of champagne against a bow of a ship. She taught Geography too; I've loved it ever since. She was my favourite teacher.

PUPILS

To the immature, juvenile mind without comparisons acquired with age, all dimensions seem big and numbers large. My recollection would put the number of boys at 150 plus. But they never seemed to be there all at the same time, except of course when the “slides” were in full use in the quad in wintertime. Then, the playground before assembly, at break and after school would be crammed. It was the job of boarders to throw buckets of water over the asphalt the evening before so that the two icy strips would be in prime condition the next day. Seniors had exclusive use of the slide reaching from the picket fence to the toilets and the juniors the one that ran obliquely across the playground to the locker room, the doors of which acting as buffers to those who could slide the fastest and furthest. Long queues of pink blazered and pink cheeked boys would form up to take turns in sliding one after the other like so many flamingos landing on a frozen lake.

SPORTS DAY

That festival occasion of white flannels fresh-brought from ‘Dugans’, marquees, taped-off running lanes and pigtailed sisters clustered around the trestle table shining with silver cups and spoons awaiting their Olympic winners. Mothers and Aunts, enlisted into catering service, bustle about with plates and pots of tea, ever cautious of guy ropes which serve as trip wires to the tea tents. The local Vicar and Mayor are there, a faint tinge of khaki and hospital blue – “One of our lads on leave from ‘The Front’ you know” and “That’s so-and-so’s father, wounded in the trenches at Ypres”. Hero worshippers pester them with questions about “the fighting in France”. In my pocket is a small envelope containing a few fragments of Zeppelin brought down at Cuffley, sold to collect funds for the Red Cross. I got it in a swap for a set of ‘Flags of all Nations’ cigarette cards. A whistle blows and ‘Wally’ booms out the result of the last race. There are green stains on my knees and the toes of my ‘sandshoes’. In my fanciful mind I got these scars at Ypres.

The Only Homefield I knew was the Grove Road School and annexes, which had been acquired but a few years prior to my joining. So its past history as ‘Bomfords’ did not enter into my thinking as did my preceding kindergarten “The Beehive”! I’m glad my parents sent me to Homefield. I rather doubt whether the modern ‘knowledge factories’ lacking so much of the original Homefield, will have an association of ‘Old Boys’ any more than a hotel or automated workshop can boast a fraternity founded upon loyalty and affection.

Though I came out of Homefield in 1919..... I never left it.

Bob Danvers Walker

In Homefield days Bob was known as Cyril Walker. He became world famous as the newsreader for Pathe News.



Newsreader and commentator, Bob Danvers Walker

EXTRACT FROM “M.C.C”

COLIN COWDREY 1938 – 1946

My first Headmaster at Homefield School, Sutton, was a stern, elderly Victorian, rooted in the traditions of the private school system, but with a childlike devotion to cricket. The term before I became a regular pupil, he allowed me to join in the Junior Game, with boys who seemed to me to be old campaigners, and I can see him now appearing after lunch in his white shirt and white flannels, the buttons on his blazer glinting, a ‘kerchief round his neck, his shoes, those brown and white creations that were so popular at the time. Under his formidable eye, I was introduced to the competitive side of cricket.

Football in the winter had slightly less appeal, the classroom had practically none! My seventh heaven was when summer returned and the sound of the mower filtered through the window on those lovely misty mornings, which give promise of cricket in the sun. I remember, too, the thrill of watching the First Eleven, and the awe with which the Headmaster would have us treat his precious square. Some, perhaps, will scoff at this, and think it misguided that such an attitude towards the game should be grafted into our tiny minds. But it was something that I never minded!

As in every boyhood, my first school match at the age of seven was a tremendous occasion. I was as a wicket-keeper-batsman for the Under Elevens, and I have good reason to remember it. Shouts of warning and delight from the pavilion told me that I needed five for my century – a score which I had never remotely approached before – and with the caution of a battle-scarred professional, I gathered the remaining runs. Having done so, I announced to my partner my intention of getting out, rather as Denis Compton might have done after his seventeenth century at Hastings in 1947, and soon afterwards I walked in with bat aloft and a head the size of a football. The only flaw was that our nine-year-old scorer had miscounted by seven, so that I was left with 93. Teas in the dining room followed, with most people looking upon the whole thing as a great joke; but I could recognise to this day, the boffin who got his figures wrong! There was, however, a silver lining. The Headmaster, who had missed my innings through being away with the First Eleven, wrote a letter to Jack Hobbs with a full account of what had happened. The great man’s charming reply hangs framed in

my bedroom today and I produced it recently at a cricketing luncheon, much to his amusement and that of Mr. Menzies, who was sitting nearby.

EXTRACT FROM COUNTRY LIFE
JULY 10, 1975
QUEEN WILLOW

Sir,

Colin Cowdrey looks forward (May 8) to ladies playing a prominent part in cricket, but 60 years ago his old school, Homefield, used to open its season by a match against Sutton Ladies. I well remember the match in 1914. The captain of the Homefield XI opened the innings; he took centre, made his block, and was out for a duck, clean-bowled first ball.

It happened thus. The bowler for the ladies' team not only bowled under-arm, but bowled a sneak, all along the ground from the moment it left her fair hand. Charles Walford, as Colin Cowdrey will remember, always taught his pupils to play with a straight bat, but he never specifically taught them how to play a sneak.

Accordingly, the opening bat on this occasion showed his contempt by laying his bat horizontally behind the crease. The ball, however, hit his block and took a sharp jump over his horizontal bat and hit the middle stump. The agonised surprise and ignominy for the Homefield captain and his team! The hallelujahs among the Sutton Ladies and their supporters!

The moral is: even against the ladies one must keep a straight bat and a stiff upper lip.

John Kirwan-Taylor,
La Residence,
Corseaux, Vaud,
Switzerland.



On the 26th of June, 1964, Colin Cowdrey, Captain of England on numerous occasions, returned to Homefield to skipper the Old Boys against the First XI. Here he can be seen talking to Mr. Chubb, who had been a master at the school as far back as 1911. Patrick Needham, the School's captain, stands on the left. In the match, the Old Boys won (not surprisingly) by 12 runs. Cowdrey made 77 before spooning a catch to Ewan Thomas.

RECOLLECTIONS OF HOMEFIELD BY THE ARTIST
GRAHAM SUTHERLAND O.M.

Written in the early 70s

Homefield Preparatory School, unique in the minds of many of us in having the marks of a miniature Public School – and one of the better Public Schools at that, was intimate and friendly. Yet its structure and working was of an order to prepare us for the sterner things to come.

This was very largely due to the Headmaster of that time, Mr Walford, a man at once awesome and yet tender, and one of the founders of the School. He created an atmosphere and a tradition which I believe exists to this day. Surrounding himself with an excellent staff, he created a closely-knit unity of staff and pupils and there was no facet of this entity of which he was ignorant.

Hardly aware of it at the time, I believe we were subtly fitted with an eagerness to learn and compete, not only in school but also in sport – a great feature and excellently organised.

As to learning, when I was translated to another place the magic had gone. The standard of teaching was sadly affected by the War, discipline was bad and bullying (which was non-existent at Homefield) was rife. I did not recover any wish to learn until later, but the foundation given one at Homefield provided the real elements on which to build.

I will spare those who may read this my strong nostalgia for the place, except to say that as I think back, I am conscious that my days at Homefield give me a warm complex of emotions: that one was looked after, that one mattered, that one was encouraged and that one could make friends, could – a miracle! – learn and want to learn. For this I shall always be grateful.

I wish the school a long and continuance of its high traditions.

Homefield School is now the proud owner of two wonderful prints of works by our illustrious Old Boy, Graham Sutherland. One of our neighbours, Mr Bob Last, who kindly exhibited at our Autumn Art Exhibition, has been researching, for the past three years, the availability of Graham Sutherland's prints and after much research, succeeded in obtaining permission for two of Graham Sutherland's paintings to be reproduced. The works, Entrance to a Lane (1939) and Standing Forms II (1952) have been beautifully framed by Mr Last, and will be proudly displayed near the Art room during the Summer term. They will be flanked by another frame, that of a photograph of the artist and texts describing the paintings and Graham Sutherland's career.



Graham Sutherland – Standing Forms II



Graham Sutherland – Entrance to a Lane

We are truly grateful to Mr Last for the dedication he has displayed in this project.