

## OLD TAUNTONIANS' 103<sup>rd</sup> REUNION DINNER 9TH NOVEMBER 2013

Last year's report started with an assurance that after each of these functions there is a detailed discussion of how it went. This one was no exception, for there was much to discuss. The attendance in recent years has given cause for attention. We now have what might be called a "Reverse Binyon Effect" in that for those still with us *'age probably does weary them and the years condemn!'* This year we had expected 83 in the main body with 9 at the Top Table. On the night this was reduced by the indisposition of Harry Lockwood and Angie Turley. We trust Harry has now recovered. We know Angie continues to have problems, and can but wish her more comfort for the future. As always she remains very positive and looks on the bright side of life.

Post-dinner Committee discussions, however, centred on the hotel and the desired arrangements we thought we had made clear. In the event our view differed from that of the hotel, both concerning the meal and the service.

These disappointments were counterbalanced by the speeches delivered by the Principal of the College and the Chairman of the Dinner both of which were excellent.

Chairman of the Dinner was **Ivor Weintroub (1958-1965)** accompanied by his wife, Irene.

The guests at the top table were The Mayor and Mayoress of Southampton (Councillor Ivan White and his wife, Mary), Mrs Alice Wrighton (Principal, Richard Taunton Sixth Form College), John Mist (Old Edwardians') and a representative for David Trenchard, (Chairman, Old Bournemouthians') (*my apology*



*for not having his name to hand*). Old Tauntonians' accompanying our guests at the table were Ian Carnaby and John Bathurst.

**Ian Carnaby (1960-67)** was MC and Toastmaster Plus, the plus being the now established duty of welcoming the guests and proposing a formal toast to "The College". In the past year several students have been sponsored by the Association and by Pearsons Estate Agents and it was with great pleasure that we welcomed them as our guests. Accompanied by Matt Atkinson (Vice Principal of the College) they entered the room with our other distinguished guests but sat with the OT diners. We are delighted and proud of their achievements and wish them further success in the future. Ian introduced them and asked each to "take a bow". They were:

**Indiana Shanker** – National Standard Swimmer who has won the British Colleges 100m backstroke and overall male championship. Studying BTEC Sport (Coaching, Development and Fitness)

**Morgan Ware** – International trampolinist and team gymnast. Member of Team Great Britain (teamgym) finalist, 6<sup>th</sup> Place at 2012 European Championships. Studying Physics, Chemistry, Biology and PE A2

**Beth Watts** – International platform diver. Member of Team Great Britain. Studying Biology, Sociology, Psychology, PE A2

**Jasmine Urquhart** – International Trampolinist. Age 12 World Champion Games triallist. and 2013 World Games Triallist. Has taken 1<sup>st</sup> place in Welsh Cup. Studying BTEC Performing Arts Diploma

During the meal the Chairman took wine with:

- All those who attended the FA Cup Final at Wembley on "The Great Day" in 1976.
- Christopher Clark, a Circuit Judge and the Resident Judge at Truro County Court, who was School Captain in 1964.
- All those at the school in 1960, the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Taunton's.



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As always, immediately prior to the interval were The Loyal Toast, The Memory of Alderman Taunton and The Memory of the Fallen. We observe them year after year and they never fail to bring special moments of quiet reflection to the gathering as a whole and to each individual.

The last, when the lights are dimmed, and the sound of Last Post fills the room is ever moving. The facsimile of the stained glass window (once in the Highfield building and now at the College) is illuminated and a silence observed, after which the Chairman recites the well-known words from the Binyon verse.

With the second part of the evening come the speeches. Time is always "of the essence". So as to allow more time for conversation after the dinner we have reduced the number of speeches during the event and 'encouraged' our guest speakers to keep theirs to what we consider a reasonable length. *(The message got through (well it did this time) with very acceptable consequences!)*

Before the main speeches there is a Toast to Absent Friends. This presents an opportunity to recall all friends no longer with us and, perhaps in particular, those who played a special part in the School, College or Association. Among the latter we remembered this year **Crosby Hunter, Steve White** and **Jimmy Gibson** each of whom had passed away during the year.

Ian then reminded us of the evening's raffle. He said he'd recently been at a function in Liverpool where there was a raffle, the first prize being an alibi!

He formally welcomed the guests saving his final comment for the spare OT at the table. He said it was good to see Johnny Bathurst's splendid blue silk waistcoat again, it's most recent public appearance having been when James Garner wore it in 'Maverick' c1957!

He then offered the toast to Richard Taunton Sixth Form College and introduced **Alice Wrighton, Principal of the College.**

**Alice Wrighton** in what is probably the best speech she has delivered at this event, said: -



"Thank you very much for your kind words, and thank you, Old Tauntonians' Association, from all of us at Richard Taunton Sixth Form College, for your hospitality, and for the support and encouragement you give us. It's great to be here again: I was quite worried about getting here on time this evening: I am now the proud owner of a Saints season ticket and I hope you are impressed that I stayed at the match until the 85th minute and still managed to get here by 0630 - just...*(spontaneous applause!)*. Every year, I have the great privilege of watching several hundred students leave our college more confident, independent and effective individuals than they were when they came to us - ready to face the future with a strong chance of success and well on the way to becoming the best kind of person they can possibly be. You have every reason to be prouder than ever of them, and of the college that your old school (and mine) *(Alice is an Old Grammarian)* has become.

So how do we do that? It's about building good relationships, individual self-belief, determination, ambition, and it's about us - the adults - seeing every student as totally worthwhile and full of potential at every stage - regardless of how irritating, difficult, typically adolescent

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and tricky they can be.. And of course it is about great teaching and learning. We have 4 students here who I am sure will back all that up!

Remember – I am talking about a huge variety of young people - and what we do we do regardless of class, ethnicity, and ability. We have a true cross section of young people from Southampton - and nearly half live in areas which are socially and economically deprived and where many families live in challenging circumstances. What a fantastic opportunity... Transforming lives, supporting social mobility, is why I do what I do - it's been the same since I went into teaching, bright eyed, enthusiastic and idealistic, in 1977! I'm still the same person.....

There has never been a better time to be a student at Taunton's. I am more confident than I have ever been about the future of Richard Taunton Sixth Form College, and more reassured than I have ever been in my time as Principal that what we do at the college is absolutely worthwhile and is having a significant impact in our community.

To prove my point, I want to talk about four things that have happened during just the last few months in the life of the college:

1. **July Days**... Starting to build our new Music Centre - reinforcing our reputation as a great place for music and performing arts Rock challenge, Music for Youth, progression to top places..
2. **August Days** - Best exam results ever; up with the very best...More high grades and better value added than ever. We knew we could now prove that you really will do as well with us as with any Sixth Form College in the area – so why go anywhere else? And for our most academically able students in our Sixth Form Academy we can now say that our results are up with those of the most selective independent and state schools and colleges in the land.
3. **October Days** We waited and waited...Then a visit from six Ofsted inspectors. At last we secured some official recognition of the quality of what we do. If you promise not to quote me, I will read out just a few key points from the report which will be published in a couple of weeks' time.....
  - Teachers and students enjoy highly productive working relationships that promote and celebrate success within a culture of high expectation and mutual respect. Students' behaviour is exemplary.
  - Classrooms and corridors abound with case studies of students' progression to university and employment.
  - Success rates for students on A-level and advanced level vocational courses have improved since the last inspection and are now high. A high proportion of A- level students achieve a high grade and students with relatively low levels of attainment at GCSE achieve well.
  - Students develop good communication skills and improve their confidence well. Many report that the staff at the college have successfully awoken and cultivated their interest in learning. They make good use of the wide range of academic, social, cultural and sporting activities that take place outside lessons and enjoy their time at college”.

And they looked at sport and said things like:

“ Sports students develop high standards of performance and coaching skills in sports such as volleyball, basketball and football. Students develop their skills well through their participation in a wide range of sports and matches with other colleges and clubs. Some develop their skills to national level, for example two students reached the national trampolining standard.”

4. **November Days** ...So here we are in the darker days of November - and the story of Mrs Hearty... “*Alice went on to explain a particular episode in the life of the College which, she said, for her summed up what their College Community was all about. We tell the story of Mrs Hearty in these pages and as a separate item*

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Alice continued by saying that the Mrs Hearty story involved some of her amazing Art students-....Mary, Mehnaz, Emmanuel and Ryan :-

“What an experience for them - but I could equally be telling you stories concerning mathematicians, scientists, performing arts, musicians, rock challenge dance champions and others...

...all of which brings us full circle and the reason why Indiana, Beth, Jasmine and Morgan are here.

I do hope that all of you will want to continue rooting for us and for our students. I am very proud to be leading the college at what is a tough but very exciting time for us all. Now back to the OTA - and something that happened just before that inspection. We had a visit “out of the blue” from a gentleman called Colin Engel, great nephew of Sidney Boyes (the sculptor and creator of the memorial window and tablets.) It felt like a mundane visit - but seeing Colin's reaction when he stood in the hall looking at his great uncle's work was actually very moving, almost like some of the scenes from *Who do you think you are?* That reminded me again of the important history and heritage we have and of our duty to continue to celebrate the school that became the college.

On that quite poignant note, on a very important weekend, I raise my glass to you all. Please join me in raising your glasses to The Old Tauntonians' Association.

### The Chairman of the Dinner

Earlier in the year the amusing announcement of who was to be Chairman of the Dinner had been as follows:-

*This year's Chairman will be Ivor Weintroub (1958-65).*

*His first five years at Taunton's were described as "only fair", and sometimes less, but having achieved a number of 0 'levels he moved from 5B1 to the sixth form. There he managed to obtain the History prize and a place at Birmingham University to read Law. On the way he carried the 1964 mock election as the Tory candidate against the national trend, without smoking a pipe or having a Yorkshire accent. His sporting attributes at school did not go beyond the Hockey 2nd eleven and scoring for the first cricket eleven. However he did write a two-person play giving a complete outline of the First World War in the end of year pageant, anticipating "Oh what a Lovely War" which, if nothing else, demonstrated that this very average schoolboy enjoyed himself immensely whilst at the school. He also for 5 years constituted a religious minority of one that seemed to make absolutely no difference, save that it meant listening to the announcements on the balcony with the Roman Catholics. On graduation from University and passing his Solicitors exams in 1969, he was admitted as a solicitor in 1971 and made a partner in the Southampton firm to which he had been articled. In 1975 he married Irene, they having 3 children, including twin sons.*

*He appeared many times as an Advocate before his former Headmaster R P Challacombe without being put in detention.*

*He progressed to be the Senior Litigation partner in his firm having failed in an application to become Manager of Southampton Football Club, of which he has been a devoted supporter since 1955. In 1983 he was appointed a Deputy District Judge of the High and County Courts and in 1992 he was appointed full-time, originally sitting in Portsmouth, and then in Bournemouth, where he had moved with his family in 1984. In 2003 he was appointed a Recorder of the Crown Court and County Courts an appointment that continues, although he has now retired as a District Judge.*



With such details available to him Ian Carnaby had a straightforward duty in inviting Ivor to speak.

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Speaking without notes, Ivor stood and delivered a beautifully crafted and entertaining speech that held and entertained his listeners from start to finish. He did not use a microphone which, apparently, made it difficult for some of his audience. They missed a treat, as we were taken on a visit to his days at school, university and in advocacy, interspersed with anecdotes and personal reflection.

He said :

“When I passed ‘the 11 plus’ my Father was not sure which one of Grammar Schools I was supposed to be going to, but knew it was the one that Mr Challacombe was Headmaster of. I started in B1, which was the higher of the two forms that were expected to leave at the end of the 5th year and did not cheat by going on to 5 advanced to do a few O levels and spend 3 years doing A levels! It was also unfortunate that I had to give up Latin at the end of my first year. It was one of my favourite subjects and cost me dear later on, in the Upper Sixth year. The consequence was, like some of my contemporaries from that year, I accumulated a number of O' levels and was woken up in the 5th year by Paddy Locke who taught history and was brilliant. He enabled me to go straight into Lower Sixth with my contemporaries and was the making of me. Starting at Taunton's was an eye opener. One of my first memories was ‘Blower’ Gale, the Maths Master, coming in and throwing out a question demanding an answer to  $54 \times 39$ , and thinking, 'Good question!' I had no idea of the answer. In the Lower Sixth I did Pure Maths for a year and decided it was a complete mystery so, having passed O level Economic History, got Nobby Clarke who taught Economics to agree to teach me for A level in a year, which he was kind enough to do. Between us I achieved a pretty good result. I spent a lot of time in first year trying to avoid PE, which proved very difficult as our Form Master happened to be Mr Hemingway who taught PE!

Geography, that Ted tried to teach me, was a complete failure. It seemed to me learning about the weather was a complete waste as all one had to do was look out of the window. This, apparently, was not the right answer as well as where anywhere was needed to stick a map on wall and it was either up there, down there, over there etc. Ted did his best but I was a hopeless case.

The one thing I learned in the first year was from Doggy Collar who revealed to me something that had bothered me for some time,. It was "Why the Dell was often water-logged on the West Stand side and impeded Terry Paine dashing down the right." He taught us that in mediaeval Southampton, water was delivered into the old town from Springhill. Thus under the Dell there was a spring and thus water. I thought this was very important to know, but it did not seem to advance my progress.

I found that the school had invented a new sport called "stone-picking" that many of us were consigned to once the new playing fiends at Stoneham Lane had been acquired. I remember that during a football match - at half time when neither side had scored - George Carter, who was by then deaf, told us in a house Game (I was in Corbin) that the winning team should kick off! This caused some confusion for a period of time. (Actually Robin Taylor told me afterwards it was a game of hockey, which was more likely as I did play Hockey for the Colts (and the 2nd Eleven later) never quite making it to the 1st Eleven, which suited me in case they played on a Saturday afternoon as that might have clashed with a Saints home game)

In 1963 Harry Spooner asked at assembly how many of the school was going to the Semi-final of the cup at Villa Park. 90% of the School raised there hands including me, it being my first visit to Birmingham, The next time was 2 years later when I went to University there to read law.

I remember an occasion when there was a hydrogen sulphide explosion in Chemistry lab. It had nothing to do with me but made a considerable impression on all of us! For 5 years, as a minority of one, I went onto the balcony with the Catholics, which did not cause any problem. In the 1980's I applied for the job as Manager of Saints when a certain Mr Branfoot was in charge. I pointed out that due to my religion I could

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not work on Saturday afternoon, but did not think that would make any difference as the team wasn't working either. Surprisingly I didn't get a reply.

In our day, although many did leave in the 5th year, there was a job for everyone to do. I do not want to enter into debate as to the merits and demerits of Grammar Schools but I think that everyone was a tribute to the school. On reflection I should amend that statement. It was not everyone as I acted for a few when in practice in Southampton who were not quite that!

The 1960s had a certain reputation as 'swinging sixties' and the time of sexual revolution, although I didn't know too much about that. I know, however, that during that time we achieved everything we had wanted - which was to gain entry to the Girl's Grammar School site!

Like every generation we thought we were going to change the world. But like every generation before us we failed – and must now look to the youngsters who are here to achieve what we failed to do. I wish you all well in the future.

When I was appointed a full time Judge I was appointed to Portsmouth, in which district is one of a certain reputation known as Leigh Park. At an English lesson at a Leigh Park school the teacher asked, "What does a sentence end with?" A young lad at the back immediately put up his hand and on being invited to give the answer said, "An appeal and an application for bail!"

Despite everything that didn't go well, there had been conversation and laughter and two good speeches. We sang Auld Lang Syne and had time for a chat before going home. It was, after all, a good evening.

*JAB*



*The Top Table*

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OTA ANNUAL DINNER GALLERY



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OTA ANNUAL DINNER GALLERY

(continued)



ATTENDANCE AT THE 103<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL REUNION DINNER

NAME	YEARS	NAME	YEARS	NAME	YEARS	NAME	YEARS
R Allison	42-50	M Griffiths	58-65	R Pavard	62-69	P Wilson	Not Known
M Atkinson	STAFF	J Hallum	51-58	G Pledger	39-45	S Wilson	55-60
J Bathurst	41-45	J Hayden	55-60	C Ray	53-60	D Windless	44-49
N Briggs	56-61	D Heatley	62-69	H Ree	44-49	G Woodling	60-67
B Brophy	57-62	M Humphrey	50-55	D Ripley	58-65	E Yates	50-58
M Bull	46-49	P Hunt	39-44	T Robinson	57-62		
C Burgess	41-51	G Jones	63-70	M Rose	51-57		
I Carnaby	60-67	P Jones	58-65	M Rudrum	58-65		
D Carrington	58-65	M Kimber	49-55	A Saunders	60-67		
K Childs	50-55	P Kingston	74-76	L Shankar	STUDENT		
C Clark	58-65	R Knight	42-50	P Shepherd	39-47		
V Cockrell	62-69	R Lane	41-50	B Shorthouse	45-52		
E Colenutt	31-38	D Lloyd	62-69	C Shorthouse	56-59		
M Danby	58-65	L Macham	58-65	P Skates	53-58		
D Defty	56-61	J Martin	44-50	R Smith	54-59		
T Divett	44-53	B Miles	74-76	K Snelgar	54-59		
P Dommett	51-58	P Muddiman	54-62	A Stanley	58-63		
I Downer	35-39	D Munday	44-52	W Tampion	44-53		
B Dunford	60-67	D Mussell	58-65	R Taylor	58-65		
E Heath	45-51	R Newell	65-71	R Turner	59-64		
G Fooks	46-52	D Newman	58-65	J Urquhart	STUDENT		
T Forfar	51-56	D Noyce	42-47	E Waldron	39-44		
P Gannaway	47-53	B Osman	51-58	M Ware	STUDENT		
A Gilbert	58-65	C Owen	62-69	D Watson	62-65		
E Godley	42-48	R Parsons	64-66	B Watts	STUDENT		
P Goodwin	46-51	S Parsons	74-77	J White	43-51		