

# THE GATTON ASSOCIATION



Incorporating  
The Maitland Association,  
The Royal Albert Old Boy's Association &  
The Royal Alexandra and Albert School

Chairman: Phil Wade

President: Ray Davies

Membership Secretary: Michelle Ellis

Contact E-Mail: [gatton.association@gmail.com](mailto:gatton.association@gmail.com)



## Chairman's Welcome

Welcome to the Spring Newsletter. Firstly may I wish you all a very happy New Year. I hope it finds you all well after the festive season, and rather chilly start to the year.

## Sad News

I am sorry to start with the sad news that Carol Penoyre was killed after a tragic accident on the M23 on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> December, on her way home after work. She was the PA to the bursar at the school for the last eight years, and was often called upon to assist me and the Association in its organising of events. She will be greatly missed by all that had dealings with her in a professional and on personal level. Our condolences go out to her family and friends. We will miss her quiet and efficient support. The Association was represented at her funeral by Ray Davies and Phil Wade.

## Funding of Foundationers at OUR School

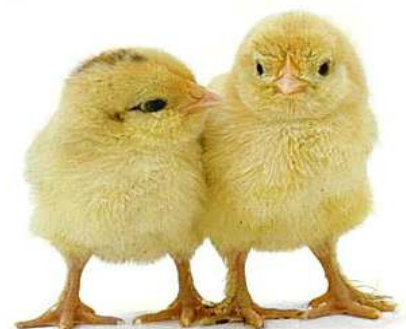
Following the AGM held in August 08, it was suggested from one of our members that the ethos of the school and its beginnings were based upon the charitable principle of providing support and sanctuary to children in need.

The school was set up as an orphanage to support and provide a safe and caring environment in which children could grow and flourish. This is still the case, even after 251 years. Shortly you will be receiving a letter in the post explaining that the school needs our support in providing funding for Foundationers. The cost for a child to be funded for a year at the school is around £12,000. The numbers currently being funded by charitable donations are around 50 children. The school wants to offer further places to children that could benefit from a safe and stable environment, but funds are not there. We can help! All it takes is a few pennies a day. If you are in a position to spare even a few pennies, it will help. The letter that you will receive lays out some simple options that are available to us to support a child and give them a secure future, as the school has given to so many in the past. You may be one of them! Please consider this appeal, and with the right support from us, the 'Old Scholars', we can make a huge difference to a

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child's future. Let us help to raise the number of Foundationers with our small or large donations. Gift Aid is the best option, it will be there in the letter, just fill in the form and change the future for a needy child. Let us make that difference.

### **Membership Secretary.**

I would like to announce that due to changes in personal and work life, John Hounsom has resigned as membership secretary of the Association. I would like to thank him for his service and commitment to the sometimes thankless task of managing The Associations membership. He has been a great support and friend for many years, and I wish him well.

The new Membership Secretary is Michelle Ellis, who will also be taking on the mantle of merchandising secretary, so keep your eyes open for some new ideas and products. We would like to know what items you would like us to investigate as promotional merchandising for the Association and the School. Michelle is looking at a few options to start with, but your input would help. Please send her your suggestions she can be contacted via email at 'gatton.association@gmail.com'. So please send any updates or ideas to her, so that we can keep you informed of all that is happening and obtain the things you would like to be offered. Michelle has written a small piece further down to introduce herself to you. Welcome to the committee Michelle.

### **Founders Day.**

This year Founders Day falls on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> May. You are all invited to attend the day but you will need to see the invitation inside this issue if you plan to attend the chapel and prize giving service. Seats will be available for 'Old Scholars', so please don't be shy, come along and enjoy the day.

### **Challenge Trophy' Football Match.**

The afternoon has the 'Challenge Trophy' Football Match, which will be played behind the chapel. This event has been running since 1994, and I'm pleased to say that it has been an annual spectacle, for various reasons and a great opportunity to catch some enthusiastic and focused endeavour to win the day.

Everybody that wants to play will. Don't worry that you may not be as fit as you once were as we switch substitutes at regular intervals.

If you would like to play, please contact me by email at, 'gatton.association@gmail.com' or phone me on 07903 192989. We need you on Founders Day.

### **'Gatton Goes Green' Country Fair'**

Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> July. A chance for you to attend a great day out for all the family. Visit the school and see it in its summer beauty. Make a day of it, arrange to meet old friends and have a fun filled day. There will be a variety of Country crafts on display and many demonstrations stalls, children's activities, gardens and grounds open. 1 - 5pm Cost: Adults £4.00 children free. The funds raised at this event go to maintain the grounds of the park. They are worth having a look at. Especially if you have not been back in a while. For more info regarding the events that take place in Gatton Park call 01737 649066, email 'education@gatton-park.org.uk' or visit the website [www.visitgatton.org.uk/adults.htm](http://www.visitgatton.org.uk/adults.htm). There are many events worth a visit.

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### AGM

As you know the Association has an AGM each year, as stipulated in our constitution, and this year is no exception. The AGM will be held on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> October at 1.45pm in Ballroom in Gatton Hall. The meeting is a chance for you to have your say in the running of the Association, and giving feed back on how we are performing on your behalf.

The difference this year is that we are inviting you to have lunch in the school dining hall between 12 noon and 1.15pm. The AGM will then be held at 1.45pm. Then you can enjoy a conducted tour of the new buildings and school.

Well that about sums up my intro, so please enjoy the rest of our newsletter. My thanks to the hard work of our news editors Thanks Chas and Sue.

### Hello and Introduction!

By Michelle Ellis

Hi! My name is Michelle Ellis and I am the new membership and school liaison secretary, and assistant to merchandising and publicity. I joined the committee after the reunion last year.

I specialise in IT and my last job was a medical secretary. I also have experience in working for charities.

### Merchandising!

I am looking into sourcing merchandising items that we could sell to benefit The Association.

If you, or anybody you know work for one of the merchandising/promotional product companies and think you can help, please do get in contact with me at: [gatton.association@gmail.com](mailto:gatton.association@gmail.com)

## Class of '85 reunion'

Northampton get together for those who left in 1985

29th August 2009

Contact Joanna Smith (Hunt) for more details  
07706 059284

Many thanks, Joanna

## Committee Members

Positions	Name
President:	Ray Davies
Chairman:	Phil Wade
Secretary:	Peter Page
Treasurer:	Ray Davies
Membership Secretary:	Michelle Ellis
Publicity Officers:	Phil Wade Alicia Edwards
Board of Governors & Ex-Scholar:	John Billingham
Archivist:	Ian Baines
Merchandising:	Alex Duffy
Events Co-ordinator:	Chris Manns Ian Baines
News Editor:	Chas Bailey
	E-Mail: <a href="mailto:chasbailey@hotmail.co.uk">chasbailey@hotmail.co.uk</a> Phone: 020 8648 7274
Assistant News Editor:	Andrew Bailey <a href="mailto:tukaa@hotmail.co.uk">tukaa@hotmail.co.uk</a>

## From the Headmaster

Spring is just around the corner and the new school term is now well under way – *just the Headmaster having a bit of a "wandered lonely as a cloud" moment!*

Looking back on the Autumn term, Remembrance Day was marked with a flag raising ceremony followed by a service in the School Chapel with Canon Peter Bruinvels of Guildford Cathedral, Field Officer for the Surrey British Legion and Secretary of the Surrey County Appeals Committee. Please do remember you are most welcome to attend such events and we hope to see more of you here next year.

Despite many pupils and staff being struck down by illness in the weeks leading up to Christmas, a huge number of performers made our Christmas Concert and Carol Services a great success - a tribute to the determination and sticking power of pupils and staff who refuse to be stopped from producing the events which make this School so special.

Work on the new science block and Dance Studio moves ever closer to completion and should be ready for use in the Summer term. The new extension to Gloucester House was formally opened just after half-term and we are currently preparing planning permission applications for Cornwall and Kent Houses. These are planned to open in Summer 2010. All these projects are fully funded by grants from Central Government, Surrey Capital Funding allocations and grants from trusts.

In September we received the great news that the DCSF – what used to be called the Department for Education ! – has given us a grant of £2,400,000 to finance the building of boarding accommodation for Sixth Formers in single and double bed-sitting rooms with en-suite shower rooms ..... *it wasn't like that in your day !* This building work will be completed for September 2010 and, at the same time, we shall be applying to have our own Sixth Form taught on site.

Our Founder Selection Day will take place towards the end of February and this year we have put even more effort into finding Founders, a group of children who can be hard to reach. From all the applications received we have invited sixteen children, all very worthwhile cases, to our selection day and are confident we will be able to offer boarding places to six or seven new children, adding to the number of families we already support. One of my aims is to be in a position where we can help even more needy children. If you would like to help and feel able to contribute to help finance Founder places and continue the original charitable purpose for the existence of the school, please do contact me.

Looking ahead, preparations are now under way for Founders Day on the 10<sup>th</sup> May and I look forward to meeting as many of you there as possible.

### Dates for your Diary

Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> May Founders Day

Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> July Go Green at Gatton

Grounds and Gardens Open Days – First Sunday of each month from February to October

The AGM will be held on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> October at 1.45pm in the Ballroom in Gatton Hall

## Invitation

**Founders' Day  
Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2009**

10.30am in the School Chapel and afterwards for lunch  
(Please arrive by 10.15am)

**To reserve your seat for the Founders Day service and lunch**

**RSVP**            The Headmaster  
Royal Alexandra & Albert School  
Gatton Park Reigate  
Surrey RH2 0TD

**Please reply by Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April**  
(Seats have been reserved but these will be limited)

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## Norman Bell

Recently I received a letter from Colin Bell informing me of the death of his younger brother Norman Bell over the Christmas period.

Norman attended the RAS from the summer of 1942 to the summer of 1946. He did attend the Rascal's dinners at Basingstoke a couple of times.

I'm sure all who remember Colin & Norman would like to join with me in passing our sincere condolences on to the Bell family. Although Norman left school a few years before the Gatton we know today came into being, it is still the spiritual home of all those separate entities that led to its present incarnation and this Gatton mourns his passing as one of its own.

Chas Bailey – Joint News Editor.

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## School Badge/Emblem

If you would like to purchase a School badge/emblem that can be fixed on the lapel of your coat. The badge is enamelled on Brass and is easily attached to clothing.

Please contact Phil Wade Who will be pleased to forward one or more on to you

@: [gatton.association@gmail.com](mailto:gatton.association@gmail.com)

Each Badge will cost you £3.50 each plus a one off charge of £1.50 for post and packaging.

Every time a badge is purchased it helps raise money for the Gatton Association.



[Size of a one pence coin]

# CHILD'S PLAY for channel 4

Do you remember the outdoor games you played as a child?

If you have vivid and interesting stories to tell - from playground adventures, to imaginary worlds, to fun and games in the streets and fields - we want to hear them!

## Testimony Films

(makers of *Pocketful of Posies* – BBC2 and *Green and Pleasant Land* – Channel 4) are making a BBC documentary history on how children's outdoor play has changed, based on people's memories.

We're interested in child's play in Britain from the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century right up to the 1970s and 80s. Which was the decade of your childhood and what were the most popular outdoor games of your era?

In the past children often had more freedom to take risks and play away from the watchful eyes of parents which could be liberating - but it could sometimes result in danger or disaster. Did you do things as a child which you were lucky to get away with?

Children's play could also be cruel. Were you bullied as a child, or were you the bully!?

If you have a child's play story to tell, then please write, phone, or e-mail me - Emily Sivyer, Testimony Films 12 Great George St, Bristol BS1 5RH.

Tel: 0117 925 8589. Email: [emily.sivyer@testimonyfilms.com](mailto:emily.sivyer@testimonyfilms.com)



# The Most Dangerous Cake Recipe

( This is for Alicia Edwards and anyone else who misses the Gatton Chocolate Cake Special )

First Snapshot of  
Chocó Cake



Second Snapshot of  
Chocó Cake



Third Snapshot of  
Chocó Cake



Final Snapshot



## 5 MINUTE CHOCOLATE MUG CAKE

- 4 tablespoons flour
- 4 tablespoons sugar
- 2 tablespoons cocoa
- 1 egg
- 3 tablespoons milk
- 3 tablespoons oil
- 3 tablespoons chocolate chips (optional)
- a small splash of vanilla extract
- 1 large coffee mug

Add dry ingredients to mug, and mix well. Add the egg and mix thoroughly.

Pour in the milk and oil and mix well.. Add the chocolate chips (if using) and vanilla extract, and mix again.

Put your mug in the microwave and cook for 3 minutes at 1000 watts (high)....

The cake will rise over the top of the mug, but don't be alarmed!

Allow to cool a little, and tip out onto a plate if desired.

EAT! (this can serve 2 if you want to feel slightly more virtuous).

And why is this the most dangerous cake recipe in the world?

Because now we are all only 5 minutes away from chocolate cake at any time of the day or night!

# **A Day in the Life of a Boarder at the Royal Alexandra and Albert School**

***Daniel and Ryan are both in Year 7 (age 11-12). Daniel has been here since last September but Ryan only joined the school a few weeks ago, mid-way through the school year.***

Before we came to the school we wondered what boarding would be like. We've seen the Harry Potter films and thought it might be a bit like that, like a big sleepover and thought it would be fun. It is fun with all the PlayStations and snooker tables. You're never lonely and all your friends are here. We all mix in together with the day boarders too.

We have to get up at quarter to seven in the morning. Even if you've got an alarm clock the staff come round to make sure you're up. We have a wash and put our uniforms on and tidy our rooms. Some people have bunk beds and some people have beds with the desks underneath them. Then we go downstairs and we might watch TV for a bit before we go for our breakfast. There is a nice choice at breakfast, you can have cereal or whatever you want. I really like the porridge here! Then we go back to Albert house and we might play table tennis or something for a while.

Then we go to our tutors first. We have all our lessons in our tutor group so we're all together.

After school we go back to Albert house. There's loads to do for activities. You can go on the computer or play football – there are lots of sports – some boys even do dance club! At 5.00 we have registration in the house and then we can go for tea. After that there's an hour for projects and our prep which we all do in the computer room. The teachers can help you if you need it and if you have finished your prep you can go and read a book or anything as long as it's quiet and you're doing something that is creative or constructive. From 7.00 to 8.00 there are the evening activities. Sometimes we go and play in the cage and some nights we go swimming. If you're tired you are allowed to stay in the house if you want to.

At 8.00 there's supper with toast and spreads and stuff. Sometimes we have a special supper and sometimes it's sausages!

Year 7s have their showers in the evenings. We have to be in bed by 9.00, lights out by 9.30. Sometimes we might talk quietly but usually we're so tired we go to sleep quite quickly. When I first started I didn't go to sleep for ages – I used to go to bed a lot later when I was at home but then I got used to it and now I go to sleep really quickly. I felt homesick for about two weeks but now I'm OK. Sometimes I go home at weekends but not always.

Boarding is good because of making friends and all having something in common. It's like a family and we have special privileges and sometimes we get to go on trips like to the science museum. Boarding sometimes isn't so good when all the days are the same. It would be more fun if there was a change of routine and I don't enjoy it if people are being mean.

It was great when we had the snow – that was a change in the routine! We had snowball fights and we made an igloo and snow seats and a snowman and we walked right around the lake – it was really, really cold!

***With many thanks to Ryan and Daniel***



## 1962 Junior (12-14) Sea Cadet Trip – part 2

This is a joint effort between Mike Chapman aged 13 and Chas Bailey aged 12 at the time the trip took place.

We woke early on the Saturday morning, we got ourselves washed, dressed and stowed away our sleeping bags followed by a breakfast of scrambled eggs bacon and fried bread. Soon the engines started up and we were on our way to Poole in Dorset.

We were all given small jobs to do and took turns to take watch on the bridge to look out for other shipping. We past close to the needles that rose majestically out of the sea.



Soon we were clear of the Isle of Wight and looking back at what must be some of the most beautiful coastline in the world, small bays and inlets with golden sands and green rolling hills beyond. As the Boat approached the entrance to Poole Harbour we were all called upon deck to line the Port and Starboard sides of the MFV Boat as is traditional with all Royal Navy ships.

As we entered the Harbour there was a Royal navy Frigate already in Port and the some of the crew saluted and cheered us, an honour indeed.

Poole Harbour is home to many yachting enthusiasts and there were plenty of yachts in the Harbour when made our arrival. We moored up alongside the Harbour wall and after lunch we were allowed to go ashore for several hours to explore the town. We all got back in time for our evening meal before settling down for the night.

Sunday morning not such 'dawned' as 'arrived', there was no sun to greet us, just grey brooding clouds resting on a grey, brooding sea! Apart from the foaming white crests of giant breakers, the whole world had turned grey! We could see there was some kind of consultation taking place on the bridge, our three officers exchanging worried glances as they sent frequent anxious looks at the prevailing conditions. We were due to sail back to Portsmouth Harbour that morning but out of nowhere, as often happens in the Channel, a severe storm had blown up during the night, a storm so severe of as to result in the sinking many of the yachts moored up in the Harbour, some of which only had their masts showing as they rested fitfully on the ocean floor. It was Force 8, we were told, gusting to 9, severe by any standards.



The officers were considering sending us young lads back by train!

Well, that was long before the days of the cotton wool society we find ourselves in today where all things Health & Safety prevail over derring-do & adventure! There was no 'vote', the officers were firmly in charge & more than anything were concerned about our safety, nevertheless, as one we made our feelings clear.

Train? Are you kidding? We were the Sea Cadets! Trains were all well and good in their place but it wasn't their place, this was our own rip-roaring adventure and we weren't going to let it fizzle out in the carriage of a train if we could help it.

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How much sway we held, we'll never know, suffice it to say, though, we didn't take the train!

We left the relative safety of Poole Harbour, sunken yachts included, and headed out to an awesome sea. From peak to trough, some of those waves must have been 50' high, put it another way, some of them would have swallowed Gatton Hall, not, of course, that we'd have wanted that end for our Senior girls or indeed even Mr Wylie, the boss! There were times when the wind seemed to pick us up and throw us around at will, we rolled, kicked and bucked so hard that I wondered if we were going to make it! We weren't allowed on deck so things were cramped down below, anything that wasn't battened down was airborne and that sometimes included sick for making it to the toilet was a feat in itself that required utmost concentration and care; apart from skidding on the swamped deck, whenever we did have to heed the call our eyes were riveted on the monstrous waves that charged out of the grey expanse in front of us! Apart from that, we could still see through the portholes, of course portholes, of course.

What a sight! What a ride!

Somehow, we finally made it back safely to Portsmouth later that day, tired, poorly, but exhilarated! Portholes, of course even now, more than four decades later, remembering it is still special. At the time, those who survived (o - ok - we all survived!) felt that we had achieved and experienced something that very few 12/13 years old boys could brag about and brag about it we did. Speaking for myself, I still do, how about you, Mr. Bailey?! Too right I do. Mr. Chapman!

The icing on the cake? We made it to the papers! We were in the news! We were famous! Well, in Gatton, anyway! And so came to an end the journey of Gatton Parks Sea Cadets Or did it? I'm not so sure, it was character building, it gave us a platform to stand on, a tape to measure things against, it gave us new kind of camaraderie forged through adversity and even though we were all in the same 'pot', We remember caring for our friends when they were sick, the same friends who cared for us when we were.

No, it wasn't the end, after all.

It was just the beginning!

## **Albert at War**

### **BY COLIN BELL**

It was early January 1942 when I left Newcastle Central Station with my mother; we were heading for Camberley in order for me to join the Royal Albert School. It wasn't a pleasant journey in those days, trains had small compartments with narrow corridors linking carriages, carriages that were usually packed with troops from all the armed services, most of their equipment seemed to be accompanying them.

It was a long, tiring journey to London, as we arrived at Kings Cross an air raid was in progress so we were held up in the tunnels just before the station. We eventually moved into the platform, and made our way to the underground and headed for Waterloo to join the train for Bagshot / Camberley. Once we arrived at Camberley, we were given a meal and shortly afterwards I was sent to bed. My mother was found accommodation nearby.

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The next morning I was fitted out with a uniform and given a number, it was the number 94, I was also issued with a blue tie that distinguished me as now belonging to Connaught House, a House I eventually went on to captain.

My first day at school left me wondering, had I had done the right thing? Here I was, a total stranger some 300 miles or so from home in an alien environment. For quite some time, my heart wasn't in it, but, as there was no other alternative, I just had to get on with it. Actually, I had already spent part of the war evacuated to Cumberland so – in a way – I kind of knew what to expect, it was now down to me to get on with and accept my fate.

Over the next few days I met my fellow incumbents, I was shy but inquisitive, slowly, they weighed me up as I did them, some of us coming out of the encounter as friends.

It was not long before I had my first confrontation, a fight with one Charlie H...s which I'm afraid I lost, my excuse is that I was vulnerable at that time. Next time, eh, Charlie? Seriously, we never fought again; I actually matured enough to become the House Captain. Eventually, I also had the honour of being Team Captain on the football field.

That first winter was a cold one, we had snow; that was good, and amongst other things it meant sledging! The trouble was, in those days we were made to wear short trousers & the backs of our knees, in particular, were extremely vulnerable to frostbite! To make matters worse, when bathing or showering at night, we had to be inspected afterwards by a master or mistress to ensure that our cleanliness met their high standards, sometimes, unfortunately, they mistook the dry blackened skin of frostbite for dirt and we were often sent to wash all over again!

The wash places were rather primitive, best described to be like the gents toilet in a seedy public house. There was a limited supply of hot water, so - the first ones in were the lucky ones, those who followed had to endure cold showers, whatever the weather. Sometimes, because cold water isn't conducive to deep cleansing, we had the ignominy of being sent back in again to scrub harder!

Schooling was basic, mainly concerned with the three R's, but it was of a good standard. There was one infant class (known as midgets) and two other classes through two age ranges. Many qualified teachers in those days were serving in the armed services, therefore, most of the ones we had were elderly.

Recreational materials in wartime Britain were scarce, we had to improvise, for a football, for example, we used tightly packed newspaper wrapped in a piece of rag, real footballs were reserved for official matches or for training by the school team. Nevertheless, there were other things to occupy us with in those days as well, for example, we raised funds for the war effort by taking place in organised events in Camberley, events such as military displays and country dance exhibitions (as well as my football competitions!) the school being keen to take part in anything they could.

My first summer holidays were spent in the top woods under the ancient canvas of military bell tents. Now & again we were allowed to go to Bagshot or Camberley with just enough money for the cinema, it was during one such excursion when we saw and spoke to Canadian soldiers, a convoy of troops having stopped along the road outside Sandhurst Royal Military College. The next day, we were there again, this time the Canadian troops we saw were all wounded. Soon after, we heard about Dieppe!

I often wonder what happened to our Canadian friends.

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1943 saw me entering my last year at a school desk so I was placed into the top class. I didn't do too badly & ended up being in the top four in my class, my friend Alex and another boy named Skinner just pipping me.

We all looked forward to Sports Day and Commemoration Day, I think I took part in every race going and was placed in quite a few which was wonderful, at five shillings for a win (25p), two shillings and sixpence (12.5p) for a Second and two shillings (10p) for the Third, with my 'winnings'; I was able to fund train fare for my brother & myself back home to Newcastle, our mother having arrived on a visit that weekend.

At the end of the term during which you had attained your 14th birthday, your classroom days were over, the strings were cut and you were let loose into the big, wide world to learn a trade. There were 6 choices, farming, gardening, carpentry, cooking, shoe repair and domestic service. Possibly due to the lack of tutors, I seem to recall the honourable skill of 'shoe repairing' dying, even whilst I was there. To begin with, I worked in the kitchens and domestic staff dining room; however, I soon found a place as a farm boy.

Once again I eventually settled down, made friends and was accepted as a member of the large family that I would be part of for the next four years. Life was quite hard but it gave one a sense of satisfaction, ploughing with horses that were much larger than you also gave you a sense of perspective, all in all it was quite a challenge.

During my second year on the farm, one of the horses died and the school bought a 1937 Fordson tractor which had to be started by hand, this meant switching the petrol on, cranking it with a starting handle, then changing over to paraffin. All quite difficult for young boys.

It was during this time that I lost my best friend to an accident. We were ploughing mustard plants with a tractor, two people were needed to do so, one to drive the tractor, the other to keep the plough clear, the accident happening when the driver pulled the lever to drop the plough. It took the end of my friends finger clean off.

If only that had been the end of it!

He was taken immediately to Frimley Hospital where he had an injection for tetanus that was all, a simple injection! Tragically, the reaction to the injection killed him!

Camberley was a relatively safe place to be during the war as we were surrounded by military, the Transit camps of Deepcut and Clearwater were close by, as was Sandhurst College.

Just a field away, Bagshot Heath was used by troops of many different nations Americans, French, Polish, Dutch and of course, British. Very good for scrounging chocolate and ciggies! All things considered, life wasn't that bad, just as long as you didn't get caught, that was!

Allowed to vote for which youth organizations we wanted to belong to, we were first attached to the Frimley Company before becoming F Company of the Kings Own West Surrey Regiment ACF! In 1945 we had the honour of marching behind them through Guildford when they received the freedom of the City.

I remember it was a good party afterwards!

I left in 1945 at Christmas, I believe the unit went from strength to strength until the school amalgamated.

In all my four years at the school, although it was sometimes hard, it did prepare me for my later life, especially my Naval career, for as far as discipline was concerned, I was prepared and could sometimes survive things others couldn't.

## Time for a Confession!

Delivery of your autumn 2008 Newsletter and in particular Memories of Ray Davies has rather belatedly prompted me into action, some 50 years after I left the RAAS. If you would like to consider below for publication, this is just one among many of my memories of Collingwood Court. I can categorically state the victim wasn't Ray Davies, for whom at the time and still do, I have the greatest respect and gratitude

By Andrew Head RAAS: 1952-1958

## They Liked A Nice Cup of Tea In The Morning?

Reminisces by Ray Davies on Collingwood Court, and in particular the impressive and spacious wide staircase, remind me that there was another much smaller staircase within the building, that that climbed from the kitchen area to the staff sleeping quarters.

In January 1953, after the 11+ boys had departed to Gatton Park, I was detailed off (I certainly didn't volunteer) to make a cup of tea early each morning for each of the staff members sleeping in that area.



Ray has already mentioned that above the ground floor there was no heating. So each morning, bearing in mind the time of the year, I was expected to rise without the use of an alarm clock from my bed in Edinburgh House (E28) and freezing cold, make my way down to the kitchen to prepare an early morning cup of tea for each of these staff members.

Having made the tea, shivering, I would then take each cup and saucer of tea up the lengthy back staircase, knock on each door, politely wish each 'Good Morning' and deliver said cup of tea. On several occasions, one male member of staff, whose name I genuinely can no longer recall, remonstrated with me for spilling some of the tea into the saucer. Tucked up in his bed I'm sure he didn't realise just how cold I was? After discussing the problem with the other lads, a solution was forthcoming. Before climbing the first step I would take a gulp of tea out of his cup, climb the stairs and on reaching the top, spit the tea back into the cup – I never had any further complaints from him!

There was a remuneration for carrying out this duty – a bag of mixed sweets, 10 to 12 in number, given to me once a fortnight by Miss Jones the Matron. No doubt each staff member had contributed one or two sweets from their own monthly ration. Yes, sweet rationing was still in force, so that small bag of sweets was truly a treasure chest for a 10-year-old.

**(A few more memories from my time at Collingwood Court on page 13)**

**(Andrew Head RAAS 1952-1958)**

**Yes we were hungry all the time but we didn't starve** – two slices of bread each with a sausage or rasher of bacon for breakfast, and joy of joy, three slices each to accompany the evening meal. The one and only occasion when we received a treat, a local farmer gave the school sufficient apples for each pupil to have half an apple each. Called to the kitchen area during the afternoon play time, each pupil was given their half an apple dipped into sugar – pure bliss, and we ate the core too!

**Who remembers 'chibby grove'?** The sweet chestnut trees by the railway line near the Jolly Farmer pub. During the autumn watching the Sunday evening film in the dining room, the floor would be covered in their shells

**The outside toilet block**, where all the doors had been long removed to make sledges – during winter the very last place you wanted to bare any skin. You'd look for a swinging chain, perhaps the seat was still warm!

**Dusty Miller and boxing**, Yes voluntary, but if you didn't participate, you were shamed for NOT representing your house.

**Swimming in the Blue Pool.** We'd have to walk down orderly to Camberley. The open air pool opened 1st April and was freezing. Stretch (Mr Steele) used to make those who couldn't swim pull themselves right round the edge of the pool before they were allowed out. Those who could swim, well they did two lengths and got out much quicker!

In 1952 for my 10th birthday my Grandfather gave me a watch. This was an extreme rarity amongst any of the pupils and out in the wood I was well known for letting everyone know it was time to get back to the main house. Going swimming one summer day I hid the watch within the toecap of another pair of shoes kept in my unlocked metal locker in the undercroft (I think we pupils referred to the area as the quadrangle). Returning, the watch was gone. I was devastated and it rapidly became common knowledge throughout that the watch had been stolen. Some days later I was called to Mr Deubert's (the headmaster) office where the watch had mysteriously reappeared. He told me that in view of the controversy the watch had caused he was confiscating and it would be returned to me on the last day of term. He then added, "If you had hidden it in the toe cap of a shoe none of this would have happened!" But in those days no reply was expected or given!

There are many more where these came from and that's before I moved to Gatton Park, where after what I now know to be the deprivations of Collingwood Court (and I've heard Bishopswood was similar) we were truly spoilt, to spend a further five happy years in Kent House – yes, again under the wonderful guidance of Ray and June Davies.

Incidentally, somewhere if I delve deeply, I'm sure I have a photograph of that wide elegant staircase, certainly of the entrance hall, NOT to be used by boys!



**Happy Easter from all of the Committee Members**

# REUNION Film DVD

Hi everyone,

As you may know, there has been a film made about life living at Gatton told from the viewpoint of some past pupils. There was also filming at the reunion weekend capturing all the madness on camera.

The film is finished and is now ready to be sent to each of you... for FREE!

The only problem is that we need to pay for the music copyright. I am therefore appealing to you to donate some money to help pay for this.

We need to raise £500. There are over 1000 of you in the Gatton Park friends on Facebook and many more of you on the Gatton Association list...if most of you donated 50p...that would be amazing! but that probably wouldn't happen. So please give whatever you can from 50p - £500 if you did well on the Lotto.

There are two ways of paying - cheque or bank transfer.

Cheque - Please make your cheque payable to 'Gatton Association' and send it along with a note saying 'film donation' and include your name and address so that I can send you a DVD copy.

The address is:

**Gatton Association  
Foundation Office  
Royal Alexandra and Albert School  
Gatton Park  
Reigate  
Surrey  
RH2 0TD**

OR

bank transfer....let me know and I will get the bank details to you straight away.  
Please email: **reunion\_2008@hotmail.co.uk**

Thank you for your support. And I look forward to you all seeing the film!

Thanks again,

Alicia

## Registration Form

Please complete the form below and return it to our membership secretary at the address on the form, or via e-mail.



### *Gatton Association Registration Form*

First Names:..... Surname:..... Former Name:.....

Address: .....

.....

Town:..... County..... Postcode:.....

Country:.....

Home Phone:..... Work Phone:..... Mobile:.....

Email Address:.....

**Please remember to keep us informed of Postal or Email Address changes or our correspondence will not reach you.**

School Location attended (*tick as appropriate*):

Gatton Park    Maitland    Bishopswood    Elmcroft    Duxhurst    Bedford

Camberley    Other (please state).....

Last House(s) attended:.....

Years attended:   from..... To.....

**If you would prefer to receive Newsletters etc. by Email please tick the here:**

**Please return completed Registration Form to the Membership Co-ordinator:**

MICHELLE ELLIS

Via

Helen Pollard

**Royal Alexandra & Albert School, Gatton Park, Reigate, Surrey, United Kingdom, RH2 0TD**

**Main Switchboard (044) 01737 649 000**

*Or*

EMAIL:   GATTON.ASSOCIATION@GMAIL.COM

If you have any comments or suggestions you would like to pass back to us,  
please do so via Michelle Ellis at the address above.