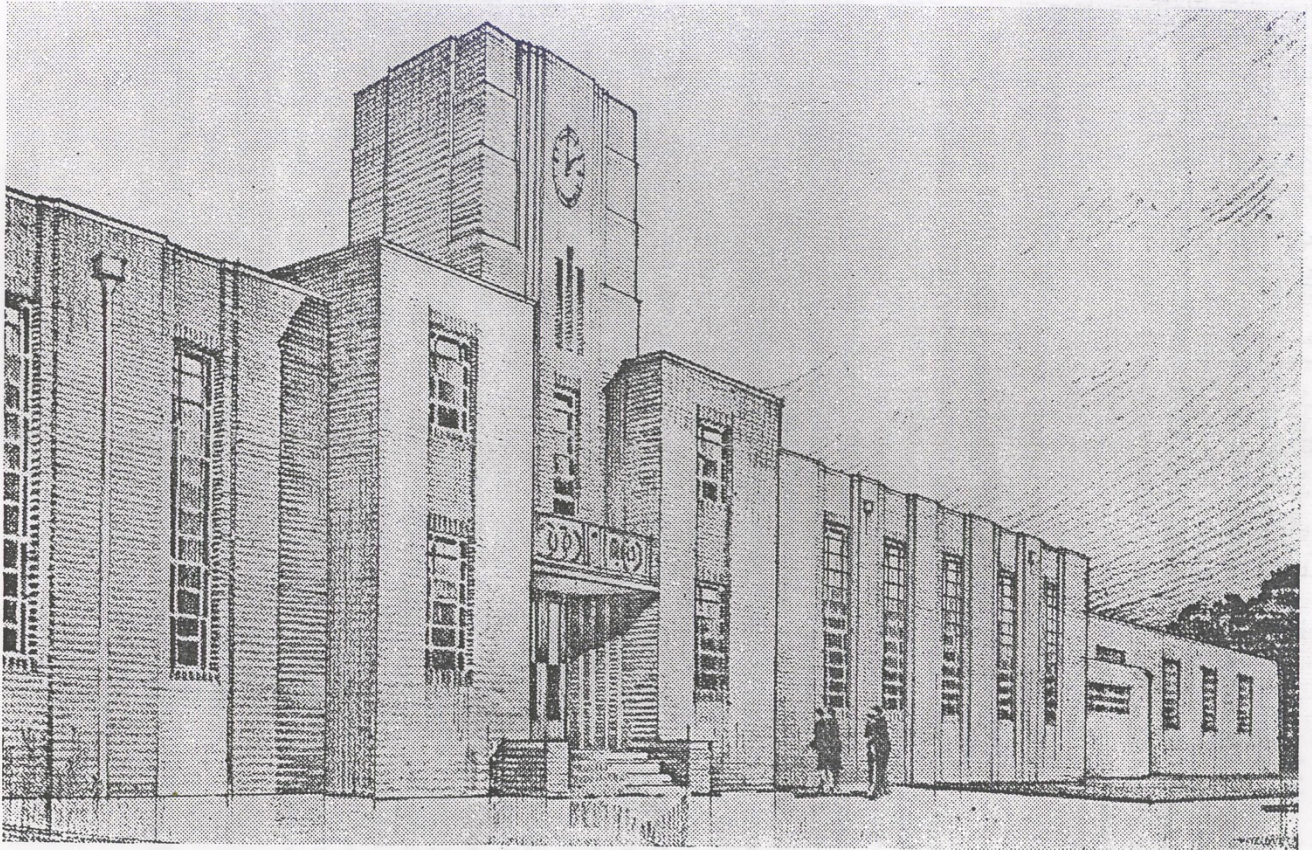


OLD MORGANIANS

NEWSLETTER No. 15, MARCH 2017

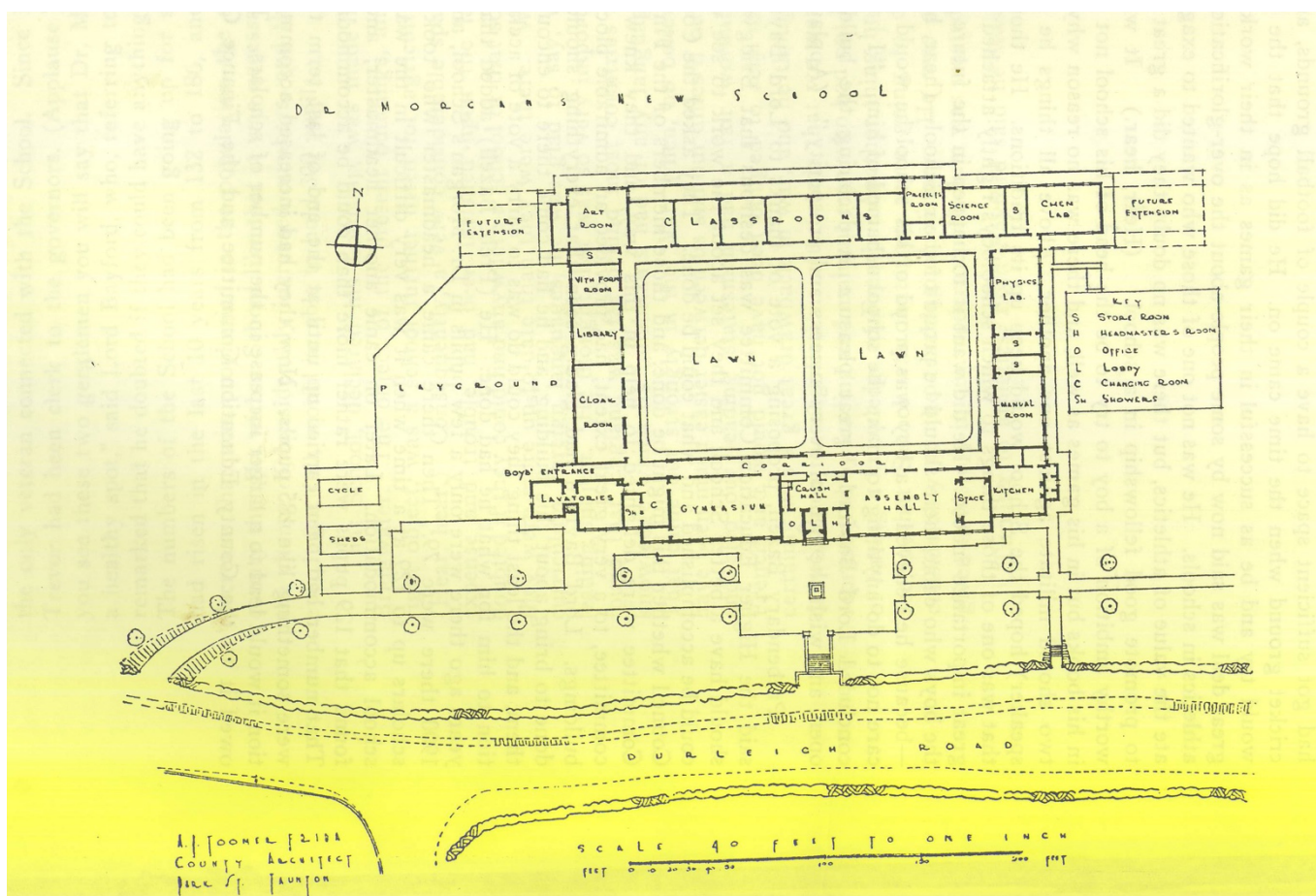
Editor: Geoff. Marchant; NB: See bottom of page 10 for all contact details.

CELEBRATING 80 YEARS OF THE DURLEIGH ROAD SCHOOL BUILDINGS.



DR. MORGAN'S SCHOOL, NEW BUILDINGS.

The above picture featured in the 1937 "Morganian" magazine – many thanks to Bill King who gave me a copy of that! It makes a nice change to have a contemporary sketch of the front of the school instead of our much used recent years photos. A scan of the front cover of that "Morganian" is shown on page 9 here – I have had to succumb to 10 pages this time to get in all I want to show this time round! Thanks to OM John Stuckey and committee member Dick Raymond we also have a floor plan of the school at that time (see page 2) and Ray Haines has provided not only a similar plan for the school in the 1950s but also a plan of the sports field layout as well (see pages 3 and 4); many many thanks to all our contributors. I will endeavour to fill the spaces between these pictures and plans with snippets from other pages of the 1937 "Morganian" - if the computer will allow me to do that!! However, the big news is that we shall be welcome to return to our old school on the 2017 Dinner day, Saturday September 23rd. for an afternoon event jointly arranged by Haygrove staff and pupils and our own OM committee. This is by kind invitation of the present Head of Haygrove, Karen Canham. The dinner will follow at Wembdon Green at 7 for 7.30pm.



1937 Dr. Morgan's School Plan.

The drawing of the "New Buildings" on page 1 here was interleaved in a report of the opening ceremony in the December 1937 Vol. 14 No. 1 of the Morganian, which presumably means that the Morganian had already been going 14 years. To fill in under the above 1937 school plan I reproduce here the start of the report which accompanied it. I will then complete the report on later pages of this newsletter.

NEW BUILDINGS.

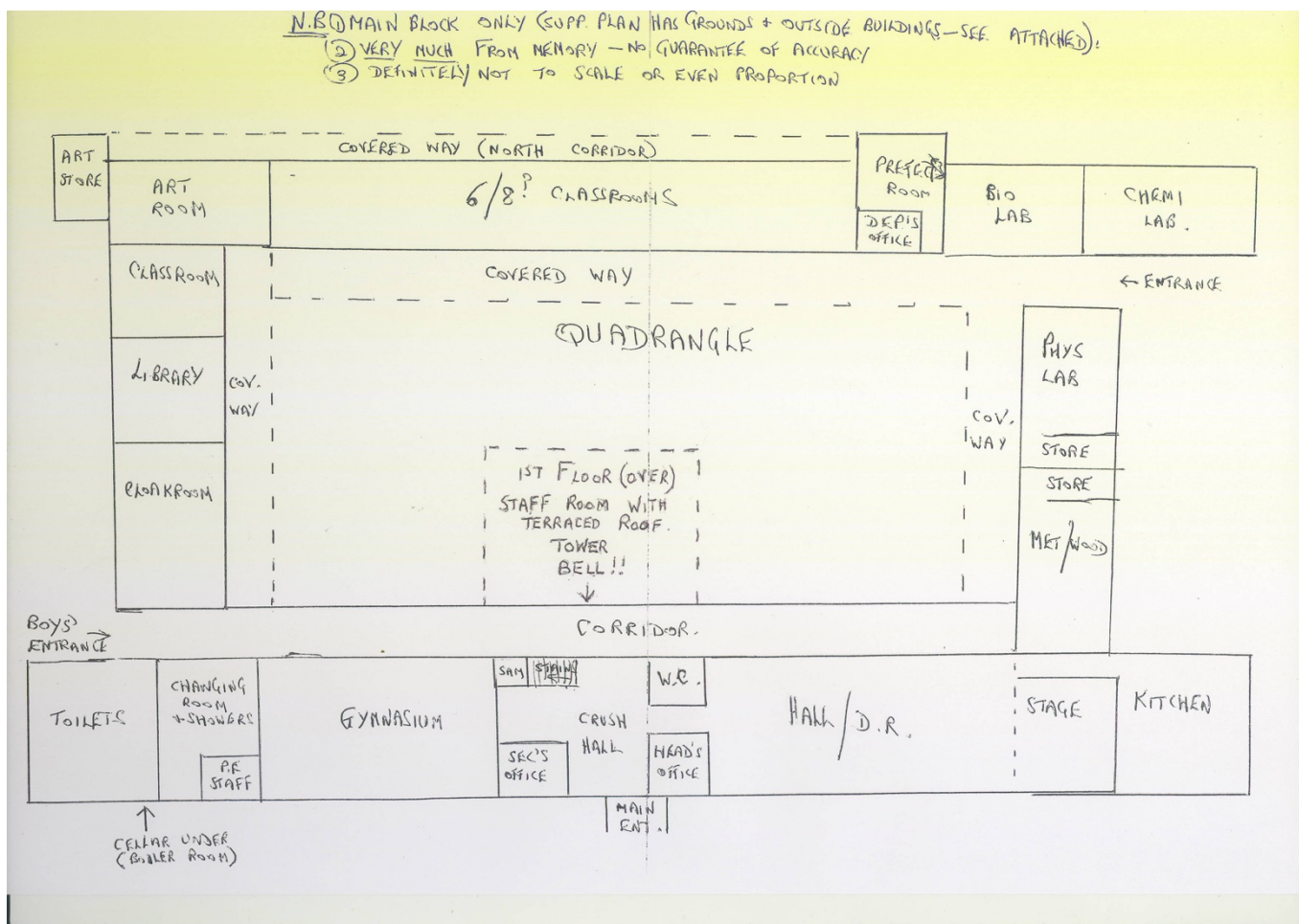
THE OPENING CEREMONY, OCTOBER 28th, 1937.

(By courtesy of the "Bridgwater Mercury.")

Favoured with fine weather, the opening ceremony, which took place in the assembly hall, was attended by a large company, including representatives of the County Council and the County Education Committee, the Town Council, and the Rural District Council, J.P.'s for the county and borough, and many other leading residents of the town and neighbourhood, including also "old boys" and parents of past and present scholars.

The chair was occupied by Mr. J. Coleby Morland (chairman of the County Education Committee), who was supported by Lord Bayford, the Mayor of Bridgwater (Alderman F.J. Reed, C.C.), Preb. C. Bazell (chairman of the governors), Mr. C. Trenchard, M.A. (Headmaster), Mrs. J. Cooke Hurle, J.P., Mr. E.S. Reed (chairman of the Buildings Sub-Committee of the County Education Committee), Professor A.M. Tyndall, Mr. C. Harden, C.A., Alderman W. Deacon, J.P. Mr. J.P. Ferguson, Mr. R.F. Clark, J.P., Alderman R. Ashton, and Mr. Jas. Slocombe, J.P. In the audience were the Rev. W.E. Catlow, M.A., a former Headmaster, and Mr. Edward Trevor, clerk to the governors.

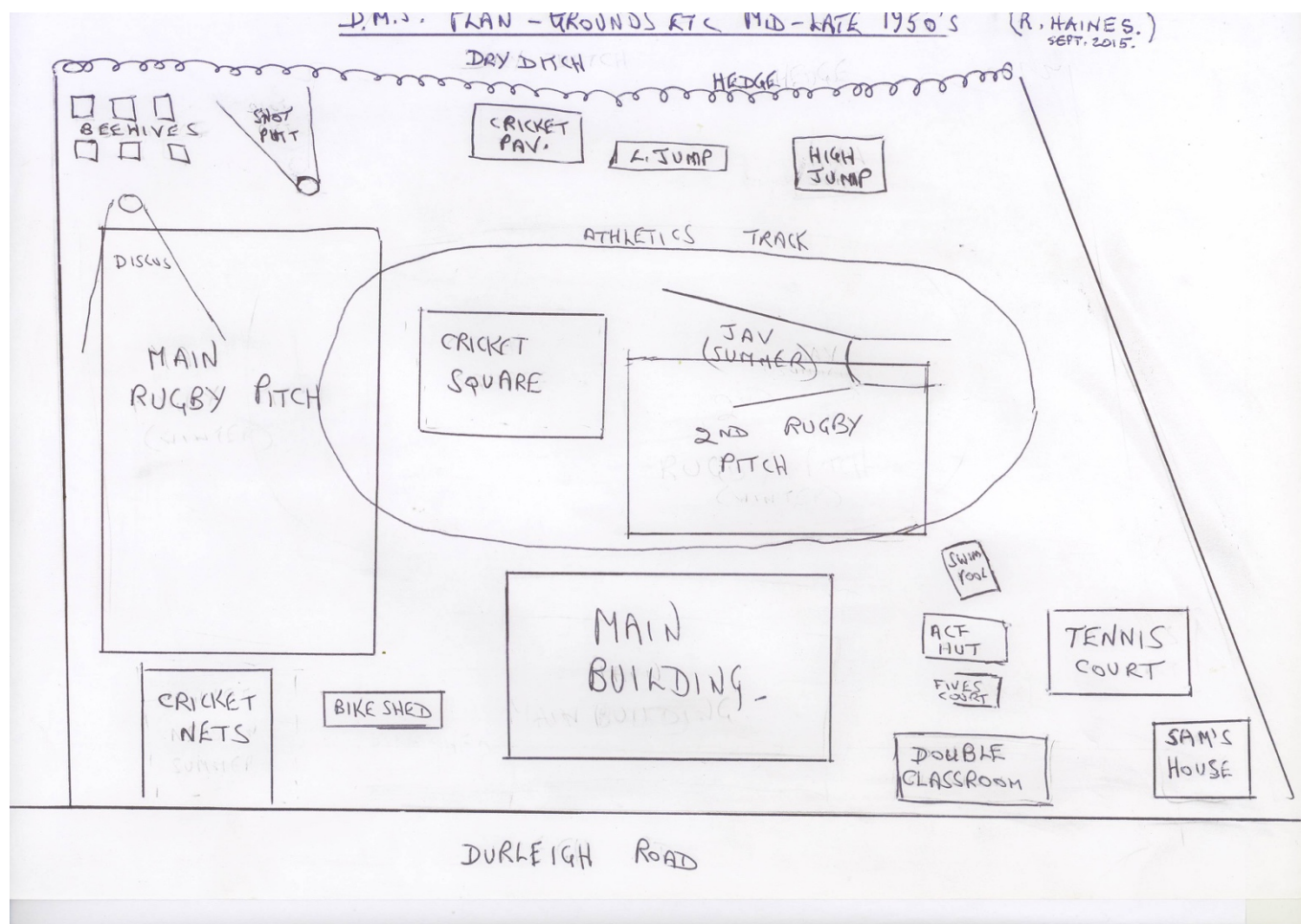
Continued on Page 7.



Ray Haines Plan of DMS in the 1950s.

OM Gordon Williams, now of Malmesbury, also sent me a copy of “Dr Morgan's Grammar School – Plans as existing date 10th July 1961” This is approximately A3 size so would not scan on any scanner I have yet found, but it is a fascinating document as it shows the “Timber Hut 18ft x 30ft, Classroom 9, which was our own “home” room in our 3rd. or 4th. year there at DMS. Also it shows the Fives Court, Greenhouse, and crossed out classrooms 10 and 11 in a “10 Bay MoW Hut” nearer Sam Napper's house. As I left in 1956, can anyone explain whether these latter classrooms were ever installed? Gordon's architectural plan also gives the layout of the first floor in the tower. Otherwise it is a more official version of what Ray shows us above, and presumably originates from Somerset County Council archives. I do hope I can find a way, perhaps by scanning it in several sections, to include it in a later newsletter. Gordon had to do a similar approach to copy the version he has to send to me. Our very grateful thanks for all that and if he feels he can tell us the history of the document, I'm sure it would make very interesting reading. As in Ray's 1950's plan, I was interested to see that there was no way out onto the school field by the Art Room at that time, merely a “Book Store” between the Art Room and Classroom 1, which in my day's (1951 – 56) was Bertie Bollom's Classroom adjacent to the Library. Classrooms 2 to 8 (8 with lockers in front of it and extending back out into where the covered way was North of classrooms 2 to 7). These ran West to East along the back of the Quadrangle where Ray shows “6/8 ? Classrooms” between the Art Room and the Biology Laboratory. A “Prep Room” is shown between the Biology and Chemistry Laboratories. I have a feeling that Ray's version was what actually got built though in that location! We would love to hear other OM's reminiscences on both these plans, **and** the 1937 one if

anyone can remember that far back!! I will try to remember to get Gordon's plan on show at the afternoon exhibition before our 2017 dinner.



Ray Haines' Plan of the School Field in the 1950s.

What can I say about the School Field? There are others much more qualified than me in the DMS sporting fraternity to make comments here. Ray has already in an earlier newsletter told us a story of very irresponsible happenings down by the cricket nets which ended with the police being called. Luckily that was a “one off” and in the main the worse to happen there was under-age smoking! Many much better events happened on the school field, hence all the rugby and cricket photographs which we have published and others which now appear on the website drnmorgans.com

In a recent discussion with David Hooper (DMS 1947 – 52) David told me several memories of life at DMS, and that included a “How did it ever happen?” account of him sciving off of afternoon lessons and persuading the then Groundsman to allow him to help cutting the grass on the school field! Can anyone remember the name of the Groundsman cum Boilerman in those days as the name escaped both David and myself? David also said that Mr Rees used to “have a word” with David's afternoon period master at times and get him to allow David to “help him in the workshop” this sometimes evolved into digging over a garden plot for him!! I had heard of Mr Key's greenhouse and the swimming bath before, but never this “Metalwork” one! A further one of his memories was being caned by Headmaster Key, having been sent with a couple of other boys to the head for having had the nerve to lace all the boys' satchels together outside of their home room, the Biology Lab., so that when the first boy returned to collect his satchel after lunch he was trying to lift the whole 20 or so bags!! On the subject of Biology Lab., has anyone come across Mr Skelton yet, or in the past since leaving DMS? According to Chris Cudlipp he was last heard of in the Haverfordwest area. Sam Napper had also seen David and two pals up on the school roof

one evening ... but failed (on purpose??) to catch them. Thanks to David for all those memories – he really ought to break a habit of a lifetime now, join OMs, and come to the next dinner. Can a peer of his persuade him? I didn't get far - “I never go to re-unions” was all I got!

OTHER NEWS....

In our last newsletter I only had room to mention the **2016 John Biffen Award** but now I can include a picture and our secretary Roger Richards' report:

Presentation of John Biffen Award.

Once again Old Morganians took part in the annual Bridgwater College Prize Giving Ceremony on the 31st of August 2016 when the John Biffen Award was presented to Olivia Reed by Roger Richards, Secretary of Old Morganians who was supported at the Ceremony by fellow Members Dick Raymond and Brian Scott. Brian organised the items to be awarded in conjunction with John Stuckey who has been associated with the Award since its inception.

The Award includes approximately £150 worth of books chosen by the winner. As well as Olivia and Roger Richards the photograph attached includes Martyn Aldridge the College's Course Leader. The shield being presented is engraved with the Winner's name.

Olivia studied for the International Baccalaureate Diploma and achieved a very impressive 38 points including a grade 6 (equivalent to A grade at A level) in History, she completed a 4,000 word research essay into the reputation of Richard III, which was awarded an excellent A grade and her coursework on the causation of the French Revolution also gained top marks. As a member of the College Honours Academy she took part in the Lessons from Auschwitz project which involved her visiting Poland and delivering sessions to local school children about the Holocaust.

Remarkably Olivia achieved these high academic standards despite having to attend school in Toulouse France while her father was there working for Airbus. She now lives in Bristol from where she commuted every day on the train to attend the College. She is progressing to Exeter University to study History and French.

For those uncertain about John Biffen: He was born in Combs, attended Dr Morgan's School from where he won an Open Scholarship to Cambridge University. He graduated with a First Class Honours Degree in History. After working for some years in Industry he held the Parliamentary Seat of Oswestry from 1961 to 1997 and occupied several Ministerial Posts in Margaret Thatcher's Governments and was elevated to the House of Lords in 1997. John passed away in 2007. The Award in commemoration of John



was funded by subscriptions from Members of Old Morganians.

A report from the college has been put onto the college website and was also sent to numerous press contacts by Kelly Thorne, Events & Communications Co-ordinator, Bridgwater and Taunton College.

2016 DINNER... Again, I only had room for a few comments and a picture in the October Newsletter, but now can include my report and also that received from our Secretary, **Roger Richards**. Many thanks to him for his report and also to **Dave Peek** for all the photos he took at that event, and moreover to **Greg Kett** for getting all Dave's pictures onto our website drmorgans.com so promptly. Greg has also finished putting the **DMS archive pictures** held by **Bill King** online, so do have a look at all of that sometime. Just go to the website and look around or use the direct links Greg has set up and given me as shown below:

2016 Dinner: <http://drmorgans.com/photo-gallery-old-morganians-dinner-2016/>

DMS archive pictures: <http://drmorgans.com/photo-gallery-scanned-photos/>

Roger's Dinner Report, as sent to Bridgwater Mercury:

Old Morganians Celebration 25th Annual Dinner.

On the 24th of September 2016 The Old Morganians celebrated their 25th Annual Dinner at the Bridgwater & Albion Rugby Clubhouse when an excellent evening was had by all.

Ninety members attended, who are all ex pupils of Dr Morgan's Grammar School that was located on the Durleigh Road site now occupied by Haygrove School.

The evening began with a welcome speech by the President Bryan Lancaster that included a summary of the history of the Old Morganians and emphasised the enjoyment members gained from the Annual 'Get Togethers'.

After a very enjoyable meal supplied by Windsor Catering members were entertained by Somerset based professional comedian Jimmy Quinn.

The Master of Ceremonies for the evening was Tony Ball M.B.E. who thanked the Comedian for his very entertaining performance and then Tony added several excellent jokes of his own!

The attached photograph shows (from left to right) Jimmy Quinn (Professional Comedian), Mike Dodden (Treasurer), Bill King (Chairman), Bryan Lancaster (President) and Tony Ball M.B.E. (Master of Ceremonies).

Note that the photo provided was a cropped version of the one which appeared in our October Newsletter.

Editor's Dinner Report: Our committee had everything well organised with name tags, table plans, and menu reminders for all the 90 OM attendees. The caterers served a fantastic meal with great efficiency and helpfulness – no request too much trouble. The beef main course was exceedingly succulent and tender and a vegetarian option was available for those who had pre-booked it.

Our President, Bryan Lancaster, summoned us to table at 7.35pm and welcomed all before asking for silence in memory of those of our members who had passed away in the last year. He then recounted how these reunion dinners had started 25 years ago, but also mentioned that Bill Groves of Othery had organised a peer group reunion even before that. The Society had gathered 70 to 80 members in the following years and then the younger DMS ex pupils had started up the DMS Association to encompass their eras. In 2000 there had been a combined dinner here at the Rugby Club and in 2012 the Society and the Association had merged and the "not so old" old members on the present committee were doing a great job keeping the tradition going. Next year the dinner would be on 23rd September at Haygrove School (– this drew audible appreciation from the floor, *but note the venue is now Wembdon Green*) with many thanks to Head of Haygrove, Karen Canham, who also would like to hold another afternoon historic exhibition at the school on that day.

After our meal Bryan proposed the loyal toast and introduced comedian Jimmy Quinn, who then regaled us with a quick patter of jokes and comments. Our MC Tony Ball OBE was introduced and he thanked

Jimmy with his own inimitable humour before proposing the toast of “The School”. Members then chatted and explored the exhibits before disappearing off-stage for yet another year!

Many, many thanks to all those who organised such a successful evening and to Dave Peek for taking numerous photographs – they will be shown online at drmorgans.com as soon as we can organise it. (Note that Greg Kett of Ravenswood media had those pictures online by 6th October, together with all Bill King's DMS archive pictures – a special thank you to him. Members may recall that Greg is son of the late Clive Kett who was a member of the Association and was also on the Association committee.)

DINNER COMMENTS FROM COLIN BROWN on our committee:

1. Total cooperation of the former occupants of the room, in stopping activity as promised.
2. Good car parking.
3. Excellent meal - best yet !
4. Good table layout & bar facilities - clean toilets.
5. Good use of the microphone in Bryan Lancaster's initial welcome & historical statement on the Origin of the School etc.
6. Comedian not as good as last time - a little patronizing to some guests. Near the knuckle for some older members.
7. We should use this venue & caterer again.
8. Welcome at the door always well received.

I received a few bits of information about the late John Chedgey from OM John Marsh which I will show here:

The following are a brief few notes regarding the late John Chedgey (1942-2016).

- * Born in Bridgwater 1942 (lived in the Durleigh area).
- * Attended Dr Morgans Grammar School for boys at the age of 11 in 1953.
- * On leaving the Grammar School he went to a radio college and trained as a Radio Officer.
- * He obtained his PMG1 (Post Master General Certificate 1st Class).
- * He joined a Shipping Company and went to sea for several years as a Radio Officer.
- * He later worked in Southampton and London.
- * His latter years were spent working at the Radio Station in Highbridge. Formerly owned by the Post Office until it was nationalised and became British Telecom.
- * One of his great loves was his BMW which he regularly changed for a new model every 2/3 years.
- * His work colleagues at the Radio Station remember him fondly for his dry humour, never panicking in a crisis and his enjoyment of a game of pool at the attached social club.
- * John leaves the following family:- Wife Marilyn Tel No 01278 795865

Address No9, Atlanta Key, Burnham on Sea, Somerset.

Son Kieron Daughter Michaela and 3 grandchildren

Yes Geoff you are correct, John Chedgey was not an actual member of OMs. On receiving my regular newsletter I would pass any items he might be interested on to him. He did attend with me the 1953 year intake get together when we had all reached 60 years of age at the hotel in North Petherton. He actually lived when at Dr Morgans in Woodbury Road which was just down the road from the school. I guess that would make it still Bridgwater and not Durleigh.

Many thanks John for all those details.

THE 1937 OPENING CEREMONY REPORT continued from page 2.

The Chairman read a telegram of “good wishes for a great day” from the Bridgwater County School for Girls, and proceeded to tell of the part the new School took in the scheme for secondary education in the county. A good many years ago when a survey of the county was made with regard to education, there was a very serious deficiency of schools in one or two areas. The County Education Committee had hoped to start this school in 1930, but following the severe slump building operations were suspended. They were handing over this school to the managers and governors, and he trusted that they would find it a most useful school. It was not buildings only that were necessary;

it was the way in which the teaching was carried out and the inspiration given, and the work thrown into the school by the boys, staff, and governors as well. (Applause.)

Lord Bayford, heartily received, said it was a great honour to be asked to come down that afternoon to perform that most interesting ceremony, and it was also a great pleasure to him to go round the buildings and see what a very complete - he might almost say what a very magnificent - building they had there. (Hear, hear.) He could only think with regret of the circumstances under which he was brought up -(laughter) – and which (*wished? -Ed. OMN.*) he had had the pleasure of being born about 50 years later than he was. (Laughter.) “My first acquaintance with Dr. Morgan's School,” continued Lord Bayford, “was rather an unfortunate one. It was when I was first aspiring for Parliamentary honours. At that time there was occurring what I always think is a most unfortunate phase of public affairs – that was a very bitter conflict between Church and Chapel. One of the most prominent members of the Liberal Party in this town made a speech of great eloquence and some asperity, saying what he thought about the proceedings of the Church. A supporter of mine, with equal eloquence, and certainly asperity, replied in these terms: 'Who is this gentleman who has come forward, a high priest to denounce our mother Church? Why, he was brought up in Dr. Morgan's School, he was actually brought up by the charity of the Church; why does he turn and bite the hand that fed him?' (Laughter.) That did not tend to make things easy for me – (laughter) – and the good feeling which I had hoped would go all through the election was sadly impaired, but it had the effect of making me enquire something about Dr. Morgan's School. Since those days I have taken, at a distance, a certain amount of interest in it, and have been trying to get what I previously knew about it enlarged, and I have found out what an interesting history Dr. Morgan's School had.”

TWO CENTURIES OLD.

Continuing, Lord Bayford said he did not know how many of those present knew that the School was more than 200 years old, and that the original Dr. Morgan was a medical practitioner who left two freehold farms, comprising nearly 100 acres, “to keep a judicious master to teach reading, arithmetic, navigation, and mathematics” - (laughter) – and no boy was eligible to those benefits who could not read his Psalter and say the Catechism. The School in those early times consisted of one hall with a gallery. He had noticed that the new hall had got no gallery, but he had heard that the gallery in the old School had a history, that on one occasion one of the boys was enabled to get behind the headmaster and hurl him from the gallery into the body of the hall. (Laughter.) He (Lord Bayford) did not know whether or not by the insistence of their present and respected headmaster in constructing the new hall care was taken not to run any risks by providing a gallery. (Laughter.) At that time the house consisted of five small rooms, and at one time during the 19th. century the headmaster lived in a small house adjoining the School, and not only had his own family there but 20 boarders. The School was divided into four class-rooms, and later additional class-rooms and laboratories were added, and this with a temporary workshop comprised the School buildings until the end of the summer term in 1937. The County Council before that, in 1928, took over the School, and at that time certain arrangements were made about continuing the religious instruction for the School.

TWO VETERANS.

Of that body, as its predecessor, the chairman was their old friend, Preb. Bazell. (Applause.) He was glad, and he was sure they were all glad, to see that Preb. Bazell had been able to come and enter into the proceedings that day. (Applause.) Preb. Bazell had been a governor since 1887, and he had been chairman since 1920, but he was not the only veteran associated with the School. Since 1888 Mr. Edward Trevor had been clerk to the governors. (Applause.) “I think when you see these two gentlemen you will say that Dr. Morgan's School is a healthy spot,” said Lord Bayford, who, referring to the new School, remarked that he doubted if they could have anything more up-to-date. The numbers of the school had been going up for some time. They had risen in the last 10 years from 132 to 186 and in spite of the decrease that was prophesied in the population, the authorities of the county thought with a School like that it was necessary to provide for the chance of considerably increased numbers, and that School, whenever it got full, would be able to hold 300 pupils.

That School, declared his Lordship, was made for the people of Bridgwater. The object of the present buildings, and he thought the right object, was a school further fitted for agriculture and industry. (Hear, hear.) Consequently, a very considerable space, together with expense and trouble, had been lavished upon the laboratories.

Continued on page 10.

THE MORGANIAN

Vol. 14.

No. 1.

DECEMBER, 1937

EDITORIAL.

The tumult and the shouting has died, and we are now peacefully settled in the promised land, though we shall not live every man under his vine and under his fig tree until the trees are grown up.

We have few complaints. The old buildings certainly had this effect—we are not likely to be too critical, and at least we had the only dry day in the week for the opening, an account of which appears elsewhere.

We welcome to the staff this term Mr. H. L. Middle, B.A., who has come to take charge of Modern Languages, and to introduce German into the curriculum.

It was with great pleasure that we saw Mr. Catlow among us again, and looking so well.

To our cups has been added the "Dr. Morgan's Junior Cup," for competition between the two houses among the year's entrants, for good all round performance, in school and in the field. Fairfax has started well. Form I.f has beaten Form I.w in Rugby, 18—3.

The cup, presented by Mrs. Trenchard, is of 18th Century Dutch Silver. The stem is of the form of a gentleman of the period of Dr. Morgan (1723) holding in his hand a curious staff the nature of which is a mystery.

THE OPENING CEREMONY continued from Page 8...

He (Lord Bayford) doubted if they could find a school of that sort and size where they (the laboratories) were more up-to-date than they were there. With regard to the curriculum, foreign languages, he was glad to say, were to remain a leading subject. He thought that was so very important. It had been found that England was far behind most countries in respect to the knowledge which its inhabitants had of any language but their own. That came out strongly in the War, when, he believed, things might have been much easier between us and our allies if our leading generals and also our leading statesmen had a fair workable knowledge of French and would not have been obliged to rely on interpreters. It certainly was a great drawback in war, and he thought it was a great drawback in the negotiations afterwards that we were so very largely represented by leading and eminent men who had not had the advantage of having a knowledge of French. Another thing he was very glad to see in that School was that they were going to devote themselves considerably to the teaching of history. He was sure that no time given to history in our modern curriculum was wasted.

To be concluded in the June OM Newsletter.

Candlesticks (& Bell?)! David Hooper also told me that when his brother Clive was churchwarden at Holy Trinity, Hamp, Bridgwater, Clive had shown him around the church. When they got to the altar, David exclaimed "I've seen those candlesticks before – I and two other members of DMS made those!" So are the other two DMS members reading this? I wasn't given names, but evidently they were made in Glyn Rees' workshop and that ties in perhaps with something the late John Gardner e-mailed to me when I was researching the school bell. I'm pretty sure John said he thought that one of the bells he remembered cleaning in Rees' store had been given in exchange for some candlesticks.... so I wonder if our bell was that from the old Holy Trinity church on Taunton Road (graveyard site now by the traffic lights opposite Morrisons) and if so why it wasn't transferred to Hamp with the church? Another lead to follow up!

R.I.P. O.M. John Marsh has let me know by e-mail on 5th. Dec. 2016 that "**Dennis Moore** (DMS 1955-60) aged 72 died in October 2016. His wife Thelma died in September 2016. When Dennis left Dr Morgans he went to work for Westlands at Weston super Mare. When his father died in 1963 he took over his father's business, Moore's Fish & Chip Shop, which was started by his grandmother in 1926." Many thanks for that information John, and may he rest in peace.

Also, ref. Dick Raymond 14.02.17, **C.J.(John) Sparkes** died on 7th. Feb 2017 – more details next time.

Dinner, September 23rd. - Speaker John Palmer (DMS 1962 – 68) Please see Addendum to this Newsletter provided by our secretary Roger Richards.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE OLD MORGANIANS Website Address is drmorgan.com and it has been totally updated by its producer, Greg Kett, son of DMS Old Boy, the late Clive Kett. Greg runs Ravenswood Media.

Old Morganians President: Bryan Lancaster.

Old Morganians Committee: Treasurer Mike Dodden 01278 423890 **mob: 07540052982** e-mail: mdodden@aol.com

Secretary: **Roger Richards**, 3 The Crescent, Corsham, Wilts, SN13 9FT. 01249 716263 rognsue@hotmail.co.uk

Minutes Sec: Tony Wilkins. Chairman: Bill King 01278 456405; Dick Raymond 01278 686509, Colin Brown; Ray Haines; Brian Scott; Ralph Sealey.

NB: Contact Mike Dodden if you require a 2017 membership/dinner application form.

Material For Newsletter. Please write, phone, or e-mail, to Geoff Marchant, 37 Mendip Road, Yatton, North Somerset, BS49 4HR. Tel: 01934 834550 E-mail: Please send to yattonmarchants2010@hotmail.co.uk Photos can be sent to this e-mail address but bear in mind that we still produce a black & white newsletter for a large number of our members who either have no e-mail address, or whose e-mail addresses are out of date on our information listing. Therefore, **please do not send large colour photos, or black & white ones of extremely high resolution, say in excess of 300kB.** Thanks for all contributions to the newsletter – **do please keep them coming.** I especially need career / life history articles and reminiscences of the old school days.

Geoff. Marchant, Newsletter Editor