

THE OLD CESTREFELDIAN SOCIETY



Eighty Sixth Annual Dinner and Reunion

The 2015 dinner was held in the Chesterfield Football Club Stadium, Whittington Moor on Friday 24th April.

This grand occasion was attended by 103 Old Cestrefeldians who had entered the school from 1935 to 1986 together and included two former masters.

Following the loyal toast and the toast to Old Cestrefeldians no longer able to meet, dining was punctuated by the retiring President's many requests to take wine with those who had participated in various ways in the life of Chesterfield Grammar School and the Society.

The formal toast to the Old School and the Old Cestrefeldians' Society was proposed by Colin Cantrell who entertained the assembled company with reminiscences of the old school and the achievements of former pupils in many fields.

Our retiring president, Canon Peter Downham responded to the toast adding his own memories of the freedoms and responsibilities granted under the old school regime. He was also able to provide an update on the unusually high number of activities that had taken place in the year of his tenure and thanked those involved in their promotion. These included the Chesterfield School Exhibition at the Museum, the rededication of the War Memorials at the old school, the creation of the Old Cestrefeldians' Trust and the tour of the School by around 30 OCs that very afternoon.

Next to speak, former pupil and master, Keith Pollard introduced our new President, Prof. Derrick Willmot. Three generations of Willmots had attended the School, Derrick from 1958 to 1965. Latterly he was Professor of Dentistry at Sheffield University and now is called on as an expert witness. Keith recounted that Tony Page had spotted Derrick's dexterity with a drill in his first year at School when making a toothbrush stand.

Keith then proposed the toast to our new President while the regalia of office, the Badge, Shield and Cap, were presented by the retiring President for safe keeping through the coming year.

In accepting the Presidency, Derrick gave a very amusing speech remembering initiation rites, Paradise and the novel use of explosives. He expressed gratitude to the School for all that it had given his family. Derrick had been vice chairman of the governors of Brookfield School in the 1990s. Whilst expressing frustration at the strictures imposed by Derbyshire County Council at the time, he spoke warmly of it as the Grammar School's successor.

The presentation of the Accounts to 31st December 2014 by our Treasurer, Michael Hadfield followed. Thanks to the generous donations of members the Society made a net profit of £103, total assets being £2425.



Prof. Derrick Willmot (left) receives the Badge of Office from Canon Peter Downham.

Frank Gorman gave an update on the Old Cestrefeldians Trust whose committee comprises Frank, Tom Roberts and Tony Hine. An appeal was made for items of memorabilia to be given to the Trust for safe keeping and also for members' missing email addresses to enable more effective promotion of the Trust.

The end of the formal proceedings was the usual rather competitive rendering of the School Song followed by Jerusalem led by John Roberts.

Old School Tour

As mentioned above, the Reunion Dinner had been preceded by a tour of the old school buildings thanks to the staff of Chesterfield College of which they now form a part. The tour was organised by Tony Hine who provided the following photographs. We understand that the lettering in the panel on the right hand gable in the first photograph is due to be reinstated.

