

THE OLD CESTREFELDIAN SOCIETY



Eighty Seventh Annual Dinner and Reunion

The 2016 dinner was held in the Chesterfield Football Club Stadium, Whittington Moor on Friday 29th April.

One of the largest in recent years, this grand occasion was attended by almost 120 former students and masters, Arthur Mitchell who attended from 1935 being the most senior and Rob Woodhead, of the 1989 entry the youngest.

Following the loyal toast and the seated 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.

A new item this year was the playing of *Non Quo Sed Quomodo*, a musical celebration (akin to a rap) of the Old School motto, provided by former President Sir Robin Saxby.

The formal toast to the Old School and the Old Cestrefeldians' Society was proposed by Dr. Nick Rodick, the response being from our retiring President, Professor Derrick Wilmott. Derrick updated members on the various activities of the year including that very day's visit by a group to the Brookfield Community School organised by Tony Hine, the Armistice Day Service led by former president Rev. Canon Peter Downham and Rev. Ron Smith when the burnished WW2 plaque was reinstalled and the Chesterfield Civic Society's blue plaque unveiled at the Sheffield Road site.

The progress of the OC Trust was also outlined. Tom Roberts had overseen the transfer of paper archive material to the Derbyshire Records Office and other items had been transferred to the Chesterfield Museum and Library. It is anticipated that the Derbyshire Records Office material will eventually be made available online. The creation of awards is being progressed with local schools.

A history of the School has been commissioned from OC and historian Philip Riden. The OCS webmaster, John Drabble, has recently refreshed the design of the Society website also improving navigation. Photographs and John North's videos of the School in the 60's were shown during the event.

Following further entertaining recollections of School life, Derrick expressed his thanks on behalf of the assembled company to the organising committee, comprising Michael Hadfield, David Finney and John Moss.



Next to speak, Trevor Jackson introduced our new President, Dr Geoffrey Miller OBE. Geoff, currently one of the best known OCs globally, began at Chesterfield School 50 years ago and developed his cricketing prowess early in his school life. While in Transitus had been selected for the U15 Schools India tour and later that of the West Indies. Such was his ability Geoffrey “Luigi” Price had created a special Sixth Form category for him, and after GCEs he graduated to “L VI Extra”. Geoff played first class cricket for Derbyshire County Cricket Club in 1973 and in 1976 was called up by England to play the West Indies. Between then and retiring in 1990, he played 34 Test Matches, 25 One Day Internationals and around 700 first class and one day matches. Since then he has been a popular after dinner speaker. In 2000 he became a Test Selector and then Chairman of the selectors, following David Graveney. Geoff received his OBE in 2014 for services to cricket. He has been a lifelong resident of Chesterfield.

Trevor 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, Geoff gave an excellent speech describing how he was inspired by his father to take up cricket while still at Highfield Hall, the lengths to which his father had gone to support him, how his abilities were nurtured by masters at Chesterfield School, the recently deceased Tony Roberts getting special mention and how his selection for national schools teams helped to extend his school career despite other setbacks. (We suspect these might have been overplayed for dramatic effect; the creation of L VI Extra was ratified however). He expressed his great pride and sense of honour at recognition bestowed by the Society. The Society was left in no doubt why Geoff is in so much demand as an after dinner speaker.



Prof. Derrick Willmot (left) presents the Badge of Office to Dr. Geoff Miller, O.B.E..

The presentation of the Accounts to 31st December 2015 by our Treasurer, Michael Hadfield followed. The Society had made a net profit of £279, almost matching the profit made on the sale of the new OCS ties which had been a great success. Total assets now stand at £2688.

The end of the formal proceedings was the usual competitive rendering of the School Song led enthusiastically by Sir Bryan Unwin followed by the singing of Jerusalem.