

THE OLD CESTREFELDIANS' SOCIETY



*Non quo sed quomodo
1594 to 1993*

Eighty Ninth Annual Dinner and Reunion

The 89th Annual Dinner and Reunion took place on April 27th 2018 at the Casa Hotel when 80 former pupils and one master of the Old School gathered to renew acquaintances and reminisce and, sadly, to bemoan the end of Chesterfield FC's stay in the Football League.

The dinner was, as usual, peppered by the president's requests to take wine with groups among the attendees including, Peter Miles, the one former master, John Heath, the most senior former pupil, former Presidents, pupils of the various decades, fellow 1951ers and the organising committee, sadly depleted by the passing of John Moss.

Official business followed the loyal toast with the toast, in silence, to those no longer able to meet, not least Sir John Fretwell and John Moss.

The toast to the Old School and the Old Cestrefeldians' was proposed by Past President John Heath. John amused all with tales of liaisons in Morrisons' car park, scholarship results, various war-time school mistresses, commercial opportunities of rabbits and horses. All present are now much wiser on the use of Y-sticks.

Retiring President, Professor John Goodman, in his response, reviewed his onerous year, the highlight being the publication of *The History of Chesterfield Grammar School*, by Philip Riden, covering all aspects of the school and many details of the social structure of Chesterfield over 400 years. He said we are immensely indebted to Philip and to the Old Cestrefeldians Trust for commissioning the work. John also paid tribute to those responsible for the resurrection of the Society in 1985, the trustees of the OCT, the webmaster and the Reunion organising committee with special mention of John Moss.

Derrick Priestley then took to the podium to propose Andrew Elliott, his friend since Highfield Hall days, as our President for the coming year. After gaining his BSc at Glasgow, Andrew became a Fellow of the Society of Optometrists and a Freeman of the City of London. He became a partner in the family business in 1976 which he remained until his retirement in 2016.



Following his installation as President by John Goodman, Andrew paid tribute to John Moss who had suggested that he should consider nomination for President. He thanked Derrick and took wine with fellow 1960 starters. He paid tribute to Headmaster, Bill Glistler, who despite his lack of success at O levels at the first attempt must have seen potential and persuaded him to commit to work and trying again. This eventually led to his gaining a degree in optometry at Glasgow University. Andrew amused his audience with recollections of the foibles of former masters, not least Froggie Hanson (whom he had met professionally late in his life), Ernie Pugh and Gordon Jephcote. Andrew's generous and amusing speech was warmly appreciated by all.

Trustee, Frank Gorman, updated attendees on the successful development of the Old Cestrefeldians' Trust. Further donations are always gratefully received. The book had been successfully launched but copies are still available. He mentioned its main objectives being to support archiving of material about the School and local schoolchildren through the award of prizes. He thanked Chesterfield College for facilitating the 2017 Remembrance Service (on a Saturday) and was pleased that they had agreed to do the same for the 100th anniversary of the Armistice this year when it is hoped relatives of the fallen will be able to attend. Another project for the current year is the restoration of the lettering of the early motto on the front of the 1846 building.

As usual, Mike Hadfield made the accounts seem interesting and, while a small loss was made this year, suggested the balance would support the Society for a good number of years.

The proceedings were rounded off with John Roberts leading the competitive singing of the School Song followed by Jerusalem.



Above photos courtesy of John Little & Gordon Reddish