THE O.N.

The Newsletter of the Old Newportonian Society

President 2014/2015                                   Jon Dudley [1961-67]
Honorary Life Vice-Presidents                 Fred Thompson [1937-75];  Eric Este I.S.O. [1933-39]
                                                Keith Huddlestone [1964-02];  Eric Gentry [1944-50]
All correspondence to:                           The Hon. Secretary
                                                Mr. C.K.Huddlestone
                                                Joyce Frankland Academy, Newport
                                                Newport, Saffron Walden, Essex CB11 3TR
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E MAIL ADDRESSES AND POSTAL ADDRESSES:
Please inform the Secretary if you change your email address and/or your postal address. It is
important for the secretary to have both an email address and a postal address. If the email address
fails then there is the postal address to fall back on. Please note that email addresses will NOT be
passed on to anyone else. They will only be used to send out the newsletters and any other important
information which needs to be sent to the whole of the Society membership.

This Year’s President: Jon Dudley [1961-1967]

My secondary school career, if it can be described as such, began in September 1961. Having attended Hockerill boys
primary school in Bishop's Stortford, and post-11 plus failed a scholarship interview for Bishop's Stortford College, I
was mercifully destined for Newport. I say 'mercifully': it was in fact with a certain amount of trepidation that I looked
forward to starting the next phase of my education. At the time the school was in some sort of hiatus and had an
unfortunate reputation for a general lack of discipline and bullying in particular. There was no alternative however, so it
was with heavy hearts that the raw recruits, on the first day at Newport were lined up and divided into purely arbitrary
classes with no regard for the relevancies of friendships made at one's primary school. Kids being the adaptable
creatures they are, I very quickly made new friends, and soon counted Fred Cable from far-off Saffron Walden, 'Trunky'
Wait from the equally distant Sawbridgeworth, and Rod Marsh from unknown Hallingbury, as chums of the first order.
Later would come many more.

SUFFER AND SERVE
What a school motto! - my heart sank when first I saw it beneath the crest in the dining hall. From what I'd seen
of 'Billy Bunter' on television I recognised the elements here of a public school - prefects, houses, corporal punishment and
the like. The teachers wore gowns and mortarboards forsooth!

Fortuitously, our arrival at Newport coincided exactly with that of Geoffrey 'The Doc' Elcoat as its new headmaster.
Here was a force to be reckoned with; from his beak-like nose to his steady disposition to his enviable war record, to his
university gown and hood, this man was, in modern parlance, going 'to turn the ship around' and he certainly did! The
first demonstration of the new régime wasn't long in coming. An extremely unpleasant attack upon a Stansted boy by a
well known fifth form bully was summarily dealt with by the only ever public caning I witnessed - at morning
assembly. Immediately, the bullying, so easily indulged in on the Stortford train ceased, and an iron discipline was
beginning to be felt throughout the school. Corporal punishment by some members of staff was common and took the
form of the use of favoured weapons...the common slap, the projectile use of the blackboard rubber, the razor strop
(biology) and the sole of a size thirteen plimsoll (maths) being but a few. It wasn't all one way traffic however and
victims in the form of new teachers fresh from college were put through the mangle by boys anxious to test them and if
possible, redress the balance. Equally as bad as the physical punishments we'd suffered was the mental torture we
handed out. Some of these poor young graduates either left the school rather quickly, went on a short remedial 'holiday' or stood their ground and survived. From our point of view it was poetic justice - but it wasn't, it was aping the adults’ behaviour, and I still feel rather ashamed of it all. One who not only survived but came through with flying colours was the man who has been secretary of the ONs for a generation - Keith Huddlestone! We failed to get the better of him which proved to be to Newport's huge benefit. Our teachers were generally good sorts - some were even fun! Many had been through the war, and some must have carried huge emotional scars resulting from their experiences...

Being a boys-only school and set in a small village in the country we were starved of female company; as we grew, so did the testosterone levels, and clutching at straws we even began lusting after the very few mature women members of staff. The absolute stunner for most of us was Mme Knight, an elegant French lady who'd been drafted in to help with our French lessons. Always absolutely proper in every way she nonetheless and completely innocently and unknowingly, exuded that particularly Gallic form of sexual frisson to which any fourteen year old boy is particularly susceptible (actually any man in his right mind). Coupled to that her transport was a delectable dark green, tan-leather upholstered Citröën DS 19 in which she would occasionally give four of us a lift back to Bishop's Stortford, usually if we'd been in detention for some minor misdemeanor. I can still smell the aroma of her Chanel No.5. What joy! Our only other glimpse of members of the opposite sex were the girls disembarking at Stortford station for the Herts and Essex girls school...pretty poor substitutes for the exotic Mrs Knight. Frau Witt the German mistress in her shabby pre-war Austin Opal convertible ran a worthy, but distinct second in the 'Miss Newport' stakes. Presumably the Doc with his two French daughters must have wisely kept them locked up, for we rarely saw them.

Probably as a result of over concentration on the foregoing and on cars and motorbikes, myself and several contemporaries failed to take our education seriously and were demoted to the 'B' stream where we were to happily remain until 'O' levels. Failure here too of biblical proportions put several of us into the benign last chance saloon which was the charmingly named 5X. This gave us the opportunity of remaining at school to get some extra tuition and maybe even an 'O' level or two. As luck would have it my family moved to Sussex in the Summer of 1967 and through the good offices of Dr Elcoat I was able to entirely spuriously enter the 6th form of Lewes County Grammar School for Boys where I became a late blooming and not entirely unsuccessful student.

Back to Newport...
Thanks to our English teacher, the eccentrically wonderful Dennis Welch who had been an International Six Day Trials rider on motorcycles, pre-war, there was a rather tolerant attitude to our riding motorbikes to school. Several of us would scorch along the old A11 with the Ugley straight being the ultimate testing ground for man, machine and ultimate top speed. It's a wonder none of us was killed in the Newport Grand Prix! Vintage Cars and Motorcycles have remained an integral part of my life ever since, an interest fostered by my father, an aircraft engineer who also loved such things.

Never interested in the sciences or mathematics - their being far too difficult, I gave up sums as soon as they started involving letters of the alphabet and became algebra. Instead I developed a love of English language, literature, history and art which paved the way for a life bastardizing and commercialising those art forms as the creative director of my own advertising and design agency... a career from which I have recently semi- retired, yet still retain a bizarre affection. A legacy of working through the night on campaigns for irrelevant products and equally unworthy services, fuelled by Indian takeaways, cigarettes and alcohol has left me with a legacy of type 2 diabetes and high blood pressure, but thanks to the sciences I so studiously avoided, everything seems to be under control for the time being.

Another life
I've been married to Jill Copper for thirty seven years and inherited three boys who have been a joy (generally, forgetting the teenage years). When I married her I also married into a Sussex country dynasty, for her family, The Coppers, have a tradition of singing English folk songs in harmony going back to at least the 18th century and almost certainly long before that. I too have been singing with Jill, her late father Bob Copper and her brother John for more years than I care to remember. From the mid 1990s for a period of some ten years we toured extensively in the USA visiting twenty seven states. Nowadays our children also sing with us and we are often joined by our grandchildren too. This has proved to be a touchstone for us all and provides a very tangible link with the past, keeping the family very much together.

The School
As I enter my term of office, the eighth consecutive president from my year (why on earth should that be I wonder?), the school is entering a new and exciting phase as The Joyce Frankland Academy, Newport. Named for that far-sighted foundress back in 1588 who, upon the death of her own child provided education for 'fifty sonsnes' I wish the school under Gordon, its tenacious headmaster, or manager, or director or whatever the nomenclature is these days, great success for the future. As a Society, the ONs, with our limited resources and with an eye on the past but our thoughts very much in the future, will encourage the school and its students as much as we can.

My time at Newport is viewed neither through rose nor cloud-tinted spectacles, but objectively. I loved it, feared it, got sentimental about it and wished it had never existed... but I can honestly say those emotions were probably true of every boy. I wouldn't have missed it for anything. In our greatly sanitized society it is easy to be dismissive of the codes and
morés that ruled our world then, but that's the way it was and we knew no different. Fate projected me into that Newport but it also bred friendships that have lasted a lifetime.

The Society is a rather neat way, particularly in these days of social networking, of keeping abreast of not only the good friends you've made at Newport but to check up and see how well or badly the ones that you couldn't stand are doing!

The Society can only exist with new members...if you are about to become a school leaver please join us...it has been known to be an enjoyable experience! It's time that us old greybeards gave way to younger people ...we could get together over a pint...or three. Come in the water is lovely.


FORTHCOMING EVENTS

1. Friday 20th February 2015: 20.00 onwards; Gathering of ONs at the Coach and Horses, Newport

The July newsletter gave no specific date for the “Gathering” of ONs in 2015. As numbers attending the Coach and Horses in February [nearest possible day to Foundress Day which is the 20th February] have been going down the committee decided to try and find a suitable date later in the year in the hope of attracting more ONs to attend. However, this has not been possible. Therefore the committee decided to go back to the original February date which in 2015 is Friday 20th February the actual Foundress Day date. It is hoped that all ONs who are in the Newport/Saffron Walden area on the evening of 20th February 2015 will make every effort to come to the Coach and Horses for this annual gathering. Please try to attend at some time during the evening and support the President, Jon Dudley.

2. Sunday 22nd March 2015, 11.00am: Church Service at Newport Church to Commemorate the Founding of the School in 1588

This will be the sixth such service to be held at St. Mary’s Church, Newport to commemorate the Founding. The previous services have been a great success and very well supported by Old Newportians. As usual the service will be part of the Newport Parish Church’s normal 11.00am service of Morning Worship. The Principal of the Academy, Gordon Farquhar will give the address. This service is being advertised to everyone connected with the Academy [Pupils, Parents, Staff, Governors as well as Members of the Society]. There will be some refreshments after the service.

The Vicar of Newport, the Rev. Neil Macleod and the PCC are very much in favour of this service and of supporting links between the Academy and St. Mary’s Church so the committee hope that as many members of the Society who are able to attend will do so. It will only be a success provided that members of the Society come in good numbers to support it. In previous years this service has been held on the Sunday at the end of the Spring Half Term which made it very difficult to get students involved. Holding the service a month later will make it much easier for students to take part in the service which is something the Rev Neil MacLeod and Gordon Farquhar are very keen to do.


As in previous years there will be two Hockey Matches. The Women’s Hockey Match will start at 9.30am and the Men’s Hockey Match will start about 10.45am. The Football Match will start at 10.15am and the Cross Country Match is at 11.00am. As next year [2015] Easter is quite early [6th April] it is possible to hold these matches on the usual date which is last Saturday in April. If you wish to take part in any of these matches please email the ON Secretary [ckh1941@hotmail.com] or telephone the Academy [01799 540237] and leave a message. As usual Di Reed will organise the ON Society Hockey Teams. If you wish to play in any of the hockey matches please contact her by email [muffin51@ntlworld.com] or telephone her on 01799 502360. This occasion has now become a major event in the Society’s and the School’s calendar. Apart from the players many other ONs [as well as parents of students who are playing for the school] also come along and support the matches. Refreshments will be served in the Club House [next to the cricket pavilion] after the matches.

4. Sunday 28th June 2015: Annual Mixed Hockey and Cricket Matches against the Academy

The date of these two fixtures has been moved to the last Sunday in June to ensure that as many members of the Academy’s 1st XI Cricket and Hockey teams are available to play as was explained in the July newsletter. The Mixed Hockey match will start at 11.30am and the Cricket Match at 2.00pm. If you wish to take part in either or both of these matches please contact the ON Society secretary by email ckh1941@hotmail.com or by telephoning the Academy [01799 540237] and leaving a message. Arranging for the mixed hockey match to be played in the morning and the cricket match in the afternoon makes it possible for ONs to take part in both matches if they so wish. Tea, to which everyone is invited, will be taken between the two innings of the
cricket match at about 4.30pm in the Club House next to the Cricket Pavilion. Di Reed will organise the ON Society Hockey team. If you wish to play in the mixed hockey match, please contact Di Reed by email [muffin51@ntlworld.com], or by telephoning her on, 01799 502360.

The PE and Games Department at the School is very supportive of both the above events for which the Society is extremely grateful.

Please make a note of the two above dates and try to support the occasions either by taking part in one of the ON Society teams or by being a spectator.

5. Saturday 3rd October 2015: AGM at 6.00pm: Annual Dinner at 7.00 for 7.30pm.

Please make a note in your 2015 diary of these two most important events. Further details will be given in the next newsletter which will be sent out in July 2015.

Reports

1. AGM: Saturday 4th October 2014 at 6.00pm

This took place at the Academy and was attended by 25 members of the Society. Minutes of the 2013 AGM and the secretary’s report for 2013/14 were distributed shortly before the meeting. A statement of the audited accounts for 2013/1214 was also distributed to all those present. The Treasurer, Christopher Szaj explained the salient points and informed the meeting that the statement of accounts clearly showed the Society’s finances to be in a very healthy position mainly due to the continued great success of the 100-Club.

The following elections were made for 2014/15:

President: Jon Dudley [1961-67]; Treasurer: Chris Szaj [64-70]; Secretary: Keith Huddleston [64-02];


Auditor Richard King [70-77].

At the time of the AGM it was not possible to elect a President Designate. However, since the 4th October the committee have unanimously endorsed a proposal that Alan Mills [1950-55] become President for 2015/16. Alan Mills has been a great supporter of the Society over many years. As a student at Newport he played for both the Football and Cricket 1st XIs. He is a former captain of the Bishop’s Stortford Cricket Team and has in the past played cricket for the ONs against the Academy. He is a regular attender at the AGM and Annual Dinner.

2. Annual Dinner: Saturday 4th October 2014: Although not as well attended as last year [2013] the Annual Dinner was nevertheless a very enjoyable occasion. There was the usual sixth form table and one of the Sixth Form Students, Shakila Karim provided a most entertaining musical item. The Head Girl, Briagha Barnes proposed the toast to Dame Joyce Frankland and the Head Boy, Andrew Draper gave a very informative speech in proposing the toast to the Society in which he thanked the Society for all the support it has given and continues to give to the Academy. The President, Martin Tomlinson replied to this toast and said he said how honoured he had been to hold the office of President for 2013/14. As 2014 marks the centenary of the outbreak of World War One it was thought appropriate for Malcolm White to again propose the toast to the Academy as he has done a great deal of research into those Old Newportonians who had died in both World Wars. In proposing the toast to the Academy, Malcolm White recounted some of the great acts of courage shown, and some of the acute suffering endured by former students in both world wars. He felt that the huge resolve shown by all those Old Newportonians who had taken part in the two world wars was in no small part due to the education they had received at the Academy and from all he had seen recently he was convinced that today’s students are fortunate to be receiving an education which will equip them well for all the challenges they will meet in the 21st Century. The Principal, Gordon Farquhar in replying to this toast thanked the Society for all their support and then gave a very positive report on the progress the Academy is making currently.

3. The Old Newportonian Society 100-Club: As reported in the July newsletter, 2014 has been another highly successful year for the 100-Club. 217 membership tickets were sold which, although not a record is nevertheless a wonderful result. The committee are most grateful to all ONs who support the 100-Club which enables the Society to support the School in a number of different ways as well as ensuring that all the necessary administration costs are covered. Current membership of the 100-Club will end on 31st January 2015. The committee very much hope that all those who purchased tickets this year will renew their membership for 2015. The cost of one ticket is £12 and there is no limit to the number of membership
tickets anyone can purchase. If you wish to join as a new member then please complete the pro-forma on page 6 and send it with your cheque to the ON Society Secretary at the Academy. Please make cheques payable to the ON Society 100-Club. The closing date for entry into the first draw of the New Year is 28th February 2014. Those ONs who are already members of the 100-Club will, as usual receive a separate invitation by post to renew their existing membership.

**Winners since the last Newsletter**

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**New Members since the last Newsletter**

The following have been elected to the Society:

William Jackson [2003-08]

**Deaths**

The following death has been reported to the secretary since the last newsletter:

R.W. Archer [1943-51]:

Roy Archer entered Newport in 1948 from the Boy’s British School in Saffron Walden. He was a regular member of the school orchestra. He sat his School Certificate Exams in 1948 and A Level Exams in 1951. He died on 14th June 2014.

**Update of the School History:** As reported in previous newsletters the updated school history, written by Malcolm White [1961-68] has now been published. Although a lot of copies have been sold there are still some available from the initial printing run of 300. **If anyone would like to purchase a copy please contact the ON Society Secretary at the school either by email or letter [see contact details above]. The cost is £5.00 per copy or £7.50 to include postage and packaging. Cheques should be made payable to the “O.N. Society”**

This updated history of the school which covers the period from 1988 to 2013 has been very well received by all those who have purchased a copy. It is of A5 size and consists of 60 pages with a large number of photographs many of them in colour including a fine aerial picture of the whole school site.
Application for membership to the O.N.Society 100-Club for 2015/16

The cost of annual membership is £12.00. There are no restrictions on the number of tickets any member can hold. Cheques should be made payable to the O.N.Society 100-Club.

I wish to apply for [please print in words]___________________ticket[s] for membership of the O.N.Society 100-Club.

I enclose a cheque for £_______Name [Block Capitals] ________________________________

Address
[BlockCapitals]_______________________________________________________________

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Post Code______________________________________Tel. No._______________________

Email Address___________________________________________________________________

Please return the completed form with your cheque to the Secretary of the ON Society at the school [Joyce Frankland Academy, Newport, Newport, Saffron Walden, Essex  CB11 3TR]