Kevin Dalley’s article “Look Back and Learn” in the last Newsletter produced much favourable comment from ONs all over the world. Patrick Neville has written the following in response.

It was indeed a pleasure to read ON President Kevin Dalley’s account of his school days at Newport and of his subsequent career in the RAF. Kevin [1953-60] was at the school just after me [1950-57]. But we shared many of the same black-gowned masters and clearly some of the same experiences, particularly the mass canings of the outgoing fifth formers [Year 11 today] after the infamous graffiti episode on the Ryder Field and the Pavilion! I recall one suspected malefactor who, in preparation for his punishment, went into the kitchen and thrust a plate into his pants. When the cane came into contact with the intended target there was a loud “crack” suggesting it had hit something other than posterior flesh! Amid suppressed mirth around the hall, the wayward pupil was ordered to remove the make-shift armour and received an extra whack for his troubles from the Headmaster, Maurice Willmore! Me? I escaped the dreaded stick only because I was busily carving my initials on the lead flashing around the school’s bell tower so was not present at the defacement of the Ryder Field and Pavilion.

Sadly Kevin Dalley’s academic record at Newport sounds very similar to mine. History. I failed History at “A” Level but did manage to grab the School Geography Prize- only because I think I was the only one doing it!! My only other minor claim to fame is [apart from an occasional win at tennis and cross-country] was to attain the heady rank of Flight-Sergeant in the School’s ATC Squadron, ably and enthusiastically run by Fred Thompson. On the other hand my late brother Stephen, who was at Newport five years before me, went on to become Mayor of Saffron Walden twice, an Essex County Councillor, a Governor of the School and a nationally respected restorer and operator [not always within the law] of steam traction engines!

Just for the record, I did my National Service in the control towers of RAF Linton-on-Ouse in Yorkshire and [would you believe it] RAF Debden. I then managed to get myself a job as a trainee reporter on the local City of London Newspaper, the City Press. Long deceased, it was owned and managed by veteran Beaverbrook finance journalist, S.W.Alexander. This feisty character paid me five miserable quid a week and we worked anything up to 18 hours a day. But he and his colleagues gave me a great training in most aspects of newspaper life and within three years I was a financial reporter on the former London Evening News, which in those days had the world’s largest evening paper circulation of 1.5 million. By chance in London I met some resourceful and hard-drinking Australians, amongst whom were a group who had started Sundowners Travel Company running bus
shuttles overland between London and Calcutta. This sounded like-and proved to be real adventure [unlike Kevin Dalley I did not set foot outside the UK during my RAF stint]. So I sold up my meagre assets in London and booked my overland passage. Around the same time I was told Rupert Murdoch was seeking financial journalists for Australia. I went for an interview and got a job with his flagship, The Australian newspaper in Sydney. That, although I did not know it at the time was farewell to England. The overland trip took three months and I arrived in Sydney in December 1968 two stones lighter and with just forty pounds in my pocket! I must say I have never looked back. I spent over four years with The Australian, eventually becoming the paper’s Melbourne Finance Editor [having never passed “O” Level Maths!]. During this time I got interested in the Australian Motor Industry and after an exchange of unflattering words with The Australian’s Editor, joined Chrysler Australia in Adelaide as public affairs manager, organising press launches of new models and generally doing PR work associated with a major industry. Fred Thompson and his wife came to stay with us during this period. I spent the next 26 years in this dynamic industry, ending up back in Melbourne with Toyota and retiring in 1999. My Australian wife Lorraine and I now live in an old buttery factory in the McLaren Vale wine area of South Australia. Here we have an acre of premium Shiraz vines which in a good vintage year [which is most of them] produces well over 2000 bottles of robust red wine!

My brother, Stephen [who died in 1994] and I attended the School’s 400th Birthday in 1988. It was a memorable occasion with he and I driving his huge Burrell Traction Engine onto the Ryder Field, chewing up the old sod [no not Spud Taylor!] before donning our black ties and attending the special opera “The Four Lockets” in the evening. Feeling a little thirsty after a day on the engine, we wandered off during the interval to the Axe and Compasses at Arkesden only to find a lot of other people there also in black ties…..

Kevin Dalley is right-there has been many changes time I have been back I have never met anyone from the UK during my RAF stint]. So I sold up my meagre assets in London and booked my overland passage. Around the same time I was told Rupert Murdoch was seeking financial journalists for Australia. I went for an interview and got a job with his flagship, The Australian newspaper in Sydney. That, although I did not know it at the time was farewell to England. The overland trip took three months and I arrived in Sydney in December 1968 two stones lighter and with just forty pounds in my pocket! I must say I have never looked back. I spent over four years with The Australian, eventually becoming the paper’s Melbourne Finance Editor [having never passed “O” Level Maths!]. During this time I got interested in the Australian Motor Industry and after an exchange of unflattering words with The Australian’s Editor, joined Chrysler Australia in Adelaide as public affairs manager, organising press launches of new models and generally doing PR work associated with a major industry. Fred Thompson and his wife came to stay with us during this period. I spent the next 26 years in this dynamic industry, ending up back in Melbourne with Toyota and retiring in 1999. My Australian wife Lorraine and I now live in an old buttery factory in the McLaren Vale wine area of South Australia. Here we have an acre of premium Shiraz vines which in a good vintage year [which is most of them] produces well over 2000 bottles of robust red wine!

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Kevin Dalley is right-there has been many changes for the better since our time at the School. I am indeed grateful for the broad education it gave me. The only regrets I have are that [a] I did not take fuller advantage of it whilst I was there and [b] each time I have been back I have never met anyone from my year. That is why I think it is important for ONs to report in from time to time. It is good to see names like Fred Thompson, Eric Este, Keith Huddleston, Eric Gentry and Ron Hockley still in harness- all praise to them! They all serving, but hopefully not suffering!

Any ONs visiting Australia are welcome to come and say hello. Our email address is: pneville@comstech.com and our telephone number is [08] 8556 5480. We are 45km south of Adelaide in South Australia in an area that produces some of the world’s best wines.

Richard Priestley; Headmaster 1991-2006

In January of this year Richard Priestley announced his retirement as Headmaster of the School. He will officially leave on 31 August 2006. Richard Priestley was appointed as Deputy Head of the School to succeed Ken Yates who retired in 1984. He immediately proved to be a very hard working, dedicated and popular Deputy Head. It was no surprise that when Kenneth Hall retired in December 1990 Richard was appointed Head of the School as from 1 January 1991. It was a time of great change for Newport. In 1990 the decision had been taken by the Governors for the School to become co-educational and so Richard had the job of ensuring a smooth transition from an all boys school to a fully co-educational school [since 1968 girls had been admitted into the Sixth Form] which he did with great success. During his tenure as Headmaster he has overseen much needed building work. The construction of the Sports Hall, the Sixth Form and Business Studies Centre, the Biology and Technical Studies Block as well as a large amount of long-overdue refurbishment of the older buildings has all been achieved in large part due to his drive and initiative.

Under his Headship the school has become very successful academically and as a result has become extremely popular. He has strongly encouraged a whole variety of different extra-curricula activities in addition to the traditional ones of sport, drama and music. He has been very much involved in setting up the School’s international connections with schools in many other European Countries. So successful has this venture been that the School was recently presented with the British Council’s International School Award. Amongst many other achievements Richard has overseen the School’s successful application to obtain Language College Status. In spite of his huge commitment to the overall running of the School he has found time to continue teaching Latin with much success to a number of classes each year. During the whole of his time at Newport he has been a very great supporter of the Old Newportonian Society and was its President in 1994/5. Since becoming Head in 1991 he has hardly missed any Society Committee Meetings or any of the Society’s events. There is no doubt he has been a great servant of the School and his legacy will last a very long time. We wish him a long, happy and peaceful retirement for he has surely earned it.

Please see the letter from the President on page 6 of this email

The New Headmaster

The Governors have appointed Mr Sean O’Hagan to succeed Richard Priestley as Headmaster of the School as from 1 September 2006. Currently Mr O’Hagan is Deputy Head at West Hatch School in Chigwell. He comes from Ulster but has lived in England for many years. He is a graduate of the University of Leeds.
Forthcoming Events

1. Friday 1 September 2006: Annual Golf Match v Saffron Walden Golf Club; 13.00. Please note the change of date.

Anyone wishing to play in this match should contact Don Hirst, 1 Highfields, Saffron Walden, Essex CB10 2AD; Tel. 01799 502244. Don Hirst hopes that as many good players as possible will respond to his request to get a really strong ON Team together this year.

2. Saturday 7 October 2006: 17.00 Annual General Meeting at the School in the Memorial Library.


The President Designate for 2006-07 is Mr. Rick Reynolds [1994-]

3. Saturday 7 October 2006: 19.00 for 19.30: Annual Dinner in the Main Hall at the School

The cost will be £17.50 per head. Wives and partners are very welcome to attend. As usual no tickets will be issued. All money will be taken on the door on the night. Therefore it is important that all those who complete the enclosed proforma to say they will attend do actually turn up on the night so that the secretary can give accurate numbers to the caterer. It is also important that no one turns up on the night without first informing the secretary of their intention to do so. If you wish to attend, and the committee hope that as many ONs as possible will do so, please complete the enclosed proforma and return it to the ON Society Secretary at the school as soon as possible but no later than Friday 29 September 2006. The proforma is on page 5 of this email.

4. Friday 23 February 2007: 20.00 onwards; Gathering of ONs at the Coach and Horses, Newport

This was a thoroughly enjoyable occasion. Over 20 ONs turned up at some time during the evening. Two aspects were especially pleasing. One was the fact that a number of ONs were attending this event for the first time and secondly that there were a lot of younger members who attended.


The Football and Hockey matches start at 10.15 and the Cross Country match starts at 11.00. Further details will be given in the December Newsletter. Those ONs who wish to take part please make a note of the date.

6. Saturday 7 July 2007: 11.00 Annual Mixed Hockey Match v the School

As usual Di Reed will organise the ON Team. All those who would like to play please make a note of the date.

7. Saturday 7 July 2007: 14.00 Annual Cricket Match v the School

This match is now a 40 overs per side game in the afternoon and evening with tea between the innings. For those who wish to take part please make a note of the date. Further information about the mixed hockey and cricket matches will be given in the December Newsletter.

Reports and Results

Friday 10 February 2006: Gathering of ONs at the Coach and Horses, Newport

This was a thoroughly enjoyable occasion. Over 20 ONs turned up at some time during the evening. Two aspects were especially pleasing. One was the fact that a number of ONs were attending this event for the first time and secondly that there were a lot of younger members who attended.

Saturday 22 April 2006:

1. Annual Football Match against the School

This was a good game which the School won by four goals to one. The match was not as one sided as the score suggests. The ONs had a number of very good chances to score which they squandered. On the other hand the School took full advantage of all their scoring opportunities. The following players for the ON team:[substitutes]: A.Judd[95-02], R.Hasleton [79-86], B.Hasleton [72-79], J.Wrenmore [66-73], L.Page[69-76], M.Stredwick[70-77], R.King [73-80] Capt, R.Lambert [80-85], D.Eady [88-93], P.Watts[92-99], R.Treadwell [88-95]; P.Treadwell [ 92-99]; N.Treadwell [95-02] G.Harding [69-74]; S.Hussey [87-92]. It is especially pleasing to note that the three Treadwell brothers played and the two Hasleton Brothers played. This must be some sort of record.

2. Annual Cross-Country Match

Rick Reynolds who for many years has organised the Cross Country Match has written the following about this year’s match between the ONs and the School.

It was a lovely morning when 32 runners turned out to race the historic senior cross-country course. It was obvious before the start that the 13 ONs would be no match for the school runners, and not just because there were 19 of them. So it proved with the ONs losing the race 62-182 based on the first 10 from each team scoring. Unlike previous years when an ON wins the race closely followed by one or two more ONs, this year the first ON home came in 7th.

What happened to all those school runners who have beaten the ONs over the last 10 years and are now ONs themselves? Come back, we need you! My long term plan for the ONs to beat the school lies in tatters. It is only once a year and you get to meet all those runners, footballers, and hockey players you had forgotten existed. Alright, lecture over. The stalwart ONs who ran did not worry too much about the result they just enjoyed the morning meeting up with many former school friends. They congratulated the school year
3. Annual Hockey Match against the School

This was a very good game which the School won by 3 goals to 1. Although it was a close and exciting game the school did deserve to win. Di Reed is to be thanked for all her hard work in organising this match. The following played for the ON team [including substitutes]:

R.Hollidge[96-03]; J.Totty[95-02]; A.Cootie[98-05]; J.Johnson[94-01]; T.James[95-02]; M.Wigens[2000-05]; N.Dawson[98-05]; O.Pye[98-05]; A.Mitchell[98-05]; A.Harmer[94-97]; N.Tapper[91-96]; D.Tovey[97-02]; A.Dale[92-97]

Saturday 1 July 2006

4. Annual Mixed Hockey Match

The ONs won this match by 4 goals to 2. This was a very exciting game with some excellent hockey played by both teams. Again Di Reed is to be congratulated on all her hard work in organising the ON Team and making all the arrangements for the match to take place.

The following played for the ONs

C. Atack[96-03]; L. Wilson[96-03]; A. Dale[92-97]; V. Nankiville[93-98]; A.Cootie[98-05]; J.Turner[97-04]; N.Tapper[91-96]; M.Wigens[2000-05]; O.Pye[98-05]; S.Tovey[99-04]; D.Tovey[97-02]; S.Dale[96-01]; A.Harmer[94-97]; J.Griffiths[98-05]

5. Annual Cricket Match

As has happened for the last three years the annual cricket match was played as a limited overs game which again proved to be a great success. The ONs batted first and made 149 for 8 in their allotted forty overs. There was a good opening partnership between Kevin Wood and Gordon Scott and in the last 7 overs Sean Murphy and Graham Hesketh put on 60 runs to ensure the ONs had a good target to bowl at. The school side bowled well and fielded brilliantly taking three outstanding catches. The ONs bowled accurately and the school batsmen apart from Michael Wood [son of Kevin Wood] found it difficult to keep up with the required run rate and got themselves out trying to push the score along. The school were all out for 69.

Michael Wood made an excellent 40 and Miles Dixon very good bowling figures of 4 wickets for 6 runs.

The following played for the ON team:

S.Murphy[Staff] Capt., P.Carr[57-64]; G.Scott[Staff]; K.Dalley[53-60]; T.Dixon[93-2000]; M.Dixon[93-2000]; B.Powell[School]; G.Hesketh[Staff]; K.Wood[74-81]; S.Carter[School]; N.Williamson[2000-05]

As usual John Attesley[45-50] acted as the senior umpire for the whole match. John has recently broken his left arm and everyone was delighted that Peter Carr acted as his chauffeur so that he could come and umpire.

As the School have won three of the five sporting fixtures against the school [Cross Country, Hockey and Football] they win the Burgess Cup for the second year running.

O.N.Society 100 Club

This year [2006] a record 192 tickets have been sold. The committee are most grateful to all members of the 100 Club for their continued magnificent support. The success of the 100-Club is essential if the Society is to thrive and be really effective in supporting the School in a variety of different ways as it most certainly has been able to do over the last 12 years As 192 tickets have been sold it is possible to have three prizes each month this year and a fourth prize in October as happened last year. Over £1000 has been been raised from the proceeds of the 100-Club to support the School and help run the Society. This year the Society has been able to donate £800 [about half the cost] towards the internal refurbishment of the pavilion. A first rate job has been done and the interior of the pavilion is now in excellent condition.

100 Club Winners since the last Newsletter

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<th>No.</th>
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<td>2</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>J.Ransom</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>50</td>
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<td>R.Reynolds</td>
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<td>R.D.Morris</td>
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New Members since the last Newsletter

J.Green; J.Griffiths; J.Griffiths; S.Woor; M.Bailey; P.Melarange[1992-1999]; J.Jameson; R.Walsh both 2004-2006

Deaths

The following deaths have been reported to the secretary since the last newsletter:-

P.J.Davidson [73-80] Peter Davidson died on 14 March 2006 at the age of 44 after a long battle against cancer. Peter was diagnosed with cancer in 2002 but never let his illness get him down. He worked very hard during the last few years of his life to raise money for Cancer Research UK. His ambition was to visit all 92 League Football Grounds acquiring memorabilia from each and then auctioning them off to raise money for Cancer Research.

He managed to visit 51 before he died. Peter came from Bishop’s Stortford but had lived for several years in Somerset.

R.F.Casbolt [38-42] of Colchester: Reg Casbolt regularly attended the Lunches, held in June which used to be arranged at the School for those who found it difficult to get to the Annual Dinner.

Email Addresses

If you have an email address but do not receive the newsletter via email please send your email address to the ON Society Secretary at the School. If you think you have sent in an email address to the Secretary but still the receive the newsletters by post please let the Secretary know. As everyone will realise it is much easier [and cheaper] to send out the newsletters by email so it is a very great help to have email addresses for as many members as possible.
PROFORMA FOR ATTENDING THE ANNUAL DINNER
ON SATURDAY 7 OCTOBER 2006

I will definitely attend the Annual Dinner on Saturday 7 October 2006

Name [Block Capitals]__________________________________________________

Postal Address [Block Capitals]__________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

___________________________________Years at the School_________________

Email Address________________________________________________________

Signed_______________________________________________________________

Name of Wife/Partner [if attending]______________________________________

Please return to the O.N.Society Secretary at the School as soon as possible but
no later than Friday 29 September 2006
Returning this proforma will be taken as a guarantee [emergencies excepted]
that you will attend so that correct numbers can be given to the caterer.
To all members of the Old Newportonian Society

Retirement of Mr. Richard Priestley as Headmaster of Newport Free Grammar School

As reported in the newsletter, Richard Priestley retires officially from his position as Headmaster of the School on August 31 2006. The Old Newportonian Society Committee has unanimously agreed that it will be entirely fitting to present Richard with a retirement gift from the Society at the Annual Dinner on Saturday 7 October 2006.

Since Richard Priestley became Headmaster in January 1991 the School has flourished under his leadership and is now vastly oversubscribed. To the Old Newportonian Society in particular Richard has always been a tower of strength, attending virtually all then Society’s events and most of the committee meetings. His commitment to the Society has been total. Without his tremendous support during the period of his Headship the Society could not have achieved the success it has enjoyed in recent years.

He has actively encouraged school leavers to join the Society and take part in the events it organizes. When the Trustees of the Foundation of Newport Free Grammar School were reconstituted some ten years ago it was Richard Priestley who insisted that a member of the Old Newportonian Society be named officially as one of the Trustees. The Old Newportonian Society Committee are most grateful to Richard for all the help, encouragement and support he has given to the Society in general and the Committee in particular and hope that as many members as possible will feel able to contribute towards a retirement gift for him.

If you wish to make a donation towards a retirement gift please complete the proforma below and return it with your cheque [made payable to the O.N.Society] to the O.N.Society Secretary at the School as soon as possible but no later than Friday 22 September 2006.

Yours sincerely
Kevin Dalley [1953-60]  President 2005/6

I enclose a donation towards a retirement gift for Richard Priestley

Name [Block Capitals]___________________________________________________________

Years at the School_____________________________________________________________

Postal Address [Block Capitals]__________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________