

# OLD ELPHINIANS' NEWSLETTER

## SUMMER 2007

Welcome from your new(ish) Officers!

### Welcome!

As you will read later in the minutes of our last AGM there have been a few changes but hopefully everything will continue to run as smoothly as ever - I certainly have a hard act to follow in Christine.

This was to be a Spring Newsletter but time marched straight past me, although I'm not sure I should call this a Summer Newsletter! I trust the wait will be worth it! If you have any news for subsequent newsletters please send it to me using the contact details below.

I was asked at the last AGM to find an alternative location for our 2007 AGM. I have booked The Bristol Golf Club - Saturday 13th October 2007. It was recommended by another Old Elphinian, and my visit to the Club on a busy December lunch-time with people arriving for their company Christmas lunch certainly showed they will look after us well. I look forward to receiving your booking forms.

You may be interested to know that 51% of members live within 50 miles of DE4 2HA! We will hopefully be able to give you news in October of our 2008 AGM location.

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### Letter from the Chairman

Dear Old Elphinians

Even though there was only a small number of former pupils at our reunion last November, it was lovely that the entire age range was represented. We had splendid accommodation with lots of room to display memorabilia, move around and chat. There was an excellent supply of drinks and biscuits inside and sunshine glinting on the water outside. We all enjoyed a very good lunch in the National Water Sports Centre. My sincere thanks to Christine Tew for organising all aspects of this reunion, and as you will read in the Minutes later this was Christine's "swansong" as secretary.

It was good to be able to thank Christine for all the many years of service she has given to the Old Elphinians and to give her a small token of our appreciation - she not only had a long stint as secretary in the past but she also stepped into the breach to fill the gap more recently.

### A challenge!

And while we're on the subject of members! Are you in touch with old girls who aren't members? Maybe you could persuade them to join the Old Elphinians. How about we all try to recruit one new member?

My contact details are:

Kathryn Dickens  
42 The Downs  
Portishead  
Bristol  
BS20 6DT  
E-mail: kathryn.dickens@btopenworld.com

ST. SWITHINS PARK  
BLACKTOURSE HILL  
ALMONDSBURY  
S. GLOS. BS10 7TP.

1  
off Junction 17 - M6  
close to Crabb's Causeway  
Shopping Mall.

Laura Bennett.  
07765 36348  
laurabennett@doctors.org.uk

Christine has been extremely loyal and hardworking and it has been a pleasure to work with her. We all hope she can enjoy her golf for many years to come and we are so pleased that she remains on the Old Elphinians committee as treasurer.

Both Christine and I have recently seen Peter Pollard in North Yorkshire. Unfortunately he is still not well but he sends his warmest greetings to you all.

A year ago I wrote that our old school buildings were empty and forlorn. It is different now. The old building is surrounded by scaffolding (it will "be restored to its former glory") and many of the newer buildings have been demolished to make way for Raven Audley Court's new St Elphin's Park.

One item of good news is that we have saved the 1994 chapel window. This window was part of the 150<sup>th</sup> celebrations. Generously paid for by the Old Elphinians, it was designed by the year 7 pupils in their art lessons and then made and installed by the York Glaziers Trust. The window was removed just before Easter and is being stored in York at the Glaziers Trust whilst the Rector of Warrington and his architect make plans for its installation in Warrington Parish Church.

A warm welcome to our new secretary, Kathryn Dickens (nee Betterton, living in the south-west of England) and her assistant, Rachel Southward (nee Gregory, living in the north-east of England). We are not sure if the computer age will be sufficient to help them share their roles sensibly but I am grateful for their support and interest which will keep the Old Elphinians going as a viable concern for the future.

I look forward to seeing many of you in Bristol in October and in the meantime I hope you are all enjoying the summer!

With my very best wishes

Judy

## Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> November 2006 at the National Water Sports Centre, Holme Pierrepont, Nottingham.

Before the meeting commenced Christine asked if there were any objections to Judy Crook chairing the meeting in Peter Pollard's absence. As there were no objections Judy joined Christine and Teanie and opened the meeting. Judy then welcomed everyone and remembered those who had died and were not well in a short prayer.

1. **APOLOGIES** were received from Mary Cliffe, Tanya Luke (Seabrook), Liz Rixon (Fleming), Rosemary Cuff, Dorothy Edwards, Olga Putnam (Mort), Stella Allen, Phoebe Milton (Melville White), Mary Goodman, Cheryl Steele (Chalk), Ruth Roseveare, Margaret Fielding, (Cosens), Jo Thornton, Sarah Wickham (Rawling), Judith Aguma, Sallie Gedye (Hitchen), Stephanie Jones, Betty Wareham, Peggy, Denning, Rosemary Chambers, Katrina Codling, Peter Pollard, Patricia Miles, Mavis Hunter, Ann Hodgson, Elizabeth Wass, Tricia Outram, Andy Jackson, Susan Hayward, Catherine Haynes, Pam Simpson, Rachel Southward (Gregory) Hannah Wood.

As the minutes of the meeting held in York on the 19<sup>th</sup> Of November 2005 had been circulated previously they were taken as read. (Proposed by Kathryn Dickens; Seconded by Sheila Allen)

### 2. **MATTERS ARISING**

a) The **Brenda Bower Trust**. Rosemary Chambers had sent a letter stating that it was still not finalised. Ann Entwistle who had requested, at the 2005 AGM to be a representative on the committee had not heard anything over the past year, but would be in contact with Rosemary.

b) The **Stained Glass Window**. Rosemary Chambers was keeping an eye on the situation and had ascertained from the Rector of Warrington

that he would definitely like to have this in Warrington and had earmarked a place for it.

c) The **Service in Warrington**. The service had been a great success and enjoyed by everyone who attended. There are still service sheets available if anyone would like (another) one.

**3. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT.** Judy reported that the plans had been passed for Audley Court to convert St Elphin's into a retirement development, however at the moment the school looked in a very sorry condition because it had been boarded up to prevent vandalism. She brought greetings from many ex members of staff. She also reported that Peter Pollard's health had improved over the past twelve months. He had however tendered his resignation as Chairman of the Old Elphinians. She still had some silver cups to distribute and some "spare" small shields.

Several people had brought memorabilia with them which had been put on display. It was suggested that such items should be listed/labelled so that when they were no longer needed by their owner they could be sent to the archive office in Matlock where the school archives are housed.

**4. SECRETARY'S REPORT.** Christine reiterated the fact that she definitely wished to resign from the post of Secretary. She had thoroughly enjoyed being involved with Old Elphinians over the past fifteen years but felt it was time for someone else to take over and bring some fresh ideas forward.

**5. TREASURER'S REPORT.** Teanie reported that the accounts were still in a healthy position. The total outlay for the service in Warrington was £618.

**6. ELECTION OF OFFICERS.** *Chairman*, Judy Crook (Proposed by Christine Tew; Seconded by Sheila Allen); *Secretary*, Kathryn Dickens and Rachel Gregory (Proposed by Judy Crook, Seconded by Sheila Allen); *Treasurer*, Christine Tew (Proposed by Teanie Dornan, Seconded by Jill Lock).

**7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.** Sheila Allen agreed to try and trace the **Books of Remembrance**, which had disappeared from the School Chapel. She would try and put an advert in the local press and also write to Audley Court.

Judy talked about the **link with the primary school at Warrington**, which had recently incorporated the name St Elphin into its title. It was agreed that it would be a good idea for the Old Elphinians to present one of "our" shields and possibly make an annual award. Judy would liaise with the Headmaster.

**8. NEXT AGM & REUNION** will be held in the south-west of England. Kathryn had already made enquires at the Bristol Golf Club. It was decided that slightly earlier in the Autumn would be a good idea before half term (see page 6 for more details and booking form).

There being no other business the meeting closed at 12.30pm.

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### **The Brenda Bower St Elphin's School Trust**

Ann Entwistle has kept me up-to-date with news on the Trust, the latest being that £500,000 has been secured for the benefit of Church of England schools. Ann reports that the Trustees are waiting for the Charity Commissions approval for the scheme and thanks must be passed to Stuart Chambers for his help in this matter.

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### **News from Old Girls**

**Maggie Gell (nee Hutchinson)** writes that she is now living in Knaresborough, North Yorkshire. She is working as chief reporter for the local newspaper and has one son, David aged 12 years.

**Sheila Allen (Mosley)** is still living at Sydnope Hall and working full time in the family business. She has regular contact with many of the younger Old Elphinians through daughter Nicki.

**Nicki Tarbatt (Allen)** is living in Ashover with daughters Sophie (3) and Georgina (8 months). She has regular contact with many of her St Elphin's friends, many of whom have small children.

**Jill Lock (Lucas)** is still in touch with Viv Hogg (Bouchier) and Katy Nutt (Rains). Viv lives in Surrey and Katy lives in Sussex, Jill lives in Southampton. Viv had heard from Carol Walters earlier in the year and they were hoping to meet up towards the end of last summer, but have not managed it yet.

**Teanie Dornan (Turner)** writes that she is completing her 3rd year of Bed and Breakfasting.

**Kathryn Shipman 1992-1999** writes that she is going to New Zealand in January for 6 months to work as a nurse and to explore!

**Philippa Heathcote 1992-1999** is working as a project manager for a marketing and merchandise company on the Coca-Cola account team. She is still living in Leicestershire with her boyfriend and dog Maisy!

**Jessica Sverdlhoff 1992-1999** is working as a nanny for a family with 3 children in Oxford. She has just bought a house with her boyfriend.

**Ruth Spokes 1994-1999** is currently working at St Mary's Hospital in Paddington in the Postgraduate Centre. She is still living in London sharing a flat with a friend from University.

**Catherine Benoist 1988-1999** is working as a primary school teacher in South Leicestershire and lives in Rugby.

**Hugh and Judith Robinson** are still living and working between Yorkshire and Cambridge. They are in touch with Margaret Fielding (Cozens) et al.

**Ruth Burgess (Doxey)** writes that she is in touch with Sheila Holdridge (nee Simms-Reeves) and they meet at least once a year. Both are now grandparents and are widows. Ruth has also spoken to Betty Beggs (Lavender) who lives in Stafford.

**Ann Entwistle (Lyon) 1947-1951** writes that she has joined the Trustees for The Brenda Bower St Elphin's School Trust as she has

Warrington connections. Ann's grandmother was a pupil when St Elphin's was at Warrington. Her mother and 4 aunts were at St Elphin's Darley Dale around the time of World War I. \*\* more news on page 3 of the newsletter.

**Mollie Harwood (Barsby) 1949-1956** has a grandson, Charlie who is 16 months old. She still meets Jen (Dearnaley) every month.

**Jennifer Marsden (Dearnaley) 1949-1955** is enjoying retirement by taking as many holidays as possible. She keeps fit by taking Tai Chi, Yoga and heart exercises.

**Barbara Brooke Taylor 1933-1939** still lives in Darley Dale, and was sorry her friends Dot Edwards, Phoebe Milton and Olga Molt were not able to be at the Reunion with as they usually use it as an excuse for a weekend away.

**Lydia Boorman (Smart)** writes with news that she lives in Dorset and is married to a shepherd. She home-schools their five children adopted from the Philippines and Cambodia. The girls are aged between 8 and 13 and have several special needs.

Christine Tew kindly passed on letters she had received from **Ruth Roseveare** and **Stella Allen**. Ruth updates us with news of her family and her joy of living in the countryside and by now she will have celebrated her 90th birthday and her sister Mary is fast approaching 92!. Stella passes on the sad news that **Joan Watton (nee Lloyd)** passed away on July 20th 2006 whilst living in a Home for the Elderly at Staveley, near Kendal. Ruth remembers being in the Second Form with Joan.

### **A plea from your secretary!**

A large number of member's e-mail addresses have failed. Please could I asked that every-one with an e-mail address, who is happy to received correspondence via this method, send me an e-mail with their name, to [kathryn.dickens@btopenworld.com](mailto:kathryn.dickens@btopenworld.com) I can then update the records.  
Many thanks.

## **Audley St Elphin's Park, Darley Dale**

Like me, many of you will have been sad to see the St Elphin's school building looking empty and neglected after its dramatic closure in March 2005. As you will know, the site was purchased by Audley in June 2005 and I am pleased to report that after many months of silence, St Elphin's is now a hive of activity again. The architects, engineers, conservationists and safety officers have completed many of their tasks and whilst discussion with planning executives and public consultation continues, work has begun to bring St Elphin's back to life and restore it to its former glory.

My name is Alison Davies and I am the local Community Relations Manager for St Elphin's Park. I have already met quite a few "Old Elphinians" and I look forward to meeting with many more of you over the next few months too and being able to keep you up to date with the activities and progress on site over the coming years.

The prestigious scheme consists of 127 retirement properties and the project involves the restoration of the impressive former school into luxury retirement apartments, as well as a selection of two bedroom cottages and further one and two bedroom apartments within the 14 acre grounds. The architects have cleverly used the layout of the old school buildings to plan and position the new cottages and apartments. The Chapel will become two cottages and the old dormitory (Orchards) will be converted into 4 cottages. The most exciting restoration will be of the main house where the Victorian splendour of the building's days as a Hydro Spa will be revived.

All of the new properties have been sympathetically designed to blend in with the surrounding area and will be full of character, style and painstaking attention to detail. A sophisticated security system will be installed with fire and smoke alarms in every room, CCTV installed across the development and two way call systems in every home. In addition there will be

an experienced team of staff on call 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Audley home owners will benefit from membership of the Audley Club. The facilities will be created in the Main house and will include a bistro restaurant with a delicious menu created from many locally sourced ingredients, a coffee lounge in which to relax and enjoy meeting their friends and a fully stocked licensed bar. The health and well-being centre will provide for those seeking a more active lifestyle and includes a swimming pool, fitness suite, exercise classes and treatment rooms as well as tennis courts, croquet lawn and extensive landscaped grounds.

What is more, for absolute peace of mind, Audley also take care of the external maintenance of the properties and the surrounding grounds. Audley also offer a wide range of optional support services available to cater for every whim or practical requirement - including a laundry service, personal shopping, personal care, domestic cleaning, or maybe even our chef's menu delivery service for that special occasion.

Audley has an excellent reputation for the development of innovative and vibrant retirement communities. It currently operates developments in Tunbridge Wells, Harrogate and South Devon and, as well as St Elphin's Park, it recently acquired a further five new developments across the UK, providing over 520 new homes.

If you would like any information about the beautiful homes and facilities available at St Elphin's Park, please do call our Sales Office at St Elphin's Park on 01629 733337.

If you would like to visit the Sales and Marketing suite to have a further look at our plans, the sales office staff and I would be happy to arrange to meet you there.

With very best wishes

Alison Davies  
Community Relations Manager.