

THE SOCIETY OF OLD BRENTWOODS

Hon. Secretary's Annual Report 2007/2008

On 1 May we found ourselves in the middle of the School's celebrations for the 450th Anniversary of its founding. Various events involving the Old Brentwoods have been featured in the last two issues of the Chronicle. The highlight for me was the Mansion House Dinner held in October, a stunning occasion enjoyed by everyone. A select band of pupils from the School were there to provide music to add to the enjoyment of the evening.

At the Annual General Meeting, Roger Bell retired as President and was succeeded by Tim Faiers. A stalwart of the Rugby Club, his year in office has seen him attend a wide variety of Old Brentwood functions to ensure that this first year of retirement from teaching remains a busy one. David Tee is the President Elect. He is a long standing member of the General Committee, representing School House Old Brentwoods and heading the Editorial Committee. He has been instrumental in changing the format of the Chronicle and encouraging first Godfrey Thomas and then Martin Rowland to become Hon Editor. His many years in publishing have suited him well for this task. As a member of Brentwood District Council he keeps his finger on the pulse of local events.

Much of the General Committee's time has been taken up during the past twelve

months with the future of the Clubhouse and the Society generally. The Hon Treasurer makes the current financial position plain in his report. Chairman Simon Boon, has written within these pages highlighting the lack of income to properly maintain the Clubhouse and grounds and suggesting ways in which the usage of the Clubhouse could be increased in order to boost income and provide the necessary funds.

A separate sub-committee was formed to focus on this particular problem and much time and thought has been spent by experienced members of the Society. The General Committee is committed to finding a solution to ensure that the headquarters of the Society of the Old Brentwoods remains at Ashwells. I refer members to the Hon Treasurer's report and the Chairman's article.

I attended the Football Club's end of season dinner and was disappointed to note that not so many attended as in previous years. More alarming, however, was that the number attending from the First Four XI's were far exceeded by those in the Veterans X1 and other guests and former players. This was particularly surprising since the First X1 finished runners up in both the Arthurian League and the Arthur Dunn Cup. They so nearly achieved "the double".

The Cricket Club was unable to play many games in the Summer of 2007 due to bad weather. This had an effect on bar takings as well as the morale of the Club. However, the Club is confident of a better season and will be running a third XI this year. I wish them every success.

The Rugby Club remains strong with many attending training as well as competing for places in three XV's. I am sure that the Essex Rugby Football Union appreciated the

outstanding facilities at Ashwells when the Old Brentwoods hosted the Essex Under 15 Final last September.

The Theatre Club, run for so many years by Steve Lines, remains ever popular. The trips they run to the West End Theatre always seem to sell out, and very quickly.

I am pleased to report that an Old Brentwoods shooting club is to start.

The Annual Dinner was extremely well attended with many tickets taken up well in advance. This year, the event was marketed by email which was evidentially very effective. I urge all who have email to register your email address with Ian Pitwood, the Hon Registrar, and keep him up to date with any changes. Ian's impact on the running of the membership was immediate during his first year and now, in his third year, we have seen further financial benefit by his diligence in chasing subscriptions. There has been a valuable increase in membership and subscriptions received and the Society is very grateful to him for his efforts.

There was a successful reunion of the 1981- 1983 leavers and the Society is keen to encourage similar events. Perhaps some of you who have left more recently would be interested in using Ashwells for a reunion of your own.? Ian Pitwood would be happy to provide contact details of your peers.

This year marks thirty years of the Old Brentwoods at Ashwells Road. I still have a handsome set of half pint commemorative tankards for our ten year celebrations in 1988. I am not sure if anything so impressive will have been available this year but I hope that as many as possible attended on Sunday, September 7 to take part in the

activities. The day was organised by our chairman Simon Boon to whom I extend special thanks for guiding us through a difficult year with the help of the General Committee.

I would also like to thank Steve Lines and Steve Gorrod for taking the minutes for three meetings this year, two occasioned by my absence for medical emergencies and one occasion when First National Railways let me down.

May 2008

I R WEST

Hon Secretary