



## **A message from our Chairman**

Dear Old Fullarian,

After 12 years on the committee I was very pleased to accept the role of chairman of our institution, which has been in operation for 130 years.

This year has been a busy one. I have chaired two meetings of the OFA Business Club at the RAC in Piccadilly in which we heard from RAF Air Marshall Ed Stringer (WBGS 1975-82) and the Chief Executive of Renault Alpine UK, Nicola Burnside.

I completed my fifth turn as Master of Ceremonies at the 2023 dinner.

I also attended various events in the life of the school, the carol service, prize givings and school plays. Perhaps the greatest honour was to represent the Association at the Remembrance Day service at Watford Town Hall last month, where we remembered particularly Captain Tom Sawyer 29 Commando Regiment Royal Artillery (WBGS) who gave his life in service of the nation.

There is a scene in the film Dr Zhivago, where at the start of the Russian Revolution, the young doctor asks a commissar what he should do. The answer - you must adapt. This is no less true of the Association as it looks to keep pace in these fast changing times. In the next year we look to embrace the whole school community, from all walks of life. We will also be part of a bold new school drama project spearheaded by the generosity of our membership.

I wish you well and look forward to seeing you at the dinner on 13 January 2024.

*Tim Constable*

## **From our Secretary**

We look forward to welcoming OFs and Guests to the 2024 Annual Dinner on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> January. The sporting theme set in the two previous Dinners (Guest Speakers Luther Blissett and Mark Ramprakash) continues with the Watford Football Club legend Steve Palmer providing the keynote speech including a question and answer session. The traditional feel to the evening is retained with contributions from the Headmaster, School sports captains and the OFA Chairman. The MC will keep the event moving and introduce a number of toasts identifying significant groups amongst those attending. The bar will again be provided by Fullerians RFC continuing the excellent service seen in 2021 and 2022.

Whilst the evening retains its traditional feel there has been an effort to streamline proceedings to allow more time for those attending to spend time with each other and renew acquaintances from across the years.

*Mike England*

## **From our Treasurer.**

I am privileged to have been Chairman of the OFA and, having handed over the baton to Tim Constable in March 2023, I can now reflect on my 3 years in the Chair (a feat never done before)!

During my tenure from 2020 to 2023 which, of course, spanned the Covid pandemic, we cannot forget the role that the virus played in all our lives (and still does) and the ways in which we all adapted to a different kind of society. The OFA was no different and, with the way in which electronic forms of communication came to the fore and changed all our worlds, I am proud of the way the OFA responded to the challenge. This tenacity and use of IT enabled us to carry on conducting our meetings via Zoom and Teams and this has now become a regular way for us to hold our meetings; consequently, we have expanded the attendance and so have an even greater pool of experience and knowledge that we can draw upon.

The Annual Dinners in 2022 and 2023 with Guest Speakers Luther Blissett DL OBE and Mark Ramprakash MBE were particular highlights for me together with having the honour of laying the wreaths to remember fallen Old Boys of the School at the Remembrance Services at Watford Town Hall in 2021 and 2022.

As Treasurer of the Association, I am also delighted in the ways in which we continue to give back to the School - and not only financially but also volunteering our time to establish and nurture initiatives which have now become part of the School's annual calendar - the Careers Day and Dragons' Den to name but two. The OFA's finances remain very healthy and our aim remains to provide the School with every assistance whenever possible. In fact we have agreed a donation of £5000 to help fund the improvements to the James Theatre.

An organisation is only as good as the people running it and the OFA is no different. The current Committee are a dedicated and passionate group of volunteers and the key to its continued success is.....succession. Every organisation must keep one eye firmly on the present but the other must be on the future to ensure continued support to the wonderful School that provided us all with so much.

*Michael Groves*

## **From our Vice Chairman**

It's been a busy period in the Membership and Social Media team as we promote the numerous OFA events and seek to expand our membership amongst the new generation of Old Boys. Their membership and engagement is crucial to ensuring the success of the Association for decades to come.

With active and growing communities across both LinkedIn and Facebook, our aim is to boost the conversion rate of these communities into fully-fledged OFA members. With membership fees being used to support the School, in a climate when education budgets are continuously being cut, we hope that potential members will see joining as a small way that they can give something back, whilst also benefiting from the range of social event and networking opportunities offered by OFA membership. .

If you know of any Old Boys who would like to join please direct them to the OFA website or reach out to me directly.

In other news, in early 2023 I was delighted to accept the proposal to become Vice Chairman of the Association with a view to taking over the helm in the coming years and continue the excellent work that Tim Constable is currently doing. I'm thankful and excited to take on this role and am already crafting some ideas of how I can help to foster and grow the Association during my time as Chairman.

I wish you and your loved ones a wonderful Christmas and 2024 and I look forward to seeing you at the Annual Dinner on the 13th January.

*Rob Hiscocks*

### **From our Registrar and Webmaster**

It is almost eight years since the last edition of Contact was issued. In that period, we have been notified of the death of 57 members, nine of whom were past Chairmen. This may seem high but the average age of our members is 63.

We had 91 new members in this period. Of these only 22 are still up-to-date with their subscriptions. Three have resigned, 39 were struck off for non-payment of subscriptions and a further 25 are in arrears and liable to be struck off. Apart from our 67 life members, a total of 41 members overall have not paid in 2023.

For 2023, our annual subscription was increased from £15 to £25. Of the 299 subscription payers, only 61 had updated their payments while 37 had made top-up payments leaving 201 with arrears of £10.

As you know, almost all of the subscription goes to assist the School so if you are one of the 201 (or the 41), we should be grateful if you would make the necessary payment and increase your payment for 2024 and beyond.

This Edition of Contact was sent out as a single page email. In addition it will be available for download from the website in conventional multi page pdf format.

*Peter Holden*

## Golf Society

Another terrific year of OFGS events superbly captained by **Steve Shannon**. The OFGS now runs six events throughout the golfing calendar as listed below.

5 <sup>th</sup> May - <b>Past Captains Evening</b>	Aldenham GC
25 <sup>th</sup> May - <b>Spring Meeting</b>	Moor Park GC
15 <sup>th</sup> June - <b>Quadrangular Cup</b>	Moor Par+k GC
30 <sup>th</sup> June - <b>Centurion Cup</b>	Centurion GC
14 <sup>th</sup> July - <b>P.Ausden Cup</b>	West Herts GC
8 <sup>th</sup> September - <b>Autumn Meeting</b>	West Herts GC



Moor Park is always a favourite of the Society and did not disappoint this year with over 40 golfers taking place on a hot and sunny May day with Moor Park absolutely resplendent in all its wonderful mansion charm and hospitality.

The Quadrangular Cup again Habs – Merchant Taylors - Aldenham, is always guaranteed to get the '*old enemy*' juices flowing and once again we returned to the delights of Moor Park to do battle but sadly Aldenham won this time.

The Autumn Meeting at WHGC was again participated in with over 40 golfers with the following Champions winning out:

- Tony Price winning the Lister Cup
- Zander Wade – top points golfer for the two meetings – President's Cup
- Captain Shannon – Veteran's Cup
- Dave Price Team Cup – Team Harper



At the end of the season this years Captain Steve Shannon handed the captaincy across to Dave 'Rod' Rogers for 2024

Next year we have another fun packed season of fixtures so please get along and join us!

### Old Fullerians' Golfing Society Fixtures for 2024

10 <sup>th</sup> May - Past Captains Evening	Aldenham GC
23 <sup>rd</sup> May - Spring Meeting	Brickendon GC
21 <sup>st</sup> June - Quadrangular Cup	Hammonds End GC
5 <sup>th</sup> July - Centurion Cup	Centurion GC
10 <sup>th</sup> July - P.Ausden Cup	West Herts GC
13 <sup>th</sup> September - Autumn Meeting	West Herts GC

Russell Deane



## The OFA Business Club.

The OFA has now run two very successful and well attended BC dinners at the RAC on Pall Mall with 25 and 22 attendees respectively on the July and Nov dates.

The format has been based around guest speakers (Edward Stringer RAF in July and Nicola Burnside Alpine Cars in November) who as senior leaders spoke about their industry sectors and their areas of interest, and provoked thought and debate.

Planning has started for 2024, taking into consideration feedback from attendees.

Key areas for discussion ahead of final plans for future BC dinners are;

- Venues: eg Lords, OFA business boardrooms or PDRs at interesting venues.
- Format: Retain current format or broaden across drinks / cocktail receptions, base 'networking' at an event eg track day or theatre or art galleries etc.
- Speakers: Begin planning with committee input and thoughts.

*Jim Chaudry*



## **The Old Fullerian Masonic Lodge No. 4698.**

In April 2024, Father David Stevenson, will be installed as our Worshipful Master. David, although not an Old Fullerian, is resident at St James Church, Bushey, the resting place of our Foundress, Dame Elizabeth Fuller. He has identified that her memorial needs some TLC. The Lodge has committed to funding the renovation and David has undertaken to perform a rededication service in 2025, to coincide with centenary celebrations of the Lodge.

This will be a Masonic occasion, but all Old Boys will be welcome.

Our activities in 2024, will include the ceremonies of Passing & Raising of new Brethren, initiated in 2023. These meetings will be held in April, October and November, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of the month.

Our meetings are held at the Halsey Masonic Hall, opposite the Town Hall and start at 18.00 hrs, followed by a formal meal. We aim to be away by 21.30 hrs.

Below is a picture after of our last regular meeting when four (4) candidates were initiated at once....a very rare occurrence at which 41 Masons enjoyed Old Fullerian hospitality.

Finally, it is with great pride that the Lodge can boast that a former pupil Adrian Ross Thomas Marsh, initiated into our Lodge, is the current Grand Secretary, the most influential Freemason in England after HRH The Duke of Kent The Grand Master.

Please contact me if you want to know more ...mpatti2401@aol.com

*Mark Pattinson*

Past Master, Old Fullerian Lodge.

Past Provincial Grand Senior Deacon, Provincial Grand Steward.

