

Old Full^{erian} CONTACT

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From our Chairman

Greetings Old Full^{erians}!

I hope that everyone is well and that 2025 is proving to be a good year for you and your loved ones. Now, a little over six months into my Chairmanship, I'm glad to report that the Association is going from strength to strength with a growing membership amongst recent leavers, and well-attended OFA events running throughout the year.

Preparations are well underway for our flagship event the Annual Dinner which will take place in the School Hall on Saturday 17th January 2026. I'm looking forward to seeing many of you in attendance. If you haven't attended before, you should find it a wonderful event and I hope 2026 will be your first of many visits. Tickets can be reserved via an email to:
annualdinner@oldfullerians.org.uk.

During 2025 I've already been lucky enough to represent the OFA at several events, including the Dragons Den, the Sixth Form Careers Day, the OFA Spring Business Club Dinner and the Full^{erians} Rugby Club lunch. The prior two events are ways in which the OFA gives back to the School and to current students via time, advice and mentoring. The latter have been wonderful events which reflect the Association's commitment to fostering OF networking and championing our affiliated clubs. I'll also be attending the OFA Autumn Business Club Dinner on Monday 24th November and there are a couple of tickets left. Grab yours now via an email to:
businessclub@oldfullerians.org.uk.



Over the course of this year, the Association has also made several financial donations to the School. These include a contribution towards the Cricket & Hockey tour as well as a more recent contribution towards the portrait of past Headmaster Martin Post. In keeping with tradition, this portrait can now be seen in the School Hall.

As has and always will be the case, all monies received from OFA membership fees and any fundraising during OFA events are used to support the School in a period when central education budgets are regularly being cut. A huge thanks for your continued membership which is the key enabler for the OFA to support the School with such initiatives.

Finally, a key objective of mine whilst in the chair is to grow awareness, engagement, and membership from a younger demographic of Old Full^{erians}. I'm glad to report that our membership on social media is growing rapidly, and via these channels we've had several of this younger demographic join our events throughout the year, and who plan to join us for the upcoming Annual Dinner. This gives me confidence that the Association is in a good place now and for future years to come.

With Best Wishes,
Rob Hiscocks
Chairman of the OFA

From our Treasurer

The OFA's overriding focus has always been to work closely with the School and to provide it with financial assistance wherever possible.

Since my report in last year's Contact, I am delighted to let you know that this mantra continues unwaveringly and this year has, I believe, surpassed all years to date.

Thanks to the level of carefully managed subscriptions that you pay as Members of the Association (£4,689 in 2025 year to date), the OFA is able to direct these overall funds towards many different and worthy of causes at the School. Assisted by the profits made from the Annual Dinner in January 2025 (almost £3,300), the OFA has made donations so far in 2025 of £7,840 being as follows:

January - £1,500 – The School (wine glasses x 432 for social events held at the School including the Annual Dinners);

January - £3,500 – The School (subsidising the costs of the Cricket and Hockey Tours to India in 2025);

April - £700 – The Old Fullerians' Golf Society (OFGS logo merchandise to celebrate the Society's 60th Anniversary);

October - £2,140 – The School (Dragons' Den – £1,000 to each of the two winning initiatives plus £20 Amazon vouchers to each of the seven winners).



As well as being your Treasurer, I am also one of the Committee's liaison officers for the Annual Dinner. For the forthcoming Dinner, which is to be held in the School Hall on Saturday 17th January 2026, I am delighted to have secured another fascinating Guest Speaker to follow on, {if he can!}, from the fascinating actor David Westhead whose speech and performance in January this year was simply quite remarkable to say the least. I am therefore equally delighted to say that the list of "names" for the Dinner now continues in 2026 with another former pupil of the School Dr Jana Denzel (2001-2008) who has since founded his own leading Harley Street cosmetic dentistry business with clients ranging from Hollywood "A-listers" to Grammy Award-winning musicians. He was also a candidate in the BBC's most recent series of "The Apprentice". Jana has agreed to take part in the now customary Q&A session following his speech so start thinking of your questions to ask Jana on the night.

I very much look forward to welcoming Jana back to the School for the Annual Dinner on Saturday 17th January and I hope to see as many of you there as possible too.

With my best wishes
Michael Groves.

Secretary's Notes

In this, as in previous years, regular Committee meetings have been held virtually using "Zoom". The December meeting is fast approaching and, once again, we look forward to welcoming the Headmaster to a social gathering in a local restaurant and hearing about developments at the School.



The next Business Club Dinner on Monday 24th November returns to the prestigious Ten Trinity Square exclusive London Private Members Club. All preparations have been completed and thanks are owed to Jim Chaudry and Rob Hiscocks for organising this.

For the Annual Dinner (Saturday 17th January in the School Hall) preparations are gathering pace with ticket money starting to roll in.

We would welcome new members to the Committee, please contact me if you can offer some of your time to support the School via the Committee's initiatives.

I look forward to seeing many of you in January.

With best wishes,
Mike England
(secretary@oldfullerians.org.uk)

Old Fullerian Business Club

On Wednesday the 14th May 2025, 20 Old Fullarians assembled at the Ten Trinity Square Club in the City of London for the fifth OFA Business Club Dinner. The OFA Business Club was formed in response to a growing interest amongst the WBGS Old Fullerian community to connect with former classmates and those from other years at WBGS.

The previous four dinners all took place at the Royal Automobile Club (RAC), Pall Mall and featured the guest speakers listed below.

1. Edward Stringer – OF and recently retired Air Marshall
2. Nicola Burnside – CEO of Alpine Cars, part of the Renault Group
3. Matt Bird – Founder and CEO of disruptive publishing company, PublishU
4. Rob Lynch - Director of Cricket & Operations at MCC

May '25 was our first time running the event at the Ten Trinity Square Club and it did not disappoint. Set in a fabulous private dining room with excellent fine dining food and wine, we were treated to an after dinner speech by Huw Davies, Deputy Managing Director of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Huw gave a fabulous, frank and honest talk on his career journey from professional Cellist to entering the business side of the industry. The conversation flowed, new relationships and networks were created, and a wonderful evening was had by all.

We have just returned to the Ten Trinity Square Club on Monday 24th November for the sixth Business Club Dinner. This time our guest speaker was John Shepherd a Telecoms & Cyber security expert.



He has worked in the mobile telecoms industry since 1989 and runs two successful businesses helping people in the sports and entertainment industries with their telecoms needs. His businesses also provide services to ordinary people who want a secure mobile contract, which keeps the press and investigation agencies at arm's length.

John was targeted by The Times newspaper in July 2020, which accused him of unlawful behaviour. This led to a two-year police investigation that did not conclude until January 2023, when he and his business were cleared of all wrongdoing.

A review of this event will be included in the next newsletter and in the website.

Best wishes,
Graham Chaudry

The Old Fullarian Golf Society

The 2025 season proved to be another enjoyable and successful year for The Old Fullarians Golf Society. Our Spring Meeting, held at Verulam Golf Club, saw some fine golf played in excellent conditions, with Dave Rogers emerging as the worthy winner.

Later in the year, the Autumn Meeting brought more competitive golf, where Russ Deane claimed victory and also took home the President's Cup, rounding off a strong season for him.

Our match performances were equally impressive, with victories in both fixtures — the Quadrangular Match at Porters Park and the annual match against the School at West Herts — demonstrating the Society's depth of talent and fine spirit.

A big thank you goes to Paul Hanson for his dedicated captaincy over recent seasons, and we extend a warm welcome to Ashley Wade, who takes on the role for the year ahead.



Looking forward, the 2026 season promises another great year of golf and camaraderie, with the Spring Meeting scheduled at Whipsnade Golf Club, and the Society hosting the Quadrangular Match at West Herts. Here's to another successful year of golf with the Old Fullarians!

Bradley Ausden

From the Registrar

I am pleased to report that so far this year, ten new members have joined the Association, all via the website. Unfortunately there ends the good news. Only one of these ten has set up subscription payments. To summarise, out of 64 members joining in the last six years, only 11 are now paying. The remaining 53 either did not set up regular payments or only paid an initial subscription so we are short by £1125 per year. It's fortunate that we don't have postage costs for their communications.



The other problem that we have is that 95 members have not increased their subscriptions from £15 to £25, giving us a shortfall here of £950 per year. Members who are in arrears have been emailed with some effect and those still in arrears will be contacted again.

So a plea to the aforementioned members. Please get your subscriptions up to date so that we can continue with the good work of supporting the School in recognition of the good start which it gave to us and continues to give to its current pupils. To those who are up to date, many thanks!!

Peter Holden

Headmaster's Update for Old Fullerians October 2025

Dear Old Fullerians,

As autumn arrives and another academic year gains momentum, Watford Grammar School for Boys continues to thrive as a place of learning, discovery and community spirit. I am pleased to share with you some of the highlights and successes from the first half of this term.

It has been a pleasure to welcome our new Year 7 students, whose enthusiasm and confidence have already made a strong impression, as well as those joining the Sixth Form from other schools. Their energy and curiosity are a reminder of the enduring values that connect today's boys with generations of Old Fullerians before them.

Several new members of staff have joined us this term, including our new Librarian, Ms Volpe, who has quickly established the Library as a lively centre of reading, reflection and discussion. Her creative displays and student initiatives have transformed it into one of the most popular spaces in school.

The annual Clubs and Societies Fair was another early highlight, celebrating the extraordinary range of activities that enrich school life, from Chess and Debating to the newly formed Bridge Club. The event is coordinated by our Head Boy Team and is similar to the events hosted at a University Freshers Fair. It was a pleasure to see the STEM Centre filled with students eager to explore new opportunities.

In the Sixth Form, forty new House Captains have taken up their leadership roles, supporting younger students and helping to coordinate charity fundraising. The Head Boy team has announced the charities for 2025–26: Rennie Grove Peace Hospice, the Movember Foundation and the Atorkor Development Foundation in Ghana. Last year's team raised over £12,000, and the same level of commitment is already evident among this year's group.

Academic and co-curricular achievements continue to make us proud. In Classics, Henry F (11R) was named overall winner of the WBGs/WGGs Summer Essay Competition for his thoughtful essay on colonialism and decolonisation. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award programme remains one of the strongest in the region, with our students completing more than 6,500 hours of volunteering last year, a remarkable 40 per cent increase on the previous total.



Geography students have been learning beyond the classroom, with Year 13 completing valuable fieldwork in Somerset, while our Modern Foreign Languages Department led another vibrant Languages Week filled with creativity, cultural awareness and enthusiasm for global communication.

Design & Technology students have also impressed this term: Year 8 pupils produced imaginative clock designs that demonstrate both craftsmanship and innovation, and Year 12 Product Design students enjoyed a stimulating visit to the Design Museum, where they explored professional approaches to creativity and design thinking.

Beyond the classroom, the Hiking Club has made the most of the autumn sunshine in the Chilterns.

The Friends of Watford Grammar School for Boys continue to be a cornerstone of school life. Under the leadership of new Co-Chairs, Mr Kwasi Affum and Ms Amanda Foster, and Vice Chair, Ms Mara Ashton, the Friends have renewed their mission to strengthen the parent community and fund vital projects. Their recent fundraising contribution of £20,000 to the School's new long jump facility are examples of their extraordinary support.

Our annual Open Morning for prospective Year 7 students and their families was exceptionally well attended and proved a great success. Our school continues to be a school very much in demand, a reputation sustained by the dedication of our staff, the enthusiasm of our students, the support of parents, and of course, the enduring strength of the Fullerian community.

As the year unfolds, I hope this update gives you a sense of the vibrancy and purpose that continue to characterise our school. I am deeply grateful for the enduring support of our alumni, whose connection with WBGs remains such an important part of its story.

Ian Cooksey



Old **Fullerians'** **Association** Annual Dinner

Book Your Place for an Unforgettable Evening Saturday 17th January

Book your ticket now for this true highlight of the Old Fullerian calendar. The Annual Dinner is a celebration of Watford Grammar School for Boys' alumni, held in the historic School Hall.

It's a wonderful opportunity to reconnect with fellow alumni, enjoy superb food, and share conversation in the company of this year's guest speaker, Dr Jana Denzel (WBGS 2001–2008), founder of a leading Harley Street dental practice and a recent contestant on BBC's The Apprentice.



Our flagship event promises an evening of fine dining, camaraderie and celebration. All Old Fullerians, partners and guests are warmly invited to join us for this memorable night honouring friendship, achievement and the enduring Fullerian spirit.

Enjoy a five-course silver service dinner, expertly served in the grandeur of the School Hall. If you'd like to be seated with particular friends, simply mention this when booking.

Tickets: £60 per person (including dinner).

Please book early to avoid disappointment — places are limited.

To reserve your place, email annualdinner@oldfullerians.org.uk.

Dress code: Black tie (lounge suits or OFA blazers also welcome)

Bar: Operated by Fullerians RFC

Evening Highlights

6.15–6.45pm – Arrival and pre-dinner drinks

7.00pm – Five-course silver service dinner

9.15pm – Appreciations from the Headmaster and OFA Chairman

9.45pm – Guest speaker: Dr Jana Denzel

10.15pm–Midnight – Drinks and conversation

Don't miss this special evening celebrating the past, present and future of Watford Grammar School for Boys.

**Rob Hiscocks (WBGS 1999-2006)
Chairman, Old Fullerians Association**

SOUBRIQUETS and MEMORIES of WATFORD BOYS GRAMMAR SCHOOL

I really enjoyed reading the two epistles

- 1) "90 years reflections"
by Laurie Cox and
- 2) "Memories of Watford Boys Grammar School"
by Puss Bolton.

I spent the war years at Watford Fields School with some of my friends who lived at Carpenders Park, we were "bussed" in (Premier Coaches) each day.



At Watford Fields I was in a class of 51 pupils and in both the football and cricket teams with Clive Southgate and Johnny Hancock who both lived in Watford. So, when I passed my 11 plus, with ten other boys from Watford Fields School, including Johnny Shenkman, Barry Seagrove, Johnny Yates, Alan Rose, and Ted Shelley, it was a bit of a shock to be amongst all these bigger lads. That was in 1948 and I was in 'Rocket' Stevenson's class 3CI, for my first year. I soon realised that life was going to be very competitive, and I took to that adage very well.

At WBGS we students were really lucky to have the opportunity of attending a place of learning where excellence in all things was pre-eminent.

The masters were top grade, facilities in terms of our general education and sporting aspirations were second to none. There was a Code of Practice which sought to provide excellence for all concerned.

All Masters wore gowns and each morning we had 'Assembly' in the main school hall for all pupils. The Headmaster and Masters all congregated on the Main Platform.

The Prefects (I was to become one in the 6th form), all marched in to the Hall, and we then sang a couple of hymns and were read a short sermon by a Prefect, before the Head dismissed us having mentioned some recent sporting achievement and any other important messages.

Before I wind up my rendition of the truly great school that we were all privileged to attend, I've listed most of the Masters I remember and given their nicknames and subjects taught. (See APPENDIX).

I joined the Old Fullerians Association in 1955, having completed all my Science A levels etc and like Graham Bolton got a job, with Harry Ree's help at the Building Research Station in Garston as an Assistant Experimental Officer (at £32/month an excellent wage), especially as at the work prior to joining I was getting £5 for 60 hours a week on Mr Absolom's farm. I retired from BRE in November 1996, aged 60 having worked there, man and boy for 41 years, and blow me to be rewarded with an OBE for my contribution to studies enabling the utilisation of Waste Materials 'so called' as blastfurnace slag, pulverised flue ash silica fume, china clay and metakaolin as cementitious components or as aggregates in concrete.

Thanks to attending a school of excellence: Watford Boys Grammar School! I've maintained my association with the school through my links with the Old Fullerians' Association. I was honoured to be Chairman of the OFA in the year 2000 and was made a Vice President. I enjoyed many years of sport with the OFA playing Cricket, Rugby and Golf with this special group of people. Of course, one of the main events of their year is the Annual Dinner, held at the School each January and I have attended most of them since leaving Watford Boys Grammar School in 1955, still maintaining contact with school friends for most of my life.

Cheers Geoff Osborne OBE, FRSC CCHEM
History/English

APPENDIX

ACADEMIA

Harry Ree	Headmaster
Percy Bolton	Headmaster
"DREAMY" Merrit	Deputy Head & Mathematics
"ROCKET" Stevenson	Form Master 3CI & English
"WACK" Corbridge	Form Master Science
"TOOTHY" Thomas	Latin & Scripture
"GEGG" Greenwell	History & Cricket
"DICKY" Drey	4A Form Master French
"DADDY" Macrossen	
"WILLEY" Wiles	Biology
"INKY" Knight	Chemistry
"CR" Thomas	French (Toothy's younger brother)
"TOMMY" Thompson	History (Rugby)
"SHINER" Opensoaw	"OPPY" History (Cricket)
"FANNY" Lister	English (Rugby)
"CAPTAIN" Mays	PT & Swimming
"FARMER" Spicer	English & Cricket
"SALTY" Sellars	Cross Country & Cricket
"SNOZ" Quantrell	Athletics & Physics
"TAFFY" Hughes	Physics
"JB" Rigg	Form Master (6th)
"BEEFY" Budden	Mathematics
'JESSIE' James	Chemistry & Drama
Mr Jones "JONER"	General Secretary

SPORTS COACHES

Mr Juba	Swimming & Diving
Mr Tarbox	Cricket
Miss Deguise & Mr Sugars	Music