

BFES/SCEA Association Email Bulletin

April 2022



From: Membership Secretary
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First thoughts:

We do hope that you have enjoyed the lovely Easter sunshine this weekend, and managed to see family and friends. It has been a lovely promise of spring and summer to come in our part of the world, so we hope you have had the same.

Also, the Winchester curry lunch has happened at last! Members attending spoke of how great it was to get together, and there was much chatter and laughter along with a lovely meal...we are all looking forward to the next event, so do read on for more details....



The 2022 Annual Reunion Lunch at:

The Abbey Hotel, Worcestershire: September 9th 2022

We are very pleased to be able to mark the resumption of our main social activity, the Annual Reunion lunch and AGM, at the attractive venue of The Abbey Hotel, Malvern, Worcestershire on Friday 9th September 2022 between the hours of 11.00am and 4.00pm.



The hotel is situated in the very heart of the town immediately adjacent to the Priory Church, and across the road from the Festival Theatre buildings. It sits at the foot of the Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty with the many attractive walks which so inspired its most famous resident, and Britain's most popular composer, Sir Edward Elgar.

Nearby are the Morgan Factory Works, the makers of the hand-made quintessentially British Sports Car. Tours are available around the works, but a visit to the showroom area itself can be worthwhile. The Elgar Birthplace Museum is a short drive away, and the Cathedral City of Worcester is just 7 miles distant. For the more agile of our members, the walk to the top of The Worcestershire Beacon will take about an hour of fairly strenuous walking, but a 20 minute hike to the top of the Herefordshire Beacon (known to all as 'The British Camp') is more gentle and will provide the same panoramic view over the Welsh Hills to the West and the Cotswolds Range to the East.

Malvern's other main draw is as the site of the Three Counties Showground (2 miles away). I am led to believe that on the same day as our reunion, the Showground will host the annual 'Busfest' where Volkswagon Dormobile owners from around the world congregate each year in great numbers.

Malvern is well situated for members to attend, just a 15 minute drive from Junction 7 of the M5. But why not make it a more extensive visit with a stay of 2 or 3 days? There is a nearby train station. Besides the Abbey Hotel, there is a good supply of Hotels in the area, ranging from Premier Inn to The Malvern Spa, the Bank House Hotel (a former home of the novelist Alistair Maclean) and the Cottage in the Woods (often used as a retreat by Margaret and Denis Thatcher

We are really hoping for a large attendance of members, both new and old. Throughout the pandemic, we have managed to increase our membership significantly, a sign of the enjoyment and fellowship that came from sharing the experience of working in Service Schools across the world. The annual reunion dinner is our chance to meet up once again, with old colleagues, and develop new friendships all linked by our common and very special bond.

We have, sadly, to face the fact that prices have not remained stable during the last two years, but you will be pleased to know the cost of the meal this year has been fixed at just £35 per head, you can, as always, be assured of good food and a resumption of wonderful memories. There will be coffee and biscuits on arrival, followed by a short Annual General Meeting. The three course meal will be supported by a very good choice of options. The Hotel has good parking facilities.

Please complete and return the Booking form that accompanies this Bulletin, together with a payment of £35 per person to Bill Bowen by 30th June to reserve your place at this exciting venue.

ORDER OF CEREMONIES:

10.30am Arrival and Welcome coffee and biscuit

11.30am Annual General Meeting

12.00 Noon 3 Course Meal

2.00 Coffee, Tea and Mints

The Shaw Suite and Hotel Lounge bars will be available for guests' leisure until the early evening.



Should members wish to book accommodation at the hotel, a limited number of rooms are available at the following discounted rates for the night of 9th September;

Standard Single Room £80.00

Standard Double Room £125.00

Superior Double Room £135

Elgar King Room £145

Executive Double Room £165 Club

Family Room £175

Rooms can only be booked on an individual basis direct with the Abbey Hotel; please quote 'Group Reference 090922BFES' when making a reservation.

Enquires about this event should be directed to Bill Bowen – see the application form for Bill's contact details.

Hub Locations and Activities: Volunteers wanted!



Starting small!

We are hoping to have the reality of ‘Hub’ get-togethers start this May, but we still need Hub leaders for many of the locations across the country. So, we are looking for friendly volunteers to step forward and set up a meeting in their area. As an example, here is the start of the Hub in the Canterbury area, when we (Christine and Hugh) met with Teresa Reynolds for morning coffee and chat. It was just good to get together and to learn more about someone now living in our own location with similar experiences.

So, no need to start big! Do step forward to meet other members in your area. We really need your help to get this idea going in every area. There is guidance for Hub Leaders to get you started, and as we know, all our members are friendly and enjoy meeting up with others. So, everything to gain and nothing to lose.



This month’s Quiz: *Answers next month.*

Many MOD schools were named after saints; how many can you get from these clues?

1. One of the apostles, this saint is the patron saint of fishermen. Three schools carry his name, in Hong Kong, Malta and JHQ.
2. This female saint is often depicted holding a sword and is the patron saint of miners and artillerymen. (Wulfen, Germany)
3. The patron saint of travellers, schools in Gibraltar and JHQ used this name.
4. Said to be born on a cliff top in a storm, with a royal heritage, this saint’s name was used for an infant school in Malta. His feast day is 1st March.
5. The bells of this church in the old nursery rhyme sang out Oranges and Lemons. The saint’s name was used for a school in Wickrath.
6. This patron saint gave his name to schools in Hong Kong, Norway and JHQ: his flag is often found fluttering from houses and cars, especially during football season.
7. This saint is an archangel, leader of all the angels and also serves as the patron saint of the sick and those who work in dangerous conditions, such as military personnel. He is generally pictured holding a sword. A school in Cyprus bears his name.
8. Often shown dressed in green, and reputedly good at banishing snakes, a school in JHQ near Mönchegladbach used this saint’s name.
9. Used for the name of the church in Rome and also a school in Lubbecke, Germany, this saint was an apostle and leader of the early Christian church and holds the keys to heaven.
10. A son of Zebedee and Salome, this saint, along with his brother James, was one of the first disciples. Two schools carry his name, in Cyprus and Singapore.



Spotlight on Members:



Jan Handley, Paphos, Cyprus

Here are two photographs from Jan Handley, who now lives in Paphos, Cyprus. Jan is proudly collecting a posthumous Paphos “Heart of Gold Award” on behalf of her husband Tom K Handley in 2015. Tom, who was an ex-SCE teacher (linguist) who taught in Singapore and Hong Kong, was given this award for Services to the Community because of the support he gave to the Cancer Support Group in Paphos. The second photograph shows Jan donating a Patient Controlled Analgesic Machine to the Paphos Oncology Homecare Head Nurse S/N Rachel Grainger-Christou for use by the Paphos Cancer Patients. The machine was purchased from the ‘In Memory’ donations received from friends and family, which include quite a few ex-SCEA teachers and colleagues. Such a fitting tribute to a man who showed such care for others, and a well-remembered and proud moment for Jan.



Jan herself was a teacher of Business Studies and Economics in Hong Kong and then became a peripatetic teacher at St John’s School in Episkopi, Cyprus. She also worked in Germany – like so many of us, well-travelled and an important member of the association and her local community.



Thank You.

A big thank you to those of you who responded to the appeals in last month’s bulletin for details about the two “lost” items. Tom now has more information about the book he was seeking (“A History of Military Personnel’s Children’s Education 1646-1971” written by Joyce Fields) and Malcolm has more information about ‘missing’ schools that will keep him busy and to add to the website.

If you have any queries, information or items for the ‘Spotlight on Members’ we would love to hear from you.

It would be interesting to hear from **former pupils** about their memories of life in service schools. Just a short paragraph or two would be sufficient. The Journal however, always welcomes longer articles, so if you feel like writing at length, please do contact Tom. So, get writing! We know that all of you have interesting stories and snippets of facts to tell, and members love reading what you have to say.

And so, goodbye:

Easter blessing to you all. We hope that you remain fit and healthy and the sun shines where you are.

Best wishes

Hugh and Christine Ritchie
Membership Secretaries