

Christ's Hospital Old Blues Association: Scottish Section

The Caledonian Society of Blues

Annual Founder's Day Lunch Perth 30 October 2010

Secretary's Report

The Society gathered on the day before the clocks went back at its usual haunt in Perth. Uniquely for that week, the sun shone and arboreal colours glowed (*Now westlin winds ... Bring autumn's pleasant weather*). We welcomed the **Head Master, John Franklin**, and his wife Kim and also **Margaret Wadman**, CHOBA Administrator. Sadly our chairman, **John Cugley (PeA 64-73)**, was having yet more joints rebuilt, but his place was taken by a former chair, **Major Graham Anderson (MdB 43-50)**, with his wife Jane. At the last minute we learnt that another senior member of the section, **Noel de Jongh (ThA 40-49)**, had been badly let down (not quite literally) by French airways and was still battling the waves towards Dover. It was fortuitous that just after his wife Catriona had rung with their apologies, the secretary received another call from the northernmost parts of Sutherland: **John Rowlands (MaB/CoIA 66-73)** and his wife Bridget wondered if there might be a couple of spare places at table. They had only recently moved to Scotland from the Lakes and we welcomed them with traditional Housey hospitality.

As the guests assembled, the committee held its annual moot, approving the treasurer's accounts, courtesy of **Ian Torkington (Staff 72-07)**, the service provided by the Queen's Hotel, and the arrangements for the year 2011 – same time, same place but different date. Conspicuous by their absence were the undergraduates of St Andrews University, who were suffering a communal work crisis weekend. We hope next year's date will suit them better. Edinburgh University was represented by **Mary Clare (BaB 97-04)**, **Tom Skinner (PeB 98-05)** and **Alex Baskerville (LHB 01-08)**; **Titus Stott (PeA 00-07)** with his guest Katie Ward represented Dundee, whilst from the crags of Cliff College, Derbyshire, came ex-'Emperor' of Rock School and Epic Roman peregrinator **Joshua Bell (PeA 02-09)**.

It was good to see the senior stalwarts still crossing the latitude and longitude of Scotland to be with us. **Kathleen Hamilton (4's 32-38)** is Mother of the House and, with **Elizabeth Mobbs (4's 46-53)** from the Isle of Arran and **Joy Holmes (2's 43-50 Staff 59-66)**, continue to fly the Hertford flag. They were joined this year by **Amanda Herries (2's 65-72)** from amongst the castles of the Stewartry. The regular Horsham seniors included **The Revd Ian Atkinson (Staff 70-85)**, our local guide and organiser, with his sister Patricia; **Major AB Cran (PeA 38-45)**, **Martin Prowse (LaA 48-58)**, and **Iain Adams (MidB 48-53)**. They were joined this year by **Anthony Sayer (LaB 59-65)** who was also BMT (before my time!).

A particular delight this year was the first appearance of Old Blues from my time on the Horsham Staff: **Ian Bartholomew (MdB 62-71)** now retired from the Navy, **David Crompton (PeA 79-85)** now retired from the RAF, **Andrew Bing (ColB 72-78)**, **Christian Ashby (MdB 93-00)** and **Peter Newman (PeB/LaA 93-00)**.

The chairman welcomed all to the Balmoral Suite of the Queen's Hotel and called upon **Joshua Bell** to read *Grace before Meat*. The food was well received and service was marred only by the secretary's over-elaborate attempts to organise the diners' choices (*Memo: next year leave it to the waiters*) and also by his dilatory speed of eating, which held up the service of two of the courses (*Memo: you can tell I was not brought up in a boarding school*). Conversation flowed freely between the tables and between the

generations. Eventually **Mary Clare** was called upon to proclaim *Grace after Meat*. The Chairman then led the toasts to our Founder and to the Queen. The secretary then gave out the following brief notices:

1. A pleasure to see so many generations of Horsham and Hertford present: a challenge to each of you to find one other member of your time to bring along next year.
2. The arrangements for next year The Queen's Hotel Perth, but a week or two earlier: nb after the event, we discovered that the hotel was already booked up for 22 October so we have booked in for 15 October 2011.
3. Next year's speaker is to be **Kate Atkinson – the Millennium Senior Grecian** – currently CHOBA Deputy Chairman and the focal point for Young Old Blues. We hope all generations of OBs in and around Scotland will rally round.

After a comfortable pause and a chance to chat to those from the other side of the room, the chairman called upon all to regain their seats and recharge their glasses. He introduced John Franklin, Head Master since 2007. The **Head Master** spoke simply, concisely, clearly and very movingly of the **Founding of the School** and its purposes throughout the centuries. Most particularly, he illustrated the **current mission** of the School with reference to young boys and girls recently accepted who were thereby enabled to cope with extreme difficulties at home or even the total absence of family life. The School provided those things necessary to build self-confidence and a positive outlook as well as training in academic, sporting, and social skills. The Head Master then proposed the *Housey Toast* to which all responded with a resounding HOUSEY!

In response, **Alexandra Baskerville**, who had been **Senior Grecian** in John Franklin's first year at Horsham, spoke boldly and confidently of what the school and its staff had meant to her. She was bold enough to tell the assembled Old Blues that, whereas each generation saw its own time as the 'proper' embodiment of the ethos of Christ's Hospital, change was not only inevitable but also vital for the Founder's vision to be carried out in a rapidly changing society. It was evident that she herself embodied the success of recent change – not just the merging of the boys' and girls' schools but the increasing confidence of the girls in the running of the merged school. She then **thanked the Head Master** for his speech, and the secretary and committee for enabling us all to meet together.

Appropriately the gathering was rounded off with a rousing performance of the **Carmen / Votum** – with *Artes palaestrae* firmly alongside *Ludi viriles*. A truly memorable Founder's Day lunch.

John Shippen (Staff 66-04)

john@shippen.org.uk

Secretary of the Caledonian Society of Blues