



“THE DORKINIAN”



NEWSLETTER OF THE ASHCOMBE DORKINIAN ASSOCIATION

Website: www.ashcombedorkinian.com

CONTENTS

Editorial	<i>Jane Collard</i>	2
ADA Committee News	<i>Jane Collard</i>	3
Annual General Meeting 2024	<i>Jane Collard</i>	3
New website		4
Friends of Ashcombe		5
Teachers remembered	<i>Various</i>	6
James Chuter Ede – the portrait	<i>Jane Collard</i>	9
News from the school/ADA Bursary	<i>Jane Collard</i>	11
Remembrance Day Wreath-Laying	<i>Jane Collard</i>	12
Life in Retirement	<i>Joyce Day (née Carter)</i>	14
Life in Denmark	<i>Nick Ridley</i>	15
Obituaries and Living Memories		
- <i>Alan Fox</i>		17
- <i>Ian Weale</i>		18
- <i>Hebe Morgan (née Blake)</i>		20
- <i>Colin Grundy</i>		21
- <i>Ray Alexander</i>		23
- <i>In memoriam</i>		25

EDITORIAL DEADLINE FOR WINTER 2025 NEWSLETTER: 31 October 2025

Please send your contributions to Jane Collard - email j.collard@btinternet.com
 Handwritten items to: Mrs. J. Collard, 17, Wildcroft Drive, North Holmwood, Dorking, RH5 4TL

Welcome to the Summer 2025 edition of The Dorkinian. I hope that this finds you all well, wherever you are reading this. Thank you to those who have sent comments on previous newsletters and especially to those who have provided interesting articles for inclusion. As an Association we are committed to keeping members informed - but ultimately we rely on contributions and feedback from you, our members, so do please continue to send in articles, however long or short, on items that you feel might be of interest.

A recurring theme in recent years has been debate over the future of the ADA. This was raised again at the 2024 AGM and there have been questions as to what we want from the Association and what its ongoing purpose is. The Committee now accepts that future growth is unlikely: in an era where social media and groups such as WhatsApp are now considered the "norm", past students meet and keep in touch in different ways. However, the Committee agrees that it remains important both to keep our members informed and to continue to interact with The Ashcombe School. As ever, your comments on the aims and objectives of the Association – and indeed its future – would be very welcome.

This year's AGM will be held on **Saturday 11th October** (note: this is a week later than previously indicated) and we hope to welcome as many of you as possible, either in person or via Zoom. Details will be provided in the next few weeks. This Newsletter contains a report on the 2024 AGM.

The invitation to contribute your memories of teachers at school has produced some interesting and amusing reminiscences. Please keep these coming!

Following on from the excellent article by Chris Smith in Newsletter 61, "Life in Retirement", I was pleased to receive an equally fascinating item from **Joyce Day (née Carter)**. Having recently retired myself, I am beginning to understand why retirees always say that they wonder how they ever had time to go to work! Thank you, as ever, to our Chairman, **Nick Ridley**, who has provided an interesting article about life in Denmark.

The School continues to thrive and members of the ADA committee have visited several times over the past year – for the AGM, the Remembrance Day ceremony, the Bursary awards – and also a visit to see the newly installed portrait of James Chuter Ede (former Home Secretary and an old-Dorkinian). Reports on all of these are included in this Newsletter. Each time we visit, we are struck by the achievements and attitude of the pupils whom we meet. They are a credit to the excellent staff at the school and to the spirit of the students. ADA members are always welcome at school events.

Sadly, there are obituaries and memories of those of our members who have passed away. Thank you to those who have provided tributes.

I hope that you enjoy reading the latest edition of the Dorkinian and I send you all my good wishes. I look forward to hearing from you.

ADA COMMITTEE NEWS

The Committee continues to “meet” regularly – usually by means of a Zoom call given our varying geographical locations! Meetings are held every 8 weeks or so. In April some of us were able to meet in person as **Nick Ridley** our Chairman was visiting the UK. There have been no changes to the Committee, although **Jane Collard** has stepped down as Vice-Chairman, being replaced by **John Bellamy**. The committee therefore comprises: **Nick Ridley** (Chairman), **John Bellamy** (Vice Chairman), **Peter George** (Treasurer & Membership Secretary), **Jane Collard** (Newsletter Editor), **John Wallis**, **David Mountain** and **Gerry Moss**.

As well as general Committee duties, **John Bellamy** and **Jane Collard** liaise with the School regarding the Bursary Awards and **John Wallis** has been working hard overseeing the development of the new website. **Peter George** continues his excellent work as Treasurer and Membership Secretary, for which the committee is grateful. **Gerry Moss** and **David Mountain** make up the Committee – the experience of both is invaluable.

We are of course always looking for new members of the Committee so please let Nick Ridley know if you are interested. Even if you don't want to join the Committee, if you have a skill in a particular area – or know someone who does – that you feel could be of use, then again please let us know.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2024

The 2024 AGM was held at the School on Saturday 5th October 2024. Eleven members were present “in person” and a further seven members joined via Zoom, from various geographical locations! Our guest speaker was Lee Wayland, who has been responsible for the development of the new ADA website. Unfortunately on this occasion we encountered problems with the technology which meant that those attending via Zoom could not participate as fully as hoped, and loss of the Wi-Fi connection meant a delayed start. We will continue to learn!

Lee, as guest speaker, spoke about his association with the school (his son attended Ashcombe, and Lee has done a lot of work with the school, including production of the school prospectus, signage and work on the Ashcombe website). He then went on to talk about the development of the ADA website, and paid tribute to the work done in the past by **Mike Nicholson-Florence** who had maintained the old website for many years. Unfortunately the technology problems encountered during the meeting meant that only those present were able to enjoy a demonstration of the new site.

We also heard from Head Teacher, **Chris Panting**. Chris talked about the excellent exam results achieved by the students in 2024, the “Good” OFSTED rating report received by the school in May 2024, and the new projects undertaken. These projects include greatly enhanced security with a new entrance, new fencing and electronic gates. (*Editor's note: Those of us who have visited the school recently can vouch for this!*). Chris also spoke about the revival of the Friends of Ashcombe group (see page 5), and the plans to mark the 50th anniversary of Ashcombe in 2026. Overall, despite challenges brought about by legislation,

pay awards and social change, the school continues to thrive and be a happy and valued place for its students.

John Wallis then explained more about the website development and **John Bellamy** spoke about the bursary award scheme and the hope for this to continue in 2025.

There was time for questions and comments at the end, and this provoked a discussion about the Association's future: What is its purpose? What do we want from it? (**Editor's Note: comments and suggestions on this topic are always welcomed and will be considered by the Committee**).

This year's AGM will be held (subject to confirmation) on **Saturday 11th October** at the School and once again a "Zoom" link will also be set up, enabling more members to join the meeting. We hope to improve the use of technology again this year, to allow greater participation (audio and visual). **Note that this date is a week later than previously indicated.**

The minutes of the 2024 AGM will be issued prior to this year's AGM.

NEW WEBSITE

We are very pleased to announce that the new website for the Association is now live. The Committee is very grateful to John Wallis for his efforts, working alongside the website developer, Lee Wayland. It is still very much a "work in progress" and we will be filling in a lot more information, photographs and documents in due course. Please take a look and let us have your comments.

<https://www.ashcombedorkinian.com>

If any member would like to help with managing the content of the website, please do let one of the Committee know.

FRIENDS OF ASHCOMBE

Jane Collard

The “Friends of Ashcombe” group was set up several years ago and has recently been re-launched. It is certainly not intended as a “rival” to the ADA but is, understandably, focussed on former pupils of The Ashcombe School (which is itself now nearly 50 years old!). **Chris Panting** (Head Teacher) is keen that all groups of alumni should work together and combine our knowledge and memories.

In his words: *“The Ashcombe School has a rich history and a vibrant future and this project aims to bring together our alumni from the earliest years of Dorking County Grammar School and Mowbray School to the present day.*

The Ashcombe School will celebrate reaching its 50th anniversary in 2026 – a wonderful opportunity to recognise all aspects of the school and look to the future.

The Friends of Ashcombe will:

- *Keep alumni informed of exciting achievements and future developments*
- *Provide inspiring stories and potential contacts for our current students*
- *Offer an unique opportunity to support our future plans and events directly*

By summer 2025, the initial focus will be on developing an integrated Alumni and Careers platform alongside a creative opportunity for new names for the school House system at the Ashcombe.

The school would absolutely love to hear from you if you used to be a pupil at The Ashcombe and you are keen to be a part of The Ashcombe again.”

FOLLOW-UP to Newsletter 61

As always, I am grateful to all who have written to acknowledge their enjoyment of The Dorkinian and to those who have commented on items included in the newsletter. As you will read on page 6, I have received several pieces from members recalling their favourite teachers! **Chris Smith’s** interesting article about “Life in Retirement” prompted an equally fascinating item from **Joyce Day (née Carter)**, which you can read on page 14.

TEACHERS REMEMBERED.....

In Newsletter 61, I invited members to send in their memories – good, bad, or funny – of teachers from your time at school. I have had several responses, which are included below.

Please keep your thoughts coming – this can be a regular feature! Who was your favourite teacher at school? Or – perhaps - not so favourite?!! Who inspired you? What are your particular memories?

---X---

(i) From Mike Dobson (1942-50)

Firstly, the delightful **Miss Burton** who looked after her charges in Room A with such great care: **Mr Griffiths**, a Welshman teaching French in an English school. Never opening his mouth when speaking, trying to interpret his dictation in French was a chancy business: Raincoats were necessary for those sitting in the front row during **Mr Goffin's** geography lessons through his somewhat damp delivery of the letter "S". His observations on Sheffield's steel manufacturing industry with its "pins, needles, nuts, bolts, screws, nails etc were particularly stormy!: End of term for the boys of the 1949-50 Upper VI would always culminate in a visit to the Star & Garter [*Pub in Dorking North Station forecourt*] for a pint before going their various ways. Inevitably, discussion centred on School and, in particular, the Staff. During an English lesson early in a following Term and much to the amusement of all, **Mr P.L.Helm** (or "PLLM" as he was known) recounted much of the conversation which he had overheard from his vantage point in the adjacent Bar!

Then there was **Mr Clegg** (Religious Instruction "RI"). Because by 1948 the School had more classes than it had classrooms, the Junior Physics Laboratory was brought into service as a classroom for the Lower VI, thus providing suitable benches for Table Tennis! The "seven-day week" timetable allowed for two periods of RI for which the Lab was used. As part of its equipment, the Lab had a compressed-air-driven siren which, by connecting to a foot pump, would produce a loud but rather mournful wailing noise. With the siren located under an otherwise unoccupied bench it could be driven covertly from another but occupied bench. Thus, at intervals during the lesson, a wailing sound would be heard apparently coming from nowhere, much to the consternation of Mr Clegg and much to the amusement of the Class!

*....and a slightly cheekier submission from **Mike**, which I hope amuses you as much as it did me! (Editor)*

Finally, there was the French-teaching **Miss Coney**. Her habit was to sit on an empty classroom desk facing the class with her feet upon the accompanying chair. Sometimes a little too flamboyant with the disposition of her knees, there was always a scramble amongst the likely-lads to occupy a desk opposite, in order to gain further knowledge, not only of the language, but also the liberally-displayed [French] lingerie!

---X---

(ii) From Nick Ridley (1952-59)

Herr Wolff joined the school in the early fifties arriving from Poland where he was born. He came as the first German teacher at the school

If we wished, we could start learning German in the fourth year. I was one of the few, (we were either six or nine in number), who chose to do so. We had two years to study for O-level.

Herr Wolff was a most imaginative teacher and taught us a few German songs such as “*Die Lorelei*”. He also introduced exchange visits with German schools in Hamburg. I went with a group of twenty pupils and we stayed at the home of a German family. Likewise we had a German pupil staying with us. This raised a few eyebrows as the war had only been over for twelve years.

Although I failed to pass O level German, the visit to Hamburg enabled me to pass the following year. One thing that impressed me was that Herr Wolff asked us to phone him when we received our results. No other teacher did this.

He awoke a great interest in me for the German language and two years after leaving school I went to the *Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen* in Stuttgart to study German. This enabled me to work in Switzerland where I stayed for five years and met my wife.

So I have a lot to thank Herr Wolff for.

---X---

(iii)...and finally from Rob Worsfold (1962-69), some reminiscences from schooldays.

Following the 'teachers remembered' paragraph in Issue 61, recollections of my own experiences at DCGS were prompted in the first instance by Karen Hewitt's article and her mention of **Mr Penman**, who taught English in my first years at the school. I remember being especially captivated by his skilful presentation of John Meade Falkner's *Moonfleet*.

English was to remain my strongest and most favoured subject, but elsewhere on the curriculum things were going less well. I struggled at first to keep up with the work and frequently underachieved when exams came round. Perhaps that's why I remember not just one teacher, but a whole group of them who came together at the right moment to redirect the learning curve. The pivotal moment unfolded at the tail end of the third year, when someone somewhere decided that I was worth a press of the reset button. I received a letter stating that instead of moving from Form 3(1) to 4(1), at the start of the Fourths I should report to **Mr Bedwell** in Form 4A. A page turned, and the sun came out again for the first time since *Moonfleet*.

So, who were these teachers who were responsible for getting my school career back on track? It's a testimony to them that I can still recall so much after nearly 60 years! **Mr Bedwell** (Pseudo), form master and teacher of RE, who brought more than a flicker of interest to the Biblical account of Nehemiah overseeing the rebuilding of the Jerusalem city walls; **Miss Coney** who used the class reader *Crin-Blanc* to paint a broader picture of the Camargue;

Mr Heasman whose patient approach got my maths back into gear. **Miss Barter**, whose enthusiasm for *Jane Eyre* was infectious to the point that for a while I couldn't put the book down; **Mr Kimber** who, as well as widening my interest in Geography, brought in his guitar at the end of term and treated us to a rendition of Tennessee Ernie Ford's 1956 hit *Sixteen Tons*. **Miss Macaulay** who was able to add a distinct touch of humour to the passage of history; **Mr Ashby** who went out of his way to help me construct a small table which wouldn't have won any prizes but which I still have at home; **Mr Dyer** who tried to convince us that his recommended Friday evening therapy was to relax in a fireside chair with a well-thumbed copy of Caesar 's *Gallic Wars*; and a special mention for **Mr Day** whose constant encouragement led to my involvement over a number of years with cross-country, field sports and 2nd XI football.

Well taught and re-motivated, I went on to scoop up enough 'O' levels to book my place in the Sixth Form. Years later in my primary school teaching career, I was able to use my own school experiences to good effect and through the Intervention process assist struggling pupils to move closer to their full potential. That this was able to happen is due in no small measure to the intervention that was made on my behalf in the summer of 1965, and to the many positive learning experiences which were to follow.

JAMES CHUTER EDE – the Portrait

Jane Collard

Readers will recall that Newsletter 58 contained an article by Stephen Hart, biographer of the distinguished politician and former Home Secretary, James Chuter Ede. In March this year, members of the ADA Committee were invited to attend a reception at the School to view a portrait of James Chuter Ede, now installed in the Library (formerly the school Assembly Hall). Stephen Hart and his wife were guests of honour and Stephen spoke about how he came to write the biography. It was a fascinating afternoon, and we were also joined by some of the students, who really enjoyed the opportunity to experience some of the real life behind our political history.



The photos show the portrait "in situ" in the Library (formerly the School Assembly Hall), and Stephen Hart, author of the biography of James Chuter Ede, standing in front of the portrait. The wording below the portrait, written by **David Blow**, former Head Teacher, are reproduced below.

"James Chuter Ede (1882 – 1965) was a former pupil (1895-99) of Dorking High School for Boys, a predecessor of Dorking County Grammar School, which became part of The Ashcombe School.

He was a distinguished politician who was the Home Secretary in the post-war Attlee Labour Governments (1945-51), the longest serving for two centuries. He and R.A.Butler were responsible for the 1944 Education Act which defined the English educational system for four decades. He was MP for Mitcham in 1923 and then for South Shields from 1935 to 1964. As Home Secretary, he was responsible for a number of reforming Acts, covering the police, fire services and civil defence, and the Children Act, British Nationality Act and Representation of the People Act (which finally established “one person, one vote” and single -member constituencies.

He was very active in Surrey politics, holding a number of posts and being responsible for many local projects. He was a Surrey County Councillor from 1914 – 49 and Chair 1933-37. In 1950, he paid for the restoration of the Stepping Stones at Burford Bridge, which were opened by the Prime Minister, Clement Attlee. He also facilitated infrastructure projects including electricity supply and Mickleham by-pass.

He stayed in touch with the school, visiting in 1946 for the revival of the Old Dorkinians Association, and also for Prizegiving..

Steven Hart has written a biography of him “James Chuter Ede: Humane Reformer and Politician”. Pen & Sword. (2021) ISBN 9781526783721”.



Picture: Guests, including Ashcombe students and staff, and ADA Committee members, at the viewing of the portrait.

NEWS FROM THE SCHOOL

Even the briefest perusal of the Ashcombe School website shows what a busy and varied life current students enjoy! Aside from the standard curriculum and study, there are many activities and trips undertaken, as well as concerts and the annual musical drama performance. Space does not permit full details of the activities this time, but I urge you to visit the school Website to see what has been happening this year.

<https://www.ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk/News>

ADA BURSARY

Jane Collard

Unfortunately, no nominations were put forward by the School for the 2024 Bursary Awards. This wasn't due to a lack of suitable candidates, more a result of the increasing time pressure on staff. We were assured that the School values the bursary and the continued involvement of the ADA. This was clearly demonstrated in 2025. The school put forward 4 candidates, nominated by their Year Heads, subject teachers and Ben Blackband, Head of Sixth Form. John Bellamy and I met the students at the beginning of June – they were still in the middle of their A-Levels! Once again, we were so impressed by the four candidates and by the opportunities afforded and the support given by Ashcombe School. It made us feel very proud (not to mention more than slightly envious of school life now enjoyed by those attending the school!). To say that it was a difficult decision is an understatement. All four students were excellent and impressed us in very different ways. Their achievements and future plans were impressive – future studies cover Medicine, International Development & Studies, Paramedic Medicine and History. They were a true credit to Ashcombe. After much consideration, and after referral back to the main ADA committee, we decided to award a bursary of £500 to all four:

Rachel Chard
Issey Pocock
Luca Fulco
Finn White

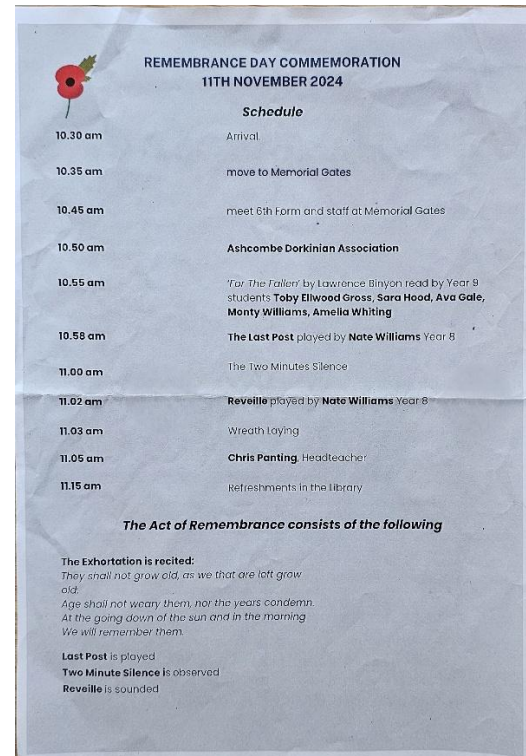
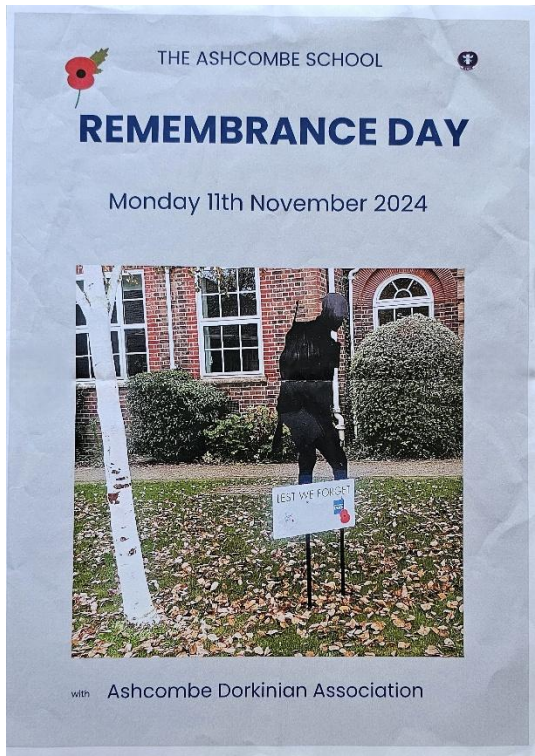
John and I returned to the school later in June to present the recipients with their certificates (the monetary award will be paid direct to their bank accounts, cheques being somewhat outdated now). I hope to include some photographs in the next edition of the Newsletter.

We very much hope that the recipients will stay in touch and provide an update on their future successes.

REMEMBRANCE DAY WREATH-LAYING

Jane Collard

The annual laying of the ADA Wreath on the Memorial Gates took place on 11 November 2024, and we were blessed with a sunny autumn day. **David Mountain, John Bellamy** and **Jane Collard** attended on behalf of the ADA. Jane de la Rosa, from the School, had organised a lovely programme of commemoration (see below).



Picture: ADA members joined by Ashcombe students for the Remembrance ceremony

Once again, we were pleased to be joined for the ceremony by a number of students. A group of students from Year 9 read the poem “For the Fallen” by Laurence Binyon. Year 8 student Nate Williams played the Last Post and, following the two minutes’ silence, Reveille.



Picture: ADA Committee Members John Bellamy, David Mountain, and Jane Collard



Picture: ADA wreath in position on the Memorial Gates

After the ceremony, we shared refreshments with the students. This year’s ceremony will be on Tuesday 11 November 2025 – all are welcome to join us.

LIFE IN RETIREMENT

Joyce Day (nee Carter 1942-47)

Editor's note: *Chris Smith's contribution to the previous Newsletter prompted Joyce to write to share her own experiences. I am grateful to Joyce for this item – a true example of making the most of retirement!*

My husband Ken and I moved up to Cambridgeshire in 1981, just as vacant teaching posts were hard to find. I did some supply and part-time teaching for a while, but I realised that I had retired at age 53. Ken was enjoying his new post but he retired a few years later and I had inherited some money so our travelling days began. I was engaged in a lot of local government affairs, including being chairman of our District Council, but could get away at all times. So, over the next twenty years we visited all seven continents, taking videos and slides and making many notes. On reaching home we spent many hours editing, adding sound and music and creating many Travelogues. When our son Leigh left home we converted his room into a proper studio with all the necessary material ready for use. We were then invited to show the videos and talk about the countries at various groups in the area. We made expeditions to China, India, Africa, Australia, North and South America and even breath-taking Antarctica. We had visited many European countries earlier, often camping with our three sons or the Scouts.

When we were at home I was much involved with council work and with being a school governor, Middle Level Commissioner, and on many boards and management committees. Ken was also Parish Councillor, Water Bailiff, my escort at times and we were both tending our large garden. We raised money for various charities by opening our garden for cream teas or coffee mornings. We purchased a five-berth launch and occasionally retreated to the river Great Ouse for a rest – often with one or other of our sons too.

In 2002, Ken died suddenly whilst playing – and winning – a Bowls match. This was an awful shock and it took us all a long time to recover. I suddenly found myself alone, the more so because, at this time son Kevin was living in Hungary with his Hungarian wife and child, and son Leigh had emigrated to Canada. Only Terry was in the UK and he was quite a distance away in Aylesbury. I was too sad to do anything much at first, however after a few years I decided that, although the long treks and perpetual moving were probably too much for me, in my mid-seventies, I could still travel. I set off alone to traverse the world. My first stop was Singapore, where I spent a few days, then went to Western Australia, where I spent some very enjoyable days with Hebe and Doc (Morgan). From there I flew to Uluru and then back to Sydney and on to Tasmania. From there to New Zealand North Island and thence traversed the Pacific to spend time with Leigh in Vancouver. As I can no longer fly, I have since cruised to many most interesting places, including Iceland, Spitzbergen, a tour of the Mediterranean and all around Britain.

Now aged ninety-four, I realise that my travelling days are over, but I am still involved in the activities of this now large village (Sawtry, Cambridgeshire). The Chorale I gathered together in 1983 and trained and conducted is still growing in numbers and prowess, although I am no longer with them. I was swimming twice a week until they closed our pool almost two years ago. I was still holding modest fund-raising events until the Covid pandemic. I now need help in the house and my gardener does the heavy work, but I still work in the garden most days. I have used a buggy to get around to local shops, meetings and events. Life is less exciting, and I still miss Ken very much, but life does still go on.

LIFE IN DENMARK

Nick Ridley (1952-1959)

Life in Denmark for me started in 1971. I had met my future wife in 1968 when we both worked in Switzerland .

So in 1971 I moved to a new country and a new language. 54 years later we have two children and three grandchildren.

Thomas our son has the same name as his great great grandfather though we didn't know about him when choosing his name. Two years ago he resigned from his job and sold his house in order to go sailing. Accompanied by sometimes his son, sometimes a friend he sailed down to Barcelona. He left the boat there in October and returned to Denmark where he quickly found a job.

Lisa our daughter worked for a year in France after leaving school and then started to work in the magazine business. She travelled round Europe and the USA but an unpleasant boss caused her stress problems and she resigned to work with an exercise group.

Mathias our eldest grandson is studying journalism and works part time in McDonald's.

Caroline our second grandchild is also studying journalism and is presently working for the financial journal Børsen.

Casper her 18 year old brother will graduate from school this summer. He is a keen footballer and plays for the third division team Frem. Last year the team did well in the Danish Cup and one game we saw drew in 2500 spectators.

My main activities are a weekly workout in the gym leading a senior citizens walking group on Wednesdays and singing in the Skovgård choir on Thursdays. In March we will go into a recording studio to record twelve Danish songs. This is just for own benefit and I am managing this.

In the summer months I play golf once a week on a course only 10 minutes away. Thorbjørn Olsen the Danish golfer and former Ryder Cup team member is also a member

Danish politics are interesting. Greenland, a former Danish colony, is wanted by Donald Trump but the Greenlanders voted in March to reject any claims he may have. The prime minister is Mette Frederiksen, a social Democrat, who has been the leader for six years. She will probably win the next election in 2026, or possibly this year despite cutting off one of the Danish public holidays .

Any party can be represented in the Danish parliament as long as they can get 2% of the votes. That is why there are 11 parties in the parliament and the government is normally a coalition. Not everybody's cup of tea!

All education is free and if you like you can complete one university course and then start another one.

Denmark has three of the world's market leaders, Mærsk shipping, Novo Nordisk pharmaceuticals and Lego, a toy company.

One of the main supermarket chains has recently marked all non American produced goods with a star in order to boycott US brands. This was supported by 94% of the population.

There are only 6 million Danes but as an old seafaring nation Denmark has developed a strong place in the world both socially and in business.

If you wish to learn some Danish here are a couple of expressions.

Har en morfar - take a nap. *Morfar* means one's maternal grandfather

Blowing a *halv pelikan*. To blow a half pelican, that is a gale.

LIVING MEMORIES

Editor's note: Just after publication of Newsletter 61, Aileen Weale wrote to inform me of the death of her brother, Alan Fox. I had some communication with Alan in my role as Editor, and he contributed some interesting articles. He was a great supporter of the Association. Sadly, just a few months later, Aileen informed me of the death of her husband, Ian Weale. I am grateful to Aileen for these two special tributes, and for the photograph of five lifelong friends from Dorking Grammar School, now all sadly no longer with us.

ALAN FOX (1946-1952)

Aileen Weale (née Fox)

It is with great sadness that I have to report that my brother Alan Fox died on the 31st May 2024 aged 91. He had been suffering with stomach cancer.

Alan was a very keen member of the Old Dorkinians (later ADA) attending the AGM meetings whenever he could and any Reunions that took place. He also played in the Old Dorkinians cricket team for many years.

He loved his time at the Grammar School and was a good student and a very keen sportsman. He held the school record for long jump for many years, he also played cricket, football and took part in athletics.

Before going to Goldsmith College when he left school in 1952 he did his National Service in the RAF.

In 1954 he took up his place at Goldsmith college studying Geography. After graduation he joined a school in Forest Hill teaching Geography and started bringing children to a school in Ewhurst so the children could experience country life. It was here that he met his first wife Susan. Alan and Susan found that they would both like to teach children with Special Needs and after their marriage they taught at a residential School in Hereford.

Alan then took up a post of Headmaster of a Special Needs Establishment in Caerleon in Wales where he stayed until he retired.

After retiring from playing cricket he became an Umpire and eventually he umpired games featuring the Ladies English Cricket team.

He was on various committees for charities for children with special needs and travelled all over England to attend meetings.

Alan and his second wife, also named Susan, moved to Holt in Wiltshire in 1995 as Susan had been offered a very good job at the Roman Baths in Bath and at this time Alan became a house father to their young son Matthew. It wasn't long before Alan was very active in the village - taking the older residents in a mini bus on various places, which he did until he was 75 when they said he was too old to drive the mini bus!

He also started up a youth club in the village and helped the local doctor's surgery with any children who needed special help.

Susan was younger than Alan and at the age of 55 she was diagnosed with Alzheimer's; he gave up all his activities to care for her. At this time Alan and I were in touch constantly to exchange notes as sadly I was caring for my husband, (**Ian Weale** who started at Dorking Grammar same time as Alan,) who is also suffering with Alzheimer's and in June of 2023 sadly went into care.

When Alan was diagnosed with cancer earlier this year he too had to make the heartbreaking decision to put Susan into care and he spoke constantly to me of the guilt he felt, a normal feeling, but nonetheless he found it very hard,.

Alan had a full and active life and age never stopped him trying something new,, I feel sure if he had not given up his interests to care for Susan he would still have been involved in village activities.

Alan had four children - 3 from his first marriage (Paul who sadly lived for only 2 days, Simon who was tragically killed aged 22, and Helen who has been a tremendous support to Alan), then Matthew from his second marriage.

For many years Alan was a Quaker and he had a woodland burial in Andover where he chose a beautiful peaceful place to be laid to rest under a tree with many of his Quaker friends attending along with Alan's family.

Alan is sadly missed by Helen and Matthew, myself and my family and all his many friends. Summing up in the words Alan left to be read at his funeral: "Communicate and look past any differences in people and celebrate who they are". That was Alan - kind and interested in everybody.

RIP, Alan, we miss you.

IAN WEALE (1946-1952)

Aileen Weale

After informing you earlier in the year of the death of my brother **Alan Fox**, I sadly have to inform that my husband **Ian Weale** passed away on the 23rd October 2024 aged 89.

Ian attended Dorking Grammar between 1946 and 1952. From what he and his friends told me he enjoyed the school, he didn't excel at sport and was an average pupil - a bit of a class comedian which didn't go down very well with the staff. That is how Ian was, very extrovert and life and soul of a party.

After he left school he started work at McMurdos Laboratories in Ashted. He cycled there each day from Dorking. In October 1953 he joined the RAF to do his National Service . After his Square Bashing, as the training was called, he was posted to Locking, near Weston Super Mare, where he trained as a Wireless Mechanic. After that training he was posted to Oakington near Cambridge. He joined the Band playing the trumpet and spent a lot of the time playing at American Air Bases.

He had taught himself to play the trumpet when he was given one when he was 17. It was then discovered that he had a musical ear and he never learnt to read music.

When he was demobbed he returned to work at McMurdos. He had various changes of firms and eventually ended up as a Technical Salesman selling the products and setting up the plants and thereafter maintaining them all in rust-prevention treatment

He married Aileen Fox in December 1956 and together they had a son and two daughters, six grandchildren and two great granddaughters.

Ian loved his jazz and was a member of the Cranleigh U3A often presenting programmes . He also attended the Shere Jazz Club. He was a member of the Cranleigh Walkers and each Wednesday would walk 10-12 miles stopping on the way for lunch and a pint. Aileen and Ian loved their holidays and travelled to many places. Eventually when they got older they spent many holidays in various Warner Holiday Hotels. Ian's walking eventually came to an end when the peripheral neuropathy from which he had suffered for a long time made walking harder and harder over the years .

After living in Cranleigh for 48 years Aileen and Ian moved to Felpham, West Sussex in 2018 near to their daughter, as Ian's Alzheimer's meant that Aileen would have support as another daughter lived nearby too. Eventually in June 2023, sadly and very reluctantly after a fall, it was decided Aileen could no longer look after Ian and he went into care. We were lucky to have an excellent home especially for Alzheimer sufferers in Felpham and Aileen was able to visit every day. He was very happy there and eventually the nurses became his family as he gradually forgot his own family.

Ian had a very happy life, he remained lifelong friends with several of his Grammar School friends, spending many holidays both home and abroad with Roy (Dirk) Durban and his wife *Peggy (née Cunningham)*. He was a much loved husband, father, grandfather and Great grandfather and is very much missed by us all.



From left to right Alan Fox, Mick Woods, Roy (Dirk) Durban, Derek Pearce and Ian Weale. Lifelong friends from Dorking Grammar School

HEBE MORGAN (née Blake 1939-1947)

Chris Smith (1958-65)

Editor's note: We received the sad news of Hebe Morgan's death, just as Newsletter 61 was going to press. Hebe, well-known to many of us and widow of "Doc", died in Perth, Western Australia, in June 2024. I am grateful to Chris Smith for this personal tribute, and for the photograph.

My first recollection of Hebe goes back to my childhood, when I was a choirboy at St Paul's, Dorking. Hebe was associated with the choir for several years, eventually becoming Choir Mistress. I remember one occasion when she took a car load of us youngsters to a Christmas pantomime at the Leatherhead theatre in her maroon-coloured Vauxhall Velox. Great fun! She was the driver in the family, Doc didn't drive. Hebe told me decades later that he tried learning, but was deemed to be a danger to himself and everyone else when he was behind the wheel!

I was a regular visitor at Doc and Hebe's home, Arundel Lodge, for piano lessons every Thursday evening. But it was Doc who saw me in each time, because Hebe was busy putting the younger children to bed. There was always a warm welcome for the many music students and choir members who visited there. Their home was next door to a pub, the Arundel Arms. My elder brother assured me – at a time when I believed everything he told me – that there was a secret passageway connecting the house to the pub!



Hebe at Arun Wetlands Centre 2008

It was lovely to be back in touch with Hebe and Doc in later years. When Hebe heard that my wife, Grace, and I were thinking about a trip to Australia, she invited us to spend a few days with them at their home in Yanchep, Western Australia. Although by then Doc had sadly lost most of his memories of life in Dorking, it was good to be able to reminisce with Hebe about their time there, and to see two of their daughters Alison and Helen. Hebe also shared lots of interesting tales about her writing career, and her life in Australia which included founding and running a community school in Yanchep.

A few years later, on a visit to the UK, Hebe stayed with us for a week and we were able to catch up on more stories and reminiscences, some of them quite hilarious. During that time we took her on visits to our local wildlife reserve (see photo) and to Wisley Gardens. It was a joy to remain in touch for many more years.

Hebe had a wide circle of friends, and will be greatly missed by all. Everyone who knew her and Doc will have warm and long-lasting memories of them both.

COLIN GRUNDY (1964-2000)

Chris Smith (1958-65)

***Editor's note:** Shortly after publication of Newsletter 61, I received an email from Barbara Grundy informing me of the sad news that her husband Colin Grundy had died following a long battle with kidney failure. Although Colin Grundy never taught me, I remember him well I studied Biology to A-level (I was taught by **Sue Smith (Thompson)**) and also had the experience in 1975 of a Field Trip to Hope Cove in Devon with both "Mr Grundy" and "Miss Smith" in charge of us (they must have had the patience of saints!). Colin and his wife Barbara also lived for some years in the same road as my parents. I am grateful to **Chris Smith** for this tribute and photographs.*

Colin arrived at Dorking Grammar School in 1964 to take up his first teaching post – probably not knowing then that he would stay at the school for the whole of his career, seeing the transition from Grammar School to The Ashcombe School in 1976. Barbara Titmarsh who headed up the biology department had left at the end of the 1964 summer term having remarried around that time, leading to the appointment of Liz Pleass as Head of Biology.

Colin came in as a biology teacher, even though his degree subject at Exeter University was geology. But one great thing about Colin was his adaptability and his enthusiasm for everything he was involved in. It was an infectious kind of enthusiasm, and for me entering the upper sixth with biology as one of my main subjects, he was a gifted and inspiring teacher who could communicate really well. I think for all seven of us in his sixth form group, he made biology fascinating and enjoyable. Colin eventually became Head of Biology and later Head of Science.

I met up with him some 20 years after leaving school at a school reunion in the mid-eighties. He still remembered me and we had a good chat about past times and people we both knew. Then, more than 20 years further on, Colin and his wife Barbara introduced themselves to me and Grace at Jim Spiring's funeral – another valued opportunity to catch up. From then on, we stayed in touch regularly, and one summer some years ago we enjoyed a visit from Colin and Barbara at our home in Barnham. They brought with them some plants that Colin

had cultivated – in retirement he continued his interest in growing plants, selling some of them in Dorking market. They also brought us some delicious home-made raspberry jam!

Colin will be remembered with great affection by generations of his students – there are so many who benefitted from his teaching skills and his friendship, and who I am sure are thankful to have known him.



Colin and Barbara on a visit to Chris in 2011 (Photo courtesy of Chris Smith)

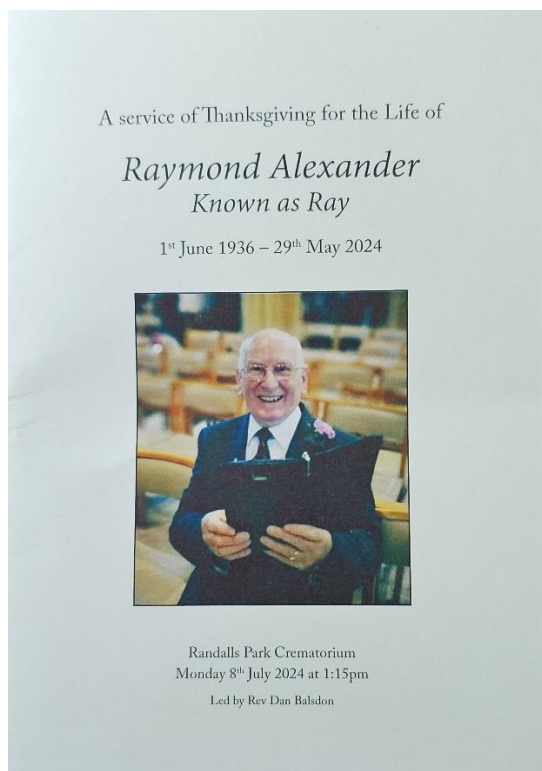


Colin filming sixth form field work at Hope Cove in 1965 (Photo courtesy of Chris Smith)

RAY ALEXANDER (1948-1953)

Lorna Alexander

Editor's Note: In Newsletter 61, we reported the death of **Ray Alexander**. Ray was for many years the Accounts Examiner for the Ashcombe Dorkinian Association. His funeral was held in July 2024 and was attended by **David Mountain** - who has kindly passed me a copy of the tribute written by Ray's widow Lorna, and which was read at the funeral. I have also included some photos from the Order of Service.



Ray was born on 1 June 1936 at 64 The Street, Fetcham, to Aida and Frank Alexander. He was the third youngest of nine children with one sister Betty and one remaining brother Jeffrey. Having 7 brothers and 1 sister it was a busy home and I remember Ray telling me after school his mum gave the younger ones dinner and they were put to bed, where they often crept out of the bedroom window (it was a bungalow), to play in the fields nearby. They got up to many antics when they were young. Another one was when Ray and his older brother went to the part of the River Mole known as "The Splash", which could be very deep. They of course went in and Ray couldn't swim at the time so almost drowned. Fortunately his brother managed to pull him out and pushed him home on his bike; of course his mum was furious and sent them both to bed. Their dad was in the forces at that time.

Ray went to Fetcham Primary School and moved on to Dorking Grammar School after passing exams. He was an extremely good scholar and very popular too, making many good friends. He passed every exam he took and friends we still keep in touch with from school days told me that there was no need to ask who came first with top marks – it was always Ray Alexander! One subject did let him down though – Art.

Ray was highly thought of and was recommended to go further on to University, but in the early 1950s and as part of a large family, times were difficult. He left school at 17 and by then the family had moved to Newdigate. I had known Ray for four years already at that time. We first met at a Guides and Scouts Christmas Party, being 13 and 14 years old.

Ray started at the National Westminster Bank in Ashted and was there for just under a year when he was called up to do his National Service. He trained in the Army at Aldershot for 6 weeks. He was then sent to Fontainebleau in Paris, where he worked in an office in the Palace. Ray enjoyed his army life there very much and was made up to Sergeant very quickly.

When he was home in 1957, he was unsettled and not sure if he wanted to go back into banking, but one evening he was at our home with myself and my parents sitting down watching TV. When my father turned off the TV (he was fairly strict, as was my dear mum too!) he told Ray that if he left his employment at the bank, he wouldn't allow us to get married as I was still only 20. Therefore Ray decided to stay in Banking, where he remained until retirement.



Our wedding took place on 20 July 1957 at the Methodist Church in Leatherhead. In the years following we had three children, Caroline, Suzanne and Mark. Sadly our dear daughter Caroline passed away 8 years ago. We have our two granddaughters, Rebecca and Lucy, and four step-grandchildren (Alex, Pia, Nicky and Jenny), all of whom Ray was very fond of.

Ray passed all the banking and law exams; after receiving promotions he was moved to many different branches throughout his career. Ray helped and advised a lot of customers, meeting many interesting people. Several have got in touch with me saying how kind he was helping them with difficulties, one or two saying he was a "top man". Cobham branch was the last bank Ray managed before retirement.

During his life Ray started as a choirboy in St Mary's Church. He had many hobbies and was great at DIY, coin and stamp-collecting, Squash and swimming. Ray was also a keen member of Astede Masonic Lodge, attending every Tuesday evening; he had many friends there but sadly many have passed away too. Ray was also the treasurer of the Constitutional Club for many years until he was 85 and found it too much to concentrate on. He helped many people with bookwork.

When the family were young we had several holidays away, some with friends too. As our children grew older, Ray and I went to some beautiful countries a lot further away with different friends and often on our own too. We saw a lot of the world. When on one of these holidays in Florida, after a lovely evening out with friends, Ray had a heart attack. He was rushed to hospital where he had by-pass surgery. Ray was only 52 at the time and was in hospital for a week. We couldn't get home for 5 weeks as he wasn't permitted to fly. That was a very traumatic time for us both. He was given 10 to 20 years to live – but survived, and lived until nearly 88.

When our holidays abroad stopped and Ray couldn't walk far, we went to Center Parcs with family, which he enjoyed. Our friends took us down to the coast most weeks, using their wheelchair to push him along the front, which he enjoyed until the end of last year (2023).

Aims Carers were a big part of Ray's life towards the end caring for him and we grew especially friendly with one of them, they know who they are.

Ray was a very kind man and everybody's friend, nothing was ever too much trouble for him and he never fell out with people, although he would always say his bit if he didn't agree with them. To me, Ray was a loving friend and husband for almost 67 years, a very special man in my life. I wish to thank everyone who helped Ray in his life and towards his death, and for everyone's kind thoughts and prayers for us both. God Bless.

IN MEMORIAM

We are sad to note the passing of the following members:

Marian Barber (1952-59) died in August 2024 at the age of 84. Her brother Norman wrote to me and described Marian as "A lovely lady who cared about everyone and cherished her friends and memories"

Cynthia Stock (née Youdale 1948-54) died in June 2024, peacefully in hospital, at the age of 87.

Ian Lynch (1946-51) passed away in August 2024

Valerie Wright (née Henderson 1950-57) died in May 2024

Robert (Bob) Swan (1958-65) died in September 2024. Although Bob was not a member of the ADA, he was a contemporary of many and we were notified of his passing by **Mike Winton**.

With grateful thanks to our printers, Tradcoe Ltd.

Tradcoe Ltd., Madrid Road, Guildford, GU2 7NT

By appointment Printers to

THE ASHCOMBE DORKINIAN ASSOCIATION