



Adams' Grammar School

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*A Member of the Family
of Haberdashers' Schools*

1656-2006

Old Novaportan Newsletter - Spring 2007

Adams' Grammar School... 350 Years Young

The 350th Anniversary celebrations have now concluded. Vice Chairman of Governors Dr Roger Johnson, who oversaw the Anniversary events, has reviewed the year's activities.

The outline for the year was devised by a hard working ad hoc committee, and we thank all those who helped shape the year. Thanks also go to the students who came up with their excellent programme and to all the teaching and support staff who gave so much of their time. I am mentioning no names, there were too many helpers. One exception though is to mention student Jack Kenyon who designed and updated the 350th Anniversary page on the school website through the year, very professionally done.

The year started with the Royal Shakespeare Company staging the Canterbury Tales at Easter 2006, followed at the end of April with the first of the successful reunions for Old Novaportans. These were a great success, and around 154 ONs attended the five organised events. Those from the 1950s remembered the 300th Anniversary, recalling the opening of the new gymnasium, now the Performing Arts Centre, and the installation of a time capsule beneath the foundation stone. What had been placed there was a matter of dispute, no one quite agreed!

The first major set piece of the year was the Civil War Re-enactment and Fair over the May Bank Holiday weekend. Hundreds of members of the English Civil War Society camped at Longford Hall, and we had several thousand visitors who enjoyed the displays greatly. The weather was awful, so the numbers attending fell below our expectations, but our staff worked so hard to present a very professional showground indeed.

The Headmaster inaugurated an Anniversary Lecture Series, and excellent speakers came to give their talks. Piers Corbyn the climatologist debunked global warming as man-made, and other speakers included Clive Jones, Managing Director of ITV Ltd, Vicki Heywood, Chief Executive of the Royal Shakespeare Company, Fedor Herbatschek, John Hilbourne and Dr Scott Taylor.

On July 1st the AGSS held the 350th Anniversary Summer Ball, and bravely upped the attendance to 500 tickets, unsure how the facilities would cope. The Ball was a

wonderful success, and the AGSS are planning to keep the ticket number at 500 for this year too.

On Wednesday July 5th School went to London, the visit commenced with a thanksgiving service for the life of William Adams in St Lawrence Jewry Church. The service was taken by The Very Reverend Keith Jones ON, the present Dean of York. His address placed the founding of the school in the new enlightenment of the 1650s and was fascinating. The school music was breathtaking, and did real justice to the wonderful setting. The Haberdashers then held a reception for those attending at Haberdashers' Hall, a great opportunity for so many students to see the hall and meet Haberdashers. One student asked to see the kitchens and the catering staff as he was interested in a career in catering, and the Master arranged for him to be given a guided tour!

The musical Oliver was held at the end of July, cast and audience suffering the heat wave gladly for such an energetic and stylish performance. This was a very ambitious production, and greatly enjoyed by all.

In October we had Speech Day and the Haberdasher Deputation, and the official opening of the Performing Arts Foyer, our Anniversary building, and already of so much benefit to School.

Sport through the year has been lifted by the Anniversary, and special mention is made of the Rugby Anti Assassins visit on November 5th, followed by ONs Rugby Hockey and Netball competitions two weeks later followed by the Old Novaportans Dinner.

Christmas brought the Carol Concert, and the turn of the year, 2007 being the 350th Anniversary of the opening of the School. The events included those organised with the help and energy of the students, the design of the contents of the Time Capsule placed beneath the new Science Laboratories, and the Anniversary Charity Walk.

In February the ONs had a dinner at Haberdashers' Hall in London, a splendid evening organised by Alun Oliver and attended by about 60 ONs. In the setting of the Hall, and under the portrait of William Adams we could reflect on how well his wishes had been followed.

A huge attendance on March 30th walked to Gnosall and back along the disused railway path, raising £4000 for the designated charity, the Joshua Orphan Care Centre in Malawi.

Prior to this the other final events of the year took place; on March 20th a joint Newport Schools Concert was held at Harper Adams College. Moorfield Primary, Tibberton Primary, Newport Junior, Newport Girls High and Burton Borough schools joined with Adams for an evening of tremendous music.

This concert was followed on March 24th with a second Thanksgiving Service for the life of William Adams in St Nicholas' Church. In his home town, perhaps 420 years after his birth, this was a moving service, those of us who have benefited from his vision were pleased to remember him in this way. Again Keith Jones gave the address, and the School held a reception afterwards for all those attending.

And so our Anniversary Year has come to a conclusion, and just writing this short account has made me realise what a lot was attempted and achieved in this year. It has been a wonderful pageant of celebration, and I hope that some of our current students will want and be able to contribute to the 400th Anniversary of School in 50 years time. For me, a year 8 in 1956, it has been a great privilege to be involved!

Roger Johnson

Time Capsule

Pupils created another slice of history in February when members of the School Council buried a time capsule in the foundations of the new block of science laboratories which are currently under construction. Intended as a permanent snapshot of school life in 2007 the capsule continues the tradition which was started in the 300th Anniversary Year. Then a capsule was buried on the site of the former gymnasium.

Upper sixth former Luke Sheldon collected suggestions from each form as to the contents of the capsule, and he consulted the school librarian and archivist also. Chosen for inclusion were items of school uniform, including an ON tie and a scarf from the last sports tour to New Zealand. Newsletters, programmes and brochures relating to the Anniversary year were also inserted.

Class of '68 Reunion

Saturday 8 September 2007

During the Anniversary activities last year there was a series of organised reunions for former pupils. One of them was aimed at students who left Adams' in the 1960s. Two ONs who attended that event are now planning to organise a further reunion of their own for the Class of '68.(ie they started at Adams' this year.) **Philip Thompson** and **Bernie Waldron** are asking their contemporaries to help them by spreading the word far and wide. Classes 1 and 1P had approximately sixty-two pupils in all. The plan for the reunion is to have a tour of school, lunch in a local pub and then watch the England v USA World Cup rugby match. They would love as many people as possible to attend. If you are able to support it please contact Philip Thompson (if you were a day boy) at philip.thompson18@btinternet.com or Bernie Waldron (if you were a boarder) at bernie.waldron@gmail.com.

Old Novaportan Calendar:

Summer Ball

Saturday 30th June

Longford

The Parents' Society, AGSS, is once again organising the School's annual Summer Ball. This is the main social event of the school year and a major fundraiser. Following the great success of the enlarged Anniversary Ball last Summer, this year's event plans to be on a similar scale, with up to 500 guests. Tickets are on sale now and fast disappearing. Tables seat 10 and tickets cost £45 per head. If you would like to attend all details, a menu and a booking form are available on the AGSS website (there is a link from the school website or you can access it directly on www.agss.info/)

You should also have received a separate letter from AGSS by email before the Easter break. If you would like to get further involved with the Ball, perhaps by donating a prize for the raffle or by sponsoring some other element of the event, AGSS organisers would love to hear from you. Please contact Brigid Cattle via the School.

Cricket

There are two cricket fixtures in the offing where we are inviting Old Novaportan players. We would really love the annual ON Cricket match to become as well supported as the December ON sports fixtures.

Sunday 24th June AGS vs Haberdashers Longford

The AGS side comprises Old Novaportans, staff and parents

Sunday 1st July ONs vs AGS 1st XI Longford

You should already have received a separate mailing about both of these two fixtures. If you would like to play in either event please contact the Headmaster at jim.richardson@adamsgs.org.uk.

Old Novaportan Open Afternoon

Friday 14 September 2007

If you missed out on attending any of the reunions during the last year, or even if you would simply like to come back into school again, the annual Open Afternoon for Old Novaportans takes place on Friday 14th September at 2.00pm – 4.00pm. There will be some refreshments and tours of the school with current pupils. If you want to come back with a group of your contemporaries that would be great too. Please let us know if you plan to join us as it assists us with numbers. Telephone the Development Office on 01952 822484 or e-mail ons@adamsgs.org.uk.

Sports Weekend

14 – 16 December 2007

This annual weekend of sport for old boys and girls of all ages is now well established and has become an important part of the school calendar in recent years, drawing back large numbers. We really welcome seeing lots of you and hearing about what you are all up to! Please put the dates in your diary now. We hope you will come along and join us either as a spectator or player at

one or more of the events. If you would like to play in one of the ON teams, Mr Mulhern in the PE Department will want to hear from you. He will refer you to the team captains (so volunteers we want to hear from you too.) Do not leave it to the last minute!

The timetable of games has not yet been published but is expected to follow the same plan as previous years. I.e.

Friday afternoon: Basketball

Saturday: Hockey, Netball and Rugby

Evening Performing Arts Centre – ON Dinner & Dance

Sunday: Netball and Rugby.

Old Novaportan Dinner

Saturday 15 December 2007

As the ON sports weekend has grown so too has the Old Novaportan dinner become established. The ON Dinner offers a fantastic opportunity to relax and unwind after a hard day's playing (or spectating) and gives everyone chance to catch up on each others' news.

Whether or not you are involved in the sports weekend, you are still welcome to come and enjoy a pre-Christmas evening of good food, dancing and catching up with old friends. Always a great night.

Tickets will go on sale later in the year but put the date in your diary now and do not leave it until the last minute to book your place. Keep an eye on the website/Old Novaportan Section for details as they become available. www.adamsgs.org.uk.

Calling ON Rugby Players ...

Haberdasher **Keith Davies** has contacted school to ask whether there are any former Adams' boys (aged 18 – 30), based in or near London, who would be interested in playing rugby for the Old Habs RFC? Anyone who might be interested and would like to know more can check out the Old Habs website initially on www.oldhabs.com/index. School will also be pleased to forward on any expressions of interest.

Other School News University Entrance

I am delighted to report that 12 Sixth Form students have been offered conditional places at Oxford and Cambridge Universities this coming Autumn. They are **Jack Andrews, Josh Bennett, Varun Buch, Robert Beal, Andrew Cooper, Tom Chapman, Nathan Cooper, Ronald Collinson, Kiara Kronbergs, Phillip Powner, Luke Sheldon, Simon Treadwell**. This number of offers is becoming a very consistent picture for Adams'.

Furthermore, we have a record number of fourteen students this year who have received offers to study medicine (*and dentistry and veterinary sciences*) at other top universities. **Jack Blake, Varun Buch, Richard Buka, Siranvir Jaspal, Gareth Jones, Andrew Kinmond, Roland King, Emily Plimmer, Leah Priest, Ravi Raja, Ishan Radotra, Sarah Steward, Jack Storrow and Tom Rowe**.

The majority of our upper sixth formers have received conditional offers of places at their chosen universities in a variety of demanding and very competitive courses.

Alex Humphreys and Henry Eve have both been awarded prestigious Army Scholarships. They were amongst 800 applicants for 40 scholarships nationwide.

Adams' Internationals

We currently have no fewer than twelve students in school who all represent their country in their chosen sport or other discipline.

Graham Kitchener (L6) Rugby. Selected for the senior England Under 18 team for the Six Nations Tournament. This has involved him in a warm up game vs Wales in Bristol, squad training, a game vs France in Henley. The tournament took place last month in Glasgow. Graham is also in the provisional squad to tour Australia in the Summer.

Sam Scott (Yr11) competed in the UK School Games for Disability Sport Wales. In the shot putt Sam gained a Gold medal and also claimed a new British, European and Junior World Record.

Gemma Howell (L6) is the British Junior **and** Senior judo champion in her weight category (56kg). Selected to play in the Junior World Championship in San Diego and shortlisted for the OCS Young Sports Person of the Year Award. **Gemma** has also recently been selected to attend the EJU Tata Training Camp in Hungary. This is for the potential Olympic judo squad preparing for the next Olympic Games.

Charlotte Grandfield (U6) Modern Pentathlon. Has represented Great Britain at youth (U18), junior and senior level in numerous competitions across the world, winning many international medals. Ranked 15th in youth world rankings.

Ed Bradburn (U6) Sailing. Under 21 National Youth Champion in OK class 2005/06. Under 21 National Youth Champion in Lark class 2006. Has now qualified as part of the GB team for world championships in 2007 in Poland.

Michael Reade (11W) Golf. Represented England at golf in the European Championships in Spain.

Tom Pym (L6) Chess. Represented Great Britain in the European Chess Championships in Montenegro

William Minty (L6) Music. Currently Principal Percussionist/Timpanist for the English Symphony Youth Orchestra. Accompanied ESYO to Sicily on their international music tour. On his return was invited to guest with the English Symphony Orchestra at their Proms in the Park.

Ben Gernon (U6) Music. Principal Bass Tuba in the National Youth Brass Band as well as in the CBSO Youth Orchestra.

Mikey Hopkins (L6) Orienteering. Selected by the British Orienteering Federation to participate in the British training squad programme. Will represent GB at the

European Youth Orienteering Championships in Hungary next month.

Daniel Redfern (L6) Cricket. Selected for England U16s on their tour to South Africa in February 2006. Also played for England U17s vs Ireland and Holland in August 2006. Daniel also plays for Derbyshire.

Alexander Sanders (L6) Alex joined us this year and is the German Junior Rowing Champion. Lightweight single scull.

350th Anniversary Appeal Update

I am pleased to report that donations are continually coming in for the Music Appeal and, as a result of the support received so far from Schrodgers' and Haberdashers' and parents and Old Novaportans, the balance now sits at £176,000. Although we are encouraged in the knowledge we have raised a substantial portion towards our target of £380,000, we know we still have a long way to go.

The new Music building will be a major boost to the school and the facilities we can offer to our current and future pupils, which is why the Governors' Finance and Major Projects Committee are still hopeful that the building will be commissioned in the 350th Year. We have the plans in place and are ready to start building as soon as we can be sure the funds are there ...**can you help us to make this happen?**

If you feel you can give your support by making a donation, then please contact Mrs Barton on Tel 01952 822484 or by email rita.barton@adamsgs.org.uk

Sport

Cross Country

Adams' cross country runners have had a fantastic season, their best ever, filling the school display cases with silverware! Some very impressive running put us in 8th place in the prestigious and very competitive King Henry VIII Relay in Coventry in February. Adams' practically swept the board at the County Schools' Cross Country Championships, bringing home the trophy and county title in the Junior Boys, Intermediate Boys, Senior Boys and Senior Girls. This was followed by an emphatic victory soon after in the Shrewsbury Relays at Shrewsbury School and then a second placing in the South Eastern Schools Competition at Harrow. In the Lucton Relays in Worcester the Adams' senior team won by over a minute and the Birmingham League concluded with wins for both A and B teams. There have been many outstanding individual performances this season but mention has to be made of **Richard Hemmings** who has consistently and regularly taken first place and been inspirational to his team.

Rugby Fraser Bird Sevens Tournament Five Haberdashers' Schools participated in the tournament in March, fielding teams from U18, U15 and U13 age groups, all of which count equally towards the competition. It was a beautiful day and there was some very fine rugby at all age groups. It turned out to be a very close competition between Monmouth and Adams', their respective teams tying in the U18 and U15 age groups. It came down to the final game of the competition: Adams' U13 v Monmouth U13. The teams were drawing 7-7 right up to the last minute of the game, when Adams' scored a try to win the overall competition. This year the competition was meant to be hosted by Monmouth but, owing to waterlogged grounds, transferred to Adams' at the last minute. The Adams' groundsman, catering team, caretakers and PE staff worked exceptionally hard in a short space of time to make the day a resounding success.

School Admissions

Open Week 1st – 5th October 2007

Open Week takes place at the beginning of October every year for families of prospective pupils. The week is extremely popular and attracted around 400 families last October. We also welcome families in to school on a twice weekly basis during term time by appointment. Details of entrance procedures and test dates are available on the website and in the school prospectus.

A **Boarding Open Evening** at Longford Hall is held once a term for families who are considering boarding for their sons. The next scheduled evening will take place on Monday 11th **June** and then following Open Week on 8th **October 2007** 4.00pm-5.30pm.

Geology Excellence

Adams' has received an accolade for the excellence of its teaching of Geology at A-level. Dr Philip Dolding was recognised by the Good Schools Guide, which bases its results on A-level performance tables as well as other measures, including the popularity of each subject, which indicate superb teaching.

Old Novaportans' News

Simon P Johnson (1992 – 1998) has recently been awarded his doctorate at the University of York. He has been appointed the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales research fellow and works as a member of staff at the universities of York and Durham. This Spring Simon was invited to give the American Catholic Historical Association lecture at New York and Milwaukee. Simon is currently writing a History of English Catholic Exile in Portugal and a further publication on English Catholic Ecclesiastical Authority, 1633 – 1850.

Roy Parry (1950-54) has written to us from Ontario, Canada. Furthermore he has sent us two paintings which have a most interesting story behind them! Roy is Membership Secretary of the Caledon Hills Bruce Trail Club, an organisation of some 750 members approximately. The Bruce Trail is a 500 mile long walking trail in Southern Ontario, stretching from Niagara Falls to Tobermory, following the brow of the Niagara Escarpment. The sketches which Roy has kindly donated to the school depict popular locations along the Trail. They were painted by Gareth Evans who donated them to the Club as a fundraiser. Gareth's father, **Phill Evans**, is also a member of the club and made himself known to Roy at a recent dinner. Both Phill and Roy are Old Novaportans and furthermore they were close friends at school. Roy was amazed to have discovered his old friend sitting at the next table to him in Ontario, having lost touch so many years ago.

Derek Smith has written to say he would love to play in the forthcoming ON cricket fixture but will 'regrettably' be in Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming that day. A resident of Palo Alto, California these days, Derek tells us he was Vice-Captain of the AGS 1st XI in 1947 & 1948 (John Bailey kept him out of the top job!) and Captain of Adams House XI.

Dr Roland Enmarch (1989 – 1960) We have received news that Dr Enmarch has recently delivered a paper at the 13th Annual British Academy Postdoctoral Fellowship Symposium in London. Title: A Comparison of Mortuary and Literary Laments from Ancient Egypt (2300 – 1200 BCE). Dr Enmarch read Egyptology with Akkadian at University College, Oxford, before obtaining his D.Phil in Ancient Egyptian Literature at Worcester College, Oxford in 2004. He is currently British Academy Postdoctoral

Research Fellow at Liverpool and is in the process of completing his second book, due to be published later this year. Dr Enmarch also serves as Reviews Editor for the Journal of Egyptian Archaeology.

David Shenkin (1943 – 1954) has written to let us know that his mother, Mrs Vera Shenkin, who taught English and History at Adams' in the 1950s and 1960s, celebrated her 100th birthday on 16 October 2006. She lives in Essex. ONs may also remember David's late father, Dr Morris Shenkin, who was a GP in Newport from 1933 until his retirement in 1967.

Ben Day (1997 – 2002) has updated us on his career to date. Ben left Adams' after one year of the sixth form to pursue a career in radio. For four years he spent time gaining experience and doing trial RSL broadcasts whilst at the same time working in retail as the youngest ever store manager for Next. Ben is now working full time in radio, fronting a Breakfast Show on weekdays for a new regional station in the Midlands as well as presenting a Sunday afternoon show.

We were delighted to learn from **Alex Burnet** that she graduated from Cambridge with a 2.1 degree last Summer.

Also that **Bill Mohin** (left 2002) gained a 2.1 BA Hons from London Metropolitan University in Film and Broadcast Production. He is currently working in film production in London.

John Perry gained a 1st class honours degree in PPE from York.

We very much enjoy hearing from our recent (*and older!*) leavers with news about their degrees and their chosen careers. Do keep in touch.

John Arkinstall (1960s) lives in Malaysia and has written to let us know that his wife Ana has a business in Kuala Lumpur in Malaysian Cooking. Called Carana it involves cookery classes for both tourists and locals alike. The classes are fun and a good half day alternative to sightseeing and shopping for visitors to Malaysia/KL..
www.malaysia-klcookingclass.com.

Obituaries

Thomas Walley Since the last Newsletter we have sadly been advised by Mrs Walley of the death of her husband, ON Thomas Walley, at the age of 83. Thomas left Adams' at the age of 14 to work for his father. He was a keen rugby player. He always maintained a strong interest in his school and often attended ON events. In recent years he has been resident in Penkridge.

Reginald Ralph Lees (1921 – 1928) We were greatly saddened to learn of the death of Reginald Lees in April. At 96 years of age we believe Reg was our oldest Old Novaportan. He was born in Trench, where his parents ran the Duke of York pub, and he won a scholarship to Adams' from Donnington Wood CofE School. Reg was always passionately interested in sport, winning school colours in cricket and football. After matriculation he went to Durham University to read sciences and then in 1932 undertook a postgraduate Dip Ed to qualify him to teach. This he did for 9 years at Wem Modern School. Exempted from war service Reg was an instructor in electronics and radar to RAF and WAAF personnel. Later he taught Maths at Wakeman Technical College as a

Senior Lecturer, living in the Shrewsbury area for much of his life. Reg's overriding love of sport remained with him throughout and he enjoyed playing bridge too. We were fortunate to welcome Reg to school on several occasions; he visited us in recent times when the sports hall was officially opened. We are told by a close friend that Reg's aim in life was to make people feel better and the happier for knowing him.

We wish to offer our sincere condolences to the families and friends of all Old Novaportans who have died recently.

Mr Adams' Free Grammar School

by David and Ruth Taylor

A reminder that we have in school copies for sale of the book written by former Headmaster David Taylor and his wife Ruth, which chronicles the history of the school. It is a very readable and interesting hardback book with some wonderful recollections from former students. It is priced at £15.95 (+ £2.50 postage and packing) and if you would like a copy you can download an order form from the website or simply send in a cheque and mailing instructions. We will be very happy to supply one to you.

Online ON Register

Are you registered?...

We are always keen to extend the database we have in school of Old Novaportans. We are particularly keen to increase the number of ON e-mail addresses registered. You can search for old friends and put in your own profile on our secure site. Go to the school website at www.adamsgs.org.uk and click on the Old Novaportan link on the left, or reach it direct at www.oldnovaportan.org.uk. Also, if you change e-mail addresses please remember to let us know.

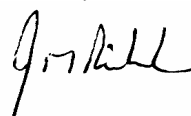
Sharing your ON Newsletter ...

Further to the advice given in the last few issues of the Newsletter, for reasons of cost and administration, we are now e-mailing the Newsletter out to Old Novaportans, rather than using conventional mail. A small number of you have requested still to receive hard copy and of course we are very happy to comply with this request.

However, we are keen to reach many more Old Novaportans and so we would ask for your support. If you are in touch with old AGS friends who may not receive the Newsletter already please forward a copy on to them. We would love them to register on our database and then we can send the Newsletter direct to them in future. (See *previous paragraph*). Any queries at all do please contact the School Development Office.

Thank you to everyone who has sent in news and to all of you who attended any of the reunions or other events as part of our 350th Anniversary. It has been a truly memorable year.

With very best wishes.



J M Richardson
Headmaster