

Old Huntingdonians' Association

Newsletter, January 2010

The Chairman's letter

Dear Old Huntingdonian,

Very Best Wishes for 2010! This 21st century is flying by! We have just finished celebrating 75 years of OHA and now we start to look forward to 2015 when we celebrate the 450th anniversary of the Foundation of Huntingdon Grammar School. How should we celebrate such an occasion?

The 2009 Reunion saw us celebrating 75 years in music and dance. There was plenty of music from all the decades, plenty of chatting and circulating between groups but not a lot of dancing so a bit disappointing for the organisers even though everyone enjoyed the evening!

The 2010 Reunion will take place on Saturday 6 March at Hinchingsbrooke House when former student Dr Rita Gardner CBE, Director and Secretary of the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) will be our guest and after-dinner speaker. Rita delighted her audience at a Hinchingsbrooke School Presentation Evening a couple of years ago. Please book your places NOW, using the reply-slip enclosed with this Newsletter.

Our 2010 Summer Reunion and AGM will take place on Sunday 4 July. This will be the usual informal lunchtime gathering in Hinchingsbrooke House. Again, please book your places by returning the enclosed reply-slip.

We are looking to appoint a new OHA Treasurer at the AGM. Ann Davies has done sterling service as our treasurer over many years but feels the time has come for a change. Thank you very much Ann for looking after our finances so well. Who will take her place? If you can see yourself as Treasurer, do please contact me.

If you would like to bring along memorabilia for display and discussion, at either of the Reunions, we will have tables ready.

In this edition of the OHA Newsletter we have another trip down memory lane from Alan Butler . . . thank you so much, Alan, for delving into all those *Huntingdonians*!

Hoping to see lots of you in March and July.

Hilary Angell-While Chairman (01480 457900)

The OHA Committee

The Committee comprises Hilary Angell-While (Chairman), Alan Butler (Vice-Chairman), Ann Davies (Treasurer) Peter Downes (President), Richard Cook (Data controller), Lynn Fortin (Web-page Coordinator), Ann Monk (Secretary) and Gary Buckenham.

There is no formal subscription for the OHA: we function by mailing list. Inevitably, our mailing-list gets out of date. Some of our 'members' move house, change name and, sadly, die. We are very sorry if we inadvertently send correspondence inappropriately and we would be pleased to be told of changes of address or circumstances.

If you are still receiving this Newsletter via the post and would prefer to read it via e-mail, let us know. The occasional voluntary donation helps to cover the cost of postage and printing. The Treasurer will be pleased to hear from you with a cheque if you feel so inclined (payable Old Huntingdonians' Association).

The OHA has moved into the 21st century with its own web-site. You can access this by going to the Hinchingsbrooke School web-site www.hinchingsbrookeschool.net and then click on Old Huntingdonians' Association in the left-hand column. A further click will give you details of events and we have now added photos too!

Our contacts are:

Hilary While 01480 457900; Peter Downes 01480 398082; Ann Davies 01480 891372 Richard Cook – richardcook@aol.com

PS We really would like to keep in touch with you via e-mail. Printing and distributing 600 magazines by post is an expensive and time-consuming activity for an organisation with no subscription, run entirely by volunteers. Please send Richard Cook your e-mail address today.

Hinchingbrooke School News from the Headteacher

Dear Old Huntingdonian,

I write as we approach the end of term. We recently held the Autumn Concert and a Celebration Evening for Key Stage 4. By the time you read this we will have held the Celebration Evening for the Sixth Form and the choir will have sung at the Civic Carol Service on 9 December. These are just some of the traditional events that you will recall from your time at this school.

We have two new parent governors, Lisa Culverhouse and Marney Connor. It is a significant commitment to become a school governor and I am very grateful to them both for volunteering. We are losing Ann Bunting and Graham Litherland this term. They have both been very generous in the time they have given to the school.

At an Awards ceremony in the Marriott Hotel at the beginning of November, Hinchingbrooke won the title of sports 'School of the Year' for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and we go forward to the regional finals. The citation was very lengthy because there have been some very substantial achievements to celebrate. In particular, the Springboard programme has been inspirational. This supports young people to overcome the barriers that may make it difficult for them to take part in sport.

Our Sixth Form continues to achieve broader recognition. Year 12 students have successfully showcased their progress with the new Cambridge International Examination Board Pre-U qualification at the national Specialist School and Academies Trust conference in Birmingham. We are now giving support to the development of Sixth forms in other schools, including an Academy in Oldham. With a roll of 431 students, Hinchingbrooke has substantially the largest school Sixth form in the county and one of the largest in the country. We are very pleased to see that as recruitment grows, standards continue to rise.

Best wishes,

Keith Nancekievill

More of the 20th Century through the pens of *Huntingdonian* writers

One Hundred Years Ago.....and counting!

Summer Term 1910 – Issue Number 1.

The Editorial included ‘.....our first edition we sincerely hope will prove a great success! A School Magazine should be at once interesting and instructive, combining a record of the term’s events and everything of interest in connection with the School.....typical witticisms should be introduced.’

Interestingly, the Sports’ reports mentioned not one individual name and an 8-0 win was summed up as ‘we haunted the goal circle of our opponents’. The Debating Society’s subject ‘The British Empire is on the Wane’ was defeated, but points considered were that there was an overfondness for sport, luxury and alcohol and that glory should not be considered permanent.

Autumn Term 1910

The Editorial began with the exhortation ‘Wake up boys!’, going on to a call to make better use of the Library. ‘If you think you know everything you don’t’. The Girls’ Hockey team did not lose a match and consequently found it difficult to get opponents. However, home dates were difficult to arrange when the secretary ‘walks wearily down the corridor to the notice board, carefully takes account of all boys’ home matches and arranges dates so that matches may not clash! Only to find a day or two before a fixture that the boys do indeed have a home game. Now boys, this is not behaving as the gallant lads of the HGS should do !’

The Shooting Club report was both ominous and perceptive, perhaps unknowingly. ‘It must be remembered that those who have had the opportunity of learning to use the rifle in their youth, will later in life feel regret if they do not avail themselves of that opportunity’.

The Swimming Sports, between the Railway Bridge and the Stone Bridge, noted that the Earl of Sandwich watched from a raft anchored in mid-stream and there was ‘a strong cold wind blowing...this was not a very comfortable quarter for either judge or competitors’. The Umbrella event and the Egg and Spoon races caused much laughter!’

Among the ‘Howlers’ (of Historical Interest) was ‘one of the causes of the Magna Carta was to the effect that there should be ‘ know ill eagle taxation’.

A boy asked for the context of '*They would never have done it if Oliver Cromwell had been alive*', then wrote '*This was said when the soldiers of Charles II dug up the bones of Oliver Cromwell after the fall of The Commonwealth*'.

(There were no publications in 1920, presumably owing to paper shortages.)

Spring, Summer and Winter 1930.

The Debating Society, having '*expired quietly*' some four or five years ago, was resurrected with the proposal that '*Prohibition in England was practical and desirable*'. Beckingham asserted that only the rich could afford a strong drink and it was '*immaterial whether they were sober or drunk*' while Vanderstone attacked this as a '*mixture of ignorance and imbecility*'. Horrex insisted on disclosing the financial side of the local brewery business of Marshall Bros and there was a learned discussion on the conditions necessary for the growth of hops.

Cross Country with Mr. Grimmett was interesting as '*his legs looked ever so funny, white and stickled all over with hairs and Jack Allinn tried to stroke them.*' The run went through a farmyard where cows got frightened and one fell over a pig. '*Yorke, who is a big chap in the IVth got his shorts torn on a wire ! Result – he later waited under a hedge until it got dark !*'

The School Scout Group met most Saturdays '*in the mornings before some of you folks are up*'.

Mr. Howgate, twenty five years Headmaster, became Mayor of Huntingdon. A clearance of Art material resulted in finding among a pile of drawing papers; '*The Editor of the Children's Newspaper leaves his love at Cromwell's School on passing through on July 13th, 1930 at one o'clock. ARTHUR MEE.*' Football recorded an astonishing result v. St. Ives G.S. The U.14 XI won by 33 goals to nil !

Spring, Summer and Winter 1940

Mr. G. Lumley, who had joined the Staff in September 1939, was called to the colours as Sergt. Instructor. At school he had proved '*a most efficient and popular instructor with the Boxing Club and Scouts*'.

Miss Calverley also left. She had revived the School Magazine in 1923. School life was affected by the rising cost of paper and delay in supplies – '*Those of us who had experience of scratching on slates during the last war have no desire to fall back on such a system again.*' Other effects of war were Cadet Corps evening parades, First Aid demonstrations and fuel

shortages, although there were comments on the pleasant warmth of the new buildings in contrast to memories of the Old School lessons where the attire on occasions had been overcoats, scarves and gloves. Skating was summed up with describing various modes of falling including *'the fling outstretched, the drop sudden and the crash unresisted'*.

Ostergard (1VA) wished to know in *'What we would like to know'...* *'What musicians do with the Time they are supposed to keep'...* *'Whether the Mt. Everest expedition will ever rest'...* *'Whether a polite housemaid is a civil servant' ...and 'Whether startling events make the newsreel'*.

There were two pages about past pupils serving in H.M. Forces, from *'an army canteen'* to *'below decks'* and as *'masters of the skies'*. 80% of school staff were on air raid duty. On a more domestic front workmen were endeavouring to get sufficient wire netting over the numerous school windows to minimise damage from flying glass.

It was especially noted that *'Mrs. Armstrong and the Headmaster will keep open house on Sunday afternoons and any old pupils in H.M. Forces who can spare an hour or two of their leave, will be welcome to tea without need of invitation'*.

Amongst the Honours were William Watson (1921-27) a Military Medal for Conspicuous Gallantry. Most had returned from Flanders to these shores. Sadly, while there were honours, other mentions were made of missing in action, killed in action or drowned.

Poetry reflected the times, *'Searchlights in the Sky'* by Constance M. Peddar (1VB) and *'The Raiders'* by Kathleen Trimmings (1VB Upper).

In *'Digging for Victory'* by D.F. Reading, *....'the landlord did the actual digging but I did all the constructive criticism, but he didn't seem to like that much. Then when I pointed out that I was preventing the snails and things from overrunning him and asked him, moreover, where he would be without my help and advice, he said, very tersely, that he would probably be a damned sight better off!'*

The School was as full as it had ever been – 353 – swelled by evacuees. In much more sober frame of mind Felicine Richtiger recounted how she came to Huntingdon involving a journey from the bombardment of Antwerp, then Ypres, Rouen and Bordeaux, machine gunned at Verdun before, with the help of the Red Cross, reaching Liverpool, London and then Huntingdon.

Spring, Summer and Winter 1950

Mr.N. Armstrong, former Headmaster, gave the Dedication and Address at

the unveiling of the O.H.A. 1939-45 War Memorial. Thirty one Old Boys had lost their lives and their names were remembered on the plain oak plaque, together with twelve teak garden seats. Included among those names was a man decorated in World War 1 while the youngest was barely thirteen years of age when the school moved to Brampton Road. The Hall was crowded, including relatives of those whose memory was being honoured.

The era of steam was well documented with local illustrations of *'The Stukeley Stick-in-the-Mud'* and *'The Biggleswade Buffer Buster'* while an article on *'The Godmanchester Flyer'* likened it to *'The Rocket gone wrong turning two scrap-boxes on wheels'* and there was *'a tarpaulin fixed to protect the crew from the weather'....'to keep the two parts of the engine from parting company at speed. There were barely any passengers at Godmanchester so the stop was to give the engine a well-earned rest. As it pulled out of the station it scattered a company of hens happily feeding on the lines, overtaking the platelayer on his daily rounds emphasised the train's great speed, while someone was nearly deprived of the prize marrow, the runners of which have played havoc on the railway track.'*

Mr. 'Timmie' Towler retired after 30 years as Art Master. He came from several generations of craftsmen who specialised in ornamental work in wrought iron. After First World War Naval Service he studied the crafts of goldsmith and silversmith and had had an exhibition of his paintings at the Old Norman School. Also, on Sports' Day, *'usually his responsibility was to mark out those arches, starting and finishing lines that are indispensable to a successful sports' meeting.'*

At the March Sports Mr. Brown had *'instituted a vast array of support when he arranged a special excursion train'*.

Excellent refreshments by Miss Shuttleworth featured in more than one report.

A number of 6th formers were invited to attend the Polish Modern Secondary School at Diddington on occasion of their Open Day and were *'received very hospitably and enjoyed dramatic entertainment given in the evening.'*

Among the OHA notes were *'Jeffrey Lyons ('42-'49) who is nominally in the R.A.F. but appears to be permanently on leave'* and *'David Rippon ('46-'50), decoding mysteriously in the R.N.'*

K.P. (6 Sc.) recorded a coach trip to Port Sunlight for the All-England Inter-County Athletics' Championships. Diana Stoddart was 3rd in the High Jump with 4ft. 8ins. Newton in the 880 yards won his heat in 2m. 7.2 secs, beating the record by one second, but unfortunately could not repeat this form in the final, coming fourth, the winning time being half a second slower

than his heat time.

Mr and Mrs Charles took a group to 'Gay Paree' and on arrival realised *'what an amount of French still to learn and how completely lost we would have been without "Combien" and "Merci".'*

Summer and Winter 1960

The Cricketers generally had a good season, even though lacking a square. Notably, Rich claimed nine wickets twice in an innings including 9 wickets – 8 runs v. Wisbech, while in the Junior XI Milton's figures included 3w-10r ; 5w-11r ; 4w – 12r ; 3w – 8r.

That other feature of the Summer Term was summed up by 'Examinitis' by J .J. Upper VI

Before: Swotting, sweating ; Plotting, fretting ; Grinding, groaning ; Sighing' moaning.

During: Frantic scribbling ; Pencil nibbling ; Flashing minute , Nothing in it !

After : Fear encumbers ; Nightmare slumbers ; Loathing , hating ;

Suspense ! This waiting.....!

The theme for the 'Circus 1960' was 'A Dying Culture' namely 'The Culture of an educated person has disintegrated since the seventeenth century. Today we are bombarded with mass entertainment and information. We may lose the power to use our own perception and form our own culture and to accept what is 'sold' us'. The programme involved visits to a Picasso Exhibition, Ford's Factory, Ely Cathedral and a Royal Ballet film.

Meanwhile the Lower Sixth geography set had been mapping out the fields and settlement of the county for the Ordnance Survey Department. Every Friday afternoon members cycled to various remote parts equipped with maps, pencils and handbooks – *'which other envious members of school described as a general skive, but in fact was rather hard work, requiring great concentration'*.

A.Webb, IVS, narrated his Easter holidays' experience at The Silent Channel works in Huntingdon in the extruding department *'For the production of continuous lengths of rubber, rubber tubing etc. using an over-sized sausage machine.'* A interesting first week became drudgery by the third and final week and the author came *'to bless the B.B.C's Music While You Work'*.

The marriage of Mr. and Mrs Riach had a suitable photograph showing the happy couple emerging from the church beneath an archway of hockey sticks.

The OHA were very active: Christmas Dance, Theatre trips, Indian meal,

and various societies.

The school production of '*Tobias and the Angel*' was '*a bold and lively production...colourful...swift moving...and if a little of the religious intent was obscured by the comedy it detracted not at all from the audience's enjoyment*'.

Three Vth formers, Susan Baker, Diana Johnson and Deirdre Grose, although exhausted by Juniper Hall Field Study Centre were loathe to return to the flat countryside of Huntingdonshire.

RMK (Upper VIth) emphasised the character building and self-reliance of Outward Bound at Ullswater.

1970

The Editorial probably indicated a shift in the purpose and nature of the magazine when a survey favoured a more entertaining glossy magazine with a less conventional format – less a record of the school's activities, more an anthology of creative arts and illustrations by members of the school.

For example, '*Toad Paradise*'...*Gruesome, grimy, grit-roughened toad / Hunched on haunches, high and mighty / Like some cruel king who over his kingdom gloats / Such a sodden, mud soaked kingdom.*' by R.Collins (3C) was accompanied by a suitable illustration by Nicola Rigelsford. At the OHA reunion in March the guests of honour were Mr. and Mrs Rowntree.

The Sailing Club was handicapped by unfavourable conditions, either gales or flat calms which did not prevent the 4th years winning the Wayfarer Class at the regatta at Grafham Water.

The Scientific Society, under the gaily moustached Geoffrey Watts, did great things one of which involved the digging out of Lucy Boston's moat, very muddily and profitably, resulting in £60 for charity.

1980

As acknowledgement of Issue No.1, 70 years before,...'*its septuagenarian predecessor*'...the same format and design was reproduced ,'*a continuity worth preserving*'. Mention was made of what had become of The Rifle Club and the Model Aeroplane Club and the Swimming Sports did not compare with the Earl of Sandwich, as judge, boarding the raft in mid-stream.

In Hockey the U15 XL won the South Hunts Championships and the U14 s were runners-up in their section. In other sports Trampoline and Basketball

were new introductions and Badminton became a firm favourite. Tamsin Green was first in the District Cross-Country Championships while Richard Youngs was first in the District, Cambridgeshire and Six Counties' Championships. Rugby had its best season to date with first-ever victories over Kings' School, Peterborough. The Under 15 Cricketers won the Huntingdon and Peterborough County Cup while the Saturday Sports' Club had as many as one hundred pupils on some Saturdays.

The Duke of Edinburgh Scheme catered for around 125 pupils and the report included the comment: isn't Mr. Baker the only person one had ever met who always wore a tie when he went camping? *'Could it mean a new era of sartorial elegance in the scheme'?*

The Obituary of Miss Christina Williams, French mistress 1921 – 1958, mentioned *'a robust personality, her cheerful readiness to shoulder daunting burdens and her inexhaustible enthusiasm for everything French'*.

A lengthy interview with the Headmaster started with *'What is your idea of the perfect school?'* while *'H.G.S. makes £34,000'* turned out to be the *'second round of a nationwide, computer-based game designed to introduce schools to the decision-making process of business'*.

1990

By 1990, the style of *The Huntingdonian* has changed: most of the 56 sides of A4 format are devoted to photos showing the amazing range of extra-curricular activities and events.

Pride of place went to the commemoration of the 425th Anniversary of the founding of Huntingdon Grammar School, with an address from former pupil Richard Rutt, Bishop of Leicester. The other star attraction was Norman Armstrong, Headmaster of HGS from 1982 to 1947, in sprightly form in spite of his advancing years. Headteacher Peter Downes summed up the occasion by saying: *'My dearest hope is that the commitment of present-day pupils, staff, parents and Governors, and the collective quality of our achievements, will be looked back on with approval and pleasure when the school reaches the landmark of 450 in AD 2015'*.

The magazine bade an affectionate farewell to PE teacher and Head of Cromwell House Mike Whiteside who took early retirement to look after his daughter Anna badly injured in a road accident.

The 4th form work experience programme featured strongly, picturing pupils working in schools, hospitals, shops, offices and factories, generally reporting positively on the experience but also realising that the world of

work is demanding and at times as boring as school.

The drama productions were *Hiawatha*, *The Crucible* and *In Camera*, ambitious and challenging for Lower School, Middle School and Sixth form respectively. The cast of *The Crucible* went to see the National Theatre production later in the year to see how the professionals do it.

An addition to the already extensive sports programme was the introduction of watersports on the lake in Hinchingsbrooke Country Park. 120 pupils took part on the first day, which happened to be windless!

Pupils reported on their trips to the Battlefields (*'I had not realised the full impact a World War cemetery can have on you'*), to Germany (*'Monday was a shock to the system – as German schools start at 7.40 a.m., we had to get up at 6.30!'*) and France (*'we ran riot in Boulogne with the excuse of doing a questionnaire for our studies'*).

Mike Baker reported that the school's Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme had been so successful (39 Bronze, 21 Silver and 12 Gold in one year) that the National HQ of the Award had visited the school to photograph the participants in action..

An unusual event, organised by the Sealed Knot and supported by the Hinchingsbrooke School Association, was the 'Battle of Hinchingsbrooke' – no, not a rebellion by dissident 5th formers but a full-scale re-enactment of a Civil War Battle in the grounds of Hinchingsbrooke House.

Michael Petty, writing about the OHA, announced that the guest speaker at the next OHA Dinner would be Mary Stuart, still as active and committed to the school as ever.

The Gymnastics Display combined conventional somersaults, twists, leaps and balances with gymnastic dance. *'Anna Burdsall and Nicole Mitchell wore striped tights and very, very short skirts as they danced to their 'tarts' music. Very daring'*.

As well as the photographic records, there was an extended piece of writing from Catherine Wilkinson on life at home: *'disruption due to flooding must be one of the strangest reasons my Religious Studies teacher has ever had for someone not doing their homework'*. Emma Wallis managed to write a page and a half on 'Nothing', being the text of her impressive speech in the Rotary Club's 'Youth Speaks' event.

Martin Dickinson, Deputy Head i/c Sixth Form, said that Hinchingsbrooke House was bursting at the seams with 320 students and wondered if it would be possible to convert the Tudor cellars into a common room.

(Please note that most of the Huntingdonian magazines, beginning with the first edition in Summer 1910, may be found in Huntingdon Record Office, now housed in the new Library in Princes Street, under Accessions 5043, 1796, 2272/109/1, 3673, 4063 and Misc 17 – *Alan Butler, unofficial Huntingdonian Archivist.*)

The OHA support for Music at Hinchingsbrooke

The Old Huntingdonians have continued to mount concerts based on the Bösendorfer grand piano bought for the school by former pupils in memory of Ken Brown.

We are now in our third year and Jillian Skerry continues to find excellent performers for us to enjoy in the Performing Arts Centre. After our second series, we were able to donate a further £100 to the OHA Music Fund. The OHA Music Fund is used to provide prizes and bursaries for promising young musicians in the school today.

In the current 2009 – 2010 series we have already had two performances from solo pianists, a piano quartet and are looking forward to the final concert in the series on **Friday, January 15th**. The performers will be Nicholas Daniel (oboe) and Paul Turner (piano). Those of you who live within reach of Huntingdon may like to join us for this occasion. You can reserve tickets by telephoning the box office on 01480 388249.

We are already planning the fourth series, featuring Chopin performances to mark the 200th anniversary of his birth. If you would like to be a sponsor, or put us in touch with a sponsor, we would be delighted to hear from you.

These concerts, and the piano that inspires them, give the OHA a valuable opportunity to contribute to the cultural life of Huntingdon. Free places at the concerts are available to current and former pupils up to the age of 25, funded by the Foundation of Hinchingsbrooke School.

A loyal Old Huntingdonian, Spencer Freeman, also helps the Music Fund by liaising with Huntingdon Rotary Club to put on a piano concert featuring the prizewinner from a competition Spencer runs in the South East. This event raises a further £300 for the OHA Music Fund as well as money for local charities supported by Rotary.

The OHA Music Fund remains open for further donations. A form, including a Gift Aid statement that enhances the gift by 28%, can be obtained from me on peter.downes@cambridgeshire.gov.uk or by phone to 01480 398082.

Peter Downes, OHA Music Fund project director

‘The Good Life in the Good Society’

An ideology for the Twenty-first century

A review of John Wakelin’s thought-provoking books

John Wakelin, Headmaster at HGS and then Hinchingsbrooke School from 1965 to 1982, has recently published three volumes of reflections upon the trends in society and the challenges for the future.

In a wide-ranging survey based on detailed and thorough research, he analyses the problems currently faced by this country as we approach a General Election.

His main thesis is that governments tend to deal pragmatically with problems as they arise but have not worked out a coherent overarching ideology for what kind of a world they want to create.

He argues that the state is ineffective at running industries and public services too. He cites the wastefulness, excessive cost and harmful effects of the welfare state, claiming that it has turned citizens into dependants.

He is equally critical of capitalism, drawing attention to the gap between rich and poor, the enormous wealth controlled by a few. He is particularly scathing of the way human greed for money and material goods has been cultivated and exploited.

Mr. Wakelin argues that a new approach is required and that none of the existing political parties encapsulates that approach. It would, among many other things, give greater freedom to the lower levels of the democratic system (including more devolution), would encourage worker participation in companies (on the John Lewis model), would encourage social enterprises, give more choice to the individual by the use of vouchers (weighted by need) and place greater emphasis and value on good parenting.

Anybody with an interest in social problems will find this set of books a stimulating read. Mr. Wakelin draws heavily on newspaper reporting as well as research publications and it might be argued that this has given him a more negative view of the current state of society than many people

experience. It is also debatable as to whether there is a need for a new political party. Given that, even in England, we now have the Socialist Workers, Labour, Liberal Democrats, Greens, Conservatives, UKIP and BNP (in a rough left to right order), it is difficult to see how a new party would carve out a distinctive role. There is also the very serious question of the practicality of setting up a new party, given that modern political activity depends so heavily on funding and media management.

As somebody who is sympathetic to many of the ideas Mr. Wakelin puts forward, my hope is that one of the mainstream parties will take on board the best of his ideas. I think I know which one could be closest to what he wants to see but I won't tell you which one it is in case I'm accused of prejudice!

Whatever your response, I think you will be impressed, as I was, by the sheer volume of work that has gone into these books, an achievement all the more remarkable for the fact that Mr. Wakelin has not been in good health since he took early retirement in 1982. Those who knew him as a colleague and as Headmaster will recognise his meticulous attention to detail and the clarity of his expression, undiminished by the passage of time.

Peter Downes

'The Good Life in the Good Society' is published by
Abramis Academic, The ASK Building, Northgate Avenue,
Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk, IP32 6BB.

The telephone sales department is 01284 700321.

Volume I (Principles and Agents) costs £8.99 plus £1.95 p&p

Volume II (The Physical Aspects of the Good Life) costs £9.99 + £1.95 p&p

Volume III (The Intellectual and Moral Aspects of the Good Life) costs
£12.99 + £1.95.

There may be a special price available if you wish to order all three volumes.

NB It is difficult to understand the complete argument without reading all three. PD

‘The Friends of Hinchingsbrooke House’

In 2003, under the inspiration of the then Curator of Hinchingsbrooke House, John Cronin, a number of people got together to set up an organisation to help the school protect and enhance Hinchingsbrooke House and its immediate environment. We also wanted to promote the House as a historic monument, arguably the ‘jewel in the crown’ of Huntingdonshire.

Since then the ‘Friends’ have grown in strength and we currently number 63. We have established ourselves as a registered charity and over the years we have managed to go some way towards fulfilling our aims.

- We have made several donations to the school to enable the internal fittings of the House to be improved
- We have raised money through our donations and other benefactors so that we can finance improvements to the House and grounds, admittedly relatively minor given the overall cost of maintaining a Grade 1 listed building but useful nevertheless.
- We have given hours of labour in restoring and maintaining the Rose Garden and the herbaceous border adjacent to it.
- We help organise the opening of the House to the public on Sundays in the summer, training and managing the Sixth Form guides
- We put on two events every year:
 - An Annual Dinner on the first Sunday in February when we have a visiting speaker who talks about some historical aspect of the House or about some of the characters associated with it
 - A Summer Evening meeting on the first Sunday in July when, after the short formal AGM, we have a short talk followed by a tour of the grounds.

We also publish a Newsletter twice a year. Membership of ‘The Friends’ is open to anybody interested, whether or not they have direct links with the buildings as a former pupil or teacher at the school.

To join, send a cheque for £12 (payable ‘Friends of Hinchingsbrooke House’) to the Treasurer, Ian Nicholls, 9 Glebe Road, Perry, Huntingdon, Cambs, PE28 0DG.

To find out a lot more about Hinchingsbrooke House, just enter the name in Google and be prepared to spend the rest of the evening finding out what a fascinating and historically important place it is.

Forthcoming events . . .

'The Friends of Hinchingsbrooke House'

Annual Dinner, Sunday, February 7th, 2010, 6.30 for 7 p.m.

Theme: 'Hinchingsbrooke and the development of a country estate'

Guest Speaker: Dr. Twigs Way, a garden historian

Tickets: **£20** from:

Ian Nicholls, 9 Glebe Road, Perry, Huntingdon, PE28 0DG. Cheques payable 'Friends of Hinchingsbrooke House'. Please enclose stamped addressed envelope.

O.H.A. Annual Spring Reunion

**Saturday, March 6th, 2010, at 7 for 7.30 p.m.
Hinchingsbrooke House, Huntingdon**

Guest Speaker: Dr. Rita Gardner CBE

Tickets: £21

Please use the enclosed reply-slip to book your tickets.

OHA Summer Lunch Reunion

Sunday, July 4th, 2010, from 12.30

An informal buffet lunch and a chance to look round the grounds, the school and the House.

Tickets: £14

Please use the enclosed reply-slip to book your tickets