

WHOBA

Magazine



Annual Review
2023





Old Boys'

Magazine



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For this year's magazine we have again looked into the archive to focus on some of the events in the years 1963, 1973, 1983, 1993 and 2003. The archive has really taken shape over the last couple of years and Tricia Moore continues the earlier work of Alison Houghton to organize and uncover gems from the numerous photographs and records.

2023 sadly marked the death of WHOBA President Davidson Taylor Gordon. As previously reported via the WHOBA section of the school website, he passed away on 8th March in New York. Davidson had a central role in establishing the WHOBA back in late 1966 when an initial meeting held in the White Swan (the Dirty Duck) unanimously decided the idea of the Association was a good idea. A second meeting also at The White Swan followed in December 1966, with a General Meeting in January 1967 being held in the headmaster's room at 24 St James Road with David Douglas also attending.

I would recommend if you haven't seen the website article, please take a moment to read more about Davidson and the early years of the WHOBA association.

Other association news is that Jean Pratt after many years of support for WHOBA decided to step down as one of the associations vice presidents. We thank her time and support.

The basketball and football continue to be well supported but unfortunately the cricket match was a wash out. However, the sun shone for the summer

open day that was again a brilliant event at the school giving old boys the chance to return and see the many changes that have transformed the school. You can read more detail about last year's events later in the magazine.

The association also held a meal at The White Swan in late October. While the numbers were small all enjoyed the chance to catch up and we will be holding another social meal in the Spring. When the date is set, we will announce it via the WHOBA website.

The other upcoming events are basketball just after Christmas, football and cricket and then in the summer we hope another WHOBA open day, building on the success of the last two open days.

The association greatly appreciates the continued support of the headmaster Mr. Lyttle and thank him for opening the school to the old boys.

Finally thank you for the feedback about last year's digital magazine and I'm pleased to say the decade boards from last year's magazine will in the New Year be loaded on the website with a zoom feature

Yours, Jeremy Thornton
WHOBAs Chairman.



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The West House Old Boys Association hosted an enjoyable summer luncheon on Thursday 15th June. Old boys, many who had not been back to the school for over 30 years travelled from all corners of the UK to meet up, tour the school and enjoy a fantastic lunch in the school dining hall.

The memories came flooding back and it was quite a job to get the old boys to stop talking and keep to the timing of the tour!

The Old Boys enjoyed spotting themselves in the photographs in big school.

Current Year 6 boys enjoyed the chance to interview the visitors and ask them about their school day memories.

Following on from a tasty lunch, the guests were treated to a musical recital by a few current pupils.



We will be holding another summer luncheon on Thursday 13th June 2024. Anyone interested in attending, please email:
whoba@westhouseprep.com



Basketball Match

We had a great turn out this year and we filled Duce Hall.

Old Boy Daniel Blackledge (2012) gamely stepped into Mr Denham's big shoes and volunteered to referee the match.

We welcome all Old Boys along to these events, regardless of when they left the school and they often provide surprising networking opportunities for secondary school aged boys looking for work experience placements.



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Football Match

Despite the wet weather approximately twenty Old Boys turned up to Richmond Hill on Sunday 26th March to play football.

Mr Sajjad refereed and reported that it was a well-matched game with the old-boys ages spanning from 11-57.

Thank you to all that made the effort to attend. Unfortunately the cricket match was cancelled due to the rain.



Final Score



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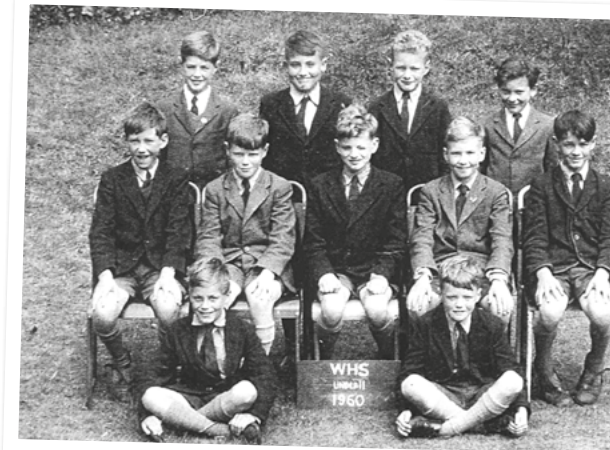
Class of 63

Old Boy, Edward Rutledge, organised an annual meet-up for the **Class of 1963**. Many memories were shared and we understand the bar bill was quite impressive too.

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Nick Gibbins, Nick Pearson, Alex Field, Jim Stokes, Tom Briant (front), John Hobbiss (back), Chris Wilkes, Paul Reading (back), Ron Middleton (front), Edward Rutledge, Shane de Lacy, Michael Kerr, Alex Field, Philip Porter



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Philip Porter was one of the old boys who joined the reunion. We persuaded him to submit his biography which we very much enjoyed reading and know you will too.

Passionate about cars and motor racing from an early age, Philip started competing in 1967 while still at school and won 10 of his 12 events in 1970 before parental pressure ended his aspirations.

After school, Philip studied business, becoming Chairman of the Aston University Conservative Association, Financial Director and then MD of one of the family engineering companies, while starting two companies of his own in his early 20s.

In the '70s he began collecting classic sports cars and in particular Jaguar XK 120s and 140s. His Fixed Head E-type, registered 9600 HP, was the original launch car and the oldest in the world, and his Roadster appeared in the film 'The Italian Job'. Both have been featured on Top Gear, in The Daily Telegraph and many articles and books. He has now owned the XKs for 50 years and the E-types for a shade less.

In the early '80s, Philip was commissioned to write a book on Jaguars and this led to a career writing motoring and motor racing books. He has written around 35, several of which have won 'Book of the Year' awards.

Philip's other interests include Sherlock Holmes and he joined The Sherlock Holmes Society of London in 1973. He was twice Chairman of the Society and organised many of the annual dinners including an event at the House of Commons when Stephen Fry was the guest speaker.

In the late '80s Philip became a hot air balloon pilot and began a fulfilling 10-year relationship with his sponsors, becoming the airship test pilot for Per Lindstrand's company. He has entered several international events and won a silver medal at the European Airship Championships in Luxembourg.



In 1995 he married Julie, an actress and theatrical director after meeting her at the Jerome K Jerome Society.

In 1997 they formed the International Jaguar XK Club and seven years later the Jaguar E-type Club. In 2000, Philip was commissioned by Orion to write a book about 9600 HP, entitled (against his wishes) 'The Most Famous Car in the World'.



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In 2001 Jaguar commissioned Philip to write a biography of founder Sir William Lyons for which Philip was jointly-awarded the Montagu Trophy by the Guild of Motoring Writers for the 'Book of the Year'. One of Philip's childhood heroes was Stirling Moss who became in the late '90s Patron of the XK Club and to Philip's great pleasure in 2005 they wrote the first of four books together.

With these books, Philip started publishing under the name of Porter Press International Ltd.

Philip's company has worked with Lord Bamford, Aston Martin, Sir Jim Radcliffe, Ross Brawn, Rob Walton of Walmart and a number of the leading car collectors in the world. In 2009 he wrote a

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book with Barry Cryer for which he interviewed Alan Bennett, John Cleese, Ronnie Corbett and others. Michael Palin wrote the foreword. Other forewords have been written by Sir Michael Caine, Lord Coe, Jools Holland, Nick Mason, Sir Tim Rice and Sir Jackie Stewart.

Several years ago, after recovering from prostate cancer, Philip came up with the idea of a Round Britain Coastal Drive for E-types, and later XKs. It was run annually on four occasions and, through a big team effort, raised a quarter of a million for Prostate Cancer UK for whom Philip was Motoring Ambassador. He also works with Jackie Stewart's Race Against Dementia charity.

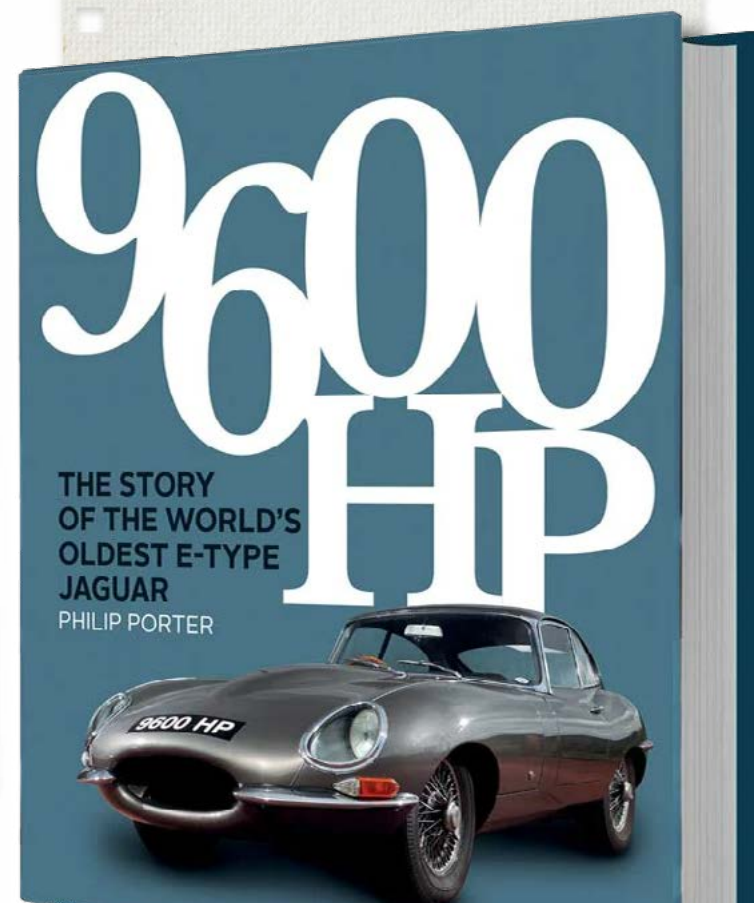
The company's offices are in a thatched 16th-century barn in the grounds of the Tudor farmhouse where Philip has lived, in Worcs, since 1978. He and Julie split their time between here, a small flat in Chelsea and a boat on The Thames.



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If any other old boys want to send us news or a longer profile piece please email:

whoba@westhouseprep.com We are always keen to hear your news and regularly add news and articles to the WHOPA section of the website throughout the year. We would like to have a page or two of old boys news in the next magazine.



Colts Football

Following the disappointments of the 1971 team, 1972 proved to be a much more encouraging session. We won six out of nine matches and drew two.

There were several 'second season' players who proved very useful, notably, Vernon, Kettle, Dixon, Jones, Upton mi. and Birtles. Also we were lucky in having two new boys who filled important positions - Prutton ma. At centre forward, and Eustace at right half.

It was some time before a notable goal keeper was found, but Healey provided some solid support towards the end of term, as did Wheatley ma. And Adams mi. at back.

In the final third of the term, there was increasing evidence of constructive tactical play and determined, thoughtful work, both of which will prove useful with the several younger players next season.

R.J.S

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My Summer Outing

On Monday 25th June all 4 B and 4 A when to Derbyshire, in separate cars. I went in Mr. Tucker's who was in charge of our outing. At about 11:30 am, we stopped to stretch our legs at Ashbourne Park and after we had played football there, we went on to Tissington, which was about a ten minute journey. We stopped at Tissington to have lunch.

After we had had lunch some old railway lines we had about a three and a half miles walk along the Tissington Trail. Once we got back to the cars, we went to Newhaven Caravan and Camping Park, where Mr. Tucker has a nice caravan. There was a shop there where we could buy souvenirs. I bought a bottle of pop, a pen and a badge. Here too, we had an early tea supplied by the school. When we finished tea, we all got into the cars and drove to Robin Hood's Stride, which is two pinnacles of rock mounted on some more rock. We played there until it was time to go. I enjoyed my outing.

D Brookes - aged 10

The following are extracts from the
1973 School Magazine



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H.M.S. Pinafore

Enthusiasm, enjoyment and a great deal of hard work went into the production of Gilbert and Sullivan's "H.M.S. Pinafore" and despite the occasional first night nerves the production went off well and was gladly received by both parents and boys. The School performance ran for two nights, the school hall being filled to capacity.

This brim-fill aspect applied to the stage itself, as the, bevy of Sir Joseph's "sisters and his cousins and his aunts", although they were not "to be reckoned up by dozens", obscured, at times, the main characters and restricted movement. Herein lies the main fault, but of course, the chorus is vital and the stage was small.

The sets, although fairly simple, were effective and by this standard the costumes also.

The size of the cast was too large for me to mention each member individually, but to the outstanding "stars" I give here a special mention.

Finer performances were given by White mi. as Buttercup and by Rutledge as a convincing boatswain simply because they were less inhibited than the rest. Kettle as Ralph Rackshaw and Arnold ma., cutting a dashing figure as the Captain, also presented realistic parts. Middleton, however, as Sir Joseph, on the fist night caught much of the spotlight, making up lines to the ones forgotten in such a way that W.S. Gilbert might have owned them himself. This compared with his undoubted stage presence, contributed to an excellence performance.

A lot of credit must go to Bridget Jones and Alan Tucker, who produced "Pinafore".

G.M.



West House School - June 1973



West House School 2XI Team - 1973



West House School Swimming Team - 1973



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Jeremy Thornton's recollections

While slightly outside of the central dates we are looking at in this year's magazine, we did notice that the old woodshop was opened in a year ending with a three - 1933. My strongest recollections of the woodshop are not connected to woodwork and carpentry but memories of the summer swimming gala.

Under the strict eye of Mr. Thomas, I recall dozens of boys waiting with a mixture of excitement and nerves before walking out to swim.

Personally, I always hoped the cold water shock didn't numb the muscles and I would be able to swim my length and reach the safety of the shallow end and the "comfort" of the bar at the swallow end through which the "warm" water flowed into the pool.

If you have any recollections about the woodshop or any part of school life, please drop an email with your stories to WHOBA - whoba@westhouseprep.com



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Dormitory Life

We had to include this lovely photo of dormitory life sometime in the 1980s, we think. Whilst the accompanying rules were written in 1977, we have it on good authority that they were still adhered to well into the 1980s.

Shirts

This was a moralistic tale called Shirts by John Challen. This was very much enjoyed. I have an undying memory of an, as ever, impeccable pint-sized Robert Yeung waiting to be collected outside the school after the play, complete with grey and maroon uniform, briefcase and bright pink punk air do. The boys thought we ought to adopt this as a permanent option! They were:

The Controller - Alistair Lyttle, Tim - Simon McIntosh, The Seller - Mark Nileswhar, One - Mark Ashwell, Two - Robert Yeung, Three - Minto Duggal, Four - Fraser Fergus, Five - Joshua King-Farlow, Six - Toby Martin

Under the Skull and Bones

The Senior School Production this year was of two short plays. The first, "Under the Shull and Bones", was a swashbuckling tale of young boy scouts privileged to have a view of pirates at their most hearty and heartless. In a world where children rule, the policeman finally mourns his lost youth with the words "Don't you never get old if you want to believe in pirates". The cast included:-

Bert - Jonathan Frank, Tom - Simon Coombes, Captain Cutlass - Arun Arora, Slit- Gizzard Bill - Jamie Southcott, Snooks - Jacob Low-Beer, Ramrod - Neil Jones, Bloodwinkle - Robert Jefferson, Slimy - Wajahat Hasmi, Blue-nosed Pete - Spencer Loades, A policeman - Benedict Ryan



GUIDE TO EVENING DUTY - DORMITORY TERM 1977

Duty lasts from 6 p.m. until just after 9 p.m. At the discretion of the duty person the boarders may swim at 6 p.m. for about 30 minutes (boys who swim do not need to shower). The boys are free to use the School facilities until bed times. Common Entrance candidates should spend at least an hour in the library. Most boys will be in the nets, gardening, in the grounds or around Woodbourne. Watch out for any silly behaviour and any possible confrontation with local boys in the waste ground.

Shower times are posted by the showers. Square dormitory come in by 7.30 p.m. latest and the others by 8 p.m. Ensure nets etc. have been left tidy. Check that boys wash and leave their clothes tidy. They should be settled in bed 15 minutes before lights out time. Square 8.30 p.m. lights out. Ensure there is silence after the rest 9 p.m. Ensure there is silence after the rest 9 p.m. Ensure there is silence after the rest 9 p.m.

Boys may watch television at the discretion of the duty person, if it is late evening they must be changed into pyjamas, slippers and dressing gown. Staff supper is at 7 p.m. in Woodbourne.

Useful punishments. Early to bed, off swimming, weeding the garden etc.

Evening task is given out at about 7.30 p.m. Boys change their sheets on alternate Mondays, their socks on Tuesdays and Thursdays and shirts and pants on Tuesdays.

Do not hesitate to ask me if any point needs clarifying.

G.K. Pace,
Headmaster.



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School Memorial

Captain Matthew Woolley (1981) of the 9th/12th Royal Lancers lays the wreath at the school memorial of Remembrance Day, watched by James Blackham, Neil McGuire and Luke Bell. The same year Captain Woolley was awarded the OBE. The school memorial from St James's Churchyard in 1985 to the grounds of the school, where it is still used today.

The school memorial was moved from St James's Churchyard in 1985 to the school's ground where it is still used today every Remembrance Day.



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BIRMINGHAM DIOCESAN REGISTRY

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DEPUTY REGISTRARS

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BIRMINGHAM B3 3BZ

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021-238 7878 (13 LINES)
021-238 3242 (15 LINES)

OUR REF R YOUR REF

11th April 1973

Dear Michael,

West House School War Memorial.

Thank you for your letter of the 30th March. I await hearing from you again when you have further progress to report.

I left West House at the end of the ^{summer} term in 1923. I should think that the unveiling took place during the triennium 1919-1921 but this is pure guesswork. The photograph which I took with a box Brownie and is very tatty and faded only shows the memorial and not the unveiling ceremony. I have still got it but a proper modern photograph would be very much more suitable. It need not be a professional effort. An ordinary snapshot will suffice.

Yours sincerely,

Richard

Michael Pratt Esq.,
South Hill,
170 Oak Tree Lane,
Bournville,
Birmingham B30 1TX.





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Pinocchio

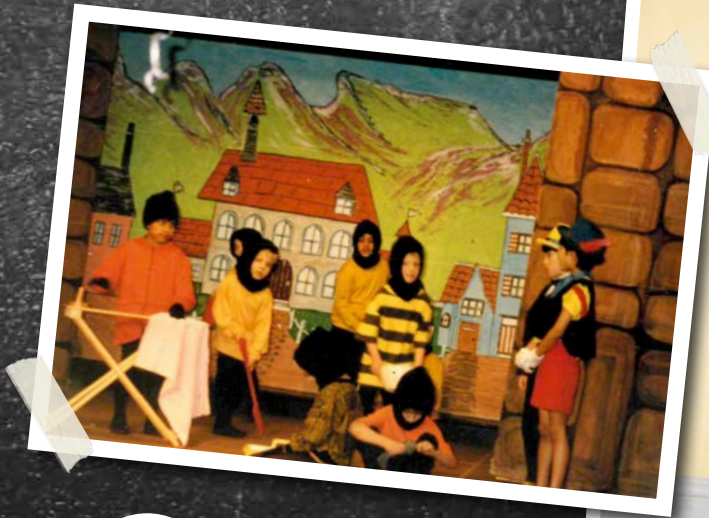
I was so pleased when Mrs Humphreys invited me back to West House to see the Junior School's production of Pinocchio, on Friday 4th December. I was looking forward to their usual well-polished performance and I was certainly not disappointed.

I really felt that it was the best Christmas production yet. All the boys acted with obvious enjoyment and enthusiasm and had worked hard to learn their parts, which they performed very well. The boys who played the main parts were convincing and Pinocchio was certainly a loveable rogue.

I must mention all the class groups; Toys, Puppets, Busy Bees, Circus Performers, Rough Boys, Nice Boys and Donkeys; their scenes were full of life and colour. The costumes were excellent, as were the props. Miss Fitton came back and painted the back cloth from my design. Congratulations to Mrs Humphreys and her staff for all their hard work and for giving us such a wonderful afternoon's entertainment.

Bridget Beard

Pinocchio - Simon Kang, Gepetto - Freddy Thomas, Antonio - Mark Patton, Blue Elf - Anish Sharda, Jimmy Cricket - Ciaran Nolan, Stromboli - Ronnie Banga, Coachman - Glen Sankey, Lampwick - David Harry, Archie - Charandeep Tank, Fox - Matthew Graham, Cat - Thomas Blackham, Policeman - Jonathan Rutledge



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We think these photos date from around 2003 which was Mr Duce's last year as Headmaster. The 2003 magazine reports that, "preparations are in hand to give the Headmaster and his wife a good send off in their retirement."

The magazine also reports that, "the next Headmaster of West House would be Alistair Lyttle (1984). Following in the footsteps of such a distinguished succession of former Headmasters – effectively only 4 in 109 years – could be seen as a daunting challenge: our Headmaster designate, however, is his own man and will surely rise to the occasion."

If you recognise anyone in these photos then please do get in touch:
whoba@westhouseprep.com

A Treasurer's Plea

Our costs go up but interests rates go down. Occasional donations, however modest, help us to bridge the gap and are greatly appreciated.

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Income and Expenditure Account

For the year ended 31 December 2022

2021 £		2022 £	2021 £
	Income		
	Annual subscriptions		1,293
	92 Bankers Orders	92	2,775
			32,000
			15,284
	Interest Received		
92	Total Income	92	51,352
	Miscellaneous		0
			51,352
	Donations		
136	Profit on sale of ties and badges	181	49,535
0	Profit on events	181	2,405
			51,940
	Expenditure		
	Old boys archive digitisation	(1,500)	
	Administration - postage & stationery		(817)
	Bank charges	(60)	
0		(1,560)	228
228	Deficit/Excess of income over expenditure	(1,287)	51,352

Balance Sheet

31 December 2021

	2021 £
Current Assets	
Stock of current Ties (£5.50 each)	1,054
Debtors	5,990
Loan - WHS	32,000
Cash on Current Account	15,316
Cash on Deposit Account	
	54,359
Current Liabilities	
Creditors	(1,500)
	(1,500)
	52,859
Represented by:	
Life subscriptions fund at 1 January 2021	51,940
Life subscriptions received in year (2022: 43 @ £65 each)	2,795
	54,735
Accumulated funds as at 1 January 2021	(588)
Deficit / excess of income over expenditure for year	(1,287)
	52,859



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