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QM FORMER STAFF ASSOCIATION

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Hon Treasurer and Social Secretary
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Dear Member

I hope you enjoyed the long-awaited summer weather.

Some happy news to start with. Bill Richards, who was Bursar at College from 1946-1978, celebrated his 100th birthday on 25th September. Dave Pank suggested that if he was willing and able, a group of us could go up to Oundle and take him out to lunch. Bill was delighted with the idea and consequently four of us – Dave Lawrence, Beryl Paine, Maureen Fry and myself, went up in Dave's car on 1st October. Sadly



Dave Pank contracted an awful cold and was unable to come – such a shame as the idea originated with him.

Two of Bill's friends – Margaret and John – brought Bill along to the pub, where we had a lovely meal, chatting and taking photos. Then Margaret and John very kindly invited us back to their house for coffee. We spent the afternoon reminiscing about College, the people and the friendliness amongst the departments. Of course College was much smaller then. Bill's mind and memory is as sharp as ever and he obviously enjoyed the memories. He had seen through five Principals during his time as Bursar and he was made a Fellow of the College.



We gave him a bottle of port on behalf of the Association and he asked me to thank everyone on his behalf. He said that he had received over 80 cards and letters, including, of course, one from the Queen. We plan to go to see him again next year.

On a sad note, Beryl Paine rang the home where Les Rackham (Maintenance) was living, to find out how he was and was informed that he had died some months ago. His niece, with whom Beryl had some contact, failed to let us know. Also, Bea Blake (Mike Saville's secretary) has died following a fall.

We have managed to acquire Room 108 in the Geography Department for our AGM this year. This will be held on Wednesday 30th October at 12.15 pm and the agenda is attached (minutes of the last AGM were sent to you in January 2013). As some of you may not remember the location of the Geography Department, we suggest that those coming meet in the main entrance of the College at 11.45 am. We hope this location for the AGM will be more convenient for you and look forward to seeing you there.

Following the meeting, and as we are not impressed by the current catering facilities at College, we plan to go to the "Weatherspoon's" pub near Stepney Green Station for lunch. This will not be a booked meal and you will be free to order food of your choice – the menu is quite varied.

If you come on trips or to any other event organised by the Association, it is quite likely that you will be photographed in a group. Please let me know if you do not want your photograph to appear in any publicity material or on the website.

It is always pleasing to be able to include articles or up-to-date information on members in the Newsletter, and I would be pleased to receive news from any members, even if you don't feel it is particularly exciting. However, if you have recently taken part in hang-gliding from the top of The Shard or climbed to the top of Ben Nevis, please let us know straight away!

BERYL PAINE WRITES: I was hoping to book tickets to see "Chorus Line" at the Palladium but unfortunately it closed at the end of August and I can't find another show we haven't already seen that I think would appeal to you. If you have a suggestion and concessions are available, please let me know and I'll try to book for January.

Meanwhile, please note our get-together for Christmas lunch will be on 11th December at 1 pm in the Harlequin Restaurant of the Kingsway Hall Hotel, Great Queen Street, off Kingsway. We were so pleased with the meal and the service when we lunched there before our visit to the British Museum in September that we decided it would be a good central location for members. It is only 5 minutes' walk from Holborn Underground Station on the Central Line.

A copy of the menu is enclosed and the cost, including wine and tea/coffee, is a subsidised sum of £7 per head. I have to order the meal in advance, so please indicate your choice and return the menu, together with remittance of £7 each to reach me no later than 30th November.

A reminder to those of you who pay your subscription annually that this was due on 1st October (£5 per annum).

Beryl

BERYL RYAN WRITES: Visit to Wimpole Hall, Farm and Gardens on Wednesday 10th July 2013: We began our journey to Cambridge by mini coach from just across the road from the College on what was a lovely sunny day. We were a very small group on this trip which is a pity because we did have a really great day out. It was so nice to see that summer had arrived at last, especially as the weather was so unpleasant on our last trip to Worthing.

We started our day there with some liquid refreshment taken at the stable block before embarking on our exploration of the hall. Wimpole Hall was bought by Captain George and Mrs Elsie Bambridge in 1938, when it was almost entirely empty of contents. Over the years they purchased pieces that were once either at Wimpole or had strong connections to the estate - the exquisite furniture, the delicate French porcelain which could be seen in the more formal rooms, showing how a grand country house would have looked in its heyday. There were also several more personal spaces that reflect the Bamberges' own tastes.

One original feature of this lovely house was the library of the Earls of Hardwicke, owners of Wimpole from 1740-1894. Wimpole Hall's library is one of the National Trust's largest which has Elsie Bambridge's own collection that includes books which belonged to her father, Rudyard Kipling. Of great interest was the Book Preservation Project. Paper conservators can be seen working at Wimpole Hall. They were removing stains

from over 200 books which were affected by a leak in 2010. Each conservator treats up to 50 pages a day using hot water and the project will take about 2 years to complete.

Because it was such a glorious day we did spend quite a lot of time exploring Home Farm with its wonderful shire horses and many rare breeds, the cutest piglets suckling alongside their mother and the rare cattle breed where a recently born calf could be seen in the paddock. There was also a very new arrival being watched over by its mother who didn't move from where the calf was sleeping and which was born only just hours before we arrived. It was lovely to see Beryl Paine grooming one of the donkeys which she did seem to be enjoying a great deal.

Our next port of call was the restaurant where we enjoyed a reasonable lunch and then a trip around the shop before returning home. I think everyone who came enjoyed this trip as it was very varied and had things to interest us all.

Visit to the British Museum to see the Life and Death in Pompeii and Herculaneum Exhibition on Tuesday 10th September 2013: Fifteen members met at Holborn station where we made our way to the very smart 4-star Kingsway Hall Hotel, which is just a short distance from the Royal Opera House, where we had a very good fish and chip lunch followed by ice-cream and coffee. The service was excellent. After lunch we made our way to the Museum, which was about a 10 minute walk away from the hotel, where we were booked to start our tour at 2.30 pm.

Sponsored by Goldman Sachs, this was the first ever exhibition on these two cities at the British Museum and the first such major exhibition in London for almost 40 years. Pompeii and Herculaneum, two cities in the Bay of Naples were buried by a catastrophic volcanic eruption of Mount Vesuvius in just 24 hours in AD 79. The result of this event has given us the most wonderful and fascinating insight into Roman life and this exhibition certainly shows us just what an advanced civilisation this was.

The exhibition showed us how, because of the two different locations, these two cities were buried in different ways. The artefacts uncovered and on display were absolutely fascinating and very beautiful. Furniture carbonized by the very high temperatures of the ash that would have engulfed the city of Herculaneum along with a baby's cradle that still rocks on its curved runners. I think one of the most fascinating exhibits was the cast of a family huddled together under the stairs of their villa in Pompeii and of a dog, fixed forever at the moment of its death.

This is indeed a great exhibition and well worth seeing.

Beryl

Yours sincerely



Sheila Fenn
Hon Secretary