NEWS OF OLD WILSONIANS

JANUARY 2021



OLD WILSONIANS' ASSOCIATION
(FOUNDED 1904)

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NEW YEAR MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT, MARK MACE

Usually, an incoming President writes a few paragraphs in NOW outlining plans for developing and improving the club during his tenure. However, we find ourselves in anything but usual times!
First and foremost, I'd like to thank my predecessor, Neil Kendrick, the OWA Council, the subsidiary clubs and especially the bar team for their efforts during the COVID pandemic. Because of their diligence, flexibility and hard work we remain on a very sound financial footing despite the extremely challenging circumstances we've faced for nearly a year now.

Recent achievements particularly worthy of note are;

- refurbished the ladies' changing and toilet facilities, which have been finished to an extremely high standard and are a vast improvement for our female members and guests.
- tennis club have upgraded the hard courts to artificial grass.
- installation of floodlights on the MUGA.

Since we've currently got no idea when lockdown restrictions will be eased, it's impossible to plan anything that would involve significant expenditure that isn't already committed to.
My immediate priority will be to continue the process already begun to change our legal structure and the club to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). I won't repeat the reasons for doing so here because it has been discussed at length in Council Meetings and AGMs over the last couple of years. If it has somehow passed anyone by and they want to know more, please get in touch with me. We've availed ourselves of specialist legal advice and are very close to finalising the first draft of our CIO Constitution, which I hope to submit to the Charities' Commission before Spring. Unfortunately, we don't know how long it will take for our application to be processed. We anticipate there will be some back and forth with the Commission along the way where further clarification is needed. I will provide updates via the Subsidiary Clubs, the website and NOW as things progress.

Simultaneously, we're about to start a project to reconfigure the men's upstairs changing facilities. Neil already had the plans for this drawn up and agreed with the relevant Subsidiary Clubs. It's a major undertaking that will be of particular benefit to the OWFC and OWCC. It is therefore being jointly funded by them using their John Brittain legacies as well as a grant from the Football Association, which we're in the midst of finalising. As soon as it is, work will begin and is expected to take a few months to complete.

This will be the extent of my focus for now. There are some other largescale projects potentially in the pipeline, such as a revamp of the clubhouse (arguably long overdue) and investigating increased water storage capacity to improve pitch maintenance. However, under our new structure, the Sports Club Council will drive decisions as to where efforts should be focussed, in consultation with the CIO Trustees. But we'll have to wait and see how quickly things return to normal after COVID-19 before anything can be decided.

Speaking of the new Sports Club Council, we are looking for volunteers to fill roles on the council and various committees that will manage the day to day running of the club. If you're interested in being involved please get in touch with me or any of the Subsidiary Club Chairs.

It does at least appear that there is now light at the end of the COVID tunnel. Albeit that we don't quite yet know how long the tunnel is! I look forward to sharing a drink or two with as many of you as possible at the club as and when restrictions are eased. In the meantime, please stay safe and well and remember: Hands – Face – Space!!

Mark Mace, President OWA

MESSAGE FROM PAST PRESIDENT ALEX FORBES

Hi everyone

Happy new year , although the latest lockdown feels worse than the previous ones.
The good news is the vaccine is rolling out & hopefully normality will follow , although I think its 3 months away .

Sadly Graham Watts passed away last week . I owe a lot to Graham as he was the matchmaker to getting Debbie & me together 26 years ago . He was our 1st Club Captain due to the ridiculous amount of work he did behind the scenes . Both Mike Pike & myself have written about Graham . Mikes is about how his presence transformed our club although how he was introduced is awry , but that was done over a number of large rum & cokes in Barbados with the big man . I will miss him . Pikey's and my tributes to the big man

Also condolences to Jon Hart on the passing of his mum & Paul Liggett on the lose of his mum , our thoughts are with you and your families .

Sport is shutdown for the foreseeable future , as are the school . There is a tennis update from Nigel Jordan. And the latest OWFC from Stuart Paton (but 25 years & 50 years ago updates)

Lastly Steve Holmes is running 5km a day to raise money for motor neurone disease in support of his Dad. Full details can be found here;

Good news is that 5 or 6 other members of the club are running daily support , that's our club. Well done on your support .

Stay safe, chat, ask for support if needed, always remember is a strength to ask not a weakness .

Hopefully see you all soon

Alex Forbes

Old Wilsonians' Association

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Old Wilsonians' Association, held on Tuesday, 8th December 2020 by video link, 19:30

Attendees: Neil Kendrick, Mark Mace, Alex Forbes, John Drabwell, Clive Peckover, Mick Pilgrim, Mike Pike, Malcolm Taylor, Ross Hartley, Chris Kingshott, Mark Williams, Toni Junge, Stuart Paton, Jamie Parkinson, Dave Welch, Bob West, Si Kidd, Chris Heayberd, Nigel Jordan, John Cornish, Nick Williams, Paul Woodward, Isobel Robinson, Jasper Gundry-White, John Howe, Nick Thompson, Tom Roberts, Nick Mole, Dan Harris and Roger Matthews.

1. Apologies for absence
Richard Smart, Ian Pilgrim, Graham Watts, Bill Hartley.

2. Minutes of previous meeting (Tuesday, 10th December 2019)
Neil Kendrick asked if it was agreed that the minutes of the 2019 AGM were an accurate record.
This was proposed by Mark Mace, seconded by Nick Mole and approved by the meeting.

3. Matters arising
Mike Pike raised the matter of a plaque being placed in the Memorial Garden to celebrate the lives of John and Janet Brittain. This was agreed to be a good idea and NK said he would take this forward.

Mike Pike went on to enquire if any progress had been achieved with the purchase of a sign for the bungalow, which was to be named the Brittain Bungalow. NK said he had had difficulty finding something which looked appropriate. If anybody else was more successful, then please let him know.

4. Report of the President/Chairman of Council *Neil Kendrick*
Well what a year that has been! The proverbial roller coaster –more and more people using the club and its facilities, a global pandemic, bar having to shut for long periods of time, sport not being played, beautiful summer days.
Through everything we continue to thrive. The reason for this is solely down to all of the hard work our sports club committees have put in. Tirelessly working to ensure, no matter what the extra work entailed, if allowed, our sports were able to be played. We owe a huge amount of gratitude to everything they have done. Without their efforts where would our members' mental and physical wellbeing be? We would certainly have not been in the stable financial position we find ourselves in.
While all our committee members have been outstanding; I would like to single out Jasper Gundry-White, Steve Millward and Steve Lawrence as having gone above and beyond, under ever changing government guidance, to keep the Club running. There are things that have not gone as smoothly as we would like; our newly formed streamlined OW Council has not really had a chance to function. The same can be said for the Sports Clubs committee; which I hope will, in the years to come, see best practice shared, and the different clubs working in a collaborative way for the benefit of the whole Club.
The move to change the Association into a much stronger legal format (Charitable Incorporated Organisation – CIO) has not been helped by the pandemic. We are now getting very close to finishing the new constitution, once that is finalised we will then apply to the Charities Commission to achieve charitable status and then transfer all the assets of the OWA over to the OWA CIO.

To do this we will need to hold an EGM later in the year to ratify this. In the meantime, we will also finalise how all the sports clubs and the Club itself will operate under the CIO purpose which is essentially the advancement of amateur sport for all Old Wilsonians and the local community. This means the advancement of any sports or games which promote health by involving physical or mental skill or exertion and which are undertaken on an amateur basis.
Initially the CIO will operate with 5 trustees, who will all oversee (from a distance) the running of the Club – the OW Council (6 members) will be responsible for the running of the Club helped by various sub-committees, and of course the Subsidiary Clubs. The makeup of the OW Council and it sub committees and how they operate will be voted on by the membership of the sports clubs with every member of the sports clubs having the right to vote.
The Trustees of the CIO will be voted in by Honorary Old Wilsonians, Old Wilsonians and past and present teachers at Wilson's School who are, or who have been, members of one of the Subsidiary Clubs.
Currently the Council would like to put forward
Mark Mace
Nick Mole
Mick Pilgrim
Alex Forbes
Neil Kendrick
As the first 5 trustees of the CIO – these would be voted on at the EGM.
In my first President's report I highlighted the following projects that I would like to see move forward

- Renovation and decoration of the main club house, including the Presidents lounge ladies changing room.
- Irrigation and water tank for the main ground
- Contract out, use of the kitchen to supply food for all events and functions.
- 3G 9v9 football pitch on Hawes Down including floodlights (assuming this would fit while keeping the cricket square and 2 x 11v11 pitches. Irrigation and water tank for the Hawes Down ground.
- Restructure of the Old Wilsonian Association, its Sports Club and constitution (more of this later)

We had hoped to get these completed by the end of this year.
The ladies' toilet, shower and changing room has been completed and I very much hope our female members enjoy this big improvement. The contracting out of the kitchen is an area we have not been able to investigate but I very much hope this is something the new Council look at. We are very close to completing the OWA restructure and without the Covid crisis we would have been able to complete the renovation of the main clubhouse. Excitingly, Alex and I met with the FA and the football foundation recently and they have agreed to a £25,000 grant which will allow us to complete renovation and restructure of the changing rooms provided for our grass pitches. Very recently, we have been included in the Football Foundation's Local football facility plan for Bromley which has earmarked £8 million pounds to improve football facilities in the borough. We have been highlighted as one of the 15 projects for possible funding for our 9v9 3G facility and improvement (in our case irrigation) for our grass pitches at both Hawes Down and Hayes.
There is much more that has been done to improve our Club which I know will be highlighted in all our Subsidiary Club reports, our members should be very proud of our wonderful Club.

5.Resolutions regarding status and structure.
In addition to the above report NK highlighted the fact that most users of the Club are not Old Wilsonians', and as such it was important that adjustments were made to acknowledge their wishes with regard to the operation of the facilities. It was for this reason and those that he had outlined in his report that the Council were looking for the following resolutions to be passed.
"It is proposed that the Association continue to trial the new OWA Organisational Structure for the day to day running of the Sports Club, in preparation for its acceptance as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation." This was proposed by Alex Forbes and seconded by Mick Pilgrim.

"It is proposed that the Association seeks authority to proceed to Charitable Incorporated Organisation status by means of an Extraordinary General Meeting when the timing is appropriate." This was proposed by Nick Mole and seconded by Alex Forbes.

Both resolutions were approved by the meeting.

Mick Pilgrim
MP gave a vote of thanks to NK for his work as President during a very difficult time, and in particular for extending his period of tenure from two to three years. During that time, he had overseen an upgrading of the ground maintenance programme, and arranged for the refurbishment of, the bungalow, the gentlemen's toilets in the Clubhouse and the ladies toilets and changing room. This was as well as dealing with the day to day issues that arose.
There was a general acknowledgement that these sentiments were well deserved.

Mast update
Nigel Jordan gave an update regarding the contractual situation with the Masts, explaining that the mast nearest the bungalow was contractually out of date. An EU initiative to drive down the cost of mobile phone usage meant that owners of the masts were looking to equate future rental costs to the estimated income generation potential of the land on which they were sited. Of late a much harder line had been detected from the operator of the mast with the expired contract and future negotiations would not be easy, with the offer of a vastly reduced contract currently on the table. Further developments are awaited.

6. Treasurer's Report
Nick Mole's Report

NM went through the income and expenditure figures for 2019-2020 referring to the balance sheet where necessary, and explained that the surplus had come out roughly the same as last year. This was accounted for by the income loss sustained by the Bar, due to the impact of Covid, being compensated for by a £25,000 grant received from Bromley Council to mitigate the impact of the pandemic. All things considered, financially matters had turned out far better than at first might have been anticipated.
NK praised NM for the work he had done since taking over as Treasurer, getting all the accounts on line and setting up a very proficient system, which had enabled the provision of up to date information. This combined with the new EPOS system which Jasper-Gundry White had introduced for the Bar, meant a much more immediate awareness of stock usage, cost and profit was available.
Nigel Jordan thanked NM for all his efforts and asked if it would be beneficial if all the Subsidiary Clubs brought their financial reporting dates in line. NM confirmed that it would.

Acceptance of the OWA financial accounts for 2019-2020 was proposed by Mick Pilgrim and seconded by Alex Forbes, the meeting was in favour of their being signed off.

7. Bar Report

John Drabwell's Report

In such a strange and different year worldwide, I think it's somewhat pointless to talk of figures and comparisons with the past. What I do feel is relevant and important is how the torrid effect of "Covid" has been addressed and dealt with.

To this end I would like to highlight the fantastic job that Jasper has done during the last 12 months. His effort and commitment to the difficult task in hand has been exemplary and continuous. Each and every member of the Old Wilsonians' should be extremely grateful for his fortitude and dedication that has enabled members to drink and enjoy themselves, whilst adhering to the Government guidelines, in a considered safe environment.

I would also like to thank the rest of the team, especially Steve who has taken on a higher workload and also shown much commitment to ensuring that we keep to the "safe" guidelines put in place. The bar staff have added greatly to the general atmosphere and shown pleasing dedication in the required "table service" which has been enjoyed and appreciated by so many.

The new "EPOS" system of payment and calculation that Jasper put in place after lockdown seems to be working very well and has been dealt with in a smooth and relatively easy manner. Our Association Treasurer, Nick Mole, has been very pleased with the transition and appreciative of the ease of reporting.

This new system has made it much easier for payment by card leading to less need for cash and change in the till. With this in mind, Gerry Adams has decided to take a well earned break from his bar team duties and has officially resigned from the bar team. I would like to take this opportunity to thank him wholeheartedly, on behalf of every member of the club, for all his work over so many years. His tireless efforts have been a great help and essential to the smooth running of the bar and beneficial to us all.

Needless to say that, although times have been different, the bar has enjoyed a high level of activity and members have taken full advantage of the conditions and the safe environment made available. Sales have been high and attendees have, for the most part, been well behaved, attentive and adapted to the conditions.

As we all know, this situation is far from finished and we must all continue to show commitment and diligence in dealing with it in the hope that we can all continue to enjoy a drink and a chat in and around our clubhouse.

I wish everybody well for the future and once again, a big thank you to the Bar Team for their outstanding work and efforts.

8. Sports Club report

The restrictions brought about by the impact of Covid, meant that no social events had taken place in the Clubhouse.

9. Clubhouse report

Paul Jenkins' did not submit a Report

Neil Kendrick, reiterated that plans were advanced to re-model the changing rooms and

refurbish the Clubhouse. Funds are available for the majority of this work to take place, but it had been thought prudent to hold back on proceeding with some aspects, until our income streams were fulfilling normal expectations. This would obviously depend on future developments with regard to Covid.

10. Ground report
Although not in attendance Steve Millward had submitted the following Report

2020 has been a challenging year. Whilst all sporting activities are still being disrupted by the pandemic, the facilities continue to be maintained to a good standard thanks to Ian Muir.
During the periods when some sort of normality was possible, issues with parking still arose but were thankfully much fewer.

Main Ground
Football – The 2019-2020 season ended early during lockdown and, as the pitches were in reasonable condition, renovations were scaled back more than usual and only 20 tons of root zone were spread over the outfield. In hindsight, this amount proved to be less than required as, even with the usual extensive and time consuming deployment of sprinklers, both pitches took all summer and some additional work to reach a good condition before the start of the 2020-21 season. New nets have also now been placed on the goals. The OWFC has increased the number of teams it runs on Saturday from eight up to ten and there are now eight 11-a-side junior teams on Sunday, as well as the vets and super vets teams. The frequency of matches being played had therefore started to increase and could have gone beyond what is considered ideal. In spite of this, and due in part to them being rested in the second lockdown, the pitches are currently in very good condition.
Car parking on a Saturday afternoon was not being monitored at the beginning of the year but since the start of the new season and with new restrictions in place, parking as well as all the pre and post match activities have been carefully monitored by Alex Forbes.
And, thanks to Mick Pilgrim for continuing to organise all Vets/Super Vets fixtures, the only senior football now on Sundays.
Note that the main ground will be available for football up to the weekend of the 17th/18th April 2021. Renovations will then take place over the next 19 days prior to commencement of cricket on Saturday 10th May.

Cricket – The new roller was serviced early in the year and extensive pre-season rolling commenced in March and continued throughout lockdown up to the start of an abbreviated season, with pitches rolled as required. This work, in conjunction with the renovations carried out at the end of the previous season, all helped to give a marked improvement in the pitches provided over the whole season. Hopefully this new high level will again be reached next year.
Some repairs to the covers will be required prior to next season to ensure they are in good working order.

Tennis – Leaves were again becoming a problem this autumn until the purchase of a “Billie Goat” leaf and litter vacuum, with integral chipper. So far, this has been a great success and, during a spell of dry weather, it will also be used to clear leaves that have accumulated in the cricket nets.
The two hard courts are being converted to artificial, with the artificial surface currently being laid down. Some tree pruning/felling will shortly be carried out between these courts and the O2 mast to remove overhanging branches and ivy covered trees and to allow more sunlight onto this section of the courts.

Hawes Down
Football – Due to lockdown and the curtailment of the season, the only areas that were significantly worn were goal mouths of junior pitches. Drainage was the main issue during the 2019/2020 season with a significant area of one 11-a-side pitch, that straddled the half-way line of the only 9-a-side pitch, becoming very boggy and unplayable after prolonged periods of rain. This necessitated renovations to be carried out to the problem area during the early summer. Unfortunately, this area had not recovered sufficiently when the 2020/2021 season began and so no matches were played on the 11-a-side or 9-a-side pitches until recently. It remains to be seen whether or not the renovated area continues to be playable after a prolonged period of rain. If necessary, I will arrange for HD to be verti-drained during the Christmas break and again during half-term in February.
Please note that HD will be available for 11-a-side football up to and including Sunday 2nd May 2021, with junior 9/7-a-side football guaranteed to Sunday 9th May.

Cricket – The HD square was continually rolled pre-season and throughout lockdown up to the commencement of the shortened 2020 season. There was a definite improvement in pitches provided and I trust that this will continue in 2021. The roller will require servicing before pre-season rolling commences in 2021.

General
A new irrigation system for the main ground still remains a top priority.
Ian Muir continues to be contracted to carry out all ground maintenance. Due to some reduction in the amount of work required during lockdown, it was agreed that there would be no increase to the amount paid to him for the 2020/2021 year.

Whilst on Sunday mornings, the OW Juniors have been employing a car parking monitor and the number of parking issues has dramatically reduced, capacity continues to be a problem on occasions when the league schedule too many 11-a-side junior matches at home. In spite of pitches now being hired at a separate ground, this situation will only get worse in the 2021/2022 when there will be around 35 teams, with at least 2 more 11-a-side teams. It should also be noted that ground along the edges of the driveway around from the main gates towards the bungalow and tennis courts is now being worn away due the amount of parking required on these grassed areas.
Additional hard surface parking spaces at the main ground are a necessity and must be considered in any future plans.

The maintenance contract for HD will again come up for renewal on the 1st March next year. The contract is subject to approval by both the OWA and the schools. I will be seeking the approval of the Heads for any new terms as well as going through any other issues that are included for discussion. Maintenance costs are now shared 50/50 between the schools and the OWA. Note that costs to outside contractors for verti-draining and large one-off renovations are paid 100% by the OWA.

The Gardening Team continues to regularly meet outside lockdown and has recently helped to plant a third memorial tree – the MacAlister tree, next to the Forbes and Kendrick trees.

Nk took the opportunity to thank Steve Millward for all he does for the Club and also complimented him on how good the grounds were looking.

11. Confirmation of President for 2020/2021
NK said that as highlighted last year, Mark Mace has been put forward to fill the role of

President for the next 2 years and it was a unanimous decision by the Past Presidents. Mark is one of the current Trustees of the Association and was Treasurer of OWA for several years and until very recently still made all the Association bank payments. Mark is a member of the Football Club who has played more than 400 games for the club and scored over 150 goals. Mark will bring with him, a wealth of experience from his working life as an operations manager and his years of working in the Association. NK very much hoped everyone would support Mark as they had himself over the past few years.
The election of Mark Mace as President was proposed by Alex Forbes and Seconded by Mick Pilgrim and passed by the meeting.

Response by Mark Mace
Mark thanked NK for his kind words and said how proud he was to be taking over the Presidency. Obviously, this was a difficult time, but also an exciting one. The Association was well on the way to submitting its application to the Charities Commission to become a CIO, also as the resolutions that had been passed earlier outlined, there is work to be done regarding setting up a new Council Structure, which will provide an opportunity for the Subsidiary Clubs and their members to become fully represented in the day to day running of the Club. This combined with the planned building and refurbishment work, will help us to ensure that we provide high quality facilities for the benefit of our members.

12. Election of Vice Presidents

Existing Vice Presidents:
Gerry Adams, Terry Adams, Ron Ashdown, Lou Barry, Bob Bevan, Fred Brindle, Mike Curling, Pete Davis, John Drabwell Alex Forbes, Doug Forbes, Mike George, Mike Harris, Bill Hartley, Ross Hartley, Neil Kendrick, Dave McCarthy, Andy McClniton, Mark Mace, Jim Matthews, Roger Matthews, Dave Mew, Cliff Milledge, Stuart Paton, Clive Peckover, Mike Pike, Ian Pilgrim, Mick Pilgrim, Stan Quantrill, Ian Rayworth, Gerry Reaseley, Andy Smith, Malcolm Taylor, Andy Udale, Dave Wakeford, Peter Wakeford, Les Wilks and Steve Wisson.

There were no nominations for Vice President this year.
All existing Vice Presidents were re-elected on block, having been proposed by Mick Pilgrim and seconded by Neil Kendrick and passed by the meeting.

13. Election of Officers for 2020/21

President:	Mark Mace
President Elect:	
Hon Secretary:	Roger Matthews
Hon Treasurer:	Nick Mole
Club Captain	T.B.A.
Hon Solicitor:	Vacant
Sports Club Secretary:	Anton Snowsill
Membership Secretary:	Mike Pike
Editor of NOW:	Malcolm Taylor
Webmaster:	Jim Lloyd, Alex Forbes
Bar Management Team:	John Drabwell, Jasper Gundry White, Steve Lawrence
Ground Manager:	Steve Millward
Buildings Manager:	Paul Jenkins
School Liaison Officer:	Andy Parkinson
Membership Committee:	Paul Jenkins, Mark Mace and Mike Pike

Disciplinary Committee: Gerry Adams, Clive Peckover and Mick Pilgrim
Appeals Committee: President and two members of the Management Committee

All of the above were Proposed by Mick Pilgrim and Seconded by Neil Kendrick on block and passed by the meeting.

14. Election of Honorary Old Wilsonians

Existing Honorary Old Wilsonians:
George Wing, Graham Watts, John Lucock, Ray Neve, Paul Jenkins, Denise Pilgrim, Stephen Millward, Clive Prince, Jasper Gundry-White, Nigel Jordan, Andy Steel, Nick Fuller, John Martin, Jill Forbes, Caroline Maxwell, Jan Jenkins, Judith Heayberd, Bob West, Norman Holmes, Archie Whitaker, Jake Johnson, Chris Gurr, Adam Stone, Tony Sherlock, Margo Lawrence, Justin Pryor and Laki Kastiruratne.
There were no nominations for Honorary Membership this year.

15. Reports of subsidiary clubs

Senior Football
Alex Forbes Report

One key decision that was made over the summer of 2019 was how many sides to run and at what level. We had no one to run the 5th XI and were in danger of going down to 7 sides from 9. The previous 6th XI were no more as the majority of players had left for university so that would be 2 sides lost. Ian Wellman offered to run the side but would use a bank of players that were non-old boys. It was decided that we would do this as we had concerns for the finances of the club to run on less sides. The committee continue to review this decision but from a financial and playing strength side of things we are certainly better off for it. They ended up finishing above the 4th team so we have swapped them over for this season.
Another big decision was the hiring of a 1st XI management side who would also oversee training. This would be mainly coordinated by Jon Howe and Andy Parkinson. There have been some issues, training has not run from Christmas due to lack of attendees and there continues to be issues with commitment of players at 1XI level and actually throughout the club (although this has improved). A great example of this was the Surrey Premier Cup loss at Farnham Town where a very make shift team was put out against the strongest side in the competition. On the night we may have pulled off a shock if the Club President hadn't buried one in his own net with 15 minutes to go. In the main the committee feels this has been a positive step. Dan has worked hard throughout the season and with some increased links to the youth section we feel this is the way to go. This venture will continue to be reviewed going forward. They have started this season poorly and before lockdown 2.0 sat bottom of the league, however commitment and availability seemed better so we are hopeful of an improvement.
Another piece of excellent news was the securing of kits by Jon Howe for every side by using sponsorship. We have always struggled with this but constant badgering from Jon has led to all sides gaining a new one last season. I have just won another one on twitter so kit wise we are looking good!
The new annual subs regime was also introduced and was a success with the lure of kit as part of your subscription meaning that many more signed up early. This also bought the vets/ supervets more in line with the rest of the club. The committee will continue to look at this and look for the best way to decide and collect subs going forward.
Jon, continues to do some excellent things with Ways and Means and his various remote

competitions continue to bring in much needed funds alongside things like the raffle and togger. Huge thanks to Jon, as you can see from this summary, he does a lot. We do clearly have a shortfall on this due to the enforced break and although the golf day will run in August we will need to look at increased revenue next year due to missed events like the OWFC 5 a side.
A huge thanks to Jamie Moniz who has become our self-appointed grants man. He has so far secured a £5k pitch grant and is currently applying for other sources of funding during this lockdown. Stu Paton also deserves credit for taking over the newsletter and certainly given us a greater online presence. His continued work during lockdown has given us all something to read during the week and keeps our spirits up.
The club has continued to engage and develop its mental health provision and this has only increased during lockdown.
On the field we had a very successful season until Covid-19 kicked in and resulted in all leagues being expunged. The 3s, 5s and 7s all had a good chance of promotion and although this was denied by events, I hope that some of those sides will move up leagues in any reshuffles that occur. Elliott, Ian and Aaron must be applauded for their efforts with these sides and hopefully they can kick on again next year.
The 1s had a little bit of work to do but Dan Stribbling should be pleased with his first year as coach with a young team. The Surrey Premier Cup was a struggle but again we disposed of a non-league side in the form of Westfield Reserves, we lost a tight game to HAC in the AFA cup and were disappointed to lose to Finchleians in the OBC semi -final, a team from a lower league. With a little more application from the squad there could be good times ahead for this group.
The 2s had a much better year and would have probably finished 4th having tailed off after and amazing start to the season. 4s and 8s also had solid seasons and I am sure the 6s will do better next year!
The vets continue to get better and if they can get their full side out will be very strong as many have been playing 1s and 2s football recently. The supervets continue to play regular games and this side of the club has the potential to develop further.
This season has clearly been a huge challenge with COVID. The committee have done a huge amount to make football as safe as possible. We have a COVID risk assessment and all players now have to sign a code of conduct which include signing up to COVID procedures. James Sparrow is our newly appointed Safeguarding Officer and he did a huge amount of work during lockdown to get the policy side of things up to date. Stu Dunk has taken over the finances and Jon Howe has moved to selection which seems a lot better. We have put together a working party to look at school recruitment which was very successful this year and we have players playing in all teams from 4-9s, even putting out a 10s one week due to excess players. On the positive side of lockdown we recruited lots of players and as such Michael Hoffman (Jr) is captaining a 9s. They are unbeaten and had just entered a league pre lockdown. Pre lockdown both 1 and 2s were struggling in the league. All other sides were looking good with the exception of the 6s and the 4s are top of the league. We managed games from August to October and look forward to the season re opening at some point. The vets have won all their games and look very strong this year.
Once again huge thanks to all the volunteers who make this club tick. From those in the bar that welcome our visitors, to the skippers and the committee. Without these people giving up hours of their free time this great club wouldn't exist. Special thanks to James Kyne who has stepped down after a very tricky year with fixtures and referees.
Our main aims are for this season.

1. Plan and return to playing football in a safe manner in light of Covid-19– we have procedures in place & a Covid officer

2. Oversee the use of the Brittain money to build new changing rooms and improve

the facilities for our members. Ongoing

3. Integrate the new position of Welfare Officer into the club structure. Done & policies & procedures in place

4. Look at the constitution in light of our changed membership. We are now running at about 50% non-old boys and this is not what our constitution says. Whichever way we go, the two things need to match up. ongoing

5. Continue to work at our relationship with the school. We are just not recruiting very many schoolboys or university returners. There are many reasons for this but we must try and reverse this trend. Trend reversed recruited 24 schoolboys

6. Develop a system in which all “data” can be collected in one spot. Presently there are some gaps that need addressing. completed

Junior Football
Mark Williams and Chris Kingshott's Report

Introduction
It has been another year of good progress for the Junior Football Section. We have added additional teams including a second girls team and there has been noticeable growing interest from players wanting to trial for our teams.
Our 2019/20 season came to an abrupt end in late March this year with no further matches played. League table positions were expunged and cup competitions ended.
Once the initial lockdown period ended, training resumed, albeit with restrictions on the ratio of coaches to players allowed and stringent hygiene practices in place, we were one of the first clubs to reintroduce organised training with our coaching partner APD.
This allowed us to get ahead of other local clubs and recruit players early for the 2020 season. Generally, our teams are now strengthening across most age groups but we are staying true to our principles of allowing all existing players to remain as members of the Club should they wish to do so.
The 2020/21 season started in September and we entered 31 teams into the Tandridge League. The current lockdown means we are unlikely to have no more than one game before Christmas.
Membership
Membership showed a healthy increase as a result of our new teams. We decided to keep our fees at the same level, and know this represents exceptional value. However, we expect to have to raise fees for the 2021/22 season to cover increased coaching and training venue costs. Our finances were also hit in the final two months of last season as we did not collect monthly fees for April and May due to the early cessation of football. The training we provided in the Summer when we came out of the first lockdown period was also provided for free as a goodwill gesture to help children who had been without exercise and football. This cost us additional money but we felt it was the right thing to do, and as mentioned earlier, it enabled us to recruit players early.

Growth/ Facilities
We have taken on additional space for Sunday matches at Warbank FC in Layhams Road. This arrangement allows us to ease congestion at the Club. Midweek training venues have also been expanded from Bromley Town FC to include Ravensbourne and Bishop Justus schools. Bromley Town FC, at very short notice, removed one of our midweek training slots hence the change to Ravensbourne; we will continue to monitor this situation as it

caused a lot of work for us in sourcing a new venue. We are open to moving to a new venue entirely if Bromley cannot guarantee us space and/or their charges become too expensive (a possibility given the expansion at Bromley)
We are also continuing our very successful minis sessions at the Club, now held on a Saturday. These are important for the Club as they feed our new u7 teams.
Despite our growth, the view of the Committee is that we are at, or very near to maximum capacity based on pitch availability, club facilities and general oversight/management. Although a large Committee, the Club's growth does need carefully managing and the focus is now on making sure our teams are run in the right way, with the right approach and strong coaching practices. We are therefore likely to restrict the number of new teams in the 2021 season.

Issues
The biggest challenge we have is one of parking and managing relations with the Hayes Hill residents. Before our 2020/21 season started, we received complaints from residents and as a result we have taken action to limit away team traffic and by having parking monitors in attendance on Sunday mornings. We will continue to keep this under review. We are also mindful of the fact that more junior members means a greater need to ensure that the behaviour of children at the Club is both respectful and controlled. We continue to communicate with our managers and members regularly to remind them of their responsibilities.

Other matters
We continue to hold our accreditation as a Charter Standard Club
Adam Stone became an Honorary OW Council member in recognition of his services to OW
Lee Reid was appointed as our Covid-19 officer.

Cricket
Mike Pike's Report

It has of course, been the most surreal of years for all of us, and I would like to congratulate all of the sports clubs who have been able to play in 2020 and thank all of those who have made this possible.

As far as the Cricket Club are concerned we were not able to play any 'proper' cricket until well into July, although we did manage to use the Nets from May, and before Coronavirus started to bite, won an indoor competition to be crowned champions of the Kent Metropolitan League Division Two.

When we did get onto the field of play, we were able to organise games for both the colts and senior sections and although the former's results were not outstanding – mainly because the games were against the so-called 'bigger' clubs - everyone enjoyed themselves and, thanks to our excellent team of coaches, made significant progress in their cricketing skills, to the extent that many progressed to playing senior cricket during the year.

As far as the seniors themselves are concerned, the Sunday Development side had their fixtures reduced from eight to four and although the results were a little disappointing – they, like the colts, were pitted against some very big clubs – the raison d'être of this competition was certainly accomplished and the skills of the participants were developed.

As for Saturdays, our 3rd and 4th XIs effectively completed their original league fixtures, albeit without the pressures of promotion and relegation, and both performed well.

The 1st and 2nd XIs were involved in a mini-league involving local clubs, the majority of whom play in higher divisions than ourselves, and both can claim that they punched above their weight, particularly the 1st XI whose division contained all but one side above them in the league structure. However, despite this, by beating the Premier league 2019 champions Beckenham, on the last day of the season, they finished top of their league.

Not to be out-shone our T20 side, containing a mixture of 1st and 2nd XI players, also played Beckenham, this time in the quarter finals of the Cup competition and again beat them, before taking on Bexley, who had been Premier league runners-up last year in the semi-finals, and beat them too. They will now play Tunbridge Wells, who finished third in the Premier league in 2019, in the final in May next year – Covid permitting, of course

So, in summary, it is true to say that the Old Wilsonians' Cricket Club overcame all of the difficulties placed in its way and accomplished a very successful 2020 season.

The Cricket Club Chairman Dave Welch also reported.

This is my first year chairing the Cricket Club and it has been an incredibly challenging period with the external disruption to the best-laid plans affecting the Club materially. I leave the playing report to Mike who has elucidated the success that the players had on the pitch and reinforcing the idea that the Club is increasing its stature and can feel confident going into subsequent seasons. The other piece of the platform for future success has been the development of the coaching structure which has been impressive, and the Colts section in particular have come through this season well given all the challenges faced.
It is, however, important to note that whilst the playing side of the Club has seen a success there have been significant headwinds. The timing of the disruption meant that we were unable to collect membership fees and sponsorship and were only able to collect match fees from the time we were able to play. This had a dramatic effect on both fees collected and fund-raising and as such we are in a relatively precarious current account position financially and any significant disruption to next season will need to be managed carefully. If we are able to have a proper cricket season then we will be able to restore a level of financial strength.
It has been good to see the evolving of the Sports Club Committee which I see as essential to the future development of the Club as a whole and, in my opinion , we will be more successful if we work together. There has been a great deal of miscommunication, or lack of communication , which needs to be improved if we are all to prosper and there has been disruption to all aspects of running a sports club over the last year but it is imperative that we all work together to achieve the best result.
I look forward to building on the relationships already built within the different parts of Old Wilsonians and to helping evolve the Club, and am convinced that there is huge potential. We have been extraordinarily resilient to the challenges faced over the last year with notable successes, csuch as the efforts to make the clubhouse as safe and available as was possible.

Tennis
Nigel Jordan's Report

This has been one of the most unusual years in our history. But unlike most of the sports

at Hayes, tennis has been permitted throughout much of 2020 – albeit in modified forms. We have been relatively fortunate.

In short, we had to lock down completely on 23 March 2020. From 13 May we were allowed to start playing singles on alternate courts with gaps between bookings. As restrictions eased we were able to use every court but with staggered start times, we dropped the gaps between bookings and started playing doubles. Group coaching was not allowed until July so Jake and his team were initially restricted to 1-2-1 coaching. Then we had to close again from 5 November!

But the club, and the sport of tennis, will come through this unpredictable year in fantastic shape. Our members showed tremendous loyalty by renewing their memberships in March just as lockdown was looming. We all tried to look after Jake and the coaching team. We looked after members of the Squash & Racketball club too. And when more playing options became possible in the summer we have benefitted from a significant increase in new members – taking our overall membership to record levels. We are now in the astonishing position of starting to consider when we declare our club to be full.

In spite of the strange circumstances that have existed there are many notable **THINGS TO HIGHLIGHT:**

- We opened up our facilities very quickly and always kept abreast of the fast-changing LTA guidance for keeping our members safe. That involved an enormous amount of work, usually at very short notice, so there has been much more to do than in any normal year;
- Membership has grown remarkably – right across all age groups. Judith Heayberd does an amazing job with this and the court booking system;
- Our facilities are in excellent shape – and thanks to John Drabwell for overseeing a significant number of projects this year:
  - The Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) now has LED floodlights – and thanks are due to Andrew French who oversaw that project;
  - .. and the two hard courts have been re-surfaced with carpet to match the other four courts to expand capacity and increase flexibility;
  - ….and a special thanks to Chris Gurr for the many hours he has spent on improving and fitting out the hut, on organising teams of volunteers who have done numerous maintenance jobs, large and small around the courts and pavilion;
- We successfully passed the LTA safeguarding audit – they commented that we have created an open and transparent culture of safeguarding, keeping all our members and guests safe in an environment that is welcoming and friendly – all done under the watchful eye of our Welfare Officer Judy Evans;
- Our finances remain very solid – even after record amounts of spending in 2020 – thanks to our Treasurer Bob West;
- Our coaching programme under Jake's RAW Tennis banner had to curtail its activities when only singles play was allowed but it has returned stronger and better than ever. Throughout the early stages the club took considerable trouble to make sure our coaches were supported, emotionally and financially;
- Oli Weller– our popular home grown young coach – continues to expand and develop the sessions we can offer. And Gino and Chantal Demichelli have added a different dimension to the performance coaching available. Thank you all!
- We managed to complete the annual Club Championships in spite of all the restrictions. It was terrific to see an even younger generation of talented young players stepping into the limelight. Thanks again Chris Gurr for running that event so efficiently;
- Our club's social sessions are becoming increasingly well attended, but being

unable to put on the full calendar of social and tennis events this year did mean we all missed out on lots of opportunities to create new friendships. Hopefully some semblance of normality will return in the New Year;

- Our box leagues for the youngsters (thanks to Laura Perrins), the cash prize tournament for 18-25 year olds and the upcoming singles box leagues initiated by John Goskie all help to ensure there is something for everyone;
- We have taken the first tentative steps as part of the LTA's drive to "open up" tennis by making our most unused court hours available for local non-members to book (i.e. hire for a suitable fee) via the LTA Rally app.

MATCH RESULTS - In terms of competitive play, the summer 2020 season was cancelled. But last winter we ran two men's teams, who each finished mid-table in divisions 3 and 5 respectively. Our ladies team won their division but lost in the play-off final to Bromley Cricket LTC but were nonetheless promoted. Congratulations.

And our 12 & Under Boys team won their final of the National League Winter event. They were in Division 2 - North Kent B and initially played four matches in their division of the event, then a semi-final at Canterbury to reach the final without dropping a single match. Eventually they hosted their postponed final against Shooters Hill, the match being held over from 29 March due to the pandemic. Old Wilsonians' won the match 3-0. Congratulations, boys.

THE FUTURE

Our AGM was held successfully via Zoom on 10 November. We elected two new Committee members and another two new volunteers are willing to be co-opted too. This is a very positive sign and will hopefully allow us to continue the slow process of handing over the reins from the "old guard" to the next generation.

Priorities for the year ahead are:

- Completing the unfinished items from the 2020 plan;
- Reviewing our constitution to ensure we have what we need, and that it will dovetail with the OWA as it continues the journey toward converting its legal structure to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation;
- Continuing to keep people safe if the pandemic is still with us;
- Ensuring we offer credits to members who lost out through the lockdown;
- Making sure the club looks after the new members who joined this year;
- Sorting out our club records, putting everything into a secure cloud storage so important material is no longer held on personal devices;
- Reviewing which tennis nets need replacing and assessing the perimeter netting which is really starting to become problematic;
- Re-examining our summer 2021 league entries because we have many more adults;
- Considering whether more major projects are needed to keep our facilities at the highest standards – LED floodlights, renewing the four carpet courts, sorting out the path from the bungalow; widening the path to the little hut to avoid the risk of members falling off the edge;
- Considering the question of when we declare our membership to be full.

This has been a difficult year. In truth the tennis club has just got on with it. However, I wish to put on record that I have felt almost completely detached from the Association throughout the past 12 months - actually longer than that. That is not something I would like to see continue, and at present it seems to be getting worse rather than better. Maybe

we need a bit of a re-think of how we operate until the new CIO legal structure is completed. In any event, I hope the incoming President and OWA Council will address the lack of interaction between the sports clubs and the centre of the Association.

Squash and Racketball
Nick Thompson's report.

It's been a peculiar and busy first year in my new capacity as Chairman of the OWSRC. Ross, my predecessor, must have intuited what was to come when he stepped down at the end of 2019.

The year started inconspicuously enough. The Priory squash team continued their rich run of form in the South East Kent League, and our members played and socialised in a way which now seems nostalgic.

Covid rather upended things, including our traditional calendar: lockdown and the subsequent government measures prevented us from running our annual handicap tournament and our internal box and external Priory league have been temporarily abandoned. Squash and racketball as we all know it, ended in March.

However, in the absence of normality, progress has still been made toward the development of our club and in more positive news, we were awarded a grant from Sport England in July, which covered our lockdown revenue losses, and have since invested in springy new Junkers flooring and an innovative new underfloor heating system on both our courts. This should address some of the issues we have faced in the past and give us a USP that most other clubs in our area cannot match. It will also mean our members can play comfortably in their shorts throughout the winter and without breathing out a cloud of condensation as they exhale!

Assuming the Pfizer vaccine is widely distributed in early 2021, we intend to go on a recruitment drive for new members to help the club grow further and make it more competitive once play returns to normal. We will create a new Facebook page for our sports section and hope to get some coaching going again when we can.

Next year we will also resume our annual court maintenance and plan to move to a contactless light-meter payment system in the Spring.

From my end, I would like to thank all our members for their patience and continued support over the past year, and also mention the tireless work of our committee members, who have volunteered a lot of time and energy over the past few months. A special mention to Anton in this respect, who has gone above and beyond the call of duty on numerous occasions. Thanks mate!

Before the most recent lockdown we noticed a large uptick in daytime play – which we suspect might be a result of people working from home – so this may be an area of growth for the club going forward, as remote working becomes the norm.

I am sure that early next year we will return to business as usual and I, like the rest of you no doubt, look forward to getting back on court again.

Netball
Toni Junge's report

It's been a very unusual season, we had a total of 19 members sign up (11 full members and 8 league members).This is lower than previous years and attendance at the Wednesday night training sessions was very up and down. In mid-March we were hit with

COVID and everything got shut down, we were not permitted to start training again until mid-June and even at this time we were restricted to only being able to have 6 individuals train together, without being able to pass a ball. On the 17th August we were given the go ahead to have up to 30 people on the court and were able to pass the ball!!

The NWK League on Saturday mornings at Bromley High School was delayed and due to start again on 14th November, unfortunately due to lockdown #2 this has been put on hold again and we are unsure when this will resume.

Junior netball at the club in connection with Shooters Netball has been doing really well, however this was also heavily impacted by Covid and was unable to return from the first lockdown until 17th August, this is also on hold at the moment due to lockdown #2.

AGM - 16th September 2020

Election of Officers –

- Chair – Toni Junge
- Vice Chair – Isobel Robinson
- Treasurer – Katherine Austin
- Membership Secretary – Joanne Champkins
- Coaches – Chloe Junge & Denise Pilgrim
- Team Captains – Joanne Champkins and Toni Junge
- Welfare Officers – Katherine Djemali and Isobel Robinson
- Covid Officer – Chloe Junge

The future direction of the club was discussed and it was agreed that getting new members was a priority. It was important that we had enough players at the Wednesday night training to be able to play matches.

Following this we created a 'Wilson's Netball Club' Facebook page to promote the club. We advertised a 6 week return to netball program to encourage a return to netball after lockdown and was very pleased to get 21 new individuals signing up. Unfortunately after week 5 we went in to lockdown #2 but anticipate that at the end of the 6 week program (whenever this will be) we will get a good number of these individuals to sign up for full membership.

We usually start new memberships from September but due to Covid the committee made the decision to put this on hold until the New Year.

16. Any Other Business

Malcolm Taylor said that he would be looking to issue a copy of NOW magazine in January and it would be very helpful if the Minutes of the AGM for 2020 could be included. RM thought that this should not prove a problem.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8:45pm.

THE PANDEMIC CHALLENGES OUR IT SKILLS

Which button do I press so that you can see and hear me?

As this most surreal of years comes to an end the most important event in the Old Wilsonian calendar –its AGM – took place on December 8th albeit in a 'Zoom' format because of the restrictions in process as the consequence of Coronavirus.

The meeting saw the end of Neil Kendrick's term of office as President – he held this position for three years rather than the traditional two, and not even Donald Trump could increase his term of office by 50%, and our sincere thanks are due to him for the way in which he has steered us through this most difficult of times. Neil is succeeded by Mark Mace, a most worthy and able successor, having already served a term as Treasurer of both the OWA and the Senior Football Club and been the architect of one of our Constitutions and, amongst other things, he now has to address himself to another version to take account of our proposed charitable status.

Mark has also played over 400 games for the Football Club and scored 165 goals, although he claims that this is an under-estimate, certainly as far as the latter is concerned. In his valedictory address Neil proclaimed that Coronovirus has meant that the proposed refurbishment of the Clubhouse has not progressed in the way and with the speed that we would have liked, but this remains a priority, with the renovation of the ladies toilet and shower area all but completed.

Progress has been made to make the Association a 'Charitable Incorporated Organisation' in order to take cognizance of its current constitute parts and, once completed, will be presented to an Extraordinary General Meeting of the membership for their consideration.

Treasurer Nick Mole reported that, despite all of the difficulties, Club finances have held up well, whilst the reports from the subsidiary clubs can be summarised as follows:

Senior Football A working party has been established to look at school recruitment, which has been very successful, whilst their Constitution is being looked at in light of their changed membership.
Junior Football Currently have 31 teams in the Tandridge League, now have a second girls' team and are strengthening across all age groups.
Netball Club Held their AGM in September which discussed the further direction of the Club, with recruiting new members being a priority, and have created a 'Wilson's Netball Facebook' page to promote this ambition.
Tennis Club Has shown continued growth in all sections, with coaching sessions for 'novices, improvers, intermediates and advanced players.'
Squash & Racket Ball Have invested in under floor heating, are looking to a recruitment drive and have noticed an uptake in day time play, probably the consequence of more people working from home.
Cricket Despite the fact that Coronavirus did not allow any cricket until mid July, both colts and seniors had enjoyable seasons with the T20 side reaching the final of the Kent League competition, which will be played in Tunbridge Wells next May.

It was agreed that the Association will continue under its current structure until Charitable status is achieved and thereby better represent the current membership of our thriving Club – you do not have to be a former pupil of the school to be an Old Wilsonian.

My ineptitude as far as IT is concerned is well-known, so how was I able to attend this virtual meeting? Step forward Dave Welch, the esteemed Chair of the Cricket Club, who kindly agreed that I could do so via his vast array of the necessary equipment displayed in his equally vast kitchen – it has also got under-floor heating and 'Alexa' which, amongst other things, can turn lights on and off by a simple instruction.

Meetings of the Cricket Club have also taken place in a similar fashion throughout the pandemic and Dave has been equally accommodating in order that I may participate. Just before the meetings start the participants ask for permission to be admitted and, upon being given the green light, their faces pop up on a screen until it is awash with the visages of those involved. The more people attending the smaller the images become, and thanks to Dave's camera, they can also see me as well as each other ; bad luck cricket club.

Coronavirus meant that we were unable to play any cricket until the middle of July, but we did play a virtual version of the game by which those with the requisite IT skills were not only able to take part but could also hear a ball by ball commentary of all of the games; 'Test Match special' has been alerted.

The announcement of 180 redundancies at 'The Guardian' and 'Observer' newspapers meant a busy time for the Union's committee, and I was able to attend these via a telephone number which, upon dialling, informs me that:"You have joined Google Chat. Please insert your password followed by the hash key" and, having completed these instructions, I am invariably told: "You have joined the meeting, but you are the only one here." Eventually others do join and do so relieved at the thought that they cannot see me, although they can hear me but, then, we do not live in a perfect world.

I have also joined the TUC's Pensions committee and the GPM Charitable Trust meetings by such methods. Sometimes participants are put 'on mute' and 'the host' of the meeting has to press a button so that everyone can hear them, which is often a double-edged sword – we have all been at meetings where someone likes the sound of his/her own voice and assumes everyone else has the same opinion.

Then there is the question as to what you should wear and where you are at the time, never a problem when you can only be heard, and we have all seen those television interviews where the interviewee is trying to impress the viewers as they sit in front of their book or art collections. I'm waiting for the day when you can do the likes of cleaning, gardening, washing and shopping virtually - oh; apparently you ***can*** do the latter. But now, and despite the Club having been put into Tier 3, there seems to be light at the end of the tunnel with no less than three vaccines available.

The first person to avail herself of this facility was Margaret Keenan – make a note of that name because it will be part of a pub/trivia quiz in the not too distant future, whilst the second to be vaccinated was William Shakespeare – well, he is 456 and thereby somewhat vulnerable. So there is hope as we approach the New Year and a real chance that things will get back to normal at Hayes in the not too distant future and everyone can enjoy their respective sports with the freedom of not having to worry about the virus, and perhaps having the occasional drink at the Bar afterwards!

In the meantime, a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to my reader.

Mike Pike

THE FORGOTTEN

So here we are in lockdown
But one group Boris did bypass
He seems to have forgotten
Us, the British criminal class

We are going to lose income
Of that there is no doubt
How can you be a burglar
When no one's going out?

Nor does it stop right there
It really makes me sick
Pickpockets are redundant
With no pockets left to pick

With the streets now so empty
For days I haven't sold a drug
If it goes on like this
There'll soon be no one left to mug

The list goes on and on
We've lost several other blags
There are no pubs left open
Where we can sell our dodgy fags

And there is another area
To which my mind is drifting
There are very few shops open
To practice our shoplifting

In any case with this queueing
By people very thick
Who insist on panic buying
Means there's nothing left to nick

While the banks may be open
A robber won't get very far
When he has to social distance
From the driver of the getaway car

The immigrant trade is over
No more sailing through the foam
With England now in lockdown
They're better off back home

So listen to us Boris
I know you're very wise
With all this profiteering
We can't afford to sanitise

Your Chancellor must hear our pleas
A refusal would be rash
We need self-employed support
And we'd prefer it all in cash

If that proves impossible
For we are such poor old souls
We are happy to be paid
With several dozen toilet rolls

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Who would have thought this time last year that we would be where we are? That 2020 would end in tiers? After a few years of travelling I was looking forward to having a full working year and otherwise becoming a recluse. Be careful what you wish for, as Laura has said more than once.

Our world of entertainment has fallen off a cliff and although some gigs have been moved nervously into next year others have not and it doesn't feel right to enforce the usual cancellation clause given the difficulties everyone is facing.

Soon after last year's card was completed by my great pal the legendary Bill Tidy his beloved wife Rosa passed away – someone we have known and loved for the 30 years Laura and I have been together and before. Other pals have followed – Big Jack Charlton, who stayed with us, Nobby Stiles, who I once played behind in a charity game at Wembley and with whom, like Jack and golf's Peter Alliss, I shared the bill at many dinners. "Great Goalie Show" friends Peter Bonetti, who once handed me a jokey writ for pinching his name of "the Cat", and Ray Clemence. Also cricketing mates Bob Willis and Graham Cowdrey. From showbiz Dame Vera Lynn (I did her 95th birthday lunch), Tim Brooke-Taylor, Kenny Lynch, Roy Hudd, Nicholas Parsons, Des O'Connor, all of whom I appeared with, and Bobby Ball with whom Laura had great fun in pantos, plus many other friends sadly too numerous to mention.

On a more cheerful note we say daily how lucky we are to live where we do surrounded by countryside and when the pub is open life could be a lot worse. Not the case for so many others as we know. My enforced retirement has made me more relaxed and easier to live with, according to my child bride who has become a locked-down domestic goddess and a champion Scrabble player. She plays endless tennis and, as Chairman of her club, has been kept busy keeping up with the latest edicts from the Lawn Tennis Association. She's also launching a new dance fitness video. One of us needs to start earning!
At this time we are thinking of downsizing, so if any of you fancy an Oast house get in touch, and having another adventure before I get too old (don't laugh).

After so many years – at least 30 – of my special cards it's sad to miss out but compared to what is going on that is a miniscule upset when so many are struggling. Maybe next year…….? Let's hope by then we will be looking back on all this as a distant memory.

We send our love to you all and hope you enjoy the Xmas poem overleaf.

Have a Merry Xmas and a Very Happy and HEALTHY New Year

from Bob "the Cat" Bevan MBE and Laura "the Kitten"

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DON'T WASH YOUR HANDS OF XMAS

Rudolph, one of Santa's reindeers
Lost his sense of taste and smell
And said to his friend Blitzen
"I really don't feel too well"

Blitzen said "I think you must've got the Covid
And though you are my good mate
I really don't want to catch it
So clear off and self-isolate"

So Rudolph sadly left the stable
Thinking he'd never felt so alone
There was only one course of action
So he got Santa on the phone

Santa was not pleased to hear him
As he was still in his bed
He said "Are you sure you've got the virus?
Is your nose so *very* red?"

Rudolph said "I'm afraid there is no doubt
I don't feel in a good place
I think you have got no choice
But to contact test and trace"

So Santa called Matt Hancock
Our renowned Health Secretary
He said "I've got trouble with a reindeer
Could I claim herd immunity?"

Matt said "Leave it out, Santa
You must isolate all your reindeer.
You'll have to cancel Christmas
Postpone it 'til next year "

But Santa phoned up Boris
Who listened to him all agog
He said "we can't cancel Christmas
And upset Carrie and the dog"

At this point a green light hit Boris
He said " I've found another way
I've solved your problem Santa
You must use an electric sleigh"

So there you have it children
What more could you ask for?
Boris has even given Santa
His own travel corridor

‘21 can only get better
There’ll be no need for us to grouse
Corbyn will be reading the Jewish Chronicle
And Trump will go from the White House

We must all keep believing
Vaccines will end the virus menace
Laura will get even browner
When she’s not out playing tennis

Crystal Palace will get into Europe
Dulwich Hamlet will win a cup
Kent will be the County Champions
And Old Wilsonians will stay up

Laura and I wish you health and happiness
We hope you’ll think this poem is a “keeper”
This year there is no card
A poem is so much cheaper!

‘Copyright Bob “the Cat” Bevan MBE 2020

Couple of posts on Facebook you might find of interest?

Dec 31 Forty-eight years ago today I was sitting in my Fleet Street office. Having moved on from shipping and travel journalism I was now handling press and public relations for the small but fast-growing car ferry company Townsend Thoresen.
I was thinking of heading home when the BBC called. Due to enter Europe the next day they had planned to broadcast live from the then six other European capitals with the legendary DJ Pete Murray but fog had cancelled all flights and they wanted me to get them across to Zeebrugge and save the day.
Needless to say I was happy to do so and we got lots of much-needed publicity as a result. Two weeks later I was invited to lunch at the BBC to thank me when I met Pete for the first time and we have been friends ever since.
When I became an entertainer he got me on just about every programme he ever did whatever the station and we are now Brother Water Rats.
I called him this morning to remind him how long we've been friends. He is 95, as fit as can be and only not still playing golf because there is nobody of his vintage left to play with. He'll be looking out for someone in the summer!
To you all I send my best wishes
for a Europe-free Happy New Tier.

SCHOOL NEWS

LEARNING INTERRUPTED!

Congratulations to all pupils and staff – and thank you to parents – for getting the term off to a great start in challenging circumstances. Once again, pupils have adapted to remote teaching with maturity, contributing their usual intelligence and good humour to our full timetable of live lessons.

Our adapted co-curricular programme is also well underway – 80 boys attended Chess club on Tuesday! – and online sports coaching and instrumental music teaching continues.

At the end of last term, we reflected on 2020 with much pride. The glowing report from our

Ofsted visit in February and of course recently being named Sunday Times London State School of the Decade were highlights for the community as a whole. And we have been incredibly touched by the kindness, courtesy and resilience of pupils since this crisis began. Their lives have been turned upside down and yet they have responded to every challenge with characteristic good cheer and genuine empathy for the staff and for each other.

There have also been many tales of individual triumph and happiness to inspire us, and we look forward to sharing news of Wilsonians' successes in 2021!

Happy New Year!

CRICKET CLUB

The Cricket Club embrace Coroavirus and reach a Cup Final

To describe the cricket club's season as surreal is not adequate but it will have to do, and not just because of Coronavirus, although you will have to read until the end to learn of the full implications of that claim.

In May we were able to announce that, provided a booking system and strict regulations were adhered to, outdoor Nets were available whilst, thanks to the initiatives of Chairman Dave Welch, 1st XI skipper Michael Mitchell and Tom Sullivan, a man for all seasons, a virtual game was inaugurated which was both a lot of fun and also raised money for both ourselves and the NHS as we tried to take our minds off the fact that the pandemic had prevented the season getting under way.

I did try and work out how it functioned but eventually simply came to the conclusion that Dave is a very clever man.The virtual game lasted for nine weeks and involved the 1st, and 3rd XIs and it was interesting to note the difference between the real and virtual games of players, Laurence Allen's batting in particular being a revelation.

The year has been a particularly difficult time for the Colts as their season is designed to fit in with the school year and it was not until well into July that we were able to get any 'real' cricket, but thanks to Paul Matthews some friendly fixtures were organised whilst Jon Rodda and his coaching team did a magnificent job to ensure that our youngsters made progress in their development and their skills have improved.

We had to wait until July11th before we got any 'proper' senior cricket and it is to the credit of our players that so many of them showed an interest in playing at all, whereas many other Clubs decided to make 2020 a sabbatical year, and to such an extent that we were able to field four Saturday sides on a regular basis.

And thanks to an OW initiative, in the form of the aforementioned 1st XI skipper Michael Mitchell, two local leagues were organised to enable both the 1st and 2nd XIs to play seven games whilst the 3s and 4s effectively played the fixtures they were due to complete prior to the onset of Coronavirus, and all did themselves proud, with the 1st XI winning their division on the last day of the season with a convincing 67 run victory over the 2019 Premier League champions, Beckenham.

"We just need to enjoy ourselves" 'Mitch' proclaimed when the 1st XI found themselves in a league containing two Premiership sides, two from the First division and one from the

third, and probably even he would not have anticipated how well the side would perform.

The Sunday Development side played 4 games in a very tough league but, despite the results, were able to blood even more youngsters as we build a solid foundation for the future. The T20 side, made up of a mixture of 1st and 2nd XI players, excelled themselves. The format was slightly different this year in that there was a league competition before going to a knock-out phase and, having won their league, they defeated Beckenham in the quarter-final and then Bexley in the semi-final and will now play Tunbridge Wells in the final, which will be played in May 2021.

So 2020 saw an Old Wilsonian side beat the Premier League champions, twice, then the runners-up and now given an opportunity to claim the scalp of the third placed side. I would like to congratulate Shehan Sivaranjan on his inclusion in the Kent County academy whilst, at the other end of the age spectrum, Sanath Dandeniya and Wayne Crosland have joined Doug Forbes and Siva Ranjan in the Kent League's over 50s squad, whilst Derek Birmingham and Rod Warboys continue to be important members of the over 70s side.

Because of Covid we were unable to hold our traditional President's Day and cricket week and enjoy two of our most popular social events, namely Margo and Blod's Quiz Night – the curtain raiser to the season – and the awards evening, where we reflect on the year and honour those who have excelled during the summer months.

However, we did decide to make four awards and as follows:

Colt of year Olliver Reid, for his excellent performances during this truncated season and his transition into senior cricket

Young Player of the year: Shehan Sivaranjan, who broke into the 1st XI at the tender age of 15 and for his inclusion into the Kent County Academy

Player of the year Jon Rodda, excellent batting in both long and short versions of the game; so encouraging to know that our Head coach is in control of his own performances!

Club person of the year *Michael Mitchell*, took the initiative to ensure that we played some competitive cricket and for his inspirational leadership, which saw both the 1st XI and the T20 sides punching above their respective weights.

Coronavirus also meant the end of the traditional cricket teas and, outrageously, there are a number of clubs who are suggesting that these should be abolished, a suggestion that we are resisting.

And, rest assured, I will be seeking a large redundancy package for our tea providers should we lose that particular battle. Mike Pike, Secretary, OWCC

TENNIS CLUB

CHAIRMAN'S CORONAVIRUS UPDATE JANUARY 2021

The UK Government announcement of 4 January placed all of England into a national lockdown. That meant all tennis venues were required to close with immediate effect. Tennis is not permitted for adults and children alike. We will, of course, keep you posted and let you know if the advice changes. You can always find the very latest information on

the LTA website including their updates for Venues, Players and Coaches. The LTA will update their guidance here:

LTA News

Our **junior teams play in the National League**, and the current season has been completely cancelled. Our entry fees will be refunded during this month. Despite the lockdown we need to plan for next summer. We have asked parents to tell us if their child wants to take part in team competition. The deadline for entries has been extended so we now have a little longer to get that all organised.

The LTA have confirmed that all their competitions up to and including 28 February are now cancelled.

In other news we have a new **Club Secretary.** Joanne Burn has taken over and has set up an email address for use on club business owltcsec@gmail.com Please use that in the future. Jo is initially helping us get the historic records in order and will take an increasing role in helping us to run the club. She takes over from Charlotte Hares – who has been terrific and very proactive and leaves only because work pressures allow her insufficient time to help as she would like. Thank you Charlotte for all you have done.

Many of you will also know that Catherine Caulfield has taken over responsibility for managing all the competing demands for **court bookings**. She will be helping the club to fit all the different bookings into the available time slots in a way that is fair and even-handed. That includes league matches for adults and juniors, club sessions & events, coaching sessions, 1-2-1 coaching slots as well as the organised groups and regular block bookings. It is worth saying that a check of court bookings in October (a week when the club was operating close to normally and not a week that involved half-term) showed around 70% of all available court booking slots were not booked so even if you were unable to get the exact court and time you were looking for, there were plenty of other options available. If you have a particular problem please contact Catherine by email to catherine.caulfield@me.com. But please remember her role is NOT to book your courts for you in the normal course of events.

Please continue to contact Judith at owltcmembership@gmail.com for any queries relating to club membership.

Around this time we would normally start to invite entries for the **Handicap Tournament** – but we cannot do that at present for obvious reasons. Depending on when we can re-start playing tennis, and whether we are allowed to play singles AND doubles, the club and event organiser Chris Heayberd will let you know whether or not this will go ahead in the same format, or be modified in some way or whether it has to be cancelled entirely for 2021.

Also, just a reminder to please download the Instagram app and follow us @OldWilTennis as well as following us on Facebook too. Hopefully there will be tennis news to report soon, and the outcome of the Kent Tennis awards later this month where we have been shortlisted for Club of the Year as well as in the Competition category for the series of box leagues and other events we ran, providing cash prizes from the Jack Petchey 21st Birthday grant.

I do hope you and your loved ones are able to remain safe and that we soon see better news. Hope to see you all back on court before too long.

NIGEL JORDAN
CHAIRMAN

Steve Holmes 5k Run - Every day in January 2021

Fundraising for Motor Neurone Disease Association
360%

£3,600
raised of £1,000 target by 116 supporters

Motor Neurone Disease Association

We fund care, campaigning and research to achieve a world free from mnd

Charity Registration No. 294354

Steve Holmes is running 5k every day in January 2021 in support of his Dad Colin Holmes, who was diagnosed with MND in July 2018. To raise awareness, hope and funds for the MND Association.

Thanks so much to everyone who has volunteered without ever being asked to help support me and MND. Massive thanks to Anthony Moran & Max Robinson who are running with me everyday, I am very grateful. Thanks to all those who are running alongside me from a distance around the country and around the world! Andy Donnelly, Stuart Holmes, Mark Pope, Steve Hollander, Jamie Parkinson, James Loud, Dave Roe, Andy Pope and Mike Pullan. Thank you so much. It means the world to me and to Dad knowing you are there.

Every penny raised goes directly to the MND association. Half of the fundraising is to help research and find a cure. The remaining half is to West Sussex South branch that do an incredible job helping and supporting people living with MND.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Ronald Kirby wrote back in 2019 to Mike Pike of his time at school and beyond with Michael Caine and forwarded the article to me:

Maurice Micklewhite (alias Sir Michael Caine) and me

My acquaintenance with Michael Caine started way back in 1945 when he was known by his birth name of Maurice Micklewhite and we both attended Wilson's Grammar School in South East London.

I had been due to start at Wilson's in 1944 but the school was still evacuated in the wilds of Sussex near Horsham and my parents would not agree to my being away from home. So as an alternative I went to SLESS at Alleyn's College in Dulwich. SLESS meant South London Emergency Secondary School.

I was there for a year and then joined Wilson's at Camberwell when the scholl returned to

London at the end of World War II and found myself in the same form as the aforementioned Miaurice Micklewhite.

At school we referred to him as 'Mick' and he insisted on calling me 'Rip' Kirby after a comic-strip adventurer who appeared in one of the daily newspapers.

He was a big lad and I was quite small. One occasion which I remember particularly was when Mock and a couple of similarly built form members wedged me in a sitting position in the Maths teacher, Tiger Smith's waste paper basket where he discovered me when he entered the classroom. I cannot recall how the story ended, but I do remember that Tiger was very tall and thin as a rake and bore no resemblance to his animal name-sake.

I last met Mick in 1950 when we both would have been 17 years of age. I was returning from a job interview in the City, I had crossed London Bridge and was continuing towards Borough when I saw this chap peering through a theodolite and I recognised him. I crossed the road to him and we chatted. The next time I saw him was some years later on the old black and white television. He was appearing in a play.

The following year we were both called up for National Service, he in the Army and me in the Royal Air Force.

I spent most of my time in Libya which was then trouble-free. Mick, I later learned, first spent some time in Germany and was then posted to Korea where he must have had a torrid time fighting to survive in a war-striken land. I venture to suggest tjat, perhaps, his experiences in Korea helped him later in his acting career, for there was no sign of his acting ability whilst at Wilson's.

But he became a very successful film star, much loved and admired by cinema-goers all over the world.

A few years ago he was awarded a knighthood and is now to be addressed as 'Sir Michael Caine'. Of course by rights it should be 'Sir Maurice Micklewhite' but that doesn't sound quite right. Anyhow, what's in a name? A rose by any other name would smell as sweet. A quote from old Bill Shakespeare's literary efforts.

Well, Michael got his knighthood, I'm still waiting for mine. I did think of writing to the PM to suggest that my elevation to the aristocracy be made another condition of Brexit but I expect he has other weightier things on his mind.

Ronald Kirby (now aged 87)

From Bob Bevan on the death of Tommy Docherty

Another old pal gone-Tommy Doc. Did many dinners with him - one at Swindon on the day when I had to have my cat Jasper put down. If I'd told him he would have taken the mick and I wasn't ready for that so only told him years later
First dinner with him was Preston's Centenary when he was manager after being sacked by Man U because he ran off with the physio's wife. I had to follow Bernard Manning as he had another job later. As he left he shouted at the Doc from the doorway "Tom, wish you'd **** off with my wife". I had to follow that!
The Doc was an entertaining bloke and a great character RIP Tom

OBITUARY JEAN WEBB

Brian Marshall provided this obituary

I should be grateful if this obituary could be reported in The next Issue of News of Old Wilsonians.

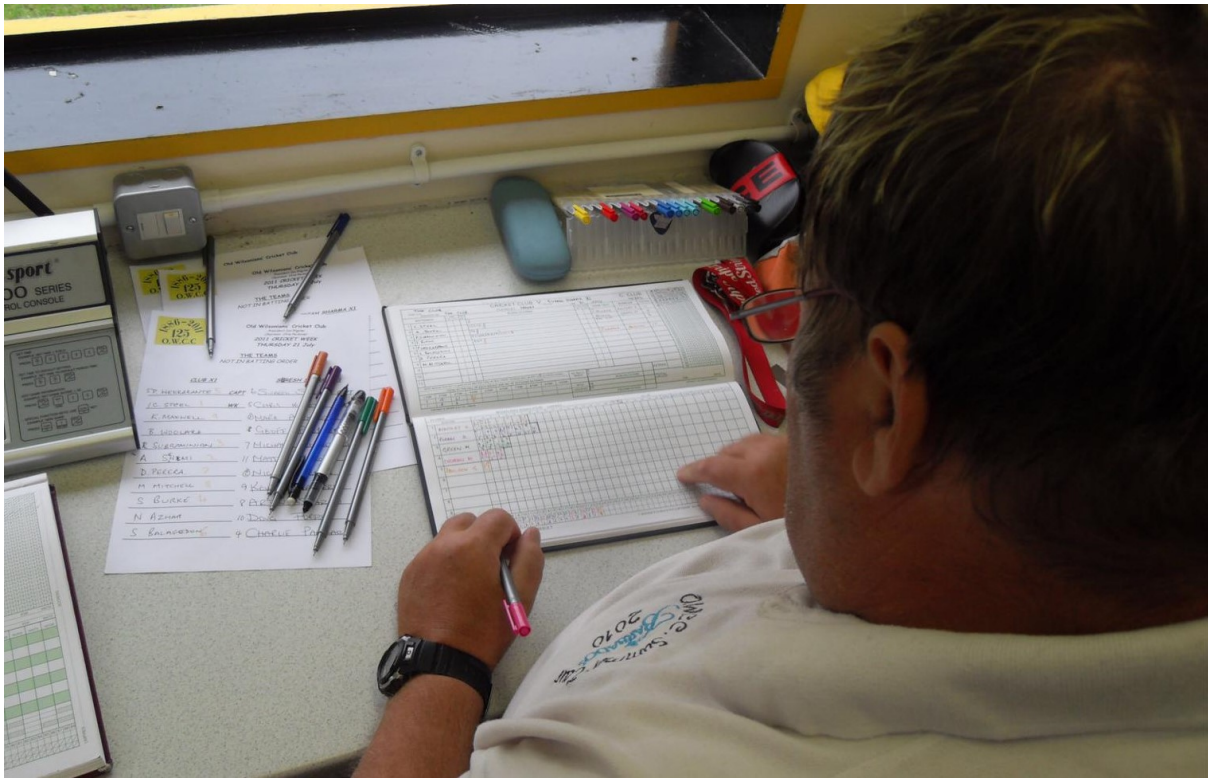
Jean Webb was my sister and died sadly on 2nd April 2020 of the CoronaVirus at the grand age of 87.
I thought I would write a piece for News of Old Wilsonians as her connection with the Old Boys was
extensive and goes back to the fifties.
She was married to Alf (Wiggy)Webb for almost 50 years.He was a great friend of mine and was an
excellent Best Man at my wedding in 1961.
Jean and Wig had a lot of friends in the Old Boys start ing with Les Wilks(Their Best Man),Mac McAllister,
Pat Fitzimmons,John Britten,Malcolm Woolhouse and Cyril Lucking.
All of these friends played for my Dad's two football teams St James United and Nunhead Rovers very successfully.
I apologise if I have forgotten any body but I was only a lad then.
We used to have meetings at our house in Old James Street in Nunhead and my Mum made dripping toast for all
(Part of the fitness regime)
My own connection with the Old Boys was as an opponent on the cricket field for Dulwich Wanderers Cricket Club
for many years and many arguments ensued with Mike Kendrick as you can imagine.
I hope I have stirred up some happy memories for some dear friends in Jean's past.

Jean leaves behind her daughter Julie,Son in law Mervyn and Grandsons Matthew and Owen.
Her son,Peter (who lives in Australia) Daughter in law Claire and Grand Daughters Daisy and Esme.

Thank You, Brian Marshall.

OBITUARY GRAHAM WATTS (1/12/1950 – 5/1/2021)

Graham Watts – the man who broke the Old Wilsonian mould



Graham reconciles the score-book, but there was more to him than being our diligent scorer – read on to learn more about this remarkable man

ost of us were pleased to see the end of 2020, with a global pandemic seeing 1.7 million deaths – and counting – and even more suffering from its effects, so most of us did not mourn its passing and, being an optimistic race, felt that 2021 must surely be a lot better .

However the year started dreadfully from an Old Wilsonian perspective when January 5th saw the death of Graham Watts, a unique OW and a man who laid the foundation stones for the transformation of our unique Club.

He was our first ever Club captain and anyone who attended his marquee event – literally – will never forget the Abba tribute act he hired to mark the occasion, particularly after 'Abba' were joined by Clive Peckover and his unique voice.

Brother Bryan was the Master of Ceremonies that night and the experience both of them had gained in organising events for Southwark Council was very much in evidence. The OWs also gained from their expertise in many other ways as Graham, who organised the London Marathon for a number of years, ensured that not only did we gain much needed funds by acting as the likes of marshals on the day, but also fast tracked entry for some of our members to the race itself, many of whom were raising money for the club as the consequence of their participation.

Graham also dealt with the elite athletes and well-known personalities, including Frank Bruno, to whom he allocated the number 1995 for the race and on receiving a 'phone call

from the latter's manager asking why he had been given that number, Graham replied:
"I thought it was appropriate because that was the year he became world heavyweight champion" and, whilst giving this explanation, Graham became aware of Frank's distinctive chuckle in the background.

Graham also worked at Beckenham Sports Club for a number of years and on his first day became the victim of the 'let's wind up the new boy syndrome' when a colleague asserted:
"Graham – there is a woman playing tennis whom I've never seen before; can you check to see if she's a member?"

Eager to impress Graham sauntered over to the tennis courts and inquired: "Excuse me madam; are you a member," only for the lady in question to give him a disconcerting stare; it was Martina Navratilova.

Neil Warnock, who was manager of Crystal Palace Football Club at the time, came in one Sunday morning and explained that he and his family had recently moved into the area and were interested in joining the Tennis Club.

Graham was not a follower of football – rugby was his Winter game – and explained the joining process to the new member which was completed satisfactorily and when Graham became aware of Warnock's credentials he suggested a T20 game of cricket between Beckenham and CPFC.

The Palace manager agreed to this – and to be his side's umpire – and a date was agreed but, and sadly, a torrential down-pour half an hour before the game was due to start meant that it had to be called off.

However, and despite his lack of interest in football, Graham always supported the OWFC's Vice Presidents and friends days and was even persuaded to speak at the Football Club's end of season Dinner one year; and successfully, too.

Graham was a great organiser and was instrumental in seeing the OWs make several trips to Barbados, the first of which saw us play a game at the Kensington Oval where the opposing opening bowlers were Wes Hall and Charlie Griffith whilst, on a break from cricket, some of our players encountered Gary Sobers on the local golf course.

Many years ago he took over the running of the Super 70 and 200 Clubs, another example of his fund-raising expertise, and the monthly draw became one of the highlight of OWLS – Old Wilsonian Lunches – as indeed were his 'Parish notices', which will never be the same again.

But it was as our 2nd XI scorer that most readers will remember him, a job he had been doing for almost 30 years. He often became frustrated at the lack of opposing scorers, particularly when they did not even have the decency to score when they were batting. "We'll get the details from play cricket" was the normal stock response, probably not realising how the results got there - little did they know that this was another of the many jobs that Graham undertook.

My guess is that Graham first made an appearance at Hayes one Sunday about 40 years ago when he was one of many supporting our exceptionally gifted Sunday side at the time, for whom Bryan kept wicket.

They all sat to the right of the pavilion in deck-chairs, often with supporters from the opposition, chatting amiably as they watched the cricket and applauding at appropriate moments. Eventually Bryan persuaded his younger brother that he should take up scoring, an activity he took to like a duck to water and the rest, as they say, is history.

After Bryan's death Graham inaugurated a 'wicket-keeper of the year award' and purchased, from his own pocket, a number of replicas for the winner to keep for all time.
Graham knew who to talk to about such things, and many others, and was in the process of getting the score-board updated when he died. He was also the man to go to when a new bench was needed, whilst his signage ability has never been more in evidence than now. He was also admired and respected by other Clubs, as this message from the Chairman of Bromley Common illustrates:

"Leigh Walker contacted me today to say he had heard of the recent death of your esteemed scorer, Graham Watts.
That is sad news, indeed. He was always a popular visitor at our club and a valued member of the cricket family.
Please pass on the condolences of all at Bromley Common to his family and many friends at Old Wilsonians.
Regards,Dave Williams,Chair, BCCC

Brian Smith, who, amongst other things, collates the results for both the Kent and Regional leagues, wrote as follows: "So sorry to hear the news - a great loss to Old Wilsonians CC. Please pass on my condolences to friends and family" and Peter Wiseman, the Beckenham scorer, recalls Graham's days working at that Club as follows:
"Nobody produces posters like Graham."

And how apposite that the last game Graham saw was our T20 semi-final against Bexley at Bromley Common's ground, and I'm sure Graham's memory will give the side added inspiration when they eventually take on Tunbridge Wells in the final.

Bryan's death affected Graham greatly and I do not think he ever recovered from it. They used to call each other at 8-00 a.m. every morning until the day when Bryan did not answer his 'phone.

Concerned, Graham ordered a cab only to discover that his older brother had died in his bathroom. Now it was the turn of Jasper Gundry-White, whom Graham considered to be a surrogate brother, to discover the death of the younger Watts.

As we all know, Graham had been in poor health for the last few years or so with frequent stays in hospital, the last being just before Christmas. I used to speak to him two or three times a week, even more frequently when he was in hospital, and he genuinely seemed to be lot better, speaking highly of the treatment he had received during his last stay.But, and sadly, this proved to be a false dawn and we will no longer be able to enjoy his company.

To return to the start of this piece and my claim that Graham was " a man who laid the foundation stones for the transformation for our unique Club,"his legacy must surely be that he proved that you do not have to be a former member of Wilson's school or Wilson's Grammar school to be a member of the Old Wilsonians' Association, and to establish the truth and reality that we are all Old Wilsonians now, irrespective of where we received our education.

Mike Pike

Graham Watts Rest In Peace

Posted 9th January 2021
Graham Watts passed away earlier this week , he will be sorely missed . Graham was a big character and did an awful lot of work behind the scenes at the Old Wilsonians . He has been a stalwart of the cricket club for over 30 years . He joined the club when he joined his late brother Bryan & 90 others on our first cricket tour of Barbados , he enjoyed the crac . He became 2nd XI scorer that tour although had no idea how to score , that was Graham . The deal was done over a number of rum & cokes , it involved 5 of us running in the marathon & him learning to score . From then on Graham threw himself into the club , he has been 2nd XI scorer ever since . . Graham was an organiser and ran a number of Presidents Ladies Night, OWA Dinners with his brother Bryan & my old man . He also helped raise funds by getting the club involved in events he was involved with such as The London Marathon handing out water , Dulwich horse show putting up fences& the Womens London run .Also for the last decade he has run the 200 club & super club draws for the club . His passion though was the cricket club he would be seen late into a saturday night inputting scores from various home matches & then join us for a diet coke & a laugh. Graham became our first ever club captain in thanks for all his hard work , also he was a great listener , with sound judgement & that will be missed greatly
Many years ago I worked for Graham at Southwark council where he ran the entertainment division , where he acted as matchmaker to Debbie and me .
We will miss Graham me more than most
Rest in peace Wattsy

Alex Forbes

From the Cricket Club Newsletter - The year starts in the most awful of ways

I had intended to start this, the first newsletter of the year, in both a traditional way, wishing you all a Happy New Year, saying that this was one way for the cricket club to keep in contact with its membership during the winter months and urging everyone to take care and stay safe in these most difficult of times, all of which I do, but 2021 started in the most awful of ways for the OWCC with the devastating news of the death of Graham Watts on January 5th.

The love and respect that we all felt for Graham is such that this edition is dedicated to him and I will now write about the subjects I intended to cover in February and, in all probability, feature additional tributes that I will almost certainly receive over and above those featured this time.

We are already thinking of having ‘A Watts Day’ during Cricket week to commemorate all that Graham and brother Bryan did for us over the years, but nothing can replace the fond memories we all have of Graham.

Thought I’d send you a message, pikey, and my sincerest condolences with the loss of Graham. Really am gutted for myself and everyone at the club. Steve Lawrence

Hi Mike - Truly sorry to hear about Graham. He was such a lovely man with a great sense of humour. He was very helpful to me when organising things at the club. He also loved my dogs. I know you will really miss him when you finally get back to the score box. - Steph Jenkins

What dreadful news! I was only chatting to him at the Christmas lunch when he seemed on fine form. A lovely man, who gave me a lot of information on heart problems (we both had heart surgery) and he was related to Vic Bennett whom, as you know, passed away last year and was a good friend of ours.
A lousy start to 2021; RIP Graham. - Alan Wilson

So sad to hear about the loss of Graham. I had not seen him for several months due to the lockdown and I knew he had health problems, but he always kept his spirits up and continued to send me details of the OW Draws, which he managed for years. I worked with him and Bryan and Ian Forbes on the Annual Dinners for several years, with Graham producing the Menus and collecting monies on the night. Another one who will be sadly missed by OWs, the OWLS lunches and GOALS.
Malcolm Taylor

His heart was with us in every way - Mick Pilgrim

Another stalwart gone. He was a regular G.O.A.L.S. member at one time, along with Bryan, but not so much in the last few years, possibly with his growing monthly commitment to O.W.L.S.
I had heard from another source but was asked not to publish in my Wednesday articles. However, as now published for O.W.L.S. members, many of whom, as you know, are also G.O.A.L.S. members, will "cut and paste" your paragraph today. - Malcolm Whitehead

Very sad Mike; thanks for informing.- Ted Turpin

Hadn't realised quite how active he was, so a sad loss indeed. Back in 1961 his brother was a leading light in getting football teams out.(This was when Pikey was only halfway through his school years, of course.) Bryan was also involved in booking big name pantos at Lewisham Town Hall. On the bill was a young dancer called Laura, now my wife, so our connections with the Watts go back a long way .So many friends leaving us, but we have to try and keep smiling, as I think they would wish - Bob Bevan

Very sad news with which to start the New year. In so many ways, Graham was an "unsung hero" amongst Old Wilsonians, just getting on with organising things behind the scenes with his own "sense of humour, " which will be sorely missed. - Steve Wisson

What a great shame, especially at this dreadful time. Graham was a very worthy Honorary Old Wilsonian and did so much more for this club than perhaps we acknowledged at times. He will be missed as a larger than life character. Jasper also reflects the companionship of the OWA that Graham enjoyed, and should be thanked for his concern and efforts as well. A shocking discovery to for him to have made - Peter Davis

Hi Mike, Thanks for letting us know. Very sad. So many of the old OW guard going. - Jim Matthews

Sad news indeed. Mike. Another king pin in the life of the OWs leaves us, with so many memories to think back on. - John Drabwell

Very sad - another good guy gone will be missed - Paul Jenkins

Really really sorry to hear of Graham's passing. Thanks for letting me know. Whenever OWLS was mentioned, he always came into my mind. - very sad. - John Martin

Such sad news - Ray Jenkins

This is dreadful - he seemed his normal self at OWL's but we know he was suffering and has been for some considerable time. - Colin Smith

Sad news about Graham. Such a lovely and open character and we cannot afford to lose his sort ever, let alone at a time like this.- Paul Kidd

I heard today about Graham's death, which saddened me greatly. Of course I only knew him in relatively recent times, but the bond he had built over many years with the Club was obvious for all to see. - Jeff Mascarenhas

From Bob Bevan

I hadn't realised quite how active he was so a sad loss indeed. Back in 1961 his brother Brian was a leading light in getting football teams out. This was when Pikey was only halfway through his school years of course. Brian was also involved in booking big name pantos at Lewisham Town Hall. On the bill was a young dancer called Laura, now my wife, so our connections with the Watts go back a long way.

Brian's boss was Bob Fox who used to come and play when we ran out of OWs in the newly-formed 5th XI. We're still in touch with Bob who is even older than me, and possibly Les Wilks. He lives in Weymouth and follows them in the National League.

In case any of you didn't get my Xmas message it is attached along with a re-issue of the poem I did in March last year.

So many friends leaving us but we have to try and keep smiling as I think they would wish.

Keep well

Cat

Explanatory Notes

OWLS - Old Wilsonian Lunches, a monthly event at the Club which Graham helped to organise, the highlights of which were his 'Parish notices', in which he updated those in attendance with updates of what is happening at the Club, and the draws for the 200 and Super 70 Clubs, both of which he ran for a number of years

G.O.A.L.S - Golden Oldies Alcoholic Lunches, which also involves other local Clubs, who take it in turns to organise the event