



QE(K)A

2008

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# ENVOY

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# EDITORIAL

Welcome to the 2008 edition of Envoy.

I'm delighted that we have a packed newsletter this year, mostly thanks to the enthusiastic efforts of Audrey Green who has been busy digging through her memorabilia of the Physics Department and encouraging old friends and colleagues to put their literary skills into practice. Many thanks to Audrey and everyone else who has contributed.

Sadly several friends and colleagues passed away this year, some at a ripe old age after a long life of fulfillment, but others tragically taken whilst still in their prime. Reading of their achievements makes me feel very humble, and very proud to have been a part of KCHSS/QEC.

If anyone would like to write in with any articles or news for next year's Envoy, we'll be very pleased to hear from you.

*Lyn Embling* (nee Rigby)

(Physics, 1972-1978)

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**Front Cover:** Watercolour of Queen Elizabeth College, painted by Barbara Dorf.

# CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Since my last report, we had a successful AGM and reunion last September when our guest speaker Professor Catherine Geissler talked to us about her research in nutrition at QEC and subsequently King's.



Following that AGM, our committee has been enlarged by recruiting Michael Derome and Barbara McLennan, while Pat Cox has taken on the duties of Treasurer since Audrey Stubbs stepped down.

We have been planning the next reunion and hope that many of you will take the opportunity to meet up with 'old' friends. Our guest speaker will be Professor Robert (Bob) Price who worked in the Biochemistry Department at QEC and continued his teaching and research in King's following the merger in 1985, where he is still Emeritus Professor. We will be on the first floor of Strand campus again, using the Old Committee Room for refreshments and having a half-hour AGM in lecture theatre C2 followed by Bob Price's talk, then lunch in the River Room which proved to be so popular last year. We hope that the new timing (the first Saturday in October) will encourage more alumni to come along – the days should still be relatively long, the weather still reasonably mild, and it won't clash with half-term school holidays or first week of university term.

A successful reunion was organised by Sean Quilty (Microbiology 1969-72) for graduates of 1972 (or thereabouts!) mainly from the 'inmates' of Queen Mary Hall in 1972. They came from all over the UK and overseas, at very short notice, and judging from the photos, a good time was had by all. Sean has contributed a report on their festivities elsewhere in ENVOY.

I organised a 'Coral' (35<sup>th</sup>) anniversary reunion for the class of '73

Microbiologists and former staff to meet up in The Windsor Castle pub on Campden Hill Road on June 29<sup>th</sup> 2008. It was a lovely atmosphere and we all chatted ceaselessly catching up on news. I hope to organise a follow-up reunion in two years' time to celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of starting our degrees. Perhaps someone out there would like to do something similar for their class for a special reunion? Silver, Pearl, Coral, Ruby, Sapphire, Gold, Emerald.....anniversary of graduating or of enrolling....the possibilities are endless – just take the leap!

As usual I would encourage you to feel free to contact any of the committee with any suggestions or ideas you may have for the Association. Remember that the website ([www.qeca.org.uk](http://www.qeca.org.uk)) is also a focal point for contacting us and other members, especially if you want to arrange a reunion, so do check it out from time to time. Please also let us know if you have any news of yourself or other alumni so we can add it to our website and Envoy.

I look forward to meeting you at the next reunion.

I will be standing down as Chairman of the Association at the next AGM in October. I have 'served' for six years which have flashed by so quickly. I want to thank all the members of the committee who have supported me and the Association during this time - they made it so much easier and became firm friends too. I will continue to support the Association and who knows, when I retire and have more free time, I may even return to the committee if needed.

Ann Wood (Microbiology 1970-75)

## FINDING OLD FRIENDS

If you are trying to contact old friends from school or University, it may be worth trying the website [friendsreunited.co.uk](http://friendsreunited.co.uk) which links members of former schools, colleges and workplaces.

*In Touch* also has a website to help people to contact each other:  
[www.kcl.ac.uk/alumni](http://www.kcl.ac.uk/alumni)

Better still, please encourage old friends to join the QE(K)A Branch of the Association. See back cover for contact details.

# QE(K)A FUTURE EVENTS:



## ANNUAL REUNION AND AGM

October 4<sup>th</sup> 2008.

**King's College London, Strand Campus**

Guest speaker:

**Professor Robert (Bob) Price**

(QEC Biochemistry Department)

10.30	Tea/Coffee	- Old Committee Room
11.30	AGM	- Lecture Theatre C2
12.00	Guest speaker	- Lecture Theatre C2
13.00	Buffet Lunch	- River Room
14.30	Close	

To book, please send cheque (£25) payable  
*'Queen Elizabeth (Kensington) Branch KCLA'* to  
Henry Embling, QE(K)A Membership secretary,  
46 Church Lane West, Aldershot, Hampshire, GU11 3LW



**Address by**

**Professor Catherine Geissler**

**BDS MS PhD FIBiol RNutr**

*Professor Geissler graduated in Dental Surgery at Edinburgh before moving on to do a PhD in Human Nutrition at the University of California. She joined the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics at QEC in 1976 and, following the merger with King's College, was appointed Professor of Nutrition and Head of Division of Health Sciences in 1994. Amongst her many activities, she has been a member of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and has chaired the World Cancer Research Fund Grants Committee. She is Director of the Learning and Teaching Support Network Subject Centre for Health Sciences and Practice and is active in the British and American Nutrition Societies. Her main research activities include energy metabolism and obesity, iron absorption, international nutrition and diet and degenerative disease. Her work has taken her to many countries throughout the Middle and Far East and Africa as well as France and the USA.*

*QE(K)A was delighted to hear Professor Geissler share her reminiscences of research at QEC as well as keeping us informed of more recent developments at King's.*

**Memories of QEC**

Catherine applied to join the staff at QEC when her PhD supervisor at Berkley, California, told her that Queen Elizabeth College was THE place to be for nutrition research. She had to be interviewed separately from other candidates whilst travelling en-route to do research in Iran.

At that time, the Nutrition Department comprised Professor Bender, Helen Brown, Derek Miller, Pat Judd and others who have since retired or died. Technical staff included Rosie Valencia who joined as an assistant at the age of 15. One person had been in post for 30 years - at the time Catherine thought this was rather unadventurous but she now realises that was not true, as so



many things change around us without needing to move on.

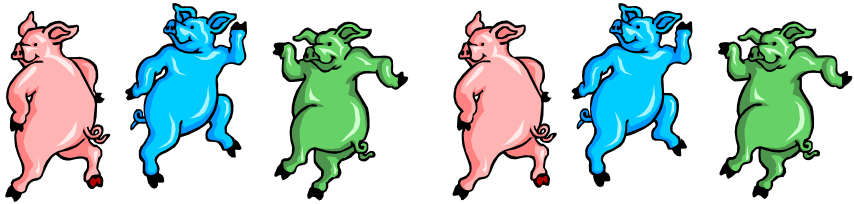
There was less legislation in those days. Rats were housed opposite the lecture theatre and smelt on Monday mornings. The department resounded to the crowing of cockerels that had grown from chicks intended for experiments that had been delayed. Staff could bring nephews and nieces to see the animals. Nowadays, the increased need for security has changed life and access to the animals is restricted via electronic pass.

QEC overlooked the back gardens of the embassies. Many male staff were frequently diverted to watch a female Embassy resident doing her exercises naked on the balcony!

Initially QEC staff tended to be somewhat territorial – if Catherine went to sit at the chemists’ table in the Senior Common Room, the newspapers would come out to obscure faces. But eventually the ice was broken and everyone mixed. Staff used to meet for tea in the Senior Common Room and met regularly in the bar, so there was a lot of scientific discussion – Nancy Rothwell was set on the road to Damehood in the bar at QEC! There is much less social interaction nowadays as staff tend to eat lunch at the desk then either work late or rush home to their families.

### **Evolving activities and research interests:**

Catherine’s PhD research included spending time in Iran where she was involved in measurements on the energy requirements of different types of worker. On joining QEC she found that Derek Miller’s work also related to energy requirements. It was generally thought that certain nutrition disorders could be explained by a protein gap in the diet and the UN reported on the need for international action for ‘an impacting international crisis’. Research was focussing on investigating additional protein sources from fish, plants and particularly milk. However, Derek Miller’s research showed that the protein was not insufficient and the emphasis on protein deficiency was dumped as the ‘great protein fiasco’, illustrating the danger of looking to only one source of deficiency.



The research emphasis changed to finding the energy processes.

Experiments (Miller) were conducted using two pigs to investigate factors affecting weight and obesity. Nowadays there is much more legislation regarding the use of animals and this can put people off research.

Protein eaters were eating 5 times as many calories but their weight was being kept constant. It was concluded that this could be attributed to the energy processes - thermogenesis. With a high energy intake the rate of weight gain reduced. Differences were found in the energy expenditure between large obese and small people; obese people needed more energy to do things.

Tests were conducted using 16 people who had been obese but were now slim. Metabolic rates and thermodynamic response were measured on sedentary days of mild exercise and days of high aerobic exercise. Mild exercise proved to be more effective at increasing metabolic rate as it could be sustained for longer. The effect of different foods and drugs such as ephedrine on metabolic rates was also investigated. The most effective was a generic drug but this was not of sufficient interest to drug companies as it would not be profitable enough. Factors affecting obesity include genetics, food intake, activity levels, foetal programming and bottle-feeding that encourages mothers to over-feed their children.

In 1979, only 5-8% of men and women were obese. That figure has now increased to 25%. In addition, children are now developing diseases connected with obesity. The government is therefore getting more interested in funding research on obesity.

The low calorie sweetener, sucralose, sold as 'Splenda', was discovered at QEC in 1976 when Lesley Huff's research assistant Pavlis misheard the instruction 'Test the powder' as 'taste the powder' and found it to be very sweet. King's are now exploiting QEC's role in 'Splenda' in order to obtain funding - Tate & Lyle are to fund a nutritional research facility at St Thomas's.



More recent research has focussed on the role of iron on metabolism. Noting that a vegetarian friend had apple juice with her cornflakes instead of milk, Prof. Geissler wondered whether this would have any effect on the absorption of iron. She set up a project for a research student to investigate this and validate the method for an increase in the absorption. An algorithm was needed to estimate iron absorption as a function of food composition. This led to an investigation with a Pharmacy and the Liver Unit at Kings to look at how iron travels around the body – if it gets transported to the wrong place it cannot be excreted - and to investigate inhibitors to reduce the absorption of iron in diet to help with phlebotomy. This also led to interest in whether people taking iron supplements for anaemia etc. could be overloading the system.

World Health Organisation experiments in Zanzibar indicated that iron intake affected mortality rates in malarial endemic areas, and WHO are now changing their recommendations on the amount of iron in the diet.

### **Other activities**

In 1999 the Learning and Teaching Support initiative was set up as a national initiative to increase teaching quality at universities in 24 subject areas. As Head of King's Division for Health Sciences, Professor Geissler put in a successful bid for King's to become the National Centre for Health Science. There are now 900 departments throughout the UK, led by a core staff at King's, with subject advisers in nursing, nutrition and pharmacy, and providing e-bulletins, newsletters and workshops for special interest groups.

Professor Geissler is also Honorary Secretary of the Nutrition Society which is currently setting up a register of nutritionists to ensure that they can be properly recognised, preventing people claiming to be nutritionists based on a one week course!

Professor Geissler hopes to continue her many activities for some time yet - she concluded that as her own mother is '100 years old and still going strong', she herself hoped to 'fend off Queen Death for at least another 30 years'.

*Our thanks to Professor Geissler for taking time out from her busy schedule to come and give such an interesting talk. It was particularly impressive that she kept us all rivetted despite not being able to show her slides due to technical hitches with projection equipment.*

**QE(K)A members  
enjoying the  
Reunion Lunch**



**29 September  
2007**



**River Room**



**King's College  
Strand**



**Professors Catherine Geissler  
and Don Kelly**



**Chairman Ann Wood  
gives our thanks to  
Audrey Stubbs on her  
retirement as QE(K)A  
Treasurer**



**Members take a  
break from  
AGM to watch  
Mayoral  
Parade.**



# Year of '72 Reunion

**Sean Quilty, Microbiology 1972**, organised a reunion for graduates of '72 and thereabouts', drawn mainly from 'inmates' at Queen Mary Hall, many of whom have since dispersed worldwide.

They gathered on Saturday 26th April at the Copthorne Tara and then headed for 'warm Fullers' at the Churchill Arms in Kensington Church Street, later moving on for a nostalgic viewing of the old QEC buildings. They were able to arrange entrance to the Old Refectory ... 'it was oh so bright, clean and posh'... where they 'took photos and smiled a lot'. They ended the evening with dinner at the Taj, now the Kensington Tandoori.



*For me it was like we never parted, we had the same friendships and I sensed again that special energy. We may be 36 years older but we have unexpectedly started or re-newed a network of contacts and opportunities ....*

*Sean Quilty*



# Microbiology Class of '73 Reunion

*Ann Wood organised a reunion for Microbiologists and former staff on June 29th 2008. Ann reports:*

On the big day we had the good fortune to have clement weather so we were able to spend our reunion in the garden of the Windsor Castle pub on Campden Hill Road. I had been unable to contact five of the



group; another five (\*) were unable to attend because they were abroad or otherwise engaged. The remainder (\*\*) came along alone or with partners and we also had a Mum there for good measure. I had also invited former staff of the department: Tony and Margaret Trinci, Brian and Margaret Bainbridge, Ted Mathison, Don Kelly, Marian Simmonds (ex Parr, ex chief technician) and Margaret Pirt (nee Watts) - so we had 18 people in total.

We had no problem finding things to talk about after what was a 35 year gap in conversation for most of us. John and Chris Beardall were en route back to their home in Melbourne where John is Head of Biological Sciences at Monash University. Andrew was visiting from his home in Spain. Graham had come in from Wiltshire and the rest of us – Lee, myself and Nick are all based in the London area so didn't have too far to trek. The staff had travelled from as far away as Barbados (Ted) so we all clocked up some mileage getting to Kensington.

We had a casual lunch under the vines and umbrellas to shade us from the sun, and swapped stories, histories, photos and of course the memories of student days which actually didn't feel so far away as 35 years. We hope to meet again in 2010 to celebrate 40 years since we started our degrees – the favourite suggested venue so far is in Barbados!

Class list: AJ (Tony) Parkes; Andrew Birch\*\*; Ann Wood\*\*; Anne Trustam; AR (Tony) Humphries; Caroline Hyde\*; Carolyn Fiddy (nee Heard)\*; Christine Borer (nee Potter)\*; David Roberts\*; Graham Perry\*\*; JA (Tony) Birkett; John Beardall\*\*; Lee Richards\*\*; Nick Fellows\*\*; Peter Shotton\*; Stuart Miller.

# THE SIX-A-SIDE KNOCKOUT

When I joined QEC in 1963, it had only recently begun to admit male students, but it was not many years before cricket made its appearance on the sporting scene. So a time came when I was introduced, by arm-twisting, to the six-a-side cricket tournament, a once-yearly event in June which engaged the whole college.

Our research group could just about muster a team of six (men and women). Teams came from all sections of the college, staff, students, technicians and admin, and as the activity grew in popularity numbers had to be limited to sixty teams on the six cricket pitches. It was always a debatable matter, choosing the composition of a team. Mixed was more fun and, besides, the rules patronisingly gave the girls four runs each, to encourage them to take part. Since most people had never played in a cricket match, this bonus brought a distinct advantage to a mixed team.

A few weeks before, groups of staff and research students could be spotted at lunch time, sauntering out in trainers and making their way furtively to Holland Park where there were a few cricket nets. (Incidentally, it would have been safer for the other users of the park if the netting had surrounded the batsmen on all *four* sides!)

Training before the games was considered unsporting by other amateurs, but it was necessary if only to explain to foreign students what a stump was, and how to hold the bat. And of course, muscles that had not been exercised since last June, except in the local pubs, had to be painfully stretched in preparation. It was in this process that one rediscovered how hard the ball was on ankles or reddened hands.

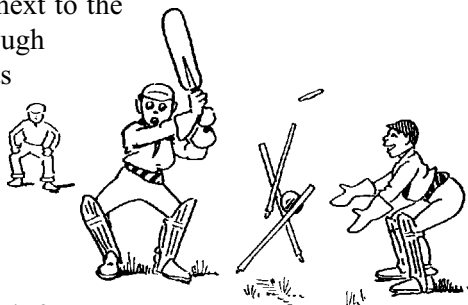
During this preparatory phase, The Picnic' had to be planned. Although food was provided in the sports pavilion, by tradition each team with its followers brought its own provender on the day, and vied to upstage the others - someone brought the picnic-cloth and cutlery, another the strawberries, then there was the chilled wine, cheese and sandwiches to be arranged. When people started to bring barbecue sets, the groundsman drew a line at this scorched-earth tactic, and forbade them.

And then, of course, the name of the team had to be decided. Since our group worked on flagellated micro-organisms, we often entered as *The Flagellators*, and one year



our six was called *The Innumerate Seven*. As the years progressed and morals grew more lax, the names became more and more outrageous, testing the authorities who finally laid down the law when a girls' team from Biology entered as *The Fallopian Fumblers*, and another (probably Biochemistry) called themselves *The Galloping Gonads*.

Eventually the day came, when all lectures were over and only a few exams were left to keep the eager from the field. The feeling in Kensington was of a medieval holy day, a sort of Saturnalia in midsummer, where on this day degrees of rank were of no consequence, and those who had some could let their hair down. Students now discovered that in the outer suburbs the lecturers had wives and even children tucked away, who were now displayed to view. According to the time of their first game, people turned up by dribs and drabs to this large playing field by the Thames in Petersham, which was next to the polo field and had to be approached through the stables. The smell of hay and horses was mingled with the intoxicating aroma of new-mown grass, signifying the tournament to come, while masts of pleasure boats glided like periscopes beyond the field and distant meadows.



On this summer's day the dress code was informal verging on laissez-faire, except for the serious players who strolled about in their own whites and boots and even brought their own bats. Other players came in white shirts and trainers, and borrowed what kit they could. The only thing insisted upon by the umpires was that every batter should wear leg pads, to give fairness in the matter of running and to prevent injuries. Umpires stood in the middle wearing whit(ish) lab-coats and carrying pints of beer as badges of office. The rules of cricket applied, except that the team of six had to use five bowlers who bowled only one over apiece until the later, serious, rounds. Anyone so unsporting as to score forty runs had to retire. The games were controlled by a small platoon of umpires, scorers and tallymen to archive all the results and display the state of play on the summary board as the tournament proceeded (and, incidentally, to inform the bookies how their favourites were doing).

The aim for most teams was to survive a few games, then to be knocked out so that their serious eating, drinking and flirting could begin - only the men in whites had intentions of winning. The end of term, the general air of freedom, and the sunshine always led to a mood of sexual frisson in the younger part of the crowd, encouraged

by the supply of alcohol: men were always eager to help mini-skirted women buckle on their pads, while the girls giggled at the plastic boxes lying in the cricket bag, pretending not to know their function. The first games were pretty much of a shambles, with a lot of wides bowled and overthrows run. Every year a few puzzled foreigners held the bat horizontally and had to be goaded into running in the right direction, but they scored as many runs as anyone else. As the tournament went on, things got more serious, and I remember many times having to dive with the bat to avoid being run out, and scraping elbows on the dry pitch. My one claim to fame arose in a game where our team was playing another team from the same department. The other team happened to contain our head of department and only professor, who was in his early thirties and fancied himself at athletic pursuits.

It was my turn to bowl an over, and he had just come to the wicket in his whites, marred only by his old cricket boots, bound round in places by green electrical insulating tape (he said it wasn't worth buying another pair). I was a rubbish bowler, and could not guarantee to get anywhere near the stumps, however I ran up past the umpire and bowled. Our professor swung his bat manfully - and the bails sailed surprisingly into the air - I'd bowled him first ball! 'Collapse of stout party,' as they say in Victorian novels. I wasn't mortified, as I had already discovered by then that this role model had feet of low-grade recycled plastic. But I did wonder if it affected my promotion prospects, although I enjoyed the congratulations.

The day saw its course, and the number of teams left in the draw dwindled, while drink began to tell on mere agility. Cheering grew for the fancied teams, and the ones on which the punters had their bets. Tea appeared in the pavilion, where sunbeams now shone slanting through the windows. The watchers looked with shaded eyes at players who began to battle for keeps, the proper cricketers who had reached the quarter-finals. Running, batting, catching had now become serious concerns, and women who shouted out 'Butterfingers!' were shushed into shamed silence. The light had begun to fail, just as the better, fastest bowlers were slinging down their murderous balls against the opposition in the gathering twilight. By then half the crowd had already retreated into the lighted pavilion for the disco, leaving forgotten players still running to and fro, neglected on the field. Collecting kit from a deserted changing room and searching for the picnic things, we trailed homewards through the polo stables to reach the cars or buses. Another year was over, with the smells of strawberries and cut grass reinforced as strong signs of freedom and celebration - tomorrow would come the hangovers, sunburn and the aching limbs.

**Dr Norman Sylvester**

**QEC Physics**



# Miss Dillon's Memoires:

*Thoughts collected by Miss T.J. Dillon, Head of Physics Department, for a party in 1979 on the demolition of the Physics Lecture Theatre to give more space for the College Library.*

In January 1923 I was invited for a short interview at K.C.H.S.S., which I had watched being built but knew only as 'That place where they do cooking'. I was taken up to a room for the Head of Department which I used for the next forty years. There was no furniture except an examination desk and chair, and also a cupboard in which I found a few attendance charts. The department took up the top floor of the North block with one laboratory and half one, one spare room, one dark room, three sinks and one power plug. There was no lecture room but we used a large, inhuman. Biology Lecture Room on the floor below and, of course, there was no lift. I met Margaret Spaul, already established as Technician, and Miss Hamilton Smith, a part-time demonstrator. I was appointed for two days a week when I found that there were lectures and classes for four different courses: Two-Year course, One-Year specials. Sister Tutors and 1st Year B.Sc. There were many problems of organisation, and the three of us did what we could.

Actually, life in those days was gracious; the students were delightful, each course wearing different coloured overalls and gaily crowding up to the lab. or clattering down the stairs to the lecture room or to the ground floor and across to the Dining Hall. There we had a High Table, and another not-so-high Table for the staff but we were rewarded with Lucullan meals served up to the staff, the fruits of the morning cookery classes. Then we had annual Garden Parties in the quadrangle with Military Bands on the Terrace outside the large Hall. It was very gay, with the men in official morning dress and the women in suitable garden-party clothes.

The hard times in the lab. went on and we made use of the landing for extra tables and the flat roof for purposes other than sun-bathing, but there were rumours of an extension to Physics. In 1928 Dr. Andrews and I had good times with the architects, Messrs. Adams, Holden and Pearson, and we studied plans of the new lab., which was about six feet higher than the existing level so that a small staircase joined the two parts of the department. There was a new crooked lecture room (at my special request), a large laboratory,

private and preparation rooms, as well as A.C. and D.C. wiring to the benches. The latter had nuisance value with batteries. Work went smoothly, with more students and more comfort for the next few years in spite of rumours of War.

In 1939 came the orders from the office: 'Pack up all essential equipment at once and moving vans will call to transport all the packing cases to Cardiff University. Details will follow.'

In September I went ahead with a few others. I met Professor Dunbar who welcomed me and nobly lent me his car to explore Cardiff to find possible residences for students. We spent some evenings at the blacked-out station, meeting shy freshers arriving on the London Train- wearing gas masks - to be sent on to their new digs. We were lent a large lab. and an enormous lecture room, both very cold, but a miracle happened that at once the students seemed to grow up as a result of being thrown together with the cheerful and sometimes tough Cardiff students. There were no more overalls or High Tables. We all fed together at mid-day in the Students' Union, where the Welsh students often burst into song - probably to cheer us all up. We were in the new University Buildings - all very blacked out - but the Biology was in the Newport Road 'old huts' and they did not like it. At the end of the session of the 'Phoney War' it was decided to risk moving us back to London, so again the moving vans were packed up.

In September 1940 a College Council Meeting was taking place when the air-raid warning started. The Council members were sent to the shelter and decided against the return to London. After much negotiation Leicester was offered as our next move and the moving vans, which were on their way back, went into reverse and headed for the Midlands.

Again I went on in advance, this time with Miss Spaull, to another good welcome. We met Professor Stewardson who ran the Physics Department single-handed and his fierce technician, Mr Waterson, who hated us all on sight - but we grew to be friends in the end. The building was a disused asylum, but labs and lecture rooms had been cleverly fitted in and luckily the Two-Year Course were housed in an up-to-date Domestic Science building.

I went to London for most weekends to keep an eye on the bombing and to collect extra apparatus from the empty labs. Troops in the trains often looked suspicious when I was carrying bits of electrical stuff, sometimes with magnets showing. They thought that I had a bomb. Dr Andrews and I were rather

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restless, as were many scientists at that time, until Professor Stewardson asked us to take on all his first-years and then the Principal wrote, asking us to co-operate in organising the Hankey Radio Courses which were being started up in the Universities. This gave us great pleasure and a lot of stimulating work for the vacations and into the terms.

The years went by with the war situation getting worse. The lab was First bombed in 1943, with damage to the landing and the staircase. Spaul and I explored the damage to date as we sat on the debris looking out into the air and down to a desolated quadrangle, when the college was full of refugees from Gibraltar. With the work of the department increasing I asked for more staff and my decision to appoint a man assistant seemed to surprise my colleagues, but Dr Rehfish was useful and great fun. Dr Wilkinson from the Leicester Tech also joined us.

On February 19th, 1944 three high explosive bombs fell in Kensington, one in Adam-and-Eve Mews and two in Campden Hill Road. I came to investigate and found the entire block demolished. The courtyard was strewn with debris of the Physics Department, the Library was then a solid mound of rubble. I picked up bits of tripods, bunsen burners and other sad reminders of the New Lab. as well as bits of blasted books. Windows were all blown out but no one was killed.

When the war was finished our chance of getting back to London was very dim although some of the other colleges were moving back. We waited for news and grumbled, even singing about it at a performance in 'The Little Theatre', hoping there would be news of repairs starting. Dr Andrews resigned and Dr Hunter was appointed for our last chapter.

In 1946, we finished our six years in Leicester with many mixed feelings of relief and gratitude as well as regret at leaving many friends. There were suitable parties with speeches and a grand clear-up as the vans were yet again loaded, and finally in my diary of October 1946 there is an entry, 'Term starts in London'. We came back to the ruins of all the front block; there was no lab., no lecture room and worse, no staircase so we were back to 'Square One'. Even to get to the original lab we had to make our way across the roof. We then began a state of emergency. An iron staircase took us from ground level to the roof, with access to Biology and Bacteriology through the windows at each stage. In addition to our old lab., we were lent a small one at the

end of the roof. It was a wet, cold session and we bought up old green plastic army Macs for anyone to keep fairly dry as they crossed the roof, or on breezy journeys to the old Biology Lecture Room. Then a 'temporary hut' was built in the quadrangle, officially for two years but it stayed for longer. We had a small lab. and a few private rooms. Physiology had half of it, including the research section for their rats.

There was little apparatus left after the bombs and the wear and tear of Leicester, so one of our tasks was to collect what we could from junk stores selling 'Army Surplus' and from firms who were in the same sad state as ourselves. Dr Hunter and I spent time searching and a day at Chatham Dockyard picking up anything we could find. I remember him struggling up the iron staircase at QEC with a disembowelled X-ray set – a hazardous task.

The rebuilding eventually started and there were building committees, workmen's huts. and the familiar noise of drills and excavations while we made do with scattered labs and much walking round and up and down. Life was never dull, with building in progress and with the cheering prospect of stairs again and of a LIFT. One day I was working in the hut and was disturbed by a noise like a bomb. I found the newly built library floor had collapsed in the middle and there were workmen clinging to the edges - but no one was hurt, so they built it up again and so far it seems quite safe.

Eventually a new Physics Lab. complete with side rooms grew up, now on the same level as the old lab., and finally a second edition of the new Lecture Theatre was finished, with improvements. However, it was not until 1953 that the restored East Block was officially opened. By this time we had new whole time staff and some secretarial help. With increasing numbers I applied to my friends at Imperial College for part-time help. There were many who came but we noted one 'star' amongst them whom we wanted to keep and found out he was Mike Browne. After that more 'stars' arose; Mr Parsons was appointed, later Dr M Harper, then Dr Sprackling and Dr McInally, all bringing new life and interests to the department. We also had our George in the workshop, and Lester planning a larger one in the basement.

Three good things happened in those post-war fifties: (1) the name was changed to Queen Elizabeth College, (2) the college started offering the full BSc. course of the University of London Revised Regulations (this was welcomed by all the Physics staff and there was a burst of new schedules and

organisation of new experiments), and (3) men students were admitted (also generally welcomed). So we went into the 60's enjoying the improvement in the department and throughout the College.

In 1962 there were more building programmes for our Anglesea Roof for Physics and for Chemistry, until the latter moved to their Palace to the North West, and amid all this a 'Super Star' arose in the shape of Professor Ron Burge and you know the wonderful things that have happened since and with his attendant 'stars' - so Good Luck to you all.



**Staff from QEC Physics Department, circe 1964**

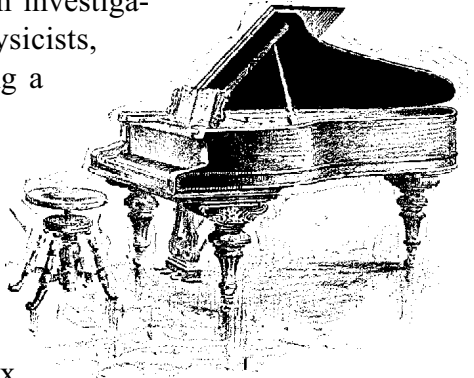
**Back row:** Miss F M Spaul, chief technician for over 40 years, died December 1975 ; Miss Jean Lewis; Dr Ursular Andrews who died many years ago; Miss Theresa Joseph Dillon, Head of Department and sister to Dillon of the bookshops and Una Dillon of motion pictures, a third sister was a nun; Dr Mike Mc Inally; Mr J J Parsons. **Front Row** Dr Michael Sprackling; Dr Gladys Isabel Harper who had worked with Rutherford; Mr George G Proctor Workshop technician who died recently; Miss Sandra Eustace Teaching Lab Technician.

# CONGRATULATIONS

**Professor Brian Foster, OBE, FRS**

One day in summer 1975, we heard strains of music emanating from the Courtauld Hall. Upon investigation, we found two of our fellow physicists, Mark Leitch and Brian Foster, playing a Beethoven sonata - Mark on piano and Brian on violin.

It is amazing how many scientists and mathematicians are also talented musicians. Mark has since become a 'part time concert pianist' amongst his many other activities, playing complex compositions to large audiences in Bristol.



Brian went on to do a PhD in particle physics at Oxford, rising to become Head of Department of Particle Physics at Oxford and Fellow of Balliol College. He is also European Director of the Global Design Effort for the International Linear Collider, the next major project proposed in particle physics. He has also been awarded an OBE and this year was awarded Fellow of the Royal Society -

see <http://royalsociety.org/publication.asp?id=7714>.

Recently Brian was guest on Radio 3's 'Private Passions'. He still plays his violin and has teamed up with violinist Jack Liebeck to create *Superstrings* - a lecture/performance that 'uses music to unravel the complex world of particle physics, starting with Einstein's Theory of Relativity'. During the radio interview, he expressed concerns over the lack of people taking up science and especially the lack of women in physics - he said he doesn't know why and still can't work it out ... No comment!

# OBITUARIES



## **Professor Sir Howard Dalton**

(QEC 1962-65) died on 12 January 2008, aged 63.

Prof Dalton was a microbiology student at QEC in the mid 60's and became a highly influential microbiologist with particular expertise in the fields of global warming, bio-fuels and animal disease. He became Professor in biological sciences at Warwick University and worked in parallel as Chief Scientific Adviser to DEFRA soon after the catastrophic outbreak of foot and mouth disease in 2002. Members present at the 2003 reunion will remember Howard as our guest speaker, a dynamic man with humour, warmth and authority, telling us of the problems awaiting him at DEFRA - foot and mouth, cockles, BSE and avian flu - and how he instigated scientifically based measures to control them. He was much

loved by his fellow students and held in high regard by academics. Our Chair, Ann Wood, knew him well: *'I had known him for over 30 years as a brilliant colleague, a good neighbour, a good laugh, a great friend and the only knight of the realm who would give me a bear hug whenever we met. He had done so much to bring science and scientists into politics and decision-making for the benefit of everyone. I don't think he had an enemy in any sphere. What a loss.'*

He was awarded a Knights Bachelor in the Queen's New Year Honours 2007. He is survived by his wife, Kira, a son and daughter, and two stepsons.



## **Dr David Anthony Armitage,**

Fondly known as Fred, died suddenly at his home in London on 3 January 2008, aged 66 years.

Fred was the guest speaker at the last Annual Reunion to be held in the Old Refectory in Kensington in 1998. He first came to QEC as an Assistant Lecturer (Chemistry) and Warden in the Hall of Residence in 1967 and was given rooms on the 4th floor from which vantage point he got to know the students in his charge, providing numerous cups of coffee for the team of students who built elaborate sets for the Christmas Ball. He had his audience with HM Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother at the 1969 Commemoration Ball. He collected scientific postage stamps, had an enduring interest in crystals, and was a supporter of Swindon Town football club.

He transferred to King's and remained there until his retirement. A memorial service held in King's College Chapel on 13 May was hugely attended, a tribute to his great popularity within the College.

### **Dr James B Heale**

'Jim' died following a stroke in February 2008. He was a lecturer at QEC and subsequently King's College following the merger in 1985, in the Division of Biosphere Sciences and then Life Sciences. His subject was Plant Pathology and he was very well known in the area. He supervised many PhD students especially over-

seas ones. He retired on health grounds following a stroke at around 1999-2000.

**Professor James Richard Lusty**, academic and administrator, b March 27 1951, d February 4 2008, age 56.

Prof Lusty graduated from QEC in 1973 (chemistry) and stayed on to attain a PhD in 1976. His subsequent career took him to Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Keele, Aberdeen and Preston, where he was made professor in 1991 and Vice-Chancellor in 1995. He became Principal of the then University of Wales College, Newport in 2002 and oversaw its transition to university status in 2004, becoming its first Vice Chancellor until the onset of illness prompted his early retirement in 2006.

He met his wife, Jackie, while they were at school and they had 3 children. His first grandchild was born just three days before he died.

### **Dr Nigel Peter Hutton**,

Nigel passed away on April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2008, aged 58, after fighting valiantly and with great courage against Myotonic Dystrophy for over 10 years. Born in Norwich, Nigel grew up in St Albans and got his BSc in Physics from Queen Mary College London. Nigel went on to do his PhD research work in the physics department at



QEC, under the supervision of Mike Holwill, where he investigated the effects of radiation on the mechano-chemical mobility of flagellated unicellular cells. After his research work was completed in 1976 Nigel went to work at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich lecturing to officers who were serving on nuclear submarines. Soon after his marriage to Janet, Nigel transferred to Aldermaston to work as a government scientist.

Nigel had an absolutely wonderful sense of humour and he always managed to get everyone laughing at some of his very witty comments. Nigel's presence was a blessing, especially in heated discussion on science or politics, when he always managed to get everyone to cool down. Nigel is fondly remembered by his colleagues for his endearing smile, patience, friendship and eagerness to discuss and help undergraduates or post-graduates coming from all over the world. Nigel was very much interested in ancient Egypt and learning hieroglyphs. His favourite music was that of Tchaikovsky, and he very much enjoyed the theatre, music and drama. The scientific community has lost a very dedicated scientist and a gifted teacher. His family and friends will always greatly miss him.

*Tribute by John L. McGregor, Dave Johnston, John Lunec and Mike Holwill.*

## **John James Parsons**

b. August 1915 d. July 2004

John Parsons was appointed as a Lecturer in the QEC Physics Department from the Buildings Research Establishment in 1957, after completing his university training during the war and subsequently being employed in radar and microwave research.

At this time, many of the original KCHSS stalwarts were still in post and John joined a department which had been led by Miss Dillon for over thirty years, teaching physics to students studying for Joint Honours degrees and nurses preparing for the Sister Tutors' Diploma. The latter tended to be more mature than the average undergraduate, which I think John greatly appreciated and indeed this was how he subsequently met his second wife Ann!

With the retirement of Miss Dillon and the appointment of Professor Ron E Burge as head of Physics in 1963, the winds of change strengthened. John was promoted to Senior Lecturer with responsibility for the development of the course unit system for the new BSc Single and Joint Honours Physics degrees introduced by the University in 1966.

He took particular pleasure in devising and developing undergraduate laboratory experiments to support the

new courses. Extremely precise and demanding in everything that he did, John always made sure that the equipment provided was of high quality and expected the students' results to be of the same standard, an expectation not always fulfilled! While he could sometimes present a formidable exterior to undergraduates, John had a kind heart and always acted in his students' best interests.

He also put his experience to good use in helping establish an undergraduate physics experimental laboratory at the University of Colombo in (the then) Ceylon, which he and Ann visited and where they spent a very successful sabbatical year in the early 1970s.

John also applied this love of accuracy and quality to his hobbies, two of which were the construction of high quality wooden furniture and the care of his well stocked and immaculate garden in New Malden. He travelled widely to source the timber for the furniture, often going long distances to bring back prime pieces of wood to season in the spare bedroom at home before working them in a specially constructed carpentry shop.

With the ending of the Sister Tutors' diploma course in 1978, John believed that he had given his best years to QEC. He did not move with the

majority of the department to the Strand, thus narrowly avoiding being associated with King's College at both ends of his career, but elected to spend more than twenty happy years of retirement with Ann, travel, tend his garden and make exquisite bespoke furniture.

*Tribute by Prof Clive Wilkinson*

*(John Parsons and Mike McInally both appear in the Physics Dept photo on page 21)*

### **Dr Michael McInally**

9 April 1925 - 11 September 2005

When I joined the staff of the QEC Physics Department in October 1960, the Head of the Department was Teresa Dillon, assisted by Ursula Andrewes, John Parsons, Michael Browne, Daphne Hall and (part-time) Gladys Harper. The accommodation consisted of two laboratories on the third floor at the front of the main building and the "crooked" lecture theatre, built to Miss Dillon's specification in the rebuilding following the destruction of the front of the building by a wartime bomb. Some staff were accommodated in small rooms opening from the larger laboratory and there were some rooms available in the quadrangle huts, recently vacated by Nutrition. John Parsons was housed in a small brick structure, known as "The Parsonage"

on the flat roof of the Anglesey Laboratories.

Dr. Andrewes retired in 1961 and her replacement was Michael McNally. In her 1979 “thoughts” on the occasion of the party to express regret at the demolition of the crooked Lecture Theatre, to give more space for the College Library, Miss Dillon referred to Michael as one of her “stars”. He had been an undergraduate at the University of Edinburgh and was awarded First Class Honours in his Final Examination and a scholarship that entitled him to undertake research under the direction of the Head of Department who, at that time was Norman Feather. In the event, Professor Feather felt that he could not find a place for an additional research student and Michael carried out the work for his Ph.D. degree under the supervision of Dr. R. Schlapp. Michael had a spell as a member of staff at Edinburgh and then moved to the Atomic Energy Research Establishment at Harwell. The Deputy Director of AERA at this time was Dr. J.V. Dunworth who married an ex-QEC student, Patricia Boston (B.Sc. 1961).

After Harwell; Michael moved to a post in the research laboratories of the British Oxygen Company but this



turned out to be something of a disappointment and he returned to academic life in the Physics Department at QEC.

At QEC Michael was given a large room in the quadrangle huts where rats had been bred for research: the floor sloped slightly towards the middle and, under

the carpet, the drain inlet remained in place. On the opposite side of Michael's room was the accommodation for the Students Union. When the students' radios became too loud he had a simple, effective and, I suspect, illegal, way of generating “noise” to get the radios turned down or off.

Michael carried out research on ozoniser-type discharges in gases but published very little of his work and never took on any research students. He preferred to put his considerable talent and experience into teaching, particularly in delivering lectures at all levels, in devising experiments and organising the first year laboratory, and looking after the welfare of students in general. For many students he was the member of staff held in highest regard and the one after whom they asked first when visiting or enquiring. At meetings, Michael usually had a well-thought-out position that

he was prepared to defend. He was a very good administrator and, in the early days of the standardised mark system, he devised procedures for determining marks and degree classes.

I was fortunate in assisting Michael in the First Year Laboratory for a number of years. Not only did I learn much from him about laboratory organisation and management, assessment, new approaches to devising experiments in the light of changing student attainments and expectations, but I was able to clarify my ideas in areas such as error estimation, and also indulge in extended discussions concerning our common interest in the structure and teaching of thermodynamics.

Outside College Michael was a rather private person. He was happily married to Mary and had three children - Catrina, David and John - about whom he sometimes spoke. He was keen on association football and, above all, he was a devout member of the Roman Catholic Church.

The forced merger between QEC, Chelsea College and King's College London came at an awkward time for Michael. He was coming up to sixty in 1985 and, with the new College anxious to reduce costs and staffing levels in the science departments he took early retirement, officially in

1984, with one or two years of part-time re-engagement.

Sadly, in Michael's final months he suffered from Parkinson's disease and his wife also became very frail. A Requiem Mass and Thanksgiving Service was held at St. Michael's Catholic Church, Ashted, Surrey, On Monday, September 19th, 2005, and was attended by a number of his former colleagues.

*Tribute by Dr Michael Sprackling*

**Mrs Everest** (QEC/QMH reception) died, Aged 90.

*Readers may remember the letter we received last year from Joyce Park (nee Duffield) who now lives in Toronto, Canada. Joyce asked if anyone knew of an obituary for Professor Harold Burton, who died in 1966, and also asked after Dr P.F.G. Prail. Dr Prail has since written to us, sending a copy of a formal obituary notice for Dr Burton that was published in 'Chemistry and Industry' December 1966 as well as his own note written for the student magazine. Our thanks to Joyce and Dr Prail for keeping in contact.*

## A Subaltern's Love-Song

*Miss J. Hunter Dunn, Miss J. Hunter Dunn,  
Furnish'd and burnish'd by Aldershot sun,  
What strenuous singles we played after tea,  
We in the tournament - you against me.*

*Love-thirty, love forty, oh! weakness oh! joy,  
The speed of a swallow, the grace of a boy,  
With carefulest carefulness, gaily you won,  
I am weak from your loveliness, Joan Hunter Dunn.....*



*Sir John Betjeman*

**Joan Hunter Dunn** was born on October 13, 1915, a doctor's daughter from Farnborough in Hampshire. At the age of 6 she was sent to boarding school in Caversham where she became lacrosse captain and tennis champion. She later went on to do a diploma at KCHSS before joining the catering staff at the University of London, staying on at Senate House after the Second World War broke out. She was constantly kept on her toes after the arrival of the Ministry of Information which brought with it a surge of journalists, writers and artists, not to mention being a target for Nazi bomb raids. It was here that she was first spotted by Sir John Betjeman, who claimed to have fallen in love with a beautiful girl with red hair, and was inspired to write his famous love poem. On asking to be introduced Betjeman went down on his knees, invited her to lunch, and then showed her the poem, already published in *Horizon Magazine*, in the taxi en-route to the restaurant. Although the poem, like *Aldershot sun*, was sheer fantasy, it did, apparently, describe Joan's life-style surprisingly well.

She later married and, as Mrs Jackson, lived abroad, first in Singapore and later in Rhodesia, returning home to England after her husband's death. She died on 18 April 2008, aged 92 and is survived by her three sons.

# KCLA Report

by **John Brockhouse**

Three meetings of KCLA Council have taken place in the past year (3 October, 20 February and 25 June) as well as the AGM and Dinner which was held on 7 November.

## **Alumni Office News**

Alumni Office staff have been active in supporting activities of a number of overseas branches particularly in the United States, Greece, Singapore, Hong Kong, Australia, the Netherlands (Inaugural Drinks Reception) and France (Choir Tour and Reception). Events are also planned in Belgium (lecture/reception) and Malaysia in the Autumn.

Staff have shown much interest in inviting Alumni to lectures run by departments as part of the Academic lecture programme. A number of these were held in the spring (Geography, History, Nursing, Education, Classics & Management) and many more are planned for the autumn.

The alumni team arranged a programme of networking receptions for alumni working in and around the City (principally in the fields of law, finance and consultancy) earlier in the year and are currently in negotiations with businesses interested in sponsoring a further event in the autumn.

Over 170 alumni, students, staff and friends of the College attended An Evening with John Irving on 29 May. The best selling American novelist and screenwriter read from his novel in progress and answered questions from the audience.

The new interactive networking facility **Alumni Online** was launched on 7 May and so far 211 alumni have registered and are using the site. Small groups of alumni are being launched on a weekly basis.

## **Alumni Weekend**

Over 300 alumni attended this year's Alumni Weekend (6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> June) which included a 50 year Geography Reunion and a 25 year Engineering Reunion. Planning is underway for next year with a focus on gaining sponsorship and it is hoped that the Principal's Reception can be held at the Tower of London, with a private viewing of the Crown Jewels, or the Guildhall.

## **Forthcoming Events**

The Sports Day will take place on Saturday 11 October 2008 with a host of sports matches and competitions between Alumni and student teams running throughout the day followed by a social evening event.

The annual candlelit Advent Carol Service that includes readings and a performance by the Chapel choir followed by a reception with mince pies and mulled wine will take place on Friday 5 December. Due to the popularity of this service, seating is by ticket only and these will be available for reservation on a 'first come, first served' basis from 1 October to 3 November.

## **Annual Fund**

An application to the Annual Fund entitled; "Student Days: images and documents from Chelsea and Queen Elizabeth Colleges 1900 – 1985" has been successful with £4,095 being added to money from the Archives budget to finance the project. The aim is to conserve the collections, to redraft and relaunch the catalogues and deliver some choice content in a permanent Web display of images and documents. The first stage of item identification and collection care is expected to last three months and will be followed by second and third stages of web publication and promotion.

The College Archives holds a large collection of photographs, publications and ephemera from Chelsea and Queen Elizabeth Colleges, with the QE material covering the College's early emergence as a pioneer in women's education and in the teaching of nutritional science through to its merger with King's in 1985. The collections are full of vital and valuable information including a wealth of illustrative material.

At present the catalogues and collections are incomplete, lack detail and exist only in paper form which limits their use and appeal. There are approximately 40 boxes of ephemera and photographs – from staff and student portraiture, student magazines, press cuttings and lecture series - many of which need sorting and repackaging.

Anyone interested in a tour of the physical archive material or other ways to get involved in the promotion of this valuable resource should contact Robbie Buscombe (Head of Individual Giving) at King's on 020 7848 3005.

## **General News**

Steven Rhodes term of office as Chair of KCLA will conclude at this year's AGM and Dinner on Thursday, 30 October. Nominations for his successor are currently being sought.



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