

ODA 2017 AGM

Secretary's Report

There has been a decline in the number of members in recent times. Sadly, inevitably, a number of members have passed away; and, unfortunately, some members have resigned as they feel for various reasons that they are no longer able to participate in the ODA's activities.

However, we continue to attract new recruits, and it is encouraging to hear from them their reasons for joining, ranging from their perception that the Association is a thriving organisation offering opportunities to continue long-standing friendships from schooldays to a keenness to receive our journal 'The Old Dy'vorian' twice a year.

Recognising the particular impact of the march of time on the ODA, Ted Nield set up his President's Working Party to find what steps might be taken to prolong the vitality and life of the ODA. It is a fact that the age profile of the current membership is well past the first flush of youth; but there is a large reservoir of younger Dy'vorians that we hope to tap into; and we are grateful to Ted and his Working Party for the Recommendations they have presented to this AGM.

Clearly, if we are to attract a new cohort of younger members, we have to present our message on Social Media, and we are doing this thanks to the lead being taken by Keith Evans. Not all of our current events and activities will be of interest to younger age groups; but we can put out the message that we are not exclusive, and our facilities and resources are available to promote and develop events and activities that will be attractive to a younger generation.

So that is our task going forward; but as I mentioned earlier we enjoy a reputation for being a thriving organisation.....and that is a deserved reputation:-

Social Events & Activities

Once again last year we hosted a series of successful ODA Events:-

The Annual Dinner attracted 165 Dy'vorians, which was 4% higher than 2015; and this year with 197 tickets sold, it will be a further 17% higher. Our thanks go to Dinner Secretary David Dickinson for his planning and organisation.

At **Balconier's Day** at St Helens, where Malcolm Nash was our Guest Speaker, there was a record attendance of 60 Dy'vorians and guests; and we are aiming for a similar number this year on Saturday 27th May, when our guest speaker at lunch will be Tony Lewis. We are most grateful to Ken Sharpe for organising this event for us every year.

The Golf Day at Clyne Golf Club also attracted a record entry of 28 players, and it is Peter Samuel that we thank for organising this.

Our two Annual Lectures were very well attended with John Ashley giving a fascinating and well researched talk on Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show in Swansea; and thanks to Ted Nield's special connections with The Geological Society of London, eminent author and T V Natural History programme maker Prof Richard Fortey delivered an outstanding lecture on his wildlife studies.

ODA Publications

Having taken over the editorship of 'The Old Dy'vorian' from Jeff Humphreys in Mid 2016, standards have been maintained and Tudor price has produced two fine editions in the past year with excellent contributions from Members. We are still looking for a permanent Editor for TOD and we are grateful to Tudor for agreeing to edit the next two editions; but we hope that someone will step forward soon to take over the role for the longer term.

We congratulate Tudor on his book '*Among Some Swansea School Boys 1914 - 1919*', which was published on a not for profit basis with the support of the ODA. All 100 copies were sold and, therefore, there was no cost to the Association. During his research for the book, Tudor discovered that four names were missing from the School War Memorial Plaque. With the assistance of Dr Ian Walsh, Dean of the Dynevor Campus of UWTSD, these names have been engraved on the Memorial, which was rededicated in a service led by the Rev. Lionel Hopkins.

Tudor has recently completed a second book along the lines of his first, but dealing with the experiences of boys and masters in WWII. It is expected to arrive from the printers by the end of May and will be priced at £7-99 plus p&p. The Association will publicise it soon, but a dozen or so orders have already been placed for it!

Tudor's research once again discovered a name that is missing from the War Memorial, and it is intended to add this name soon to the plaque.

ODA Website

Keith Evans is a busy man in the ODA. With the assistance of Tony Wright of AW Graphics, he maintains and develops our Website and our FaceBook page; besides which he maintains our data base of Members and co-ordinates our regular MailChimp announcements to Members. Various technical problems have arisen in recent years, often due to the decision taken several years ago to switch to a new system; and Keith, assisted by his patient wife and also by Phil Stone, has worked long hours to rectify the glitches.

Roger Williams continues to gather content for the expanding Archive section of the Website, which is becoming a valuable historical resource; and I would like to express thanks to Adrian Davies for allowing us to reproduce his superb gallery of caricatures of former Dynevor Schoolmasters on our Website.

Finances

Our finances are healthy, which will allow us to continue our activities well into the future. This is very much thanks to Steve Way, our Treasurer, who not only keeps the books in good order but also is assiduous in keeping track of Members' subs, which is no small task.

Relations with UWTSD

Last October we donated President's Awards, which is the custom annually, to four students who were considered worthy of recognition for pursuing their studies in spite of difficult personal circumstances. It is very gratifying for the Association to make these Awards and the presentation of them is something that is much appreciated by the University too. Similarly, the Association is most grateful to the University for allowing us the use their facilities for our various activities. In particular, we greatly appreciate the support we receive from Prof. Mike Phillips, Dr Ian Walsh, and Joyce Wills and her administrative staff.

Phil Davies
Hon. Secretary
27th April 2017