

## The Old Dy'vorians Association

### Communications Report to AGM April 2016

At this time last year, we were able to report that "solid progress" had been made in developing the online presence of the ODA. This continues to be the case, although in 2015/16 we have seen further progress in some areas but only consolidation in others.

#### Website

In terms of website content, this has continued to increase over the past 12 months as Members have contributed more images for our "Find Your Years" gallery and we have continued to build our archives.

We first published our School Magazine archive in April 2014 and Roger Williams continued with this major exercise into 2015 with the last copies being published online in the middle of the year.

We also made TOD available in open access browsing in late 2015, although the latest edition of TOD remains available only within the Members' Area of the site as this is still seen as a major benefit of being a member of the Association.

Unfortunately, these key developments have not yet been translated into growth in website visitor numbers; these have remained relatively static. After a jump in 2014 and early 2015, following the initial launch of the School Magazine archive, monthly number of Unique Visitors to our site regularly exceeded 500. Now, however, we are seeing monthly visitors more in the range of 400 – 450, a fall of some 15-20% from last year's average.

A possible reason for this is that we have experienced slower speeds on the website and, in fact, we have had to address a significant issue with our internet service provider. Half way through the year the host of our website reported major concerns about the way that [www.dynevorrevisited.org.uk](http://www.dynevorrevisited.org.uk) was impacting on his business with his other customers.

Initially, it appeared that internet search robots were visiting our site very frequently and were causing a slowdown in the speed of the server operation. We restricted access to our site to only key search engines such as google, yahoo and Bing and this seemed to have a positive effect. However, very soon we had further complaints and a threat that the website would have to be closed down or we would have to have our own dedicated server at a cost of thousands of £'s.

Upon further investigation by Tony Wright of [awgraphics.co.uk](http://awgraphics.co.uk), who manages the D2D workings of our site, it became clear that the MODX web content management system used to develop our website seemed to be causing the problems. In showing a webpage, MODX often draws data from a number of sources/fields and this necessitates multiple operations, even though the page appears more or less instantaneously. In the case of pages with multiple images such as Find Your Years, then the server would slow down considerably and this would impact on our website host's other clients.

As a result, we had to withdraw our image gallery in January to change the way in which images are presented on the website. This was a major exercise, but it appears to have solved the problem and we can now start to move forward again and increase further the content available on [www.dynevorrevisited.org.uk](http://www.dynevorrevisited.org.uk).

Finally, I know that it is always of interest to know where our website visitors come from. I can report that Great Britain, the USA, Germany, France and Canada remain at the top of the list. However, over the last year we have also seen visits from Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Russia, Ukraine and Vietnam amongst other far-flung outposts.

#### Social Media

In parallel with our website, we have continued to develop our presence on Facebook and Twitter so that members have more immediate access to information and news about the ODA. This has proven popular with many and we now have 190 Likes on Facebook and 158 Followers on Twitter. In the case of Facebook this is an increase of 35% on last year and there are now many interactions/responses when we post updates. We will continue to develop this key communication tool.

Similarly, we are also now making regular use of Mail Chimp to email members and this provides an easy and cost-effective way of communicating important messages in a timely manner.

Finally, we would make our usual appeal to members to continue to contribute any new images or Dynevor-related information/articles via the website so that we can build upon our progress so far.