

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2018 – 2019

I am pleased to present the President's Report for the past year and wish to record that it has been an honour and a privilege to serve as President of the Old Dy'vorians Association. It has proven to be a busy and very interesting time and, unfortunately, has ended all too soon!

This report will comment on how our calendar of events continues to thrive and grow and on specific actions taken to encourage the greater involvement of younger Dy'vorians, while preserving the memory of Dynevor and the Association for generations to come.

- The year started with The ODA Annual Reunion Dinner which took place on 13 April 2018 at the University of Swansea. It was another excellent night which Noel Blows had arranged as Acting Dinner Secretary. The Speaker on the night was Jeff Burns who gave the 165 Dy'vorians and Friends attending a fascinating insight into his career as a professional boxer. The evening was another great success and sincere thanks go to Noel, Jeff and all others involved in the arrangements.
- Earlier in the day, another successful Dy'vorian Golf day at Clyne Golf Club had taken place. The event was organised by Pete Samuel and 22 golfers had to brave very poor weather with visibility sometimes as low as only 200 yards. The start was delayed by 90 minutes and it was agreed to play only 9 holes but, in spite of this, all present enjoyed some excellent company! The 2018 winner of the Peter Saward Claret Jug was Peter Clement, while the Team Prize went to Pete Clement, Mike Long, Kelvin Howells and Peter Samuel. Well done to Pete Samuel for his tremendous efforts in arranging this annual event.
- On the evening of 20th June, the Joint ODA/UWTSD Annual Lecture was held at Dynevor Campus. The Guest Lecturer this year was local historian, John Ashley, who started to give a very interesting presentation on "Swansea's Aviation Pioneers"; unfortunately, after only 10 minutes, the centre of Swansea suffered a power cut which caused the lecture to come to an abrupt end, with the audience of some 30 - 40 attendees being led out in darkness by torchlight and mobile phones!
- The following day saw the ODA/Balconiers' Day take place at St. Helens and this was another entertaining gathering with 35 Dy'vorians and Friends in attendance. The cricket was played in beautiful weather and, during the lunch interval, attendees heard a fascinating talk from Mark Wallace, former Glamorgan Captain and wicketkeeper, on the life of a professional cricketer. John Williams, Chairman of the St Helen's Balconiers, was also made an Honorary Member of the ODA in recognition of his service to Glamorgan cricket in Swansea and West Wales. Congratulations again go to Ken Sharpe on ensuring another enjoyable day at St Helen's.
- On 21 September, the Joint ODA/UWTSD Annual Lecture took place for the second time. Following the premature curtailment of the Lecture in June, this re-arranged event was well-received by all attendees. Local historian, John Ashley, gave an excellent, illustrated presentation on "Swansea's Aviation Pioneers". The Lecture coincided with a further Reunion of the Year of '58 and hence a tour of the current "School" premises also formed part of this Dy'vorian event
- In the evening, the Year of '58 held their Reunion at the Grand Hotel. The organisers had arranged an interesting programme of activities over the weekend and, even after 60 years, those Dy'vorians present clearly still enjoyed each other's company and catching up on old times.
- 15 November was another notable date in the Dy'vorian calendar with, firstly, the President's Awards to Students at UWTSD being made to 3 worthy recipients who were nominated by their Lecturers. All had fought and overcome personal difficulties before and while studying for their degrees and certainly merited the support of the ODA. It was agreed with Prof. Ian Walsh that a further Postgraduate Award would be introduced in future years.
- In the evening, following a Reception hosted by the ODA, the Annual Lecture was given by Lord Anderson of Swansea. The former Swansea East MP, Donald Anderson, recounted the changes

which he had observed in Swansea and further afield during his lifetime and regaled us with a number of humorous anecdotes; he also gave more serious commentary on current political matters, including Brexit, where he was able to draw on his considerable experience in public service and, especially, Foreign Affairs.

- The Past Presidents' Lunch, organised by Edgar McCarthy, was held on 2 November 2018 at Langland Bay Golf Club. It was again very well attended and thanks go to Edgar for arranging such a pleasant and relaxed occasion.
- During the year, Committee meetings were held in June, September and January and these focused on a range of Dy'vorian matters, including the key challenge of how to engage more with younger Dy'vorians so that they become more involved in the work of the ODA to ensure future continuity. This sought to build on the work of previous Presidents and it was encouraging to have a former teacher plus two former pupils from the 70s and 80s attend the January Committee meeting.
- With the goal of attracting younger Dy'vorians to the Association, it is a pleasure to report that we are adding a new event to our busy calendar. In October 2019, a Dy'vorian Music Night is being staged at the Hyst, Swansea; this will be an informal social gathering with live performances by local musicians. Many thanks to Jeff Vaughan for taking the lead on this event.
- It is also a great pleasure to report that the significant role of older Dy'vorian members is being acknowledged formally through the creation of the category of Life Membership of the ODA. This seeks to recognise the long affiliation of senior members with the Association and the contribution they have made in keeping alive the memory of Dynevor School, Swansea.
- Lastly, over the past year, a re-design of the www.dynevorrevisited.org.uk website has been undertaken in order to make it easier to use and to create an improved archive of Dynevor related material for future social historians. This exercise is now nearing completion and the new website, with even more photographs and enhanced searchability, will be launched later in 2019.

As the years go by, it is inevitable that the number of those who attended "Dynevor" will decline, but there are still a large number of Dy'vorians out there who share memories of attending the School in all its forms. As we state on our website, "the Old Dy'vorians' Association is looking to maintain interest in the life of all of those schools, which together combined to make Dynevor such a significant presence in the history of education in Swansea. At the same time, by harnessing the power of the Internet and social media, we hope to make contact with younger generations of former pupils, staff and students so that we can keep the spirit of Dynevor alive!"

This must remain our aim – to spread the Dy'vorian name to encourage interest and involvement in ODA events and activities. The year has passed quickly, but hopefully some steps have been taken to move the Association forward in this regard.

I look forward to passing the Presidential baton to our new President, John Walters, in May at the 81st Annual Dinner of the Old Dy'vorians' Association, which has been arranged this year by Keith Ferguson, and I know that John can rely on the support of a hardworking Committee to whom I give my sincere thanks for their help and assistance.

Finally, I would like to recognise the significant contributions made to the Association over many years by Phill Davies, Secretary; Steve Way, Treasurer; Peter Samuel, Membership and Golf Secretary; Tudor Price, former Editor of TOD; and Past Presidents John Rees and Phil Stone. Thank you all very much for your tremendous work! I would also like to express my appreciation to all those who have been involved in the work of the committee in the past for their support and dedication to the cause.

Keith D. Evans
President, 2018 - 2019