

President's report

The 2017 annual dinner proved very successful seeing nearly 200 attending. My thanks go to all those involved in the organisation, especially David Dickinson and his late wife Jill. Thanks also to my brother Christopher who followed my advice to keep his speech short and include some humour - it was very well received.

My predecessor Ted Nield produced a comprehensive report on the way forward for the association, which the officers of the association have attempted to implement over the last year. Motivating the more recent alumni to attend functions and join the association is proving challenging. However, Keith Evans's recent initiative to over-haul the website and other digital resources is the way forward.

The joint UWTSD was given by Julian Lewis MP. He talked about defence issues and his relationships with other Parliamentarians and civil servants. It was a most interesting evening rounded off with a pleasant meal in the company of three of his contemporaries, myself and Ian Walsh. A spin-off from this lecture was an invitation to Dy'vorians to join Julian and Nigel Evans for a tour of the House of Commons including a meal in the members' restaurant.

The Annual ODA lecture in November was given by Tudor Price. Tudor has written a book on the contributions and exploits of Dy'vorians in the Second world war. His talk based on the book was fascinating and expertly delivered.

I am indebted to the support I have received from all the committee members. Phil Davies has been a "rock" and a wonderfully competent secretary. Noel has taken over the mantle of David and Jill Dickinson as the Annual dinner organiser which he is performing with his usual zeal and dynamism. TOD continues in the capable hands of Tudor Price and the finances have been managed with minimum fuss and competence by Steve Way. Thanks to Roger Williams for the archiving, Peter for his work as both membership secretary and golf tournament organiser, and Ken Sharpe for organising the balconeer's day at St Helens, which has become a highlight in the calendar.

A special mention for Joyce Willis who retired last year and was most helpful in co-ordinating and maintaining links between the ODA and the university. Joyce was presented with a gift from the ODA in recognition of her help to the association over the years at the annual awards ceremony. The ceremony it was once again a rewarding experience to listen to the citations, often mentioning severe hardships and adversity, faced by the students who received the awards.