

The Old Dy'vorians Association (ODA)

Communication Report 2021

As previously reported, the Communication Role within the ODA has developed on a number of fronts – it is no longer centred around the Dynevor Revisited website alone. The ODA now employs a number of tools to communicate with existing and potential members so that we remain an active and inclusive association; the following are all fundamental to this communication process and it is proposed in the 2021 AGM to appoint separate coordinators for each channel:

- <http://www.dynevorrevisited.org.uk/> now the official online Archive of the Association
- <https://www.facebook.com/DynevorRevisited> ... for more immediate posts and interaction between members
- <https://mailchimp.com/> ... for messages on specific ODA events straight to individual email accounts

In the Autumn of 2020, the Association invested in a Zoom licence and began using it to further the aims of the ODA at a time when the pandemic compelled us to suspend our usual programme of activities. The use of Zoom has allowed us during the pandemic to hold online both formal and informal meetings of members of the Association. Most notably, it has made possible a highly successful, virtual OD Annual Lecture that attracted a large international audience of ODs. The success of the Lecture has demonstrated the value of this medium in engaging with members who, for geographical reasons, cannot attend events in Swansea.

As the association moves forward, it is important that we recognise that different age groups may use different types of communication tools, with some Dy'vorians preferring the more instant and informal style of communication offered via Facebook, and others preferring all that the recently developed archive has to offer.

All of these channels are important methods of presenting the Association to members and a wider audience, with social media providing a useful means allowing all those interested in Dy'vorian matters to gain a quick overview, before moving on to <http://www.dynevorrevisited.org.uk/> to learn more about the history of the school and what makes Dynevor so important to so many.

In this regard, it is vital that fresh content is regularly made available in order to encourage ongoing engagement with the association and its events, while also reaching out to encourage new membership.

There is a wealth of recently-added Dynevor-related information on the website. The numerous Images paint a fantastic picture of the past and our present activities, and all members are urged to submit new content to Phil Stone (philstone1@me.com) or Pam Bashford (pam_bashford@hotmail.com) for publication.

FACEBOOK

Facebook is a less formal channel of communication and frequently generates engagement with Dy'vorians who are not always members of the Association. These are potential new members and maybe one day they will take the next step of becoming new members.

The ODA has made a concerted effort to gain engagement with all Dy'vorians via Facebook and we now have over 500 followers of the Dynevor Revisited facebook page. Any queries regarding the use of facebook should be raised with Steve Way (steveaway156@gmail.com)

MAIL CHIMP

Mailchimp is a simple and effective means of delivering targeted messages to members. More than 80% of members now subscribe to this email service, with over 400 announcements being despatched per campaign. Should anybody wish to subscribe to the Mailchimp service, then please contact Keith Evans (keith_evans4@sky.com)

NEW DYNEVORREVISITED WEBSITE/ARCHIVE

In 2017, it was agreed that a new website should be developed with the aim of creating an online Archive for future use by Dy'vorians and social historians alike.

The development work took slightly longer than anticipated, but it is now a pleasure to report that the new website is up and running. One of its advantages is that the content management system (WordPress) is much more accessible to those of us with some IT skills. As a result, we have been able to avail ourselves of the services of our webmaster, John Ashley, to provide introductory training in WordPress through the medium of Zoom for interested members of the Committee with some competence in IT. This in turn has meant that routine tasks in relation to the day to day running of the website are now carried out by Pam, our Secretary, and by Phil Stone. The upshot of these developments is that our website has become more dynamic and more responsive to the needs of the Association than was the case hitherto.

There are some further development issues that require attention in the near future. The home page needs to be made more attractive to potential users, principally by drawing attention in a more graphic way to the achievements of our former school and to the extensive archive that the site now holds. We must also seek to improve the search facility that is offered so that visitors to the site can carry out more effective searches of the archive. That said, we are beginning to get a website in which we can take some satisfaction, if not pride!

CONCLUSION

In summary, it is vitally important that all 3 communication channels are maintained in the future ... as technologies evolve and develop. Even though it may occasionally seem that members are getting the same message more than once, the Association must reach out to all so that the Old Dy'vorians Association remains a thriving association which is relevant to as many former pupils and staff as possible.