

## The Wilhelmshaven Association

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**Username:** may2015 (Lower case)

**Password:** TWA295 (Upper case)

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# THE NEW CAVALIER



## PRINCE RUPERT SCHOOL

### WILHELMSHAVEN

1947 - 1972

Newsletter 63

AUTUMN - 2014

Editor's letter	2
Biennial Reunion	3
Committee vacancies	5
Word from the chair	5
TWA Patron	6
Early perspectives	6
PRS stones back where they belong	7
Mid-life perspective	10
Anyone remember this boy?	10
London reunion 1958	11
Skagerak Games & Battle of Jutland	12
Dieter's story - part two	13
RN courtesy visit	15
Heather remembers	15
Lady Mary's family says Thank you!	16
Where's the gong?	17
Admissions registers back in W'haven	18
More drama at PRS	18
Book review	19
Letters to the editor	21
Wilhelmshaven mini-reunion	23
PRS reunited down under	23
The Late Pat (Easton)Fitzimons	25
Stop Press - Lois & Bernie	25
47ers mini-reunion in Lewes	26
Fleet mini-reunion	26
Drake girls reunited	27
The Military Child	28
TWA merchandise	28
How the Phoenix was saved	29
New Finds	30

*New username and password for members' website. Effective August 2014. See rear cover.*

*PRS boys discover that even the sea can freeze in Wilhelmshaven. Photo (circa 1958/59) by courtesy of Richard Tomlinson, who also provided the photo of the bathing belles on the first inside spread of the previous issue.*



Dear Members,  
 With the recent return of the foundation and phoenix stones to Wilhelmshaven, the final act in the school's history has been played out. A small band of us were present to witness the unveiling of the phoenix stone on Fliegerdeich in October. This location was chosen as the final resting place due to the main site being currently desolate and awaiting re-development, while the former school buildings on Fliegerdeich are still in use and expected to remain so for the foreseeable future. An initial report and photos of the unveiling are included in this issue.

The latest news on the only remaining landmarks of the school on the main site (the bunkers) is that one is being demolished, while the other (nearest to the school entrance) will be preserved. We will keep you posted on this and other developments at the main site as and when they occur.

As a mark of respect to our former patron, the late Lady Soames, a handful of TWA representatives will attend her memorial service at Westminster Abbey on November 20th. We look forward to paying our own tribute to our former patron in the next (Spring 2015) issue of New Cavalier.

It only remains for us to extend our warmest season's greetings and wish you a Happy Christmas and New Year, when we look forward to seeing you at our main reunion in Leeds on 29th -30th May.

Your editorial team,

*Paul Levitt & Andy Renou*

**Don't miss out!!! Book Now to Be Sure of Your Place at  
The Wilhelmshaven Association Biennial Reunion 29th - 30th May 2015**

**Village Hotel North Leeds, 186 Otley Road, Headingley, Leeds, LS16 5PR**

**TICKETS: £70.00 per head (for two days) – £50.00 per head (Saturday only)**  
*Please note this does not include accommodation – see below for hotel information.*

Members may bring a guest, however, if their guest is an ex-PRS-ite, then he/she (the guest), must be a fully paid up member of TWA for 2015/16.

To enable us to plan the event please return your booking form and deposit ASAP. Also please note this year we have options for the Saturday night meal so don't forget to complete your choices.

If you have lost the booking form you can print one from the TWA website or contact Carol Goronwy

### **FULL payment must be made by Friday 27th March 2015**

Proposed Programme: The reunion weekend will begin with a Meet and Greet on Friday evening including buffet style refreshments. As usual Saturday morning and afternoon you are free to rummage through the memorabilia, pamper in the beauty salon (book through salon reception, there is a small charge), free use of the pool and gym or enjoy the attractions of the City. Saturday evening there is the formal Dinner followed by a Disco Dance. You can book tables for the Saturday dinner via your booking form so you can be seated with your friends if you wish. This year there is a menu option, you must select your choices when you book your reunion ticket.

A full programme of events will be published nearer the event.

*To avoid disappointment book your hotel accommodation ASAP, details below.*

REMEMBER, YOU MUST BOOK YOUR OWN ACCOMMODATION before Friday 17th April 2015 latest

Initially we have reserved 55 double and 20 twin rooms in the hotel for TWA members at a generous discounted rate (these are going fast), subject to availability more will be made available (no guarantee)

Rooms not booked by 17th April 2015 will be put back on the open market.

The rates (per room/ per night) for two night stays are: £95 for double or twin occupancy and £85.00 for single occupancy. This rate is inclusive of breakfast and VAT.

N.B. Rates for a single night only are slightly more at £99 and £89 respectively. A non-refundable £25 deposit will be charged when booking.

Please use the correct booking code as shown below.

Ring Central Reservations on 0871 2224193 Mon - Fri 0800 - 2200 (Sat/Sun 0900 - 1800)

Quoting booking code: TWAR290515 for two nights or 1NGT290515 for 1 night.

(Don't forget to have your Credit Card details to hand).

The Booking line is open Mon-Fri 8am to 10pm & Sat-Sun 9 am to 6 pm.

If you choose to stay on Thursday and Sunday nights, the same room rate applies\*\* (\*\*must be booked at same time as Friday & Saturday booking). Please note that check in time is from 3.00 pm.

### **For Members living overseas**

If international members are unable to phone Central reservations, they can email [reun@prs-wilhelmshaven.co.uk](mailto:reun@prs-wilhelmshaven.co.uk) to receive information on alternative arrangements.

Upgrades to Upper Deck rooms may be possible for an additional charge of £20 per night. This gets you:-

- Sealy Posturepedic bed.
- A divine mattress topper, snuggly duvet, and high quality bed linens.
- Bose iPhone speaker dock and full Sky Movies and entertainment TV package
- Bespoke Starbucks hot drinks package
- Exclusive access to Upper Deck club website featuring brand partner offers and first-to-see Village deals and promotions

### **Getting there:**

By Car - Nearest motorways are the M621 and the M1

Sat Nav Post Code LS16 5PR (put in hotel address, post code is shared with a very swish private estate!)

By Train - Leeds City Station is 20 mins away – taxi approx. £5 - £10

By bus from Leeds City centre/Rail station 20ish mins (Bring your bus pass)

By Coach - National Express Coach Station, Dyer Street, Leeds LS2 7LA, +448717818178

By Air - Leeds-Bradford airport is 5.3 miles away and approx 13 mins.

Alternative Accommodation: There is a range of alternative accommodation in and around Leeds with several large hotels within walking/taxi distance of the De Vere Village. You can obtain details of alternative accommodation and Tourist Attractions from the Leeds Tourist Centre Leeds City train station. Telephone: 0113 242 5242  
The Tourist Centre Opening, hours 9.30-16.30 Website [www.visitleeds.co.uk](http://www.visitleeds.co.uk)



## Committee vacancies:

Marguerite Garford (Ireson, Frosbisher/Rodney-53/56) who has been our Merchandiser for 14 years, is retiring from the Committee after the Leeds 2015 Reunion. Marg deserves a well earned rest but we need to recruit her replacement as soon as possible so that the changeover runs smoothly next year.

The Chairman and Vice Chairman roles on the Committee are vacant. Suitable candidates will be given the opportunity to sit on the Committee to find out what is involved before the appointments are confirmed.

Please contact me by email at: [chairman@prs-wilhelmshaven.co.uk](mailto:chairman@prs-wilhelmshaven.co.uk) or by phone on 01635 248300 if you would like more information.

*Barbara Steels - Acting Chair and Archivist*

## A word from the Chair

Prince Rupert School, based in Wilhelmshaven from 1947 - 1972 and then in Rinteln from 1972 - 2014, has now finally ceased to be active after a period of 67 years. We have been approached by a small group of former pupils and staff of PRS Rinteln who are keen to form an association similar to ours. At our recent committee meeting, a representative of the Rinteln group attended and a discussion took place regarding how our two groups can operate separately, but under the umbrella

of the title Prince Rupert School. We are aware that for many of us in TWA, we have discreet groups - the 47ers, those in the 50's and 60's and those that we call the 72ers. You may also be aware, or not, that when our PRS closed, our headmaster and his desk, a group of 35 - 40 pupils, some staff, the phoenix crest, traditions based on school rules, drama, sport and most of the things that in some degree or other were part of our life at PRS Wilhelmshaven, transferred to Rinteln.

The first appointed head boy at Rinteln was a former pupil from our school and I hope you will agree with me that Prince Rupert School continued for another 42 years. I would like to reassure you all that there are no plans to change the way we operate TWA in the foreseeable future - this will continue in the same way. There may be a slight change in the way our website is accessed but even this will be notified and a forwarding mechanism will be included should the former address be used. Links such as TWA's attendance at the Rinteln awards ceremony over the last seven years and more recently the joint project with the return of the stones to Wilhelmshaven, are indications of links with PRS Rinteln that have been forming for some years.

All of this is to advise you that preliminary discussions on this exciting new dimension have started - the Rinteln group will be spending many months designing their association and

you will be kept informed of progress.

*Barbara Steels - Acting Chair and Archivist.*

## TWA Patron

Following the sad and recent death of Lady Mary Soames LG, DBE, the Committee has decided that we will not replace this position for the time being. If another suitable person with connections to PRS Wilhelmshaven is nominated, we will consider this at the time.

## Early perspectives

The first year has been extremely glamorous. We have been visited by two cabinet ministers and by very many distinguished people. We have all the time been doing new things and, because they were new, been fired by tremendous enthusiasm. From now onwards the newness and the glamour fades. We shall be living, in the school, a more mundane life. The real test, therefore, of the school is yet to come.

*The Cavalier, 1948*

The school really was a busy place. True, there were always boys and girls who did not know what to do, but they were not numerous. The real test of all this came at weekends of course, particularly wet ones. At first everybody was bored stiff.

Gradually the school became aware that there was much to do and gradually the boredom disappeared. Eventually, as we had hoped, there was not enough time to do everything that the boys and girls wanted to do.

*The Cavalier, 1949*

The story of the school was essentially a story of human relationships. If they were good, it was a happy story, if they were bad the story was not worth writing. PRS was a happy school, a happy community of which we can all be extremely proud and we have already achieved standards of work and games, and corporate life that bear comparison with any school in England.

Nobody knows how long the school will last, but it already has made its mark in educational history and I am sure as time goes on it will assume an even more important place than it holds now. *The Cavalier, 1951*

*Ed. - the above perspectives were of John Smitherman, our first headmaster who left school in 1951 to take up an appointment at Woolverstone Hall, near Ipswich. Subsequently, he headed schools in Hong Kong, Germany (Hamm and Munster), Pakistan, Libya and finally, Godalming. He died in Guildford in March 1984.*

## PRS stones back where they belong

On Saturday 11th October, around 40 people were present on Fliegerdeich to witness the unveiling of the Phoenix stone, which had previously been transported from Rinteln along with the foundation stones of the school chapel and Churchill building. In brilliant sunshine, the head of Wilhelmshaven's Municipal Culture Office, Dr Jens Graul, who played a key role in relocating the stones to their new home, welcomed those present, including former pupils and staff, relatives, friends and media representatives.

Acting TWA chair, Barbara Steels, told those present the story of how the

stones had been saved and transported to Rinteln, where they were displayed until the school's recent closure. (see story on page 29). Over several months, plans were made to secure and arrange removal and transportation of the stones to a safe haven in Wilhelmshaven, where the Phoenix stone will remain proudly displayed at its new location on Fliegerdeich. In due course, the other two – more portable – stones will be collected by TWA representatives and placed on display at the Leeds and subsequent reunions.

Wilhelmshaven's Deputy Mayor Holger Barkowsky, underlined the significance of the school's presence to



Home at last: mission accomplished.

the town and its people in the post-war period when he said, "Prince Rupert School is a piece of post-war history, a symbol of the peaceful fresh start after years of war and destruction." He went on to say that more than 7000 young people from service families had attended the school from 1947 to 1972 and that the phoenix emblem, along with the school motto, Sapiencia ex igne, stands for the post-war international understanding and cooperation between the Germans and British.

In his address, Professor Dr. Andre Freiwald, director of the 'Senckenberg by the Sea' research establishment, which now occupies the former school buildings on the Fliegerdeich site, said that those associated with the school will forever be welcome

in Wilhelmshaven and can visit the Phoenix stone and Fliegerdeich buildings whenever they wish. The modern research facility currently hosts the Senckenberg institute's Oceanography Department and the German Centre for Research in Marine Biodiversity.

Following the speeches, works by our very own PRS artist, Andy Renou were presented to Prof. Dr. Freiwald and Herr Barkowsky as a gesture of our appreciation for their support in accommodating the phoenix stone. After the unveiling, Prof. Dr. Freiwald invited guests to view the facility, where those interested were given a guided tour and saw specimens from the deep ocean floor around hydrothermal vents, or 'black smokers', which is a current area of study.

## Wundervogel erinnert an britische Schule

FESTAKT Wappen der Prince Rupert School hat einen festen Platz am Senckenberg Institut

An der Enthüllung am Südtstrand nahmen zahlreiche britische Gäste teil. Geschichte der Schule sollte im Stadtzentrum gewürdigt werden.

WILHELMSHAVEN/GA – Wilhelmshaven war und ist die Heimat der Prince Rupert School (PRS). Seit diesem Wochenende gibt es dafür ein weiteres sichtbares Zeichen im Stadtbild. Im Beisein von zahlreichen ehemaligen Schülern der britischen Schulen in Wilhelmshaven und Rinteln wurde am ersten ehemaligen Schulgebäude am Südtstrand 40, einem heute vom Forschungsinstitut Senckenberg am Meer genutzten Gebäude, der Wappenstein feierlich enthüllt.

„Die Prince Rupert School ist für Wilhelmshaven ein stark nachkriegsgeschichtliches Symbol für den überlängten Neubeginn nach Jahren des Kaltes und der Zerstörung“, sagte Bürgermeister Holger Barkowsky. Seit als 7000 junge Menschen haben zwischen 1947 und 1972 die Schule für die Angehörigen der britischen Streitkräfte besetzt. Zur Schule gehörten Gebäude am Beestel See, am Beestel

und am Fliegerdeich. Drei davon sind noch erhalten.

Das Wappen der Schule zeigt, in Anlehnung an den Wundervogel Phoenix, eine Wappenstein, die die Wappenstein aus dem Feuer. Er steht auch für die gezielte Völkerverständigung nach dem Weltkrieg zwischen Deutschen und Briten, die von Seiten der ehemaligen Prince Rupert-Schüler von der „Wilhelmshaven Association“ unter Barbara Steels gepflegt wird. In Wilhelmshaven hat sich neben dem Fremden und Bekannten der ehemaligen insbesondere der Leiter des städtischen Kulturamtes, Dr. Jens Graul, um die Verbindung mit der „Operation Rinteln Stones“ verdient gemacht.

Nach der Schließung der Schule in Wilhelmshaven wurden die Angehörigen der britischen Streitkräfte in Deutschland in Rinteln im Wappenstein-Gebäude untergebracht. Deshalb besuchten auf Einladung des früheren PRS-Lehrers Tony Marrow die Royal Engineers 1984 das Wappenstein, der das Hauptgebäude der Schule am Beestel See darstellt, und zwei weitere Grundstücke. Ein Projekt, so erinnerte Barbara Steels, das – von der deutschen Mutter und der



Barbara Steels, Sprecherin der britischen „Wilhelmshaven Association“, dankte allen, die mitgeholfen haben, einen festen Platz für das Wappen der Prince Rupert School zu finden. Daneben (v. l.): Prof. Dr. Andre Freiwald (Senckenberg), Bürgermeister Holger Barkowsky und Dr. Jens Graul (Kulturamt der Stadt).

Standortverwaltung unterstützt – von dem jungen britischen Leutnant Shaun Burley umgesetzt wurde. Zur Enthüllung des Steins überreichte Barbara Steels Colonel von Burley, heute immer noch aktiver Offizier im Rang eines Generalmajors.

Im Juli wurde PRS in Rinteln geschlossen. Der nach 30

Jahren von der Technischen Betriebs der Stadt nach Wilhelmshaven zurück gebrachte Wappenstein soll an die Prince Rupert School und an ein Stück Wilhelmshavener Zeitgeschichte erinnern. Der Leiter des Senckenberg-Instituts, Prof. Dr. Andre Freiwald, sagte den britischen Gästen zu, dass die jederzeit am Südtstrand 40 willkommen sind, wenn sie das Wappen oder ihre ehemaligen Schulgebäude besuchen möchten. Im Rahmen der Enthüllung wurde mehrfach die Anleihe genehmigt, dass die Geschichte der Prince Rupert School einen festen Platz im künftigen Wilhelmshavener Stadtzentrum verdient hätte.





Holger Barkowsky, Andy Renou and Barbara Steels perform the unveiling.



The two foundation stones will be displayed at upcoming main reunions.



Guests listen to the opening address prior to the unveiling, and Andy Renou presents the first of his works to Deputy Mayor Barkowsky (inset).



Coverage of the unveiling by BFBS (British Forces Broadcasting Service) can be heard via the following link: <http://web202.ssvc.com/radio/articles/3046>

## Mid-life perspective

Recently it has become known that we are not to move from Wilhelmshaven as had previously appeared likely to happen in 1962 or 1963. We shall stay here probably for many years. Because of this, it becomes all the more important to look on ourselves as part of the local community. The idea that we were occupying foreign territory as victors went out of date some years ago when West Germany became partners in NATO. But we must see it as dead in our minds also. We are in the same position as if we were a German school in Devonport. We must show by our behaviour that we realise it.

The past term has been rich in contacts with the secondary schools in the town. Many German boys and girls have attended meetings of the Phoenix Society as well as plays and carols.

Most encouraging of all, Remembrance Day was observed by us with German representatives and by the German community with some of us present. In the coming year I hope that this friendliness will grow further. More classes are learning German than for many years past. Within the school, too, I hope to see progress in building a real community.

The entertainment of the German by the British staff at Christmas and vice versa in July, with both parties held in Churchill, has now become a custom. And for the first time in 1960 the Christmas party for the children of our

German staff was organized by our senior girls instead of simply being held at our expense after the end of term. The Christmas message of 'Peace on Earth, goodwill towards all men' can be heard clearly in such circumstance. May it be so throughout 1961.

*Mr John R.I. Sharp (Headmaster 1958-63)*

*Ed. – At the end of Autumn Term 1963, John Sharp left PRS to become the first head of Wyndham School in Egremont in the Lake District. It was Cumberland's first comprehensive school and three times larger than PRS. In 1971, he moved to another headship at Bicester Comprehensive School before retiring from teaching in 1974. He died in Manchester in July 2001.*

## Anyone remember this boy?

One of our new joins is Michael Pearsall, who was in Howe 1961 – 1963. After leaving PRS, he went to Hong Kong and then joined the Army, where he spent time in Germany and Cyprus with a final posting to Berlin. "After so much excitement there was little else to do except leave the Army and go into IT – called data processing back in 1979. I spent many a happy year running around the country fixing problems, causing many more, managing companies and situations finally doing IT for myself and running my own company until I retired in 2011. I now spend my time doing the school run for our Grandson."

## London reunion 1958

Does anyone recall attending a PRS reunion which took place in London, not far from Marble Arch, shortly before Christmas in 1958? There were quite a number of ex pupils and staff present, possibly around 50-60, recalls Denis Voller, who sent us the photograph. All are ex-Howe pupils (left to right): Ann-Margret Radford, Janice Farmer, Maureen Guerney, Denis Voller, Janice Skillan and Iver Amos (non PRS).

“Janice Skillan and I married



the following year and are still together,” says Denis. “Janice Farmer married Iver shortly after we were married. Both Janices have kept in touch over the years and I owe a great deal to both, as it was Janice Farmer who put me back in touch with my wife after a chance sighting of me at RAF Butzweilerhof, Koln, four years after I left PRS.”

*Denis Voller (Howe 47-53)*

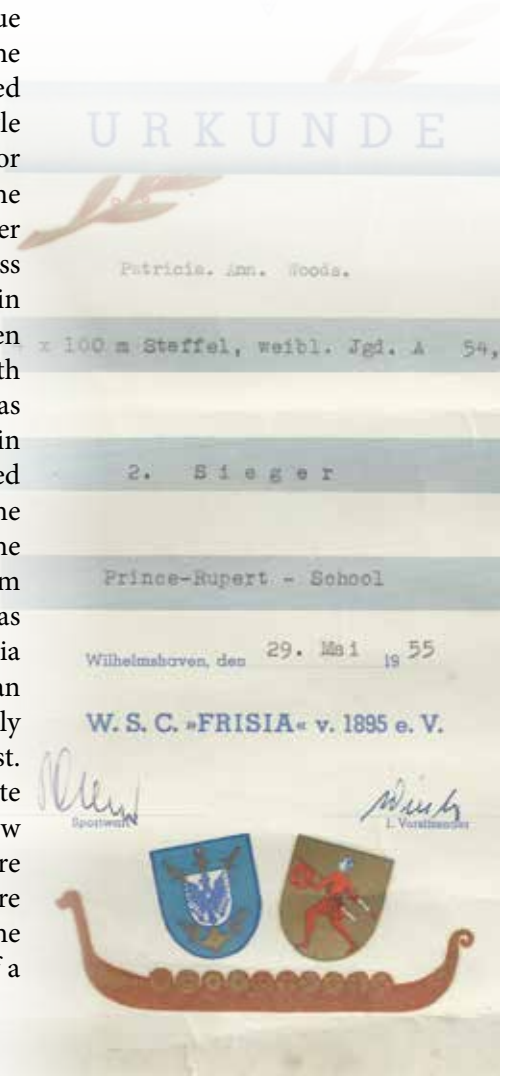


*Left to right: Dennis Voller, Janice (Farmer) Amos, Janice (Skillan) Voller and Iver Amos spotted at the Cardiff reunion.*

## Skagerak Games and the Battle of Jutland

A discussion arose recently concerning the emblem featured on the blue shield at the bottom of a certificate awarded to the late Pat Woods. One could be forgiven for imagining it to be a phoenix, but according to Dr. Jens Graul it's an eagle. “The blue shield on the left is the crest of the City of Wilhelmshaven introduced 1892. It shows a Prussian eagle on a silver shield with an anchor and two swords, symbolizing the maritime power of Prussia under the motto, ‘Wilhelmshaven - fortress by the sea.’ The crest was replaced in 1937 by a sword and waves, when Wilhelmshaven was united with Rüstringen (Oldenburg). This was banned by the Military Government in 1946, but Col. Smitherman is alleged to have chosen it as the basis for the PRS school crest in respect for the war-shattered town. The other emblem depicts a Frisian warrior and has been in use since 1948. W.S.C. Frisia is a sports club founded in Prussian Wilhelmshaven, which is presumably why the certificate features the crest. The Skagerak Games commemorate the Battle of Jutland, but I wonder how many of the British competitors were aware of this fact? I don't think there is a connection the PRS crest. The Phoenix to me is simply symbolic of a new start after war,” says Jens.

*Ed. – my guess is that very few will have known about the Battle of Jutland link, but we'd like to hear from anyone who did.*





## Dieter's story - part two

We continue the unique story of Dieter Dappen (Peter Willis at school) whose biological father was a German naval officer stationed in Wilhelmshaven when his submarine was destroyed towards the end of WWII (see NL55, p. 10). In 1948, his mother married a British soldier serving with the RAOC near Mönchen-Gladbach, where Dieter attended BFES primary school. In 1952, he became a PRS pupil under the new name of Peter Willis. His first term wasn't good, but he would eventually enjoy his PRS life until he left school at the end of 1953.

"I joined the Sea Cadet Corps and played the bugle with some success, but my efforts at playing the 2nd French horn in the school orchestra failed miserably due to always being two notes behind everyone else. Thus my musical ambitions ended. However, this venture had an upside because I met up with the delightful Kathleen Bahr, who played the accordion. She and I went out together for a while, which meant a regular evening pilgrimage from Bonteheim to the Main School. I also recall the occasional dance-afternoons with the Rodney House girls. Prefects and monitors ensured that we were properly dressed and had clean shoes, but trying to hide to avoid these afternoons was futile.

Upon leaving PRS, my family moved back to UK from where my stepfather was posted to Egypt. We stayed in a

family hostel in Portsmouth, during which time I renewed my old friendship with Chris Wallis (Raleigh 52-53), who also lived in Portsmouth. We had joined the Sea Cadets together at school, where we had a great time, especially during visits to HMS Victory with our instructor. The latter started my deep interest in historic ship model building, which I still indulge in today. In 1955, my family was posted to Famagusta/Cyprus, where a year later I would finish my schooling at the Karaolos Army Camp School. Thanks to the efforts of my stepfather, I found an interim job at Dhekelia Camp where his unit was stationed. The following year I left Cyprus to join the Royal Navy, but I was turned down due to colour blindness. I eventually joined the RAF as an apprentice and it was during this period at RAF Credenhill in Herefordshire that I bumped into a former Matthew House inmate called Trumbull.

On leaving the RAF, I returned to the country of my birth, Germany. In the meantime, my dad and family had been reposted from the UK to BAOR Munster, where I worked in the NAAFI until returning to my Krefeld birthplace. Here I joined the Ministry of Public Building and Works (formerly Royal Engineers Corp), studying part-time for foreign correspondence and translation qualifications. These helped me to pursue a more lucrative career as a project and service manager for a renowned paper-finishing



*Dieter and family today*

company. Responsible for processing-mill projects in the Far East, UK, North America and Canada, I was sent initially to Wisconsin and then Ohio to build up a joint venture with a US partner. This venture was eventually sold to a competitor, thus bringing about my return to Krefeld, where I worked until December 2001. My family and I finally retired to a small village near Flensburg on the Baltic

Coast, not far from Plön, the former location of King Alfred School."

*Dieter Dappen (Peter Willis - Matthew/Rodney 52-54)*

*Ed. – Dieter and Chris Wallis revisited the school main site together in August 1978 and were allowed a walk-around the grounds. Sadly, Chris died in April this year.*



*Dieter during his time at apprentice training school*





### RN courtesy visit

My folks were stationed in Oldenburg and had come to Bonteheim to book me out of solitary. On arrival they spied four Royal Navy minesweepers moored adjacent to the House and decided that they would be a choice place to visit. Once aboard, we were soon down in the wardroom where the party began. The Pusser's rum flowed in vast quantities and it was not long before I was quite forgotten and passed back to the House with short shrift. The party carried on long after our lights out and I believe there was a return slugging match at RAF Oldenburg the following day. But alas I was not invited! The moral of this tale is never have folks visit while the Royal Navy is in port. By the way, I wonder if anybody remembers HMS Subtle's visit to Wilhelmshaven? She was an S Class submarine with great battle honours gained in the Far East in WW2.

*John Fowler (Rodney 55 - 57)*

*Ed. - HMS Subtle (pictured) did indeed spend the last six months of the war with the Eastern Fleet, where together with her sister ship, HMS Statesman, she helped to track and sink the Japanese heavy cruiser, Haguro. She was scrapped in July 1959.*

### Heather remembers

When you became a prefect you had to write the news headlines on the blackboard at the entrance to Raleigh. The boys always wrote the latest cricket and football scores of course.

When supervising prep in the evenings, you were on your own looking after and controlling the girls and releasing them at certain times to get ready for bed. Can you imagine the furore with Health & Safety over that nowadays?

The secret ways our parents managed to hide extra money to us via soap packets, etc. 2DM a week was not much when you had to buy stockings etc.

*Heather (McQueen) Jasiok (Drake 59-64)*

### Lady Mary's family says thank you!

The condolence card sent by the Association in response to the sad news about the late Lady Mary Soames (see previous issue) prompted this reply from her family.

West House, 1b Addison Crescent, London W14 8JP  
Tel. 020 7603 6196 Fax. 020 7602 8570

Ms B. Steels,  
The Wilhelmshaven Association  
Lynwood House  
Snelsmore Common,  
Newbury RG14 3BX

3<sup>rd</sup> July 14

Dear Ms Steels,

The Soames family have asked me to thank you so much for the kind card you sent them on behalf of The Wilhelmshaven Association about their mother which was much appreciated.

She died peacefully, with her children and grandchildren at her side which was a comfort, but we will all miss her greatly.

Please forgive a typewritten letter but I am sure you will understand that it is the only way of coping with the tidal wave of affection and respect that has followed her death.

There will be a Memorial Service in the autumn at Westminster Abbey but the date is not yet fixed so keep an eye on the newspapers.

Yours sincerely,

*No. 16 Chapman*

Private Secretary to the late Lady Soames

## Where's the gong?

Many former inmates of Drake Boys will remember the gong that woke us up every morning (and occasionally at night for fire drills) and generally functioned as the house alarm clock. Norman King (Drake 1959-1961) even remembers in some cases being able to identify the ringer by his 'tune'. Crafted by boys during metalwork lessons (during the 50s, but it might have been even earlier) it stood on the staircase landing between the ground and first floor until the house relocated to a new block. The late Brian Carter, former housemaster at Drake Boys, remembered it well: "It seemed to dominate almost every movement and activity in the house. I can see every bit and piece of it even after thirty years," he wrote in June 2003, when asked if he remembered the gong. "When we reluctantly moved to the Collingwood/Howe block we took the gong with us and it was placed near the stairway on the junior (old Howe) corridor. It continued to be used in conjunction with a ship's bell on the senior (Collingwood) ground-floor corridor." But what happened to it when the school relocated in 1972 remains a mystery. "When the school moved to Rinteln everything was packed up and transferred there, including the old gong," said Brian, who continued teaching in Rinteln until his retirement in 2003. Over the years, all attempts to locate the gong have failed.

In November 2005, the current head teacher in Rinteln showed a photo of the gong to the caretakers and asked them to search the cellar, but to no avail. The last remaining member of the Wilhelmshaven staff left Rinteln over a decade ago, so the chances of finding the gong look slim. Anyone who was actually involved in making the gong, or knows who did and in which year, please contact us.



*The Drake Boys' gong - photo by courtesy of Graham Print (Drake 1955-1958)*

## Admissions registers back in Wilhelmshaven.

The school's admissions registers for 1947 to 1959 were retrieved from Rinteln following the closure in July. They are now in the possession of Barbara Steels and will be available for viewing at the Leeds reunion. An 'admission register' had to be kept at each school, following a Memorandum of the Ministry of Education - No. 48, 25th May 1945, modified by No. 116, 14th December 1945. A register contained in alphabetic order: an admission number, date of admission, surname, first name, sex, name and address of parents or guardian, date of birth, last school attended, date of last attendance or transfer and details of leaving, i.e., return of parents. "This is terrific news," says Lois Hammond, former Chair TWA. "Now we know what we are looking for, it may be easier to find the Admissions Registers from 60 to 72, or whatever system replaced them. Mr Meredith, head teacher 64 - 72, told us that his 'card index' system of pupils' names was transferred to Rinteln and kept in a filing cabinet in his office throughout his time there. So maybe we should be looking for a dusty box of card indexes. Well done Jens Graul. John Simes will be keen to know how accurate his lists of pupils were. What a painstaking task that was trawling through all the school magazines and other papers. I wonder if similar records of staff members have survived?"

## More drama at PRS

A production that sticks in mind was a review by Howe, during which a small boy appeared on the stage and started to recite 'The Green-eyed, Yellow Idol to the North of Katmandu'. Suddenly an army officer (staff officer by the red tabs) leapt up and said that this was rubbish and that the idol was to the south. Another army officer (desert rat type) then leapt and an argument on the location, colour of the eyes and even of the colour of the idol ensued. We were all embarrassed, thinking who on Earth these parents could be and feeling sorry for whoever it was. It transpired that the two 'officers' were Mick Carter and Ellis made up by Mr Fletcher, House Master of Howe. It made a great impression on us.

*Vic Longyear (Drake 47-50)*



*Carter (left) and Ellis.*



2014 proved to be a bumper year for *Wilhelmshavenites* with three new publications of great interest, says Tony Colvin.

Firstly there is *Wilhelmshaven: Captain Edward Conder RN und der Neuanfang 1945*, by Dr Jens Graul. He arrived at Wilhelmshaven on May 6th 1945 at the lead of his Naval Party 1735: Captain Edward R. Conder RN, Naval Officer In Charge Wilhelmshaven from 1945 to 1948. His orders were unambiguous: to disarm the Kriegsmarine at one of its largest bases, dismantle all military structures, handover the remains of the German Fleet to the Allied Powers and finally destroy the dockyard as well as the harbour. This included the option of flooding most parts of harbour and town for all times.

But it turned out differently: Wilhelmshaven got a second chance and Captain Conder became an important player for the economic and cultural new beginning. With all his means he supported the establishment of light industry, scientific institutes and ... a boarding school for the children of British military personal in Germany. With justification he can be regarded as one of the founders of Prince Rupert School Wilhelmshaven.

Dr Jens Graul has written an extensive portrayal of the life and career of Captain Conder and those decisive years in Wilhelmshaven between the end of war and the new beginning. It is based on private documents as well on records kept at the National Archives London.

*Wilhelmshaven – Captain Edward Conder RN und der Neuanfang 1945* (246 pages and 225 reproductions, large appendix) was published by Brune-Mettcker and is available for € 39.50 with a p&p of 19.95 with 7 % VAT from [www.buchhandel.de](http://www.buchhandel.de) and others (ISBN 978-3-941929-07-4).



*Captain Conder and Mary Churchill.*

Secondly there is *Armoured Hussars: Images of the Polish 1st Armoured Division 1939-47*, by Janusz Jarzembowski, published by and available from Helion for £17.96 with p&p of £2.95 (no VAT).

Janusz is the son of Sgt Aleksander Jarzembowski who soldiered for Poland from 1917 to 1948, almost contemporaneously with Capt Conder. The book comprises pictures taken by Aleksander and captioned by his son, starting in Lublin in 1932, defending Poland in 1939, evacuation through Hungary to France, and then to Scotland in 1940, fighting in Normandy and the Low Countries to the surrender and occupation of Wilhelmshaven, move to Jever and disbandment in 1947. The last picture was taken in 1969 at the Royal Albert Hall. None of the photographs have been seen before, although a couple found their way into Jens' book.

Finally there is *Schlachtschiff Tirpitz: The "beast" is born 1936 to 1941*, by Robert Gehringer & Antonio Bonomi, published by and available from [www.bismarck-tirpitz.com](http://www.bismarck-tirpitz.com) for Euros 49.95 with a p&p of Euros 19.95 with 7% VAT. This is a picture book with bilingual captions (German and English) of the construction, launch and departure of the Tirpitz, all of which took place in surroundings that we all know intimately.

There are 175 photographs of Wilhelmshaven, few of which have been seen before. The captions are informative, showing in detail the launch and outfitting. There are even two pictures of Tirpitz in the Third Entrance as she left, never to return, and which I have looked for in vain over the years. There are another hundred photographs of her move to Gotenhafen through the Kiel Canal and working up in the Baltic, when Hitler visited her for the second time. There will be a second volume about her active service that will not interest me at least.

*Tony Colvin (Matthew/Collingwood 50-54)*



*Dr Jens Graul's book about Captain Edward Conder RN would make an excellent Xmas gift.*

## Letters to the editor

Further to Pam(Ann) Kent's contribution in the previous issue, the drama of Summer Term 1966 was indeed *Midsummer Night's Dream* but Oberon was played by the late John Beckett and I was Titania, Queen of the faeries... Irene Parsons was Hermia, Nicholas Myhill understudied Lysander when Guy Bullough was injured and Demetrius was played by Barry Stokes.

*Helga (Smith) McNeil (Collingwood 63-66)*

Hurrah! The true phoenix has arisen with its motto. What a good production the *New Cavalier* has become. I note that you have inserted a couple of comments from Mr Smitherman's record. I believe it might be interesting to have a 'Heads' corner in the Newsletter. If there are records from other Headmasters a series of their observations could be quite instructive in the changes over the years. One comment from Mr Smitherman's record on the children who first attended may be of interest: "It was a motley collection which gathered for assembly at 10 o'clock on 2nd July (1947). They were dressed in all manner of clothes and, particularly the girls, appeared old for their age. They had been out of school since Easter and many for 9 months. They had little to do except be amused in cinemas, dances in messes and even cocktail parties. Oh yes, many of our

early pupils had had a good deal of experience of this sort of entertainment - small wonder that some of them hardly looked forward to coming to school. I think 8 children left. One mother was abusive and was going to go to her MP about my inhuman treatment. This was because we had a verruca removed from the child's foot. Another said her daughter was 'un'appy' and 'ungry'. Both were possibly true, but the child went home at the age of 14 to a gay life of dances in the sergeants' mess of her father's unit. Of course she was un'appy and 'ungry!"

*Vic Longyear (Drake 47-50)*

*Ed. - Vic points out that the photo features what must be the first triplets to attend PRS, namely, Margaret, Barbara and Betty Little. We would be pleased to hear from anyone who knows of other former pupils who were triplets.*



*A sketch by Victoria Woodbridge accompanying her poem 'The Cornfield' in The Cavalier, Autumn 1961*



*Vic Longyear's letter refers*



*Mainly Drake Pioneers, July 1947 or Autumn 1947*

*- top: Tony Lovelace, Ruth Trendall, Barbara Little, Cliff Hanes, Margaret Little, Bernice Griffiths, John Kelly, - mid: Betty Eves, Jill Parslow, -under: Den Orbell, Peter Mettyear, Margaret Sheddon, Ken Fowler, Pat Biggs, Elizabeth (Betty) Little, -ground: Joy Newton, Rita Knight*



## Wilhelmshaven mini-reunion



In the Wilhelmshaven mini-reunion report (see previous issue), we referred to six former Drake Boys being reunited with their matrons, but limited space prevented us from including this photo. L-R: Insa Stöhr, Roger Hall, Jim Hanlon, Paul Levitt, Bob Innes, Lilo Bischoff, Pete (Rees) Dieckmann, David Starkie.

*Ed. – Lilo would like to hear from a former Drake boy who she referred to as 'The Athlete's Foot'. So, if you are he, please get in touch.*



## PRSites reunited down under

A reunion was held on 14th and 15th March 2014 at the Twin Waters Resort, Sunshine Coast, Queensland, to welcome TWA founder, Liz (Bird) Hughes and her husband, Rodger, to Australia, along with friends Sue (Cumner) Rogers (Collingwood 62-66) and husband, Ken. Organised by Canberra resident, Sonya (Etherington) Davidson (Howe 61-64) and Sunshine Coast resident, Mavis (Thompson) Rogers (Howe 50-55), the two-day event attracted 36 people - not bad considering the huge distances travelled. Former head boy, Tom Fisher and his wife, Chris, flew in from Perth, WA, a mere five and a half hour flight away! Friday evening was enjoyed meeting and greeting, while guests awoke the next day to the sound of kookaburras before enjoying the tropical surroundings in perfect weather.

A formal dinner on Saturday night

*Sonya (Etherington) Davidson and Liz Bird*



*PRSites reunited down under*

was held in a restaurant on stilts in the middle of the resort lake, during which Liz gave an interesting speech and Mike Keen conducted a PRS quiz. The weekend was over all too soon, but the UK visitors stayed on at the resort for the rest of the week and visited local attractions such as Steve Irwin's Australia Zoo, and the hills behind the Sunshine Coast. Finally, Mike and

Zena Keen staged a delicious BBQ at their home before our visitors headed off on the next leg of their journey. All in all, everyone enjoyed what was a fantastic weekend with friends, old and new, down under.

*Mavis (Thompson) Rogers (Howe 50-55)*



*Garry White, Mavis (Thompson) Rogers and Mike Keen*



*Former Head Boy, Tom Fisher (Howe and Collingwood 48-54)*

## A tribute to the late Pat(Easton)Fitzsimons 22nd Jul 1932 – 28th Sep 2014

Pat was one of the original group of 70 pupils who acted as guinea pigs during the month of July to test the procedures for the main group of 250 pupils due to arrive on the 12th September 1947.

She was one of the 35 Howe pupils, the other 35 being in Drake. A member of the school magazine committee from the first issue in Autumn term 1947, she was mentioned in the third issue as having been awarded school colours for hockey, tennis and athletics. She is also mentioned in the Summer 1948 edition of the school magazine as having played rounders, so clearly she enjoyed a variety of sports.

In Autumn 1948, Pat was made a monitor and is recorded as captaining the hockey team in the 1950 Spring edition. She was promoted to prefect in 1949 and left PRS at the end of Summer term 1950.

On leaving school, Pat became a student nurse at the Manchester Royal Infirmary and eventually married a farmer who became Lord Mayor of Manchester (1979-80).

She loved being Lady Mayoress, by all accounts. Although her husband died a long time ago, Pat remained a great supporter of 47er functions and many will recall joining her on the occasion of her 70th birthday when she held a party and invited her old school friends to attend.

Sadly, Pat died of a heart attack at the age of 82, having been in hospital for quite some time. We offer our deepest

sympathies to Pat's daughter, Tina, who kindly passed on the sad news to Brian Cater, one of those recently in touch with Pat.

*Joe Kinson (Rodney 47-50)*

### Stop Press

We extend our warmest congratulations to former TWA Chair, Lois Hammond and Bernie Jones, who tied the knot in Shrewsbury on October 31. Naturally, the reception was held at the Prince Rupert Hotel Shrewsbury!



### 47ers mini-reunion in Lewes

Eighteen 47ers turned up at the White Hart Hotel in Lewes on July 15th for a mini-reunion organized by Peter and Heather Mettyear. It was almost a round 20, but Shirley (Hopkins) and husband Steve Stephenson had to cancel due to illness. Those staying at the hotel the night before the mini joined Peter and Heather for drinks and supper at their lovely home. The mini-reunion lunch was held the next day and enjoyed so much by everyone that nobody remembered to take photographs! Those staying on after the reunion meal were once again invited to join the Mettyears at their home for afternoon tea. Peter hosted the first ever 47ers mini-reunion, which was held at the Oxford and Cambridge Club in Pall Mall, London on the 30 November 1994 and attended by 23 former pupils.

At the latest Lewes mini-reunion, no less than five of those 47ers who attended that first reunion were present, namely, Peter Mettyear, Sheila (Cuffe) Cooper, Malcolm Hynes, John Newton and Joe Kinson (Rodney 47-50).

*Joe Kinson (Rodney 1947-50)*

### Fleet mini-reunion photo

The name of Sandra Snipp (now Doe) should have been mentioned in connection with the photo (middle right) on page 7 of NL62, showing three people. Sandra (Howe 53 – 56) was Helen Coulson's roommate at school. Our thanks to Helen for pointing this out and we are glad you enjoyed the newsletter.



## Drake girls reunited



This photo taken circa 1961 shows Drake girls (back row, L-R) Marion Taylor, Vicky Woodbridge, Roe Hutchinson and Margaret Pringle, (front row L-R) Heather McQueen, Carol Weeks and Felicity (Ayling) Bowdidge (Rodney 58-62)

“Marion and I shared a room at school and she was a bridesmaid when I got married,” says Vicky Woodbridge. “Two days after my wedding she went to Singapore, where she met and married her husband. We lost touch when she travelled the world, but met up again for the first time in 30 years at the Birmingham reunion in 1999. Heather McQueen was also there and we three have remained in touch ever since, meeting up at least once a year at different cities in the UK whenever Marion returns on holiday from Singapore. Heather and I even went out to Singapore to see Marion in 2013 - before we got too old!”

Vicky (Stringer) Woodbridge (Drake 59-62)



A recent photo of Heather, Vicky and Marion taken in York.

*Ed. – Roe Hutchinson and Carol Weeks are not on the found list, so if you are in touch with either of them we'll be pleased to hear from you.*



A sketch by C. Jenkins IVA from *The Cavalier*, Autumn 1961

## The Military Child

I'm a Military Child, Where I'm from? I'm a child of the world, I bloom anywhere. I'm on an incredible journey. I know once we leave here, I will probably never walk this way again. I'm an unrooted child. My life is mostly in brown boxes. One more time, again, I'm going to say goodbye to all that I know. At this moment I don't belong anywhere. Not in this place and not in the new place I'm moving to. It's a puzzle of a thousand pieces that has been turned upside down. It's up to you to put the puzzle back together again. I'm leaving behind all that is familiar, again. I'm facing the unknown one more time. My roots are short. Unexpected separations. Saying goodbye to friends. Some lessons are harder than others. But at the end, I have yet another success story. I'm flexible. I'm not going to bend out of shape. I'm walking this path. We are heading to a bright future together as a family and as a nation.

I proudly contribute to the peace and freedom we all enjoy. Sleep peaceably in your beds at night (United Kingdom). My family and I (have) got your back (covered). *Laura C. Marin, Aged 11.*

The above is so appropriate and evocative for all of us who grew up as military children. It was shared on Facebook by an American friend of mine who was also a military child.

*Val (Salmon) Bruce (Rodney 5 -58)*

*Ed.- thanks indeed for drawing this to our attention, Val. The additions in parenthesis are ours.*

## TWA merchandise

Now is the ideal time to choose those special Christmas gifts from the broad range of PRS memorabilia available on-line.

Ordering via the TWA website: <http://www.prs-wilhelmshaven.co.uk> .  
For those without web access, contact Marguerite (Ireson) Garford on tel. 01778 423161  
email: [richard.garford733@btinternet.com](mailto:richard.garford733@btinternet.com)

## How the Phoenix was saved

Created in 1953, the school's Phoenix Crest stone remained in Wilhelmshaven after the school's closure in 1972 until one fateful day in summer 1983 when Mr Tony Marmon, a former PRS Wilhelmshaven and Rinteln PE teacher, made a sentimental journey to visit the old school site. Amazed to see the crest stone and the Churchill and chapel foundation stones still in situ, he wondered if they could be removed and taken to the new PRS at Rinteln. First of all, permission had to be obtained from the German authorities, which came willingly, as did offers of help from the German Navy and the British Army 29 Engineer regiment. A joint project was then started, the British team being led by a certain young, newly commissioned officer, Lt Shaun Burley. The stones were successfully removed and taken to PRS Rinteln where they remained for the next 30 years.

Being interested to see if Shaun Burley was still around, I did some sleuthing to try and trace him. With the help of the Internet I was soon in email and telephone contact with the now Major General Shaun Burley, who is still a serving officer. He remembered the occasion very clearly and we had a long chat. I learned that to remove the Phoenix stone from the first floor position, scaffolding was erected and two young Sappers chipped away until the stone was released. There was a lot



*Major General Shaun Burley*

of interest and people turned up to watch and take photos. There was concern that the crest would be damaged during this process and they were all relieved that everything went well. The other two stones were apparently removed quite easily.

On learning that PRS Rinteln was due to close in July 2014, TWA approached Alan Price, Head Teacher and asked if the PRS stones could be returned to Wilhelmshaven. The school made enquiries and it was decided that TWA should receive all PRS Wilhelmshaven archive material. At the end of term the stones were removed by Army engineering contractors and the next day PRS friends Dr Jens Gaul and

## New Finds

Name at PRS	Name now	Years	House
Clifford Carey	Clifford Carey	67 - 70	Shackleton
Russelle Carey	Russelle Wride	67 - 70	Collingwood
Wendy Dimery	Wendy Bury	62 - 63	Hood
Patricia Hayler	Patricia Eccott	54 - 55	Rodney
Eileen Houston	Eileen Peart	53 - 55	Hood
Anna Jackson	Biddie Foord	55 - 58	Hood/ Rodney
Maria Shephard	Maria Wiltshire	66 - 67	Howe
Vincent Stevenson	Vincent Stevenson	65 -	Mountbatten

### *Joined after being located some time ago*

Michael Pearsall	Michael Pearsall	61 - 63	Howe
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### *Rejoins*

Jane Cattell	Jane Haddow	64 - 71	Howe
David Nelson	David Nelson	61 - 65	Rodney
Michael Sadler	Michael Sadler	58 - 60	Collingwood

### *Deceased*

Patricia Easton	The Late Patricia Fitzsimons	47 - 50	Howe
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Herr Meinen arrived with a pick-up truck to repatriate the stones to their original home. Subsequently, it was decided that a permanent site on the former school premises would be an appropriate resting place for the Phoenix Crest.

Fittingly, Herr Werner Milde, former head of local Military Administration in Wilhelmshaven, who was involved with the administration of removing

the stones in 1983, was present at the unveiling in October. So too were the key figures in this accomplishment and many other friends of PRS to whom we will be forever grateful for supporting us.

*Barbara (Miller) Steels (Hood/Rodney 57-61)*