



YEARS TO 1969 GROUP NEWSLETTER

This supplement to the College Newsletter carries a most interesting article by Juan Roberson on his investigations into just what examinations members of our Group faced back in the 1960s. He concludes with a request for assistance, so if readers can help him in his quest, please let Juan know.

There are no reports on social events, but by the time you read this, Geoff Henshall's guided journey on the Settle & Carlisle Railway will have taken place. Reports on this and the Old Members' Day, that will take place on 2nd July, are to be expected in the Michaelmas Term Newsletter.

It is a sad fact that from time to time we must record the death of one of our members, and this issue must mention that of Selwyn Roderick on 12th March 2011. He had a distinguished career, such as to merit a report on the BBC News website. Courtesy of that website, it is reprinted here. Members of our Group will surely endorse the contents of the final paragraph.

And finally, Peter Silverman has supplied some new brain teasers, and the answer to those in the last issue.

Chris Butterfield (1962)

50 YEARS AGO...

By Juan Roberson (1963)

Over the past decade or so various friends and neighbours have asked me to do some tutoring in maths as their children tackled their final school exams. Since I had retained enough knowledge and interest in the subject I could cope readily with such requests.

However, the more casual tutoring I did, the more curious I became about the relative levels of the subject that I was teaching vis-à-vis the level I had reached at a roughly equivalent point in time.

So out of that curiosity, and nostalgia, I set about searching for what I had done. My first port of call was to unearth

the papers I took at A/S level in 1961. This I eventually did after chasing down the successor to the now defunct joint Oxford and Cambridge Board. And virtually all of this by email from Australia, but with the help of family living in Cambridge.

Then, what were the papers I had sat in 1962 for scholarship entry to Jesus? This proved a lot harder. First stop was Ali James and then on to the College Archivist, Chris Jeens, who was most helpful. No, there were no such papers in college archives but the Bodleian held a box of Jesus entrance papers 1957 - 1960. In 1960 there was a maths paper which he kindly copied and sent to me.

So, where next? I had also identified, and obtained, a textbook bridging the gap between A-level and Oxbridge entry: 'Scholarship Mathematics' by A.V. Starr. This has copious questions from scholarship papers and in the front identified the college 'group' from which they were taken (Oxford and Cambridge). This enabled me to identify the Jesus group and then approach the archivists of Balliol, St John's, Queens, Corpus Christi and Magdalen. None were able to help any further.

However, I was simultaneously making enquiries of the Bodleian Library. There I had a useful exchange with a librarian, who eventually suggested I use their online catalogue enquiry facility (maybe got fed up with answering my tiresome questions..?). In the course of this research I unearthed a box with some scholarship papers for the ladies colleges group circa 1966. Next problem was copying. Permission had to be sought from the author since we were within the 70 year or so period for copyright.

Undaunted, I pressed ahead with enquiries to all the archivists of the ladies colleges, seeking permission to copy whatever was in the Bodleian box. A sine qua non for success. And of course asking at the same time if they had anything else in their college archives.

Then I struck gold. The archivist at St Hilda's said she had a full set of papers from 1966, and one paper from 1965, and for a small copying fee would be happy to arrange that for me and mail them, which she did. So that was the end of that trail, and no need to pursue the Bodleian any further; nor to worry about its awkward associated logistics.

However, I was simultaneously pursuing another avenue: the JOMG. I emailed George Reah and put the problem to him, asking if he would be good enough to put out a request to any relevant alumni, which he did. There was not much of a response immediately, but some kind exchanges.

And then again, when I had all but given up hope for this avenue of enquiry, another gold strike. David Hughes had raided his loft, found a set of papers for the closed scholarship of 1961 and offered to scan them and email them to me. So thank you to both George and David.

So it can be done. With a little digging and help from one's friends; and a lot of fun on the way. Thanks to JOMG and others.

Finally, a curious historical aspect was uncovered during my search. Based on the 1965/1966 papers, this was the turning point in the Oxford entrance methodology (and perhaps Cambridge too?). The 1965 instructions for the exam read, inter alia:

Scientists need only answer questions from Section A; mathematicians are advised to attempt questions from both sections.

This much I knew already. The 'scientists' were not expected to know quite so much mathematics (which, on advice, is why eventually I took the Physics entrance exam and not the Mathematics one). The 1966 equivalent reads:
Mathematicians who have not taken their A-levels, and scientists, need only answer questions from Section A; other mathematicians are advised to attempt questions from both sections.

This was, presumably, just at the moment when Oxford increasingly recognised the need to take in more (if not all) students directly at the end of their second year in the Sixth Form - instead of losing them to other universities as a result of effectively insisting on a third year. The requirement for that third year seems, since then, not unlike like the State in Lenin's communist utopia: to have withered away!

And so, my next curiosity and nostalgia mission is to get some of the Public School Common Entrance papers from 1957. What was I expected to know at that age? This is in progress (a two-pronged attack: my Prep School and the Examinations Board) and should soon be successful. But if any of you out there have some of these (some schools set their own papers) then please let me know.

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Pioneering BBC TV producer Selwyn Roderick dies

Tributes have been paid to one of the BBC's first television producers in Wales who has died, aged 82. Selwyn Roderick, seen as a key figure in the development of Welsh TV, worked on programmes as diverse as *Come Dancing* and *Songs of Praise*.

One of his crowning achievements was *Tamed and Shabby Tiger*, an affectionate farewell to Cardiff's Tiger Bay as old buildings were demolished in 1968.

BBC Wales director Keith Jones said Mr Roderick was an important innovator.

Mr Roderick leaves a wife and three children.

He will also be remembered for producing the Welsh language programme *Plant y Paith*, a documentary about Patagonia with Owen Edwards, and *Wales! Wales?*, a controversial series of programmes with historian, Professor Dai Smith. He also produced a number of programmes with the eminent Welsh maritime historian, Aled Eames. Prof Smith described Mr Roderick as one of the most 'likeable characters you could ever meet'. He said:

'I first got to know Selwyn when he asked me to present the series of (*Wales! Wales?*) films, which were shown across the UK on BBC2 in 1985. Selwyn was already a distinguished film maker for the BBC, and had made several important and significant documentaries.' Asked to describe what Mr Roderick was like, Prof Smith replied: 'He was feisty, intellectually driven and a passionate patriot. At times, he could be irascible, a pain in the neck, but he could also be charming and delightful. He was always animated and was one of the most likeable characters you could ever meet.'

BBC Cymru Wales director Keith Jones said Mr Roderick played an 'important role'. He added: 'He laid firm foundations for the medium, as well as bridging the development of innovative television services - in both Welsh and English. I had the privilege of working with Selwyn for a time, and it was a sheer joy. I offer both my own and BBC Cymru Wales' sincere condolences to the family, and acknowledge and give thanks for the distinguished contributions of one of the most important innovators in our industry.'

Brain Teasers

Here are last term's brain teasers together with the answers:

1. There are three identical grassy fields. In the first field 11 goats last for 7 days before they run out of food. In the second, 10 goats last for 8 days. How long do the 3 goats last in the third field?

Answer: In the first case $11 \times 7 = 77$ GDs of grass is consumed in 7 days. 1 GD is the amount of grass consumed by 1 goat in 1 day. In the second case 80 GDs were consumed in 8 days. The extra 3 GD of grass must therefore have come from one extra day's growth. The grass must therefore be growing at 3 GDs per day. 3 goats would therefore last indefinitely.

2. What number when spelt out has all of its letters in alphabetical order.

Answer: Forty

3. What is special about this word 'spoonfeed'?

Answer: The letters are in reverse alphabetic order.

The top prize is shared by **Jack Silverman** and **Barry Green** who got all three right. Trumping them both however was **Chris Stahl** who, I am pleased to announce, is the first recipient of the coveted JOMG 'Thinking Outside the Box'

award for his answer to Question 2 which was 'forty, deux, cinq, dix et cent'.

This term you may be pleased to see that there are no maths questions. Here they are:

1. Who is the world's largest manufacturer of houses, having made more than five billion of them for 80 countries since 1935?

2. What two words of opposite meaning can both precede 'chance' to give two phrases of the same meaning?

3. If GEGS = scrambled eggs, what are the following ten two-word phrases?

GOUCH	PHETAROM	HOPEN
IROVEAHUB	CARE	DEHADE
CLAIMUS	SHYWIK	LASE
WREC		

Can you add more items to this list? A large cash prize will be awarded to the member coming up with the most creative contribution.

Answers please to:

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