

Chairman's report

I was honoured to be elected your chairman in December 2022. My main remit with the help of the rest of the committee was to ensure that the monies belonging to the Life Fund could be freed up for the benefit of the whole membership and the school. Much of the work required had already been done by the previous committee, which had instructed solicitors Messrs. Warner's to draw up a Deed of Variation to enable this. All the new committee had to do was just to make it happen.

To this end an EGM was called for the 27th March 2023

- 1) To approve a new constitution and set of rules for the Society,
- 2) To agree that the necessary parties could sign the Deed of Variation in the form circulated to enable the assets of the Society's Life Membership Trust Fund to be transferred into the main Society funds, and
- 3) For the Society to set up a new Fund entitled the Old Juddian Benevolent Fund (the "Benevolent Fund") to be operated in accordance with the new constitution and rules voted on in Resolution 1 above, and to allocate an initial sum of £40,000 from the Society's main funds to the Benevolent Fund.

All three resolutions were carried unanimously.

The main purpose of the Fund is to provide financial assistance to ex members of the School still in further education, or to current School pupils, which the Benevolent Fund Committee determines as appropriate (for example, [bursaries, contribution to living costs, contributions to school events, etc.

As you will learn from the Treasurer's report, since then and up to date there have been 3 x £200 bursary awards. We have been unable to make any other awards as our bank inexplicably closed all accounts other than the current account. They did this without warning and only very recently due to the hard work and perseverance of our treasurer have our accounts been normalised. Following this AGM your new committee will be able to consider any request for financial assistance.

Following the EGM the 99th Annual Dinner had to be relocated away from the school due to poor attendance. It was held at a local restaurant, Ela Bella, and 23 of us enjoyed a very pleasant evening. Good food and company.

During my 2023 thanks to help from Geoff Pettitt, Ken Gunn, we reduced the OJ archives to manageable proportions. Following this with great diligence and endeavour Nicki

Prendergast has sorted, collated, and indexed everything and the archives and they are now neatly housed in the "Green Room" accessible through her to anyone interested.

At the beginning of the Autumn term last year, I was privileged to attend the senior prize giving ceremony to year 13. I was amazed at the level of achievement attained by so many of the boys and girls. It is testament the level of excellence of the teaching and ancillary staff at the school so ably led by the headteacher and his team. I am only sorry that due to a mix up with days that I was unable to attend this year's event.

In November the annual remembrance service is held and although I am personally unable to participate as I take my annual holiday in November, I would ask any of you who are able to attend to do so and swell the numbers of those few OJ's who are who regular attendees.

As you are aware 2024 saw the 100th anniversary of the OJS dinner and late in 2023 I started my exercise to cajole as many of you as I could to attend this momentous occasion. I am really pleased to say that the response was amazing. The evening commenced with a drinks reception in the School Room, where three brief speeches were made by me, the headmaster and the head boy. Dinner followed in the Ashton Dining Room, which was a new venue for us and 214 OJ's and guests enjoyed a sumptuous 4 course meal. Everyone was enjoying themselves so much that it was with regret that the festivities had to come to a close at about midnight. I would just like to reiterate my thanks to the headmaster, his PA Nicki Prendergast, Jane Porter, James Taylor and those members of the school sixth form who gave up their evening to man the bar, provide music and sound and lighting and who had helped with the set up the previous evening. Well done everyone. Believe it or not we even made a profit of just over £1000.

I am now coming towards the end of my two-year stint as your chairman. I feel that the Society is in a better place than it was two years ago and following the dinner I detect that there is a growing interest from younger elements to increase the scope of what we currently do. If that is so please come along to the AGM and let us know how you feel, what you might want and what you can do to help. It has been hard work but thoroughly enjoyable and a great honour to be your chairman and I would like to thank my committee and many others who will know who they are for the support they have given me throughout my tenure. As you will see I hope to remain on the committee and will give my full support to the new chairman.