



OLD WESTCLIFFIAN ASSOCIATION

# Old Westcliffian Newsletter

Tel: 01702 475443 Email: [office@whsb.essex.sch.uk](mailto:office@whsb.essex.sch.uk) Web: [www.whsb.essex.sch.uk](http://www.whsb.essex.sch.uk)

## ISSUE 3 / SPRING 2026

*WHSB celebrates the Centenary of its alumni community, 12 September 2026*



FIDE ET FORTITUDINE

## WELCOME FROM OUR SECRETARY

Fellow OW's,

As you will read in Mike Skelly's (Chairman and Headmaster) welcome message, the School's preparations for your Association's Centenary celebrations are now well advanced.

This will be an important occasion in the School's great history and naturally follows the School's own Centenary in 2020. For those who were able to join us, the Gala Dinner held at the Cliffs Pavilion then was a huge success and the School was able to sell 400 tickets.

As you know, the tough decision was made not to hold an Annual Dinner in 2025 due to disappointing ticket sales in the previous few years.

Our Centenary celebrations will be a great opportunity for alumni and the wider School community to come together and reflect on the incredible success of your School and hopefully allow you to share how your time at the School has impacted on your life, long held friendships, career choices etc.

The Centenary celebrations will include a celebration in the refurbished School Hall on Saturday 12 September 2026. As in recent years, OWs are very welcome to invite guests, our current pupils will provide appropriate musical entertainment throughout the afternoon and there is no dress code. This is an ideal opportunity for you to pull together a table of 8 or 10 friends and / or guests. For smaller groups, and those attending individually, we will arrange the evening so that you are seated with, for example, those of a similar age or who enjoyed similar extra-curricular experiences during their school years, e.g. Rugby, Music, or Drama.

Our hope is that the afternoon is a huge success, a sell out, and therefore giving the School confidence to hold our usual Annual Dinner in 2027 and thereafter, knowing it will be well supported. We need your support in decent numbers.

Please email me, or [community@whsb.essex.sch.uk](mailto:community@whsb.essex.sch.uk) with early expressions of interest in our Centenary Celebration. The School will email you with further details of arrangements for formal bookings shortly.

Jon Gershinson, Secretary OWA  
[secretary@oldwestcliffianassociation.org](mailto:secretary@oldwestcliffianassociation.org)



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Fellow Old Westcliffians, as I pen this message on a biting cold day, I am reminded that the Spring Equinox is exactly four weeks away on the 20th March... a pleasing thought!

It is also pleasing to note that WHSB, has been named among the top 200 schools in the country, in the 2026 Sunday Times list. In East Anglia, in particular, we have been named as the fifth best selective school in the region. Many congratulations go to the Headmaster and his talented team!

Last year, it was my pleasure to attend the annual presentation, by the OWA, of a magnificent Christmas tree to the school. It was also my privilege and honour to attend the School Remembrance Service last year, where our thoughts were dominated by those ex-students who had tragically lost their lives in conflicts. I also laid a wreath on their behalf, in November, at the local Cenotaph. I also support, when I can, the School concerts and plays. It never ceases to amaze me of the seemingly bottomless pool of talent that surfaces every year.

As public funding for schools declines, in real terms, year on year, donations to the School would be very welcome. OW's have, traditionally, been very generous in this regard. To mark our Centenary, we have launched a special appeal to breathe new life into the School's sporting facilities and its ageing pavilion. Please take a moment to read the sponsorship and funding details included in this issue. We also look forward to seeing many of you on 12th September to celebrate 100 years of the OWA—it is a landmark year for our alumni community and your presence will make it truly special.

I must place on record my thanks and gratitude to Mike Skelly for his continuing outstanding support for the OWA.

Finally, I wish you all a belated happy and healthy New Year and a splendid Summer....fingers crossed!

*Terry Birdseye, JP, President OWA*



*Presenting the Christmas Tree on behalf of OWs, December 2025*

## OUR CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

Over the years, since the School moved to its present site in 1926, many former pupils have chosen to remain in touch with WHSB and its alumni, both in recognition of the role WHSB has played in relation to their career successes and life opportunities which followed, and to maintain meaningful friendships and connections formed while attending the School. Such friendships and networks have been maintained on a personal level in so many cases, and the establishment of the Old Westcliffian Association in 1926 provided a more structured means for remaining in touch with the School and its alumni.

As Headmaster and Chairman of the Old Westcliffian Association I am always delighted to welcome back former pupils, to share time with them as they reflect on their school years, to hear of their progress following their departure from WHSB, and the directions in which life has since taken them. I am proud of the impressive achievements of our alumni, and pleased that so many choose to return, offering inspiration to current Westcliffians.

Since taking up my role as Headmaster in 2012, I have been most grateful to the many Old Westcliffians who, over the years, have offered so much of their time and support to current pupils at WHSB. The opportunities and encouragement they provide, whether through lectures, careers placements and opportunities, awards for pupil achievement, generous financial donations, one to one advice, or simply a friendly and experienced ear, those contributions offered by our alumni are integral to the outstanding educational experience we are able to offer Westcliffians. This support continues to have a very real and positive impact on the opportunities our current pupils will enjoy, now and in their later lives and careers.

This year, in 2026, we are celebrating the one hundred years since former pupils of WHSB formed the Old Westcliffian Association, the very many friendships that have remained strong and developed through the Association and other means, and the support that has been offered through friendship and mentorship across the years. This edition of our Newsletter includes further details on how we intend to celebrate this milestone, through a special event on 12 September 2026. We would be delighted to welcome you back to WHSB on that date, so please make a note in your diary, and further details on how to book your place will be emailed to you shortly.

As part of our centenary celebrations this year, we will be inviting you to explore our new OW website, an enhanced digital space, launching shortly. Our new alumni website will provide significant benefits: a central hub to foster long-term, mutually beneficial relationships and a modern, digital-first platform which will increase engagement, streamline communication, and transform a passive database into a dynamic, active community.

The new website will be developed to incorporate photo galleries by decade, and those which commemorate significant events in the life of the School. Material in the School's Archive will also be digitised and online access facilitated. The new OWA website will also enable you to network with your former peers, purchase tickets for alumni and School events, discover sponsorship opportunities within School, or donate. There is also an online gift shop where OW Centenary and School memorabilia can be purchased.

You will be aware that the OWA was brought in-house in 2023, in order to reduce costs and to provide the benefit of administrative support from within the School. Such support remains limited due to budgetary constraints, but we have benefited greatly from the superb support given by Mrs Jemima Clarke and Mr Charlie Hadley, and I would like to record my sincere thanks to them both for their outstanding contributions. Mrs Clarke has provided invaluable support in sourcing material for our new-look Newsletters, circulated since Winter 2024, and Mr Hadley is responsible for the wonderful design work which ensures our Newsletters are attractive, eye-catching, and easily accessible for readers. Both colleagues have also provided their flair and talent in developing the material for our new OW Website, and are currently contributing their time and skills towards arrangements for our celebration in September. I am most grateful to them both.

I hope you enjoy this third edition of the OW Newsletter, and please do also view copies of The Westcliff Diary to keep up with news on your School <https://www.whsb.essex.sch.uk/useful-information-for-all-parents/westcliff-diary>.

Mike Skelly, Headmaster and Chairman OWA



**AT THE CITY'S CENOTAPH, NOVEMBER 2025**



Old Westcliffians and former WHSB CCF Cadets Lt. Holmes and Former RSM Carter Bray offer their support and join the School's CCF Cadets in marching to the Cenotaph. Carter is now undertaking officer training at Sandhurst



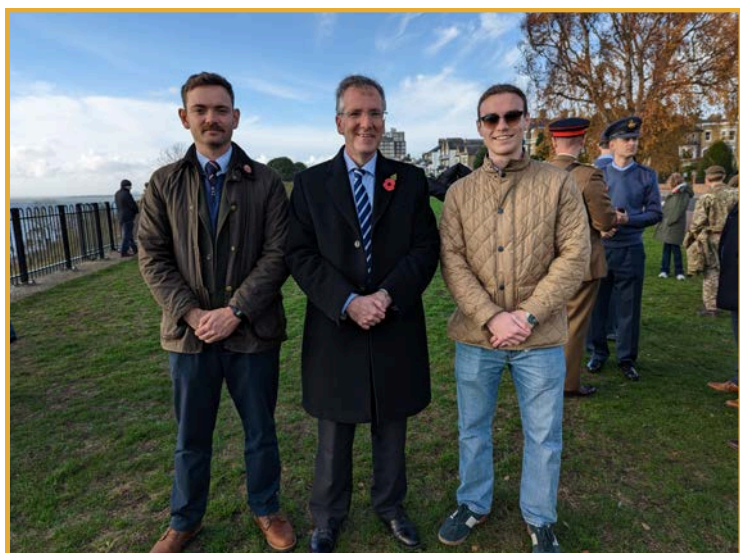
President of the OWA, Terry Birdseye, joins the Headmaster and School's CCF Captain (Gabriel) at the Cenotaph, laying a wreath in memory of former pupils who lost their lives in military service to their country



Army Section Cadets in the Upper Sixth gather to mark their final parade as members of WHSB's CCF, before leaving the School in June 2026



RAF Section Cadets in the Upper Sixth with RAF Staff Officers gather to mark their final parade as members of WHSB's CCF, before leaving the School in June 2026



Old Westcliffians and former WHSB CCF Cadets Conor Roberts and Jonathan Travers attending the service at the Cenotaph. Conor now serves in the Royal Navy's Submarine Service



## The Old Westcliffians' Centenary Celebration

Join us on

Saturday 12 September 2026, from 12.30pm

at

Westcliff High School for Boys

This year, in 2026, we are celebrating the one hundred years since former pupils of WHSB formed the Old Westcliffian Association. The Association, and the many other means by which our former pupils have remained in touch with each other, and with their School, have provided wonderful opportunities for strengthening friendships which began at school, supporting one another across the years, and providing valuable encouragement and inspiration for current pupils at WHSB.

The ongoing friendships and shared experiences across the years, as pupils at WHSB and throughout the years since, is worthy of celebration, and we are delighted to extend this invitation to you to join us for a special celebration at Westcliff High School for Boys.

Our celebration will commence with a Drinks Reception from 12.30pm, where our guests will be welcomed with a complimentary drink, and an opportunity to join tours of the School, view displays of archive material, enjoy some musical entertainment and, of course, an important opportunity to catch up with friends old and new. As they register, OWs will be invited to sign a Guest Book, a record for posterity that is to be retained within the School Archive.

The highlight of our event will be a professionally catered afternoon tea, served at 3.00pm, when guests can enjoy a sit-down experience in our beautifully decorated School Hall. Whilst enjoying afternoon tea, entertainment will be provided by members of our School community who will stage a curated showcase of music and drama.

Throughout the event, a photographer will be on hand to capture memorable moments, and a pay-bar facility will be available throughout the afternoon. Tables will be arranged in cabaret style, and can accommodate 8 – 10 people. Old Westcliffians are most welcome to bring their family members and friends with them. Further details of this special event and how to book (either individually or to reserve a full table) will be emailed to you shortly. In the meantime, please note this date for your diary, and share the details with your OW friends and contacts.

We look forward to welcoming you back to Westcliff High School for Boys on this special day.

**A NEW LOOK FOR THE OLD WESTCLIFFIANS' WEBSITE – HELPING THE SCHOOL TO DEVELOP YOUR NETWORK**



Earlier in this edition, the Headmaster has outlined plans to launch our new-look OWA website, to provide a central hub for fostering long-term, mutually beneficial relationships and a modern, digital-first platform which will increase engagement, streamline communication, and transform a passive database into a dynamic, active community. As he has noted, the new website will incorporate photo galleries by decade, digitised material from the School's archive, and the facility to enable OWs to network with former peers, purchase tickets for alumni and School events, discover sponsorship opportunities within the School, and to make a donation.

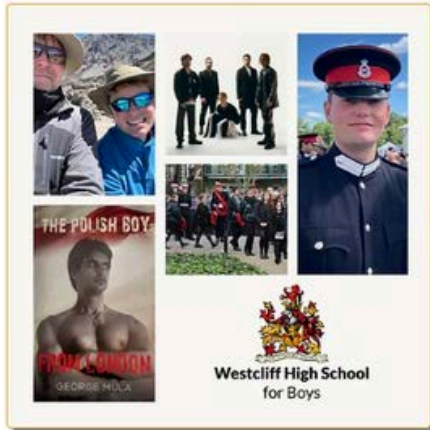
The new OWA website will be fully GDPR-compliant, ensuring data is handled with the highest security standards. Members of our alumni community will have complete control over their information, with easy options to access, correct, or remove data. Our Privacy Policy detailing how we keep information safe can be viewed here <https://www.whsb.essex.sch.uk/attachments/download.asp?file=459&type=pdf>

With the superb support of Mrs Jemima Clarke (Community Development Assistant) and Mr Charlie Hadley (Reprographics Manager), the development of the new website has been possible through the School, but there are external costs which must be funded, in particular the annual maintenance and hosting fees for the new website. These fees will be £240, subject to inflation going forwards. To assist the School in sustaining this digital hub for our alumni, we are seeking full sponsorship for a year, or individual donations to assist with a portion of the cost. If you would like to help, please contact Mrs Clarke at [community@whsb.essex.sch.uk](mailto:community@whsb.essex.sch.uk).

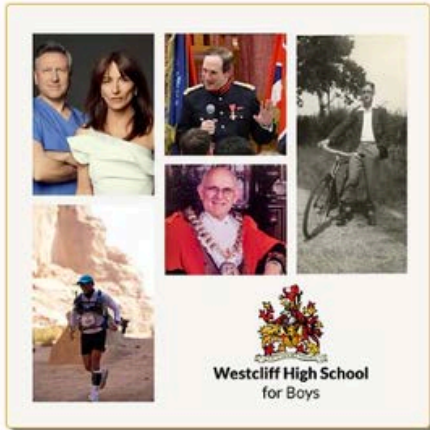
# Newsletters

**Our Mission**

Stay connected with all the latest happenings at OWA. This section is your go-to source for updates on activities, events, and news throughout the school term. Be sure to check back regularly so you never miss out on exciting opportunities and important announcements. We're here to keep you connected to the wider school.



**Old Westcliffian Newsletter**  
Winter 2024 - Issue 1



**Old Westcliffian Newsletter**  
Summer 2025 - Issue 2

**OWA CENTENARY GALLERY**

To commemorate the OWA Centenary, Old Westcliffians are invited to submit stories and accompanying photographs to help us rediscover the history of the School. By contributing to the OWA Centenary Gallery, which will be accessible via the new OWA website, you will help create a new School archive experience for the benefit of both our alumni and the present school community.

The information you submit should include the following:

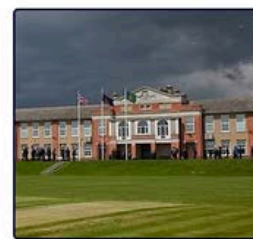
- Your name (now and when you were at School if different).
- A photo of yourself (taken recently, and if possible, one from your School days).
- Your association to the School (former pupil or staff member).
- Years attended WHSB.
- Your most significant memories of your time at the School; and
- What you went on to do next and where you are now.

Please email [community@whsb.essex.sch.uk](mailto:community@whsb.essex.sch.uk) to submit a maximum of 400 words together with your accompanying photographs.

Further information and help with the submission of photographs can be obtained by contacting Jemima Clarke, Community Development Assistant [community@whsb.essex.sch.uk](mailto:community@whsb.essex.sch.uk).



**1920**



**1930**



**1940**



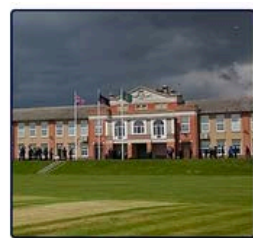
**1950**



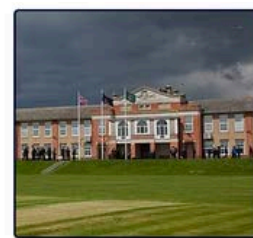
**1960**



**1970**



**1980**



**1990**



**2000**



**2010**



**2020**



## THE OWA CENTENARY FUND AND CENTENARY SPONSORSHIP

This year sees the launch of the OWA Centenary Fund with the aim of funding improvements and upgrades to our sporting facilities, including our aging pavilion. Regrettably, and for some time now, Government funding does not support such development. Thanks, in large part, to the generous legacy of £34,000 from Old Westcliffian, Barry Coker, we are now in a position to replace the School's failing tartan surface, not only an area for athletics team training but also an important outdoor teaching space in Physical Education, for every pupil. Barry's legacy, which will make a difference in the lives of so many pupils to come, is a wonderful gift to us all, and one for which we are most grateful, and we shall be recording Barry's generosity on our Donations Board in the Centenary Room.

Another way of supporting the School is to become an OWA Centenary Sponsor and we would welcome discussions on how an individual or company might wish to become involved, as well as the potential benefits. Celebrating the Old Westcliffians' Centenary affords a number of specific sponsorship opportunities to those wishing to support the School financially and these include:

- OWA Centenary Event Complimentary Welcome Drinks.
- Luxury Raffle (sponsorship of individual suggested prizes).
- Advertising in the OWA Centenary Souvenir Programme.
- Funding the Commemorative OWA Centenary Plaque; and
- Sponsorship of the new OWA Website (noted on page 6).

Should you or your company believe it may be possible to offer your financial support we would be pleased to hear from you. To discuss options or donate to the OWA Centenary Fund, please contact Mr Stephen Rotheron, Director of Finance at WHSB [rothons@whsb.essex.sch.uk](mailto:rothons@whsb.essex.sch.uk). Should you wish to discuss your donation, or the various options available, directly with the Headmaster, he can be contacted through his Personal Assistant, Mrs Dawn Holley, [holleyd@whsb.essex.sch.uk](mailto:holleyd@whsb.essex.sch.uk), and he would be pleased to arrange a discussion or meeting with you.

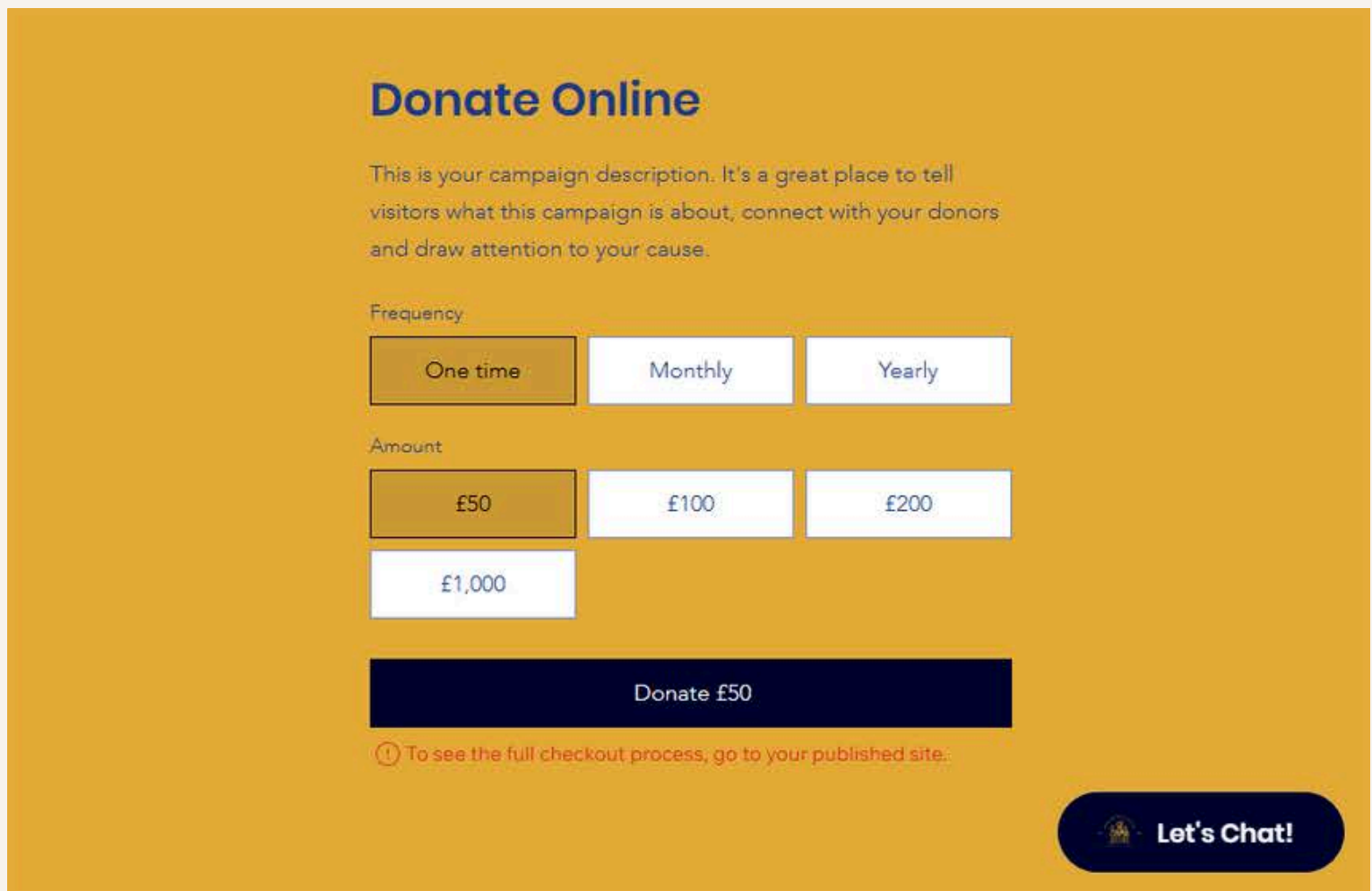


Image giving example only - facility will available following launch of our new website

## FAREWELL TO LONG SERVING MEMBERS OF STAFF

At the end of the last academic year, we bade farewell to the School's then two longest serving members of staff. Mr Andy Farrell served at WHSB for 42 years, and prior to that attended WHSB as a pupil. Throughout his career at WHSB Mr Farrell held numerous senior roles in the School. In more recent years and until 2020, he held the role of Director of Middle School, with responsibility for the pastoral care and academic progress of all pupils in Years 10 and 11. This is a role he carried out superbly and with notable success. Many Old Westcliffians will also remember Mr Farrell as a terrific Biology teacher. Indeed, he taught a number of our current Science teachers when they attended WHSB as pupils.

After he stepped down from his senior roles, Mr Farrell kindly agreed to continue to assist the Middle School with its intervention strategies to support pupils. Since 2020, Mr Farrell held the part-time role of Pastoral Adviser, providing support and guidance to GCSE pupils on how to improve their GCSE outcomes.

Mr Farrell has given outstanding service to the School and we wish him a long, happy and healthy retirement.

Mr Nick Cooper served as a teacher at WHSB for 46 years. Mr Cooper is an outstanding teacher of Geology and he also taught Geography with great success for many years. For much of his career, Mr Cooper specialised in teaching Geology, taking on the position of Head of Geology at the School. Geology is a subject for which Mr Cooper has great enthusiasm and passion.

I know that many Old Westcliffians working in the field of Geology, and related areas such as resource exploration, would be pleased and keen to acknowledge that they owe a debt of gratitude to Mr Cooper for his outstanding teaching and guidance. Talking to OWs, many remember his wonderful field visits to Dorset and Arran each year, and excellent lessons he delivered on those field trips.

During his long career at WHSB, Mr Cooper held other senior positions, including Head of Careers, and Director of Cricket. On deciding to step back from these positions several years ago, the School is most fortunate that he chose to continue to serve as a part-time teacher of Geology.

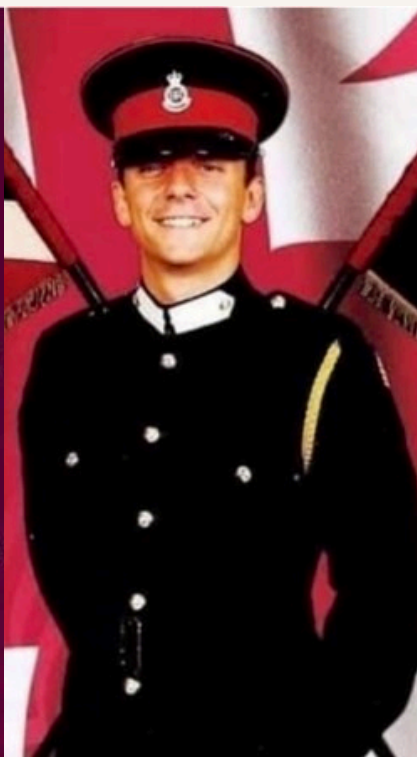
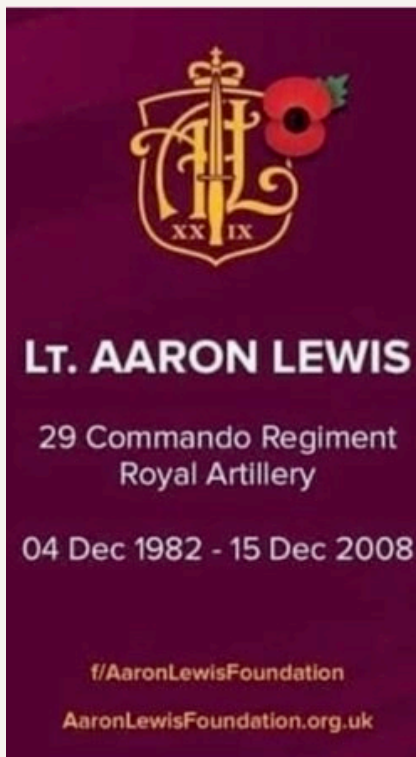
We give Mr Cooper our very best wishes on his retirement and wish him happiness and success in all his future endeavours.

It is simply impossible in the space available to fully quantify the scale of Mr Farrell's and Mr Cooper's contributions to the intellectual and personal development of generations of Old Westcliffians. Both colleagues have contributed enormously to the success and outstanding reputation of WHSB. The School has benefited greatly from their dedication, loyalty and commitment to serve our pupils and support their colleagues. They have a special place in our School's story – we thank them both.

*Headmaster*



**IN MEMORY OF OLD WESTCLIFFIAN LIEUTENANT AARON LEWIS**



You will remember in the last issue of the OWA Newsletter, we reported on the preparations that were underway by Old Westcliffian Brett Lewis to raise money for the Aaron Lewis Foundation (ALF). On the 15th December 2008, Brett's brother and fellow Old Westcliffian Lieutenant Aaron Lewis of 29 Commando Regiment Royal Artillery, was killed in action in Afghanistan. He was just 26 and on his first operational deployment. Two years after Aaron's death, ALF was established by his family, friends and former service colleagues in his memory. The Foundation is an all-volunteer charity committed to transforming lives through sport, well-being and life changing opportunities in the Essex area and nationally for service and ex-service personnel.

In memory of his brother, Brett has been preparing to tackle one of the toughest races in the world, the Marathon des Sables: 257 km across the Sahara Desert in 40-50 degree heat. Working with a specialist US based trainer, December saw him race across the desert in Peru, completing a 120k event in preparation for the main seven day race across the Sahara in April this year.

If you wish to make a donation, Brett's fundraiser can be found at: <https://www.justgiving.com/page/brett-lewis-1>



**S J CORDEN, OLD WESTCLIFFIAN (1926-1933)**

Born in December 1914, Sidney John Corden joined Westcliff High School for Boys in 1926. He enjoyed both academic and sporting success, being awarded School Colours for cricket and rugby and appointed School Captain in 1932. Sidney passed away in 2008, having been a lifelong resident of the Shoeburyness area and a much-loved father, grandfather, and great-grandfather.

In 2016, Sidney's family donated his collection of WHSB and Old Westcliffian Association memorabilia to the school. We were delighted to receive this wealth of documentation—a time capsule including perfectly preserved exercise books and school reports, alongside photos of him as a Sixth Former and member of the First XI Cricket Team in the early 1930s. Also included was the original paperwork from his application to the WHSBOBA (Old Westcliffian Association): the letter confirming his membership, the Association's AGM agenda, and the Statement of Accounts for 1933–1934. Finally, we found a bright, gold-coloured leaflet detailing the arrangements for the 1934 OWA Annual Dinner at the Westward Ho! Hotel in Westcliff. After over 90 years it remains in pristine condition, as if just run off the School's duplicator!

We are always very grateful to receive donations of memorabilia, photographs and uniform from members of our alumni community relating to their time at the School. Please do get in touch [community@whsb.essex.sch.uk](mailto:community@whsb.essex.sch.uk) if you can help.

Mrs J Clarke, Community Development Assistant



SCHOOL CAPTAINS	
1925. SWEETING, C.G.	1960. HARDY, N.A.
1926. FOUNTAIN, H.A.	1961. HAYNES, R.E.
1927. STUBBS, L.G.	1962. BARNETT, A.S.
1928. CARLYON, D.L.	1963. CLARK, D.A.
1929. DREVER, H.L.	1964. BURNS, R.F.
1930. WHITEHOUSE, J.J.G.	1965. SHERWOOD, D.H.
1931. HARRIS, E.L.	1966. SANDELL, C.J.
1932. CORDEN, S.J.	1967. MITCHELL, N.D.
1933. KERRY, D.	1968. LISTER, S.E.
1934. SYME, D.L.	1969. CROXFORD, I.L.
1935. BROWNE, H.W.	1970. GIRLING, P.
1936. WELLAND, D.S.R.	1971. BOWLER, T.R.
1937. BAKER, K.A.	1972. DAVEY, A.P.
1938. J.W.A. HOWE.	1973. TATTOO, D.S.
1939. CROWE, R.A.	1974. GODBOLD, C.
1940. WILES, W.F.	1975. DAVIES, D.G.
1941. ELIASSON, W.J.B.	1976. LIGHT, G.A.
1942. ABERCROMBIE, K.C.	1977. FLAXMAN, G.C.
1943. JEANES, R.E.	1978. ALLEN, P.D.
1944. JEANES, R.E.	1979. WHITE, T.J.
1945. ROBSON, P.W.	1980. BELSON, S.L.

W. H. S. O. B. A. 1933-34.

Statement of Accounts.

GENERAL FUND.

<p>1933. Sept. Deficit per Balance Sheet 11 14 5</p> <p>1934. June 30th. Cost of Membership Cards 3 10 0 " " Magazines 6 0 9 Postage thereon 18 9 6 Printing and Stationery 6 19 0 Postages 4 5 7 Deficit on Annual Dinner 6 15 2</p> <p>Balance Surplus for year 15 16 9 Less Deficit at commencement of year 11 14 5 4 2 4</p>	<p>1934. Subscriptions &amp; Donations.</p> <p>Prepaid — 4 6 Cash received — 37 3 6 37 8 0</p> <p>Less Prepaid at close of year 17 6 36 10 6</p> <p>Life Subscriptions. Prepaid at commencement of year 5 4 6 Less Amount prepaid at close 4 14 0 10 6</p> <p>(Theorically £14 0, Plus £11 6, Less £1 16 6)</p> <p>Surplus on Ties and Squares 3 7 11 Surplus on Dance — 2 4 4 Surplus on Whist Drive — 1 3 0 Surplus on Sapper — 9 8</p> <p>44 5 11</p>
--	--

Balance Sheet.

Liabilities.

loan from Headmaster, as last account	30 0 0
life Membership Subs. unexpired	4 14 0
Subscriptions paid in advance	17 6
<b>GENERAL FUND.</b>	
Deficit as per last a/c	11 14 5
Add Surplus for year	15 16 9
	4 2 4
	39 13 10

30th June, 1934.

Assets.

loan to Old Westcliffians R.F.C. as past account.	20 0 0
<b>TIES &amp; SQUARES ACCOUNTS.</b>	
Stock in hand	6 12 0
Debtor	17 6 7 9 6
Cash in hand	12 4 4
	39 13 10

Audited and found correct:

E. HARTLEY, Chartered Accountant.  
L. WOOLF.

Westcliff High School  Old Boys Association

**The Sixth Annual Dinner**

February, 1934.

Dear Member,

I should like to bring before you, somewhat in advance, a few details concerning our Annual Dinner, in the hope that you will make a note of them with a view to saving every endeavour to be present.


1. It is to be held at The Westward 140, Road, Westcliff.
2. The date has been allowed to March 24th.
3. Starting time, 8 p.m.
4. Tickets 5s. 6d. This may seem rather a lot, but actually it is a very cut price—cut to such an extent that we reckon to lose fairly heavily, the loss, however, decreasing as the attendance increases.
5. Leaving dress optional—in optional that it is anticipated that a majority will wear it.
6. Tickets obtainable from the members of the Committee scheduled at the end of this letter.
7. It is essential that I should be in a position to notify the Hotel Manager how many guests are coming.

I feel sure you will agree me with regard to the last point. I have the audience to live in rather an out-of-the-way place, where the postman calls only once only per day, and where I get my "morning" post fact thing at night. This means that all the Committee members who have tickets must write to me at the latest about three days before the Dinner saying how many tickets they have sold. Obviously, they cannot do this if had to guess at the probable attendance. I ordered for 60 and only 41 had tickets formed up. The Hotel could hardly have charged for the extra 19, and if they had our deficit would have been about £5 more than it was. Therefore, I make a special point this year of asking you to be helpful by ordering your ticket as far in advance as possible.

Yours sincerely,  
R. PEGG.

Tickets obtainable from—  
R. SPOER, 2, Montague Buildings, Southdown Road, Southend.  
F. C. LEE, 30, Dismant Avenue, Southend.  
F. R. BATTMAN, 11, Pittwater Square, Southend.  
M. C. HESBERT, Bishop Court, Vicarage Hill, South Brighth.  
R. V. JONES, 82, Lord Roberts Avenue, Leigh.  
L. H. KNOWLES, 223, Pitt Mill, Leigh.  
F. LORIAN, 5, Cliff Road, Leigh.  
J. PENNINGTON, 23, Cliff Road, Leigh.

**Westcliff High School**



**Old Boys' Association**

Hon. Treasurer: A. E. COHEN, B.A., Westcliff High School, Eastwood Boulevard, Westcliff-on-Sea.

Hon. Sec.: R. PEGG, "The Hive," Elder Avenue, Wickford, Essex.

Hon. Dance Sec.: R. C. EDWARDS, 186 Station Road, Westcliff-on-Sea.

*4th March 1934*

Dear *Corden*


I have pleasure in reporting that your application for membership has been accepted by the Committee and in enclosing your Membership Card herewith.

If your subscription for this season has not already been paid, will you please let Mr. Cohen have it at your early convenience.

Yours very truly,  
*R Pegg*

*S. J. Corden Esq*

**Westcliff High School**



**Old Boys Association**

Hon. Treasurers: A. E. COHEN, B.A., Westcliff High School, Eastwood Boulevard, Westcliff-on-Sea.

Hon. Sec. R. PEGG, "The Hive," Elder Avenue, Wickford, Essex.

Hon. Dance Sec R. C. EDWARDS, 186 Station Road, Westcliff-on-Sea.

September, 1933

Dear Sir,

I have to inform you that the Seventh Annual General Meeting of the Association is to be held on Friday, the 22nd. September, 1933, at 8.30 p.m., in the School Library, and it is to be hoped that every member who can attend will do so.

The Agenda for this meeting is given below, and I should like respectfully to draw your attention to the note printed at the foot of this letter,

I am, dear Sir,  
Yours faithfully,  
R. PEGG.

**AGENDA**

1. Correspondence.
2. Minutes of 1932 Annual General Meeting.
3. Secretary's Report.
4. Treasurers Report.
5. Affiliation of the Old Westcliffians Cricket Club to this Association.
6. Proposed Amendment to Rule 9:  
"The officers shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting to be held in July of each year."
7. Proposed Amendment to Rule 3:  
The first sentence to be altered so as to read:  
"The subscription shall be 3/6 per annum payable on July 30th. or Life Membership subscription compounded of 16 times the annual subscription."
8. Election of Officers.
9. Programme Season 1933-34
10. Other Business.

PLEASE NOTE that subscriptions for the Season 1933-34 became due on July 30th last. It will be of considerable convenience to the Treasurer if subscriptions which have not already been paid are handed to him at the close of the meeting.

## PRESERVING OUR HISTORY: AN APPEAL FOR MISSING SCHOOL MAGAZINES AND OWA NEWSLETTERS

For over a century, our School magazines have served as a vital record of the WHSB community—capturing the unique voices, notable victories, and everyday lives of generations of pupils. As we continue the important work of digitising our physical archives, we have identified several gaps in our collection that we are eager to fill.

To ensure the history of Westcliff High School for Boys is preserved in its entirety, we would be incredibly grateful for your assistance in locating the following missing issues:

“The Gateway” 1920 to 1926

“The Quest” – Midsummer 1926 to 1927, Mid-summer 1933, 1934 and 1935 editions, Christmas 1937 and all editions for 1940, 1941, 1945, 1949 and 1964.

“The Westcliffian” – all editions for 1967 to 1971, 1977 to 1979, 1981 to 1983 and 1985 to 1988.

Additionally, we are keen to locate Old Westcliffian Association newsletters from between 1926 and 1954, 1958, 1964, 1968 to 1969 and 1972 to 1976.

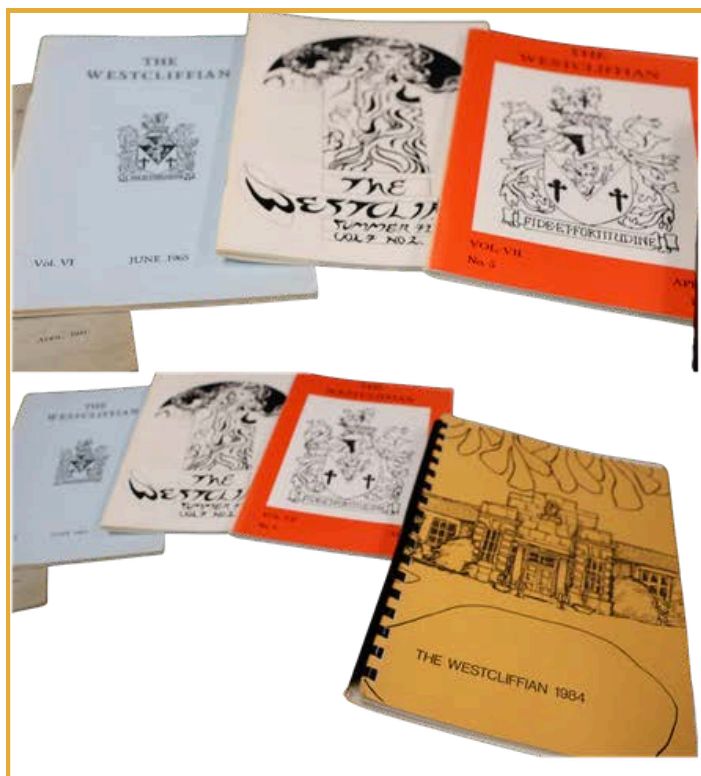
If you have a copy from one of our missing years, we would be delighted to discuss the following options:

Permanent Donation- Adding your copy to our permanent School archive.

Loan for Digitisation - We can borrow your copy to be professionally scanned and returned to you safely.

If you are able to assist, please contact Jemima Clarke, Community Development Assistant [community@whsb.essex.sch.uk](mailto:community@whsb.essex.sch.uk) .

Thank you for helping us safeguard the legacy of the School for future generations.



**SUMMER 2025 LEAVERS' A-LEVEL CERTIFICATE COLLECTION**

Last December we were delighted to welcome back to the School those who left after their A-Level examinations in Summer 2025. This annual meet-up for our newest cohort of alumni takes place on the last Monday of the Autumn term and for most, coincides with the end of their first term at university. Our summer term leavers are warmly invited to visit the School for this informal event, when complimentary refreshments are served, to collect their A Level certificates and to share with their peers and former teachers, stories about their new adventures post WHSB.

We look forward to welcoming our current Upper Sixth students and Summer 2026 Leavers to this year's event which will take place on Monday 14 December.

Mr A Dean, Senior Master Sixth Form



SUMMER 2025 LEAVERS' A-LEVEL CERTIFICATE COLLECTION



SUMMER 2025 LEAVERS' A-LEVEL CERTIFICATE COLLECTION



## OLD WESTCLIFFIANS HOST THE SCHOOL'S LEGAL LONDON DAY

In November, aspiring lawyers in the Upper Sixth at WHSB attended the School's annual WHSB Legal London Day. Courtesy of members of the School's Old Westcliffian Association, this trip offers an exclusive glimpse into the legal world of "Magic Circle" law firms, Barristers' Chambers, London's Inns of Court, the Royal Courts of Justice and the Old Bailey.

First up was a visit to the London headquarters of major international law firm A&O Shearman, arranged by Senior Lawyer and Old Westcliffian Chris Poel. Students were given an invaluable real-world insight into the structure of a "Magic Circle" firm, experiencing for themselves the working environment, people and culture. Then onto Wilberforce Chambers, one of the leading commercial chancery and business law sets in the UK, as guests of Old Westcliffian Ian Croxford KC. Joined by fellow Barristers and Old Westcliffians Iain Edwards, Elena Johnson and Marcus Kelly, together with Adam-Smith Anthony, Solicitor Advocate and Partner at Omnia Strategy LLP, students were able to understand more accurately the daily life and work of a barrister. With thanks to Iain Edwards for arranging lunch for the group in the historic Middle Temple Hall under its sensational double hammerbeam roof dating back to 1573. The day concluded with visiting two pillars of the English legal system: the Royal Courts of Justice and the Old Bailey. While the Royal Courts handle high-stakes civil and appellate cases and the Old Bailey deals with major criminal proceedings, the proximity of these historically and architecturally significant buildings offering a fascinating study in contrast and continuity.

We extend our sincere gratitude to those members of our alumni community who enable WHSB's Legal London Day each year. We appreciate their generosity in dedicating their time to provide current students with this invaluable opportunity. Such experiences are crucial in motivating and inspiring young people to achieve strong academic results and to pursue ambitious professional goals.



**SUPPORTING CURRENT PUPILS**

**DR JOE WILLIS**

This January we were fortunate to welcome Dr Joe Willis as our Guest Speaker for this year's Sixth Form Chemistry Lecture. Dr Willis last visited the School in 2022 to speak to Sixth Form students on developing sustainable materials for use in solar cells and touch screen technology. This year, his lecture was entitled: From Westcliff to Whitehall - A Career in Science and Tech Policy. Dr Willis studied Chemistry, Mathematics, Government & Politics and History (AS) at WHSB followed by an undergraduate degree: Chemistry BSc (Hons) and doctoral degree: Doctorate of Engineering, Molecular Modelling and Materials Science at UCL between 2018 and 2023.

**MR JACOB GUYLER**

In December we were pleased to welcome Jacob Guyler back to the School to participate in a Drama Workshop with current members of the WHSB Drama Group. When in the Upper Sixth at WHSB, Jacob won a National Schools Theatre Award (NSTA) for Best Actor in a Musical for his performance as Jean Val Jean in the School's 2024 production of Les Misérables. Jacob is currently an undergraduate student at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, University of London.



**ASSISTING WITH OXBRIDGE AND MDV SOCIETY  
PRACTICE INTERVIEWS**

We are very grateful to those Old Westcliffians who returned to School last November to participate in the School's interview preparation programme for our current students in the Upper Sixth applying for Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary (MDV) courses and to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Mock interviews, primarily based around the UCAS personal statement, took place on a Saturday morning, with members of our alumni community meeting with one or two students and then providing feedback. These sessions help students develop "thinking aloud" skills—demonstrating the logical reasoning and intellectual flexibility that admissions tutors prioritise. We will be looking to replicate this programme later in the year for our next cohort of applicants, further details will be circulated in due course and your help again would be most appreciated.



## AN AUDIENCE WITH INDUSTRY EXPERTS

The School's new style 'Audience with Industry Experts' careers evenings have proved most successful, consisting of interviews, a panel discussion, and Q&A session for the audience. This new format has made these careers evenings more interactive.

The Careers Evening in November, the first of the academic year, centred around the ever-popular area of Medicine, and sought to expand the range of careers covered during the evening. We were pleased to welcome Old Westcliffians Dr Ivan Shanley, MBBS MSc MRCPsych, Consultant Psychiatrist in Old Age Psychiatry, and Clinical Director for Older Adult Services (Mid and South Essex Partnership University), and Old Westcliffian Mr Paul Sayer, Optometrist and Director at Broadway Opticians in Leigh-on-Sea. Among our other special guests, we were also delighted to welcome Old Westcliffian Ian Paterson, Orthodontist, Springfield Dentist Practice, and Old Westcliffian Dr Eeshan Gangwani, Foundation Year 1 Doctor - Trauma and Orthopaedics. The School was also most fortunate to welcome Mr Harun Thomas, Consultant Surgeon specialising in Breast Cancer, who is the parent of a current pupil at WHSB.

The School is grateful to all the special guests on the panel, who were so willing to give their time to make such valuable contributions to this event. Such support provides inspiration and important guidance for our pupils as they consider their future employment opportunities.



OW Dr Ivan Shanley with students from WHSB



OW Mr Paul Sayer



### OLD WESTCLIFFIANS RETURN FOR APPRENTICESHIP FAIR

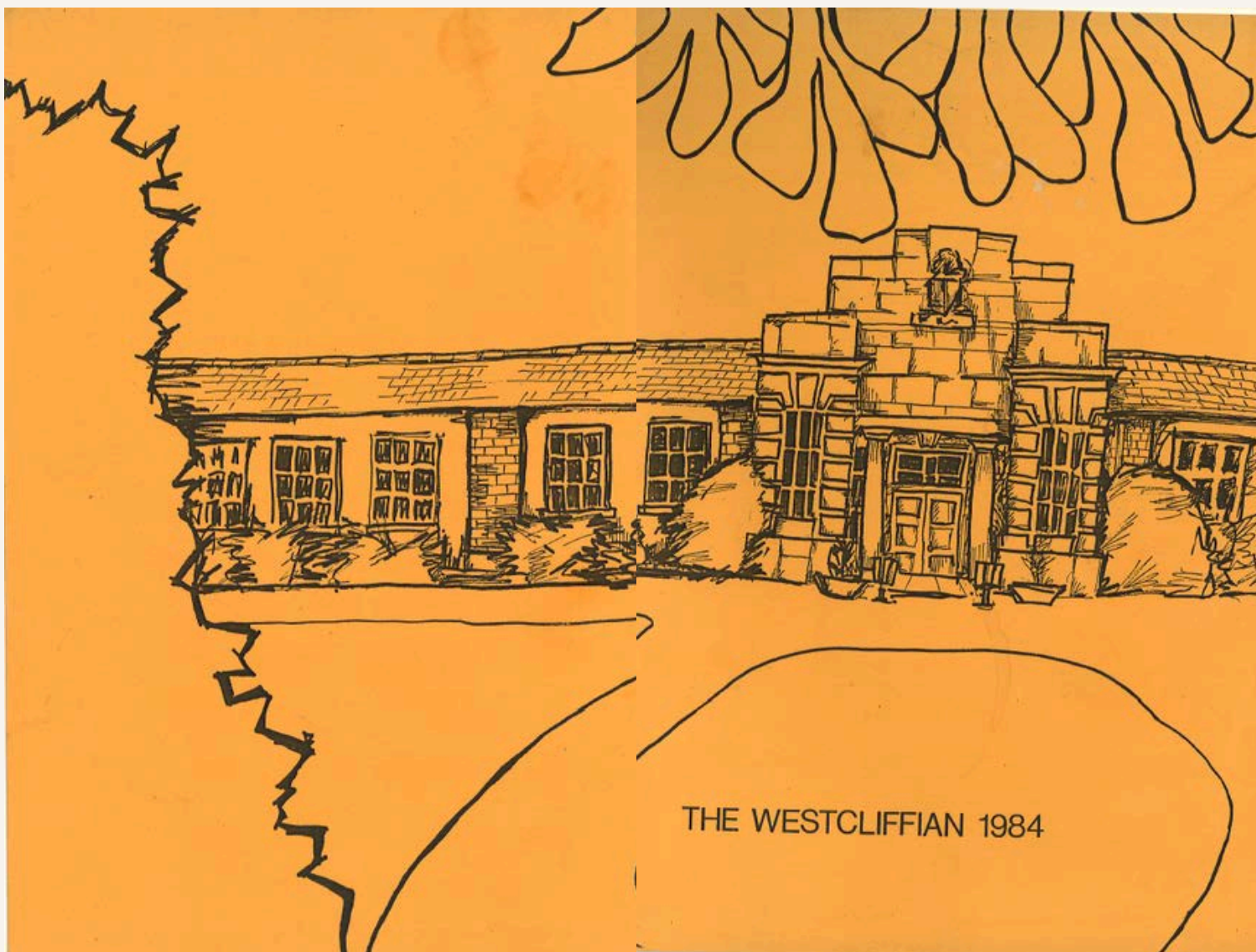
In February, as part of National Apprenticeship Week 2026, the School hosted an engaging Apprenticeship Fair for Lower Sixth students courtesy of members of our alumni community. We were delighted to welcome back Old Westcliffians who returned to share their professional journeys and firsthand experiences across a diverse range of industries. Their insights into workplace learning and career pathways provided invaluable guidance for our current students as they consider their future options. The event saw excellent attendance and fostered meaningful dialogue throughout, providing a unique opportunity to bridge the gap between education and the professional world.



### OLD WESTCLIFFIANS RETURN FOR APPRENTICESHIP FAIR



FROM THE ARCHIVES



2nd XV

The second XV started the season with very good intentions. Good team spirit produced a commendable result against St. Joseph's, Blackheath, just losing in the final minutes 6 - 9. However, this result did nothing for the confidence of the team and in the following two games we lost to Gravesend, 6 - 14, and Jaynes, 10 - 22.

After this bad start to the season the results could only get better and improved enthusiasm produced five wins out of the next seven games. This included the convincing win over the American School 68 - 3, in which David Ayling at No. 8 was the team's leading try scorer. The remaining four wins were against Goff's, 30 - 3, King John, 6 - 0, St. Edward's 22 - 12, and Cooper's 56 - 0.

However, with the inevitable problem of injuries and availability towards the end of the season, the team was only able to win one game out of the next four. This was the last game of the season in which we overcame King Edward VI Grammar School to beat them 10 - 6.

Every member of the team played to the best of his ability and in particular Mark Rayner, Andrew Scanes, John Wigram, Matthew Power and Keith Luxon showed great determination in the forwards throughout the season. Tackling in the backs improved as the season progressed with notable performances coming from Loyd Odey, Jonathan Somers, Paul Prebble, Ian Bloomfield, Jonathan Sullivan and Matthew Davey.

Finally, on behalf of the whole of the 2nd XV, I would like to thank Mr. Mason for the time and effort he has put in throughout the year, and in particular for his coaching and refereeing.

ANDY GREGORY (L6J)

UI9 Teams:

1st XV Captain - David Pacey

Vice-Captain - Clinton Patey

2nd XV Captain - Andrew Gregory

D. Ayling, I. Bloomfield, D. Blower, G. Boyle, T. Brenton, D. Company, A. Cooper, H. Davey, C. de Rochefort, J. Dilley, G. Farmer, M. Gibbons, C. Gocher, A. Gregory, P. Hagen, I. Jarvis, S. Keen, K. Luxon, O. Moon, A. Norton, L. Odey, T. Owles, D. Pacey, C. Patey, M. Power, P. Prebble, S. Purchall, M. Rayner, D. Richardson, C. Russell, A. Scanee, S. Shotts, D. Smith, J. Somers, M. Stuart, J. Sullivan, S. Towler, D. Traynor, D. Unstead, A. Walters, J. Whale, J. Whitaker, J. Wigram, M. Wydall.

**FROM THE ARCHIVES: MYSTERY PHOTO POSSIBLY TAKEN IN 1949**

When searching the archives we came across this photograph of an event in the School Hall. We estimate that it was taken in the late 1940s or early 1950s (the School Captain's board on the back wall in the first photo states that MG Smedley was appointed in 1949). The gentleman seated centre on the top table, presumably the guest of honour or a figure important to the School Community, is a mystery. Claude Webber, a stalwart of the teaching staff from 1929 to 1968 is to his left. If anyone can throw any light on the proceedings, recognises a relative or can identify the guest of honour we would be delighted to hear from you!





**SCHOOL CAPTAINS**

<p>1925. SWEETING, C.G.                  1926. FOUNTAIN, H.A.                  1927. STUBBS, L.G.                  1928. CARLYON, D.L.                  1929. DREVER, H.L.                  1930. WHITEHOUSE, J.J.G.                  1931. HARRIS, EL.                  1932. CORDEN, S.J.                  1933. KERRY, D.                  1934. SYME, D.L.                  1935. BROWNE, H.W.                  1936. WELLAND, D.S.R.                  1937. BAKER, K.A.                  1938. J.W.A. HOWE.                  1939. CROWE, R.A.                  1940. WILES, W.F.                  1941. ELIASSON, W.J.B.                  1942. ABERCROMBIE, K.C.                  1943. JEANES, R.E.                  1944. JEANES, R.E.                  1945. ROBSON, P.W.                  1946. KINSEY, J.S.                  WEBSTER, A. J.                  1947. CLARKE, D.                  1948. SOUTHGATE, J.T.                  SMEDLEY M.G.                  1949. SMEDLEY M.G.                  1950. DIBBLE, D.J.                  1951. GOZZARD, A.D.                  ELEY, M.                  1952. COKER, B.                  1953. DAVIES, T.E.                  MANTON, B.H.                  1954. UPSON, M.V.                  1955. SAUNDERS, A.D.                  1956. WHITFIELD, M.C.                  1957. UTTON, M.A.                  1958. COTGROVE, L.B.                  1959. GREEN, N.J.</p>	<p>1960. HARDY, N.A.                  1961. HAYNES, R.E.                  1962. BARNETT, A.S.                  1963. CLARK, D.A.                  1964. BURNS, R.F.                  1965. SHERWOOD, D.H.                  1966. SANDELL, C.J.                  1967. MITCHELL, N.D.                  1968. LISTER, S.E.                  1969. CROXFORD, I.L.                  1970. GIRLING, P.                  1971. BOWLER, T.R.                  1972. DAVEY, A.P.                  1973. TATTOO, D.S.                  1974. GODBOLD, C.                  1975. DAVIES, D.G.                  1976. LIGHT, G.A.                  1977. FLAXMAN, C.C.                  1978. ALLEN, P.D.                  1979. WHITE, T.J.                  1980. BELSON, S.L.                  1981. DYTON, F.R.R.                  1982. TELLING, A.M.                  1983. TRAYNOR, D.T.                  1984. NEWMAN, N.J.                  1985. DAVEY, M.J.                  1986. McDERMOTT, I.D.                  1987. RIMMER, M.J.G.                  1988. TYTHERLEIGH, S.G.                  1989. PIERS, J.M.A.                  1990. PHILIP G. HARPER                  1991. ANDREW P. OSBORN                  1992. THOMAS R.D. WAGSTAFF                  1993. GRAHAM A. CHAPMAN                  1994. TIMOTHY ROLPH                  1995. CHRISTOPHER VALVONA                  1996. JOHN BILSON                  1997. TOM LICENCE                  1998. MATTHEW ARGENT</p>
--	---

**WHSB ALUMNI: WHERE ARE THEY NOW?**

In this edition of the Old Westcliffian Association Newsletter, we highlight members of our alumni community whose professional trajectories have been shaped by their study of English and English Literature. We explore how the analytical and communicative skills honed at WHSB continue to serve as a foundation for their success across diverse industries.



**Billy Darlington, Old Westcliffian  
2013-2020**

Studying English Literature at A Level taught me how to communicate clearly and critically. Working in media, where storytelling and creativity are at the heart of everything I do, these abilities are particularly important. Learning to read between the lines, write

persuasively, and analyse complex ideas are all skills that all companies value, and these begin in the classroom.

Even if you do not go into a creative industry, English Literature gives you something essential - the ability to express yourself with confidence, think differently, and back your ideas up with evidence. These are skills that will take you far, no matter what path you choose when your WHSB journey closes.

**Scarlett Wood, Old Westcliffian  
2017-2019**



Unsurprisingly, English always took the top spot as my favourite subject at school. However, it was studying English Literature A-Level at WHSB that cemented my thought that this was a subject I absolutely had to pursue further. As dramatic as it sounds, I have

often claimed that English Literature 'opened my eyes' - a sentiment I know many others share. Our studies extended beyond the texts themselves, allowing us to explore themes of politics, history, religion, and philosophy. We were encouraged to think evaluatively and granted the freedom to express our own interpretations and critiques, armed with the skills to do so. I enjoy my career as a teacher because it allows me to continue to nurture my passion for the subject and, somewhat cyclically, I hope to 'open the eyes' of my own pupils and inspire in them the same love of Literature and critical thinking that my teachers once encouraged in me.

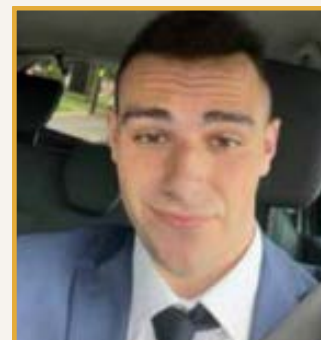


**Daniel Periera, Old Westcliffian  
2013-2020**

A Level English taught me what it was to write and to argue for myself. Reading comparatively across swathes of time, the course brought us close to the minds of philosophers, artists, political theorists, and activists. Classroom debates and

critical theory gave me the confidence to scrutinise language in all its forms, and with Great Gatsby parties thrown at Mar-alago, it is hard to miss the literary mythologies that still touch the modern day. Beyond academics, I learnt how to appreciate the beauty of the music I listen to and the films I watch more deeply - underrated, but important for life. Since A Level, I have completed a BA in English at Cambridge and a fully-funded MSt in Medieval English from Oxford, with a stint teaching English abroad for the British Council. I have published reviews, staged plays, presented at conferences from KCL to the Greek island of Naxos, and I plan to complete a PhD and remain in the glamorous world of academia.

**Shane Lynch, Old Westcliffian  
2014-2021**



Studying English Literature at A Level inspired me to become a lawyer today. After studying Shakespearean characters like Iago in English Literature at A Level, I learned to appreciate how decisive language can be in influencing outcomes. That fascination led me to pursue a career

in Law, where I discovered that precision and creativity in language are instruments commercial solicitors use to achieve tangible commercial results for their clients. Therefore, just as Iago mastered the art of language to influence outcomes in Othello, I want to use that same power in a commercial setting to safeguard the interests of clients. Studying English Literature, therefore, had a profound influence on the person I am today.

Furthermore, and this may come as a surprise, during my WHSB career, I was always a "Maths" guy. However, after enjoying English Literature so much at GCSE, I can conclude that it was my favourite subject at A-Level. The critical thinking, the interesting characters and the very engaging storylines and plots made it the subject I most enjoyed.

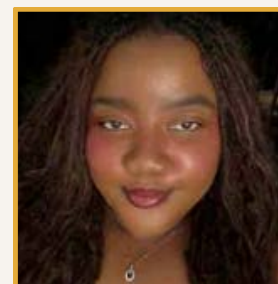


**Oluwatoni Adewole, Old Westcliffian  
2020-2022**

I have just graduated from the University of Cambridge after studying Law. Studying A Level English Literature was a deeply enjoyable time for me. It taught me how to write clearly, persuasively, and with conviction; attributes which helped me with my degree. As for the

course itself, I particularly enjoyed studying Othello. The themes of pride, honour and masculinity were very interesting and made for fascinating further reading. I would recommend English Literature for anyone who truly loves reading and enjoys using literature as a lens to examine society over time.

**Christiana Dube, Old Westcliffian  
2020-2022**



I am now a researcher within the field of Politics and International Relations. English Literature helped me conceptually analyse different modes of media. Developing an awareness of different sociopolitical lenses to evaluate the meaning and application of art and literature became increasingly valuable when conducting future research. It encouraged the exploration of theory that challenged a Eurocentric, patriarchal worldview and passivity when relating my positionality to characters and narratives I would encounter. I would recommend taking the A Level to interrogate how meaning can be shaped within literature to construct societal critiques and how to frame your thoughts on them.

## LEAVING A LEGACY TO WESTCLIFF HIGH SCHOOL FOR BOYS

### SUPPORTING FUTURE GENERATIONS OF WESTCLIFFIANS

We recognise that Friends of the School, particularly Old Westcliffians may feel that they would like to 'give something back' to the School and that this is not always easy during one's lifetime. Leaving a legacy to WHSB in your will is a way of supporting the School after you have left us.

Legacies are usually unrestricted gifts, allowing the School to support current priorities; however, we will always try to meet a donor's wishes if they have a specific area of interest in the School. Current priorities include refurbishment of aged sporting facilities, investment in outdoor seating & shelter facilities, and continued support of enriching extra-curricular activities. Longer term areas for development concern theatre and stage facilities to support the School's excellent Music & Drama activities.

The 1920 Society has been established as a means by which we can thank, during their lifetime, those who have left a gift in their will to the School. By confirming to the Headmaster that you have made a bequest to the School, you will automatically become a member of The 1920 Society.

Members will receive a special gift bearing the School and 1920 logo, and may also receive invitations to School events.

A gift in your will can be a simple way of making a significant donation to the School that is unaffordable during one's lifetime, and one which allows many people to make a meaningful contribution to future generations of WHSB students.

Making a bequest is simple: it can be included in a new will or added as a codicil to an existing will.

We recommend that you obtain legal advice before deciding to include a legacy in your will, or adding a codicil to an existing will, to ensure your interests are protected and your wishes recorded accurately.

We understand that leaving a legacy is a private matter but if you feel able to inform us of your intention it would help the School plan for the future. Publicity around your legacy can range from entirely unannounced to full details published; there may be some benefit to the School in publicising the existence of legacies but any publicity would be in line with your own wishes.

The form can be found here [www.whsb.essex.sch.uk/owa](http://www.whsb.essex.sch.uk/owa) or by scanning the QR code below.

This form enables you to submit your intention to include a legacy to Westcliff High School for Boys in your will.

The form is merely a statement of intention, it does not legally commit you. It will be treated in the strictest confidence, and if you wish to remain anonymous please let us know.

**Contact:** Mr S Rothern, Director of Finance and Accounting, [rothons@whsb.essex.sch.uk](mailto:rothons@whsb.essex.sch.uk)





# Westcliff High School for Boys

## UNLOCK YOUR POTENTIAL

# The Old Westcliffians



Stay connected. Sign up via the QR code for news, events and future information.



SCAN ME

Please follow Westcliff High School for Boys on Facebook and LinkedIn where you can find out about the latest developments and events taking place at the School. We would be delighted to welcome you back to the School to see what is going on.

We welcome your comments and contributions for future editions. Please contact Mrs Clarke, Community Development Assistant on 01702 475443 or via email at [community@whsb.essex.sch.uk](mailto:community@whsb.essex.sch.uk).

We look forward to hearing from you.



OLD WESTCLIFFIAN ASSOCIATION

Tel: 01702 475443 Email: [office@whsb.essex.sch.uk](mailto:office@whsb.essex.sch.uk) Web: [www.whsb.essex.sch.uk](http://www.whsb.essex.sch.uk)

**FIDE ET FORTITUDINE**