

OWA 2024 AGM

Warwick Arms Hotel

Thurs 12 December 2024, 17:45-18:30

Minutes

Present: Steve Tubb (Chairman), Brig James Cook OBE (President 2024), James Barker (Head Master), Arun Sachdev (Treasurer), Anne Douglas (Secretary), Jamie Barr, Owen James, David Stevens, Jim Button, Susie Carr, Adrian Keeling, William Morris.

1. Welcome and apologies

The President opened the AGM and warmly welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from James Uffindell and Jonathan Meredith.

2. Minutes of the 2023 AGM

The minutes were approved. Proposed by Owen James and seconded by David Stevens.

3. Matters arising

Ralph Thornton (WS Staff 1948-89) passed away in January 2024, just a few months after his 100th birthday. Many messages were passed on to his family, who took comfort from these and the many other condolences received. Ralph's popularity among OWs has never faltered. The wealth of messages on his birthday and the attendance at his Memorial Service, both in church and online, are testament to the fact that he was an exceptional man who commanded the respect, admiration and affection of many.

4. Chairman's report

The Chairman congratulated and thanked the Head Master and staff for leading the school so well. He referred to the impressive Foundation Gala Concert which had recently taken place in Butterworth Hall.

The Chairman was delighted to report on the work of Old Warwickian Trust and confirmed that the Trust was currently funding three full bursaries at the school. The Trust had also agreed to support the recently launched Hardship Fund.

The Chairman recorded with regret the passing of a number of OWs and former members of staff and extended condolences to their families and friends.

They included:

Harry Greenway (OWA President 1983)

Robert Holl-Allen (OWA President 1990)

Gerald Bousfield (WS Staff 1957-70)

Robin Flintoff (Head of Art 1978-2015)

Margaret Keighley, née Tingle (Warwick Junior School Staff 1947-62)

John Pipitone (WS Staff 1989-2012)

Ralph Thornton (Second Master and WS Staff 1948-89)

Simon Wheeler (Head of History WS Staff 1980-2003).

5. Treasurer's report and adoption of accounts

The Treasurer presented the accounts. He thanked the school for picking up HSBC bank charges. The Treasurer presented the school with a cheque for £578.80 which the OWA had collected for Portcullis. A cheque for £451.25 was passed to Old Warwickian Trust for donations to the Trust. The accounts were approved by Jim Button and seconded by Owen James.

6. Alumni Relations report

The Old Warwickian Association currently has over 6,382 members worldwide.

6.1. In the summer, 2024 leavers were warmly welcomed into the OWA and presented with their OW tie by 2024 President Brig James Cook OBE. A decade programme is in place with special communications and targeted events to keep recent leavers connected to the school, encourage their participation in OW events and offer them opportunities to extend their professional network.

6.2 To help shape future relationships, a second OW survey was conducted to help develop an

alumni relations, communications, events and reunions programme which strengthens the relationship between OWs, the OWA and Warwick School. 61% of OWs feel strongly or very strongly connected to the school.

6.3 Strong confirmation was received about what OWs would like provided. Communications, reunions and both formal and informal events were all well-received.

6.4 Almost all OWs request The Old Warwickian magazine. Two editions were produced in 2024. The newsletters are distributed online with a small number printed for those who are not online. Open rates of approximately 70% are very high.

6.5 Above all, in terms of events, OWs request reunions. A series of anniversary reunions has been developed and in June over 200 OWs were welcomed back for their decade year-group anniversary reunions. 1969 leavers also requested a 55-year anniversary reunion.

6.6 OWs continue to appreciate the formal events which have long been an OWA tradition. In April 2024 OWA President James Cook hosted a tremendous dinner for over 80 OWs and their wives, partners and friends in the Indian Army Memorial Room at RMA Sandhurst.

6.7 Attendance at the OWA Annual Dinner has been declining so, in 2024, the date was moved to early September as a trial to encourage younger OWs to attend. Some did, but others who traditionally come to the event the first Saturday in December, would like it moved back to December in 2025.

6.8 Recent Leavers, from 2022, 2023 and 2024 were invited back to Recent Leavers Drinks for OWs and alumni from King's High and Kingsley on 17 December.

6.9 A biennial Armed Forces Dinner was held for alumni across the Foundation who are currently serving or who served in the Armed Forces. 45 Foundation alumni currently serve in the Armed Forces.

6.10 The 2024 research also indicated OWs enjoy formal and informal social events. Thanks were extended to those who organise more informal local, regional and international gatherings including the Birmingham Bash and Wessex OW gatherings in Winchester and Somerset.

6.11 WSF Principal, the Head Master and Director of Development Susie Carr were delighted to meet up with OWs living and working in San Francisco and LA. Susie, and Foundation Head of Boarding David Bull, enjoyed meeting with a number of OWs (and two alumni from Kingsley) on the school's annual visit to Hong Kong.

6.12 On 6 July, OWs were invited back to school on the last day of a month-long Creative Festival. They enjoyed lunch in the Pyne Room followed by a performance of the newly established Corps of Drums. Very special thanks were reiterated to all those who kindly donated to the Drums.

6.13 Thanks were extended to OW sports captains and OW Golf Secretary Julian Marcus. OW sporting opportunities continue to be enjoyed, with annual School vs OWs golf and cricket matches, golf meetings and a team of runners taking part in the annual alumni race over Wimbledon Common.

6.14 Most OWs use www.oldwarwickians.org to book events, browse the image galleries and read the great selection of WS archives (the latter with thanks to Archivist Gervald Frykman). There are regular posts on OW pages on Facebook, X and LinkedIn. The free online networking platform – warwickfoundationconnect.com – is an enormously useful resource, especially for younger OWs seeking mentors and professional contacts. It brings together the communities of Warwick School and King's High, including alumni, parents and friends. 1,216 (78%) of registered users are OWs.

6.15 OWs continue to be offered opportunities to meet online as well as in person. Three OW Book Groups continued to meet monthly online throughout 2024.

6.16 Thanks were extended to the many OWs around the world who contributed to the 'View from my window' online gallery as part of the Creative Arts Festival. www.oldwarwickians.org/window.

6.17 OW support for the school has always been tremendous, especially in terms of giving time, expertise and financial support. Sincere and heartfelt thanks were extended to those who support:

- the **Bursary Fund**. This last year just short of £1m was raised to provide access to a Warwick School education to those who would otherwise be unable to afford it.
- the new **Hardship Fund**, established to support families who are facing immediate and financial difficulty in keeping their son at Warwick School in challenging times. The fund had so far raised almost £30,000.
- the **Floreat Society**, choosing to leave something in their will to the school.
- the school **Careers Programme**, returning to give talks and offer advice to current students looking to follow a similar career path.

6.18 2024 was an active and very positive year. Looking ahead, 2025 looks set to be another good year. Events on the horizon include:

- New professional networking events
- An exciting President's Dinner on 17 May
- Anniversary Reunions on 7 June
- London drinks... back again in response to popular demand!

7. Election of OWA Committee and President Elect 2025 (to be President 2026)

The following nominations were received for the OWA Committee 2025.

President - Jamie Barr (WS 1971-78)
Chairman – Steve Tubb (WS 1971-82)
Treasurer – Arun Sachdev (WS 1991-2002)
Head Master – James Barker (WS 1991-97)
Secretary - Anne Douglas.

The committee proposed to retain the option to co-opt members.

There were no other nominations.

The nominations were approved. Proposed by Jim Button and seconded by Owen James.

President Elect 2025 nominations (to serve as President 2026)

At its meeting on 1 October 2024 the committee nominated James Uffindell (WS 1992-97) as President Elect 2025 (to serve as President 2026).

James, *CEO & Founder, Bright Network*, is a technology entrepreneur and the UK's leading expert on Gen Z talent. James started his first business in his student bedroom whilst at Oxford which he sold to a private investor. In 2013 James founded Bright Network in high-growth technology platform that uses 300M+ data points and insights to build the workforce of tomorrow. Bright Network employs ~150 people, supports over 1M+ graduates and works with 300+ of the world's largest employers including Google, Bloomberg Goldman Sachs, Accenture and PwC. James is a regular media commentator and speaker and been featured in *The Economist, Management Today, The Times, The Independent, The Daily Telegraph* as well as on live on BBC (radio and TV), Sky News, Channel 4, CNN and on ITV.

The nomination was approved. Proposed by Jim Button and seconded by Owen James.

8. President's Dinner 2025

Jamie Barr was delighted to announce that the 2025 President's Dinner would be held at The Cavalry and Guards Club in Piccadilly on Saturday 17 May. It is the first time in nine years that the dinner is to be held in London. One of Jamie's key aims as President is to build engagement with all OWs. He is keen to initiative and work with the school on developing professional networking groups and also to encourage younger OWs to get more actively involved in the OWA. Jamie would be offering a generous discount for up to 25 leavers from 2017 onwards for his President's Dinner. Details would be sent out to all OWs the first week of January.

9. AOB

In closing the meeting, President James Cook said what an honour it had been to serve as President in

2024. He had supported the school and OWA on no less than 11 occasions during his Presidential year and every time he had returned to school he had been impressed by the students. He was pleased to hand over the Presidential Chain to Jamie Barr, OWA President 2025.

The Chairman thanked the President for his tremendous work and support throughout 2024.