



2004

ENVOY



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EDITORIAL

Many thanks to everyone who responded so positively to the last Envoy, saying how pleased you were to hear news of old friends or to see the KCHSS and QEC identity being preserved. It was also lovely to see so many of you at the re-union, to catch up on news, share reminiscences and see the wonderful photos and other memorabilia that has been treasured over the years. I am delighted to say that we have been able to include several of the photos in this edition - and hope to include some more of those we could not fit in this time in next year's newsletter. I must apologise profusely to those of you who lent photos, (especially Jean West and Ann Browning) for holding on to those treasures for so long. If anyone would like to bring photos to the re-union this year, we are hoping to have a scanner so that we can scan them straight away and give them back on the day!

We were a little disappointed with the way the photos came out in the last issue - it was run off quickly on the hottest day of August. We are returning to Envoy's traditional printer this year so are keeping fingers crossed that your lovely photos will come out better this time.

Over the year I have been contacted by several of my old friends, and some new ones, thanks partly to the web site (www.qeca.org.uk) set up by Gary Thomas which seems to be doing a sterling job of putting people back in touch.

Thank you to everyone who has written in with articles and snippets of news for Envoy - I hope I have remembered everything, and apologies if I have missed something out or got it wrong! I look forward to receiving more snippets of news and articles for next year!

Lyn Embling (nee Rigby)
(Physics, 1972-1978)

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Front Cover: Watercolour of Queen Elizabeth College, painted by Barbara Dorf.

*Introducing our
new Chairman:
Ann Wood*

Hello everybody. If you were at QEC between 1970 and 1975 you might remember me - but probably not - it was a long time ago! I came to QEC from Pontefract in Yorkshire, so big city life came as a shock to the system. The great thing about QEC was its friendly atmosphere, being a relatively small institution, it was never intimidating. So it was actually very easy to feel part of a community and have friends in several different disciplines.

I stayed on at QEC after graduation in '73 (Microbiology) to do a PhD. My supervisor moved to a Chair at the University of Warwick so I transferred there in 1975 for the final year of my PhD. I carried on doing research at Warwick until 1990, working first in the Dept of Environmental Sciences and then in Biological Sciences. I have been very fortunate as my research activities have taken me all over the world either for conferences or to do research as a guest in other labs and I have made many lifelong friends as a result. I can't imagine life without research, although it becomes increasingly a Holy Grail as academic paperwork takes on biblical dimensions.

In 1991 I returned to the old QEC campus in Kensington, as a lecturer in what was then the Division of Biosphere Sciences of King's. That underwent several metamorphoses before becoming today's Department of Life Sciences, which incorporates Biology, Zoology, Botany, Microbiology and Biochemistry, which many of you would remember from QEC, as well as other subjects such as Immunology and Molecular Genetics which started later. It migrated from Kensington to Waterloo in 1999. Anyone interested in the teaching and research activities in Life Sciences can find us on the KCL website (www.kcl.ac.uk). You could also search the KCL website for familiar names from QEC days - many of us are still here! Try Fred Armitage, Martin Hughes (Chemistry); Bob Price, Peter Ellis, John Stirling (Biochemistry); Tom Saunders, Catherine Geissler, Peter Emery (Nutrition); Lee Richards, Jeremy Mason (Microbiology); Hushang Balyuzi (Computing) and many more.....

I have kept in touch with several pals from my QEC days. It's amazing how an annual Xmas card can bridge what seems like an endless gap. In the past few years we have increased our reunions, as children have grown and departed, leaving more time for socialising. I do hope that you will be able to take advantage of the QEC Association and indulge yourself in some serious nostalgia. I am looking forward to meeting old and new friends from QEC, so do try to join us at a reunion soon.



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Last autumn about 80 ex-QEC students held a very successful reunion in the Franklin Wilkins building of KCL at its Waterloo campus. We had a very interesting and entertaining talk by Professor Howard Dalton FRS (see page 6) on his time at QEC (Microbiology 1964) and his activities and achievements in research and academia since then. We also enjoyed a champagne toast for the 50th anniversary of the foundation of QEC. Throughout the refreshment breaks and buffet lunch there was lots of chatting to catch up with old friends, and browsing through the many photos that had been brought in. These ranged from the student roll photos through to the Commemoration balls and student sport teams. They were extremely popular and proved to be a goldmine of social history. As a graduate of the early 70's, the notion of wearing a huge ball gown and long-sleeved gloves seems rather glamorous compared to the mini-skirts and flared jeans which were the norm in my student days. As for the changing fashions in hair styles.....

We started the afternoon with the annual business meeting in which we discussed future activities, membership and committee membership. John Brockhurst announced he was stepping down as Chairman (and eventually I volunteered to take over that role). Taking over the mantle of Chairman has been a gradual process and I wish to thank John and the committee members for helping me during the past year. I also wish to say a big thank you to John on behalf of all the members, for all his time and efforts during his period as Chairman. QECA has clearly experienced a revival during that time, which hopefully we can continue to encourage in the coming years.



Above: QEC students resplendent in their ballgowns; Visit of the Chancellor - HRH Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother with Sir John Atkins. 30 April 1958

Photo courtesy Ann Browning

The next reunion will be on October 16th when Professor Barry Keverne FRS (Zoology 1964) will talk to us. Pat Cox is organising a reunion of the graduates of 50 years ago, and we are hoping that those of you who graduated 40, 30, 25 and 20 years ago (in '64, '74, '79 and '84), will also take this opportunity of meeting up again.

Next year will see the final graduates in the Chemistry BSc in this college, ending a very long history of Chemistry in both King's and QEC. Maybe some of you former Chemistry students out there might like to take the opportunity of a timely reunion in 2005 when we will also be having a talk from Professor Martin Hughes (Chemistry since 1964). The final students in Biological Sciences (incorporating the original Botany, Biology and Zoology) and Microbiology BSc degrees will graduate in 2006, so again, perhaps those of you who graduated in those degree subjects might like to coordinate a reunion to mark the end of those degrees, and what surely must be the passing of an era.

Please feel free to contact any of the committee with any suggestions or ideas you may have for the Association. Remember that the website (www.qeca.org.uk) is also a focal point for contacting us and other members so do check it out from time to time.

In the meantime I look forward to meeting you at the next reunion.

Ann Wood
(Microbiology 1970-75)



Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No it's SuperJohn. Our retiring chair, John Brockhouse, prepares to 'get on his bike' after the 2003 AGM.



*Above:
Setting the trend in floppy hats:
HRH Queen Elizabeth the Queen
Mother visits Household Sciences.
Courtesy Mrs S E Evershed, née
Susie Matthews (centre) 1955*



*Left:
Maimie Kaing from Burma (1937-40)
presents flowers on the visit of Queen
Elizabeth.
Maimie was the first woman to study
for a degree outside Burma.*

QE(K)A ANNUAL REUNION

October 2003

Address by Professor Howard Dalton FRS

QEC Microbiology 1962-65

It was our pleasure to welcome Professor Howard Dalton at the Annual Reunion in October 2003 to tell us about his life at QEC and beyond. Having seen the roll photo for 1965, we already knew here was a man to be reckoned with - he appeared not once, not even twice, but **three** times!

Howard Dalton joined the first intake of students in the Microbiology department that had just been set up by John Pirt. It was a new degree and there were only 12 students on the course which was being run in conjunction with UC.

His memories of QEC included table tennis in the Atkins building and Rag Week - carrying buckets around Kensington Gore using a horse and cart from the Young's Brewery at Wandsworth. A big Bentley with smoked windows stopped and rolled down the window for a gentleman with a big cigar to place a £5 note in the bucket - it was Winston Churchill.

Having come top of his year with a 2:1, Howard went on to do a DPhil at the University of Sussex, looking into how nitrogen-fixing bacteria could grow on oxygen and still protect their oxygen-sensitive nitrogen-fixing enzymes from damage. He postulated a sophisticated protective mechanism which is still accepted today. The way to progress, 'in those days' was to go to America after the PhD, so Howard found a postdoctoral position at Purdue University in Indiana working on enzyme biochemistry.

There was a small problem with America - the possibility of being drafted into the Vietnam war - but this could be avoided if you were a cleric or medic. So Howard paid \$25 to become a vicar. Today, he can still conduct marriages, but only on board ship. Howard met his own wife in America, also gaining an instant family with her two children, and has since had two more.

Returning to the UK, Howard did a post-doc at Sussex, on molybdenum enzymes, for the Medical Research Council. He soon transferred to a lectureship at Warwick University who were setting up a degree course in microbiology. Warwick University was 'good' - it put faith in individuals, provided the resources they required and gave them freedom to develop. Howard wanted to work in bacterial methane oxidation which would provide a mechanism for converting methane gas into protein. Professor John Wilkinson at Edinburgh University had said it was a very difficult problem to solve, so Howard was even more determined to do it! He built a team of 26 post docs and postgraduates, and they became the world leaders in that field. He also helped in part to set up a medical school at Warwick - it was the only leading university in the UK at the time that didn't have one.

Howard was promoted to professor in 1983 and elected to a Fellowship of the Royal Society in 1993.

In 2001 the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food (MAFF) was re-structured to form the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). Howard was appointed as Chief Scientific Adviser, but returns to Warwick one day a week as he felt it was important, as CSA, to retain strong foundations as an active scientist. As CSA, his responsibilities are far reaching, covering the scientific aspects of Kew Gardens, the Horticultural Research International (now amalgamated with Warwick University), several Research Agencies as well as the science of animal disease, agriculture, waste, pollution, climate change etc.

DEFRA have a science budget of £320 million/year - to ensure that the food we eat is safe, the environment is protected and that the countryside is a good place to live. It looks for all forms of diseases all over the UK that affect animals and food. Howard started at DEFRA in March 2002, at the end of the outbreak of **foot and mouth disease**. During his first few weeks there were over 71 phone calls of possible suspect cases of FMD, all cases that needed to be tested by a vet. The last FMD outbreak was in the 60's so a lot of present day vets had not seen it before. They needed to be properly trained. Since Howard was appointed he had spent a fair time restructuring the Science activities of the Science Directorate.

Other areas covered by DEFRA include testing for **BSE** - following a mix up over whether a sample was bovine or ovine, there was a problem in identifying whether sheep had got BSE. All DEFRA scientific work is now subject to strict quality procedures to try and avoid such a muddle happening again.

Another current concern is **Avian influenza** - 30 million chickens were slaughtered in Holland and there are concerns in case it comes to the UK as it is transferred by migratory water fowl. A contingency plan has had to be set up in case it comes here.

TB in cattle is on the increase. It is thought that the badger may be a reservoir for tuberculosis, and long term research experiments costing £40,000-£50,000 a day are being conducted to confirm this - but it may be mice, ... or deer ...

DEFRA also get involved in advising on international issues as well as UK domestic concerns - such as the effect of industrial pollution on CO₂ emissions, and climate change.

DEFRA's concerns are widespread. Howard's job is to ensure that they do the right science to give the right scientific advice to the government **before** making a decision.

Our thanks to Professor Howard Dalton for giving his valuable time to give us a fascinating and informative talk.

Sic transit gloria

The Transit of Venus (8 June 2004)

Duncan Steel

Did you know that Sir Isaac Newton died in a house on Kensington Church Street? The year was 1727, and in those days I guess this was a gentle stroll through open fields from the QEC site. Campden Hill was to remain a good distance from 'London' for many decades yet.

Newton had been born in 1642, the year after the death of a very young man who would surely have anticipated many of Newton's discoveries if only he had lived beyond his early twenties. The man in question was Jeremiah Horrocks. How peculiar it would have been, if we instead had learnt about Horrocksian mechanics, or Horrocks' theory of light.

No-one is quite sure when Horrocks was born, but it was late in the 1610s. He went up to Cambridge University at age 14, studying theology, and when he was 17 he returned to his native Liverpool. Astronomy and mathematics were his real love, however, and he embarked on a private programme of reading and research.

This was a vital time in astronomy, Johannes Kepler having recently spelled out his laws of planetary motion, and Galileo turned his telescopes towards the heavens, revolutionizing knowledge of what lay above Earth's atmosphere.

Horrocks was one of the very first in Britain to adopt the Keplerian way of thinking, taking these laws as proof of the sun-centred cosmology of Copernicus, whilst others (especially the Church) held to the notion of the Earth being the centre of the universe around which all other celestial bodies revolved.

With his own telescope, and most especially using his very considerable mathematical skills, around the age of twenty Horrocks showed that the Moon has an elliptical orbit around the Earth, and he suspected that comets likewise had elliptical orbits around the sun. He was convinced that Kepler was correct.

There was one thing that Horrocks thought that Kepler had gotten wrong, though. In the late 1620s, shortly before his death, the latter had predicted that both Venus and Mercury would cross the face of the sun in 1631. The Mercurian transit was observed by several Continental astronomers in November, but that of Venus shortly afterwards was not seen, because it was night-time in Europe. Kepler thought there would be no further Venusian transit until 1761, but Horrocks calculated that there would be another eight years later, in 1639.

This discovery he made just a few weeks before the event. By then Horrocks was living in the village of Much Hoole, a handful of miles south of Preston, working as a tutor to the children of the gentry at Carr House, and also assisting in the local church.

Horrocks was a staunch Protestant, in fact a Puritan, in a county dominated by Catholics. The fact that his astronomical investigations had the potential to upset the Catholic Church – this was just a few years after the forced recantation of Galileo – meant that he had to keep his head down. Horrocks had time only to inform two other people of his prediction of the transit of Venus: his brother Jonah in Liverpool, and his friend William Crabtree in Salford, thirty miles away.

The date was November 24th (Julian calendar), so you can imagine what the weather was like in the Northwest. Even worse, it was a Sunday and so Horrocks could only observe the sun between church services. But half an hour before sunset the clouds cleared and he saw the black silhouette of Venus crossing the face of the sun. Confirmatory observations were made by Crabtree, but Jonah was clouded out in Liverpool.

From his measurements – with a small telescope he had projected an image of the sun on to a screen which he had previously marked with reference lines – Horrocks was able to estimate the distance to the sun as being about 100 million kilometres. This is only about two-thirds of the real distance, but it was still a remarkable result. Previously, the best guesses at the solar distance were many times smaller, and so this was the first demonstration of the huge scale of the solar system, and the concomitant phenomenal spaces between the stars.

Early in 1641 Horrocks died suddenly, in fact the day before he was due to travel to Manchester to meet his friend Crabtree. He was only aged about 22-24. He had written voluminous notes about his work, but much was lost before some of them, including his transit observations, arrived in the library at Cambridge in the 1660s. It is known that Newton, then starting on his own investigations of the physical universe, consulted Horrocks' writings, but the extent to which they influenced him is not known.

Later transits of Venus enabled astronomers to measure the solar distance more accurately. In particular, James Cook was sent to Tahiti in 1769 to observe the transit, with secondary orders that resulted in the claiming of New Zealand and Australia for the British Crown.

Venus transits occur like clockwork, with spacings of eight years, then 121.5, then eight, then 105.5 years, and so we know far in advance when they will take place. I saw the June 8th transit (or at least its start) at my sons' school in Adelaide, where we set up a telescope just as Horrocks had done. In all we showed over 300 pupils Venus on the face of the sun: some said "so what?" but most thought it was great. Australians and New Zealanders have a special reason to note such events.

If you missed it yourself, write June 6th, 2012 in your diary. After that it's a long wait until December 2117.

Duncan Steel (BSc Physics and Astrophysics, 1977) presented a pair of documentaries about Venus and its transits on BBC Radio 4 and the World Service in the weeks before last June's event. He also detailed the history of such transits in his book 'Eclipse.'

Sic transit (not so?) gloria

The war years saw KCHSS evacuated to Cardiff, in 1940. But then Cardiff was bombed, so KCHSS was evacuated again - to University College Leicester, from 1940-46. The KCHSS building was used to billet WRNS who, dug trenches and burnt fires in the quad. Miss Horrocks (The College Bursar) was horrified !

KCHSS at Cardiff, 1940, courtesy Mrs Jean L. West



**K.C.H.S.S./ U.C. Leicester,
4th Joint Reunion,
29 - 30 March, 2003
Beaumont Hall of Residence,
Leicester University**

K.C.H.S.S. was evacuated to University College, Leicester, from 1940-1946, so some students spent all their college years there. The U.C.L. students took London University External Degrees, and there was even a little sharing of staff. K.C.H.S.S. returned to Kensington in 1946 after their bombed college had been sufficiently repaired. In 1957 U.C.L. became Leicester University.

This was the fourth such reunion since 1997. This time all U.C.L. alumni were invited, as the numbers of 1940's students able to attend was dwindling. Nearly 100 attended in total, of whom a quarter were war-time students, though only five on this occasion from K.C.H.S.S. Many others had expressed an interest, but health problems, travelling difficulties and other commitments intruded.

During the war the colleges were very small: about 150 at K.C.H.S.S. (all women) and perhaps half that number at U.C.L. (men and women), so there was an intimate atmosphere and one knew the majority of one's fellow students at least by sight. Not surprisingly there were a

number of cross-college marriages, including that of David Attenborough (who spent a year at Leicester before going up to Cambridge) and Jane Oriel (1944-46 Diploma Course) who, sadly, died in 1997. Two other such couples attended this reunion. [Incidentally, the first male student at K.C.H.S.S. (in 1946) was a Sister Tutor! There was a one year course for nurses training to become sister tutors.]

We spent 27 happy hours talking with old friends, meeting a few new ones, recalling old times aided by a display of photographs, watching a film about the history of the Leicester college 1913-2002, eating, drinking, sleeping and strolling in the adjacent Botanical Gardens. The Vice-Chancellor of Leicester University joined us for dinner. It was a relaxed, largely informal occasion well suited to our years and possibly the last big reunion that "we oldies" will organise. Smaller groups of friends will probably get together from time to time.

Our thanks to all those who helped in the organisation, including the Alumni Offices of Leicester University and K.C.L.A., the M.C. Denis Watson, Ron Kinns who reproduced and displayed the photographs, and most especially Audrey Simons (nee Robinson) and Audrey Cooper (nee Weston) who worked very hard arranging everything in Leicester, keeping track of both names and money, and looking after us so well when we arrived.

Muriel Johnson, (nee Law) 1944-47



*U.C.L. standing: Alan Hurd . Margaret and David Clayton (from
Canada) . Roy Johnson . Roger Anderson
K.C.H.S.S. sitting: Nancie Mcintyre (now Hanks) Monica Wignall (now
Hurd), Muriel Law (now Johnson), Evelyn Shipley (now Sue Smith),
Mary Clements (now Richards)*

KCLA Report

John Brockhouse

This year is a particularly important one for King's as it is the 175th Anniversary of the college's foundation in 1829. To celebrate this there have been a number of events organised through the year (full details can be found at www.kcl.ac.uk/175).

The main focus of the celebrations took place over the weekend of 11th to 13th June and the programme was designed to offer formal and informal, thought provoking, entertaining and indulgent events to appeal to King's alumni of all ages and interests. It provided an ideal excuse to meet up informally with old friends or bring families to London for the day or weekend. The weekend's activities included Evensong in the Chapel (including an Introit specially commissioned by KCLA for the occasion); visits to the Old Operating Theatre, Gordon Museum, Franklin-Wilkins Building, Apsley House, Somerset House and St Mary le Strand; tours of the Palace of Westminster with lunch and drinks and the Maughan Library; an Anniversary Debate 'Science, Religion and Society: A cause for conflict?'; Anniversary Dinner and a lecture by the War Studies Department. The weekend also featured two exhibitions. The first celebrated the achievements of King's alumni from overseas and in overseas locations whilst the second, "Coming to London", focussed on the student experience of coming to London and life as a student in London. Online versions of these exhibitions will be available on the [Archives website](#).

A ceremony of Beating Retreat took place in The Quadrangle at the Strand campus on Friday 30 April. The evening included re-enactment of the Duke of Wellington's duel with the Earl of Winchilsea (fought in part for his role in the foundation of King's College, London), performance of the battle symphony 'Wellington's Victory' Opus 91 by Beethoven and concluded with a Grand Firework Display. Music, to accompany the performance by Members of the Napoleonic Association, was provided by the Band of Her Majesty's Scots Guards and Trumpeters of the Irish Guards.

To coincide with the anniversary, a book was published in February entitled 'King's College London: *In the service of society*'. Researched and written by Christine Kenyon Jones, it tells the story of the history of King's and its constituent institutions, including the medical and dental schools of Guy's and St. Thomas' Hospitals, Chelsea and Queen Elizabeth Colleges, and the Institute of Psychiatry. Copies can be ordered via the website (*see above*), by telephone 020 7848 2929 or from the Central Services Unit at the Strand, price £20.

Year 2004 also marks the 40th anniversary of the foundation of the Music Department in 1964. To celebrate not only 40 years of musical achievement but also to highlight the abundance of musical talent that King's can boast today, the College Orchestra performed an exciting concert programme of three pieces - two well known and one a UK premiere. The concert took place on 26th March at St. John's Smith Square, Westminster, one of London's most prestigious venues.

Over the last couple of years there has been a review of the Chemistry Department resulting in approval for its closure. Much has been reported on the financial crisis in higher education funding, which has undoubtedly had an influence, but the decision also reflects the decline in interest in the study of Chemistry at university level throughout the country and is part of a general repositioning of science within King's. In the 'Strategic Plan 2001 - 2010' King's committed itself to the pursuit of excellence in all disciplines represented in the college and determined to concentrate its resources to better effect. The intention is to pursue fundamental and translational scientific research at international levels of excellence in many broad areas and pursue research-led teaching by concentrating resources on maintaining and developing teaching excellence in over 150 first degrees and nearly 100 Masters programmes in scientific areas. As of June 2004, a number of the proposed areas await formal approval but many are cross-disciplinary/school involving teaching input from more than one department.

The Chemistry issue has provoked great concern within KCLA and much protest by members who hold the history of science teaching within the college close to their hearts. It remains to be seen how this restructuring transpires but the decision has been made and we can only hope that college's strategic design is successful.

1977-1979 Reunion 6 September 2003 King's College

The reunion was organised by Kings College Alumni, with Mick Farrow (Physiology & Biochemistry, 1978) arranging the QEC contingent. The day started with lunch at the Windsor Castle followed by the reunion at Kings, comprising of a series of talks and tours during the afternoon and a reunion dinner in the evening. See Web site www.qeca.org.uk for photos of the day.

SALAD DAYS

In 1954 the musical **Salad Days** by Julian Slade made its debut in the West End, it depicted four young students who had just completed their university education who were seeking a new way forward. One promise they made and performed together in an opening chorus was

'We said we would never look back!'

Perhaps fifty years on we might make an exception.

What are our memories of student life in the early fifties at QEC or KCH&SS as it was known then? In some respects it resembled a girls' boarding school with most students resident in hostel taking their meals in the college refectory. Food rationing was still in place and a meagre portion of butter was dispensed each Friday although there was no refrigerator to store it. Students' welfare was watched over by the bursar Miss Horrocks, a tall sad looking lady ably assisted by her pet Pekinese. Curfew was 10.30pm, doors locked at midnight and a special application to the Principal was required to stay out beyond that – all visitors to be off the premises by 10.00pm

In contrast to most university courses, we seemed at QEC to learn less and less about more and more – a wide based curriculum one might say - but for most students it proved an admirable launching pad for future careers. We had some eminent and colourful lecturers - organic chemistry with Professor Harold Burton, nutrition with Professor John Yudkin of *Pure White and Deadly* fame and whose dietary recommendations on the consumption of fats and proteins and avoidance of carbohydrates were not so dissimilar to those of Robert Atkins today. Miss Dillon will be remembered as much for her literary and musical skills as for experiments carried out in her laboratory. Progress in the teaching kitchens could only proceed after students had learnt how to successfully reconstitute lumpy dried eggs.

However it was a great time to be a student in London especially for students whose school days had been interrupted by the war and evacuation.

We experienced the last great London smog which paralysed the capitol and blighted the Christmas ball, we queued for hours at the lying of state of the late king, stood in the rain for the coronation procession of Queen Elizabeth. The College was granted a new charter, changed its name and sense of direction and acquired a mascot – a griffin christened Gregory.

Yes we can look back on our years at College with pride and affection. We made good and lasting friendships which are still in place today, and we look forward to seeing many familiar faces at the Annual Reunion on October 16th.

Pat Cox



*And from an even earlier era:
Staff entertaining the students in 1934*

Above: The Kings Marines; Standing Dr W I Pinard, Prof K Tinkler, Sitting Dr C Dukes, Prof V Mottram and Mr H Stanners.

Below: Miss Dillon, Miss Pain, Miss Hitch and Miss Waters

Photos courtesy Mrs Jean L. West



Royal Society Celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the **DISCOVERY of ALDOSTERONE**

Many Thanks to KCHSS

Hilary M. Drane, nee Grundy (KCHSS 1944 - 1947)

I received my BSc in Household and Social Science in 1947. Ever since then, working as I have in medical and veterinary research, I have had problems with that label!! At last - this year - honour has been satisfied. I was thrilled (though somewhat alarmed, having been retired for some years!) to be invited to represent our Middlesex Hospital Medical School team which had made the original discovery.



A year after getting my degree at KCHSS, I was fortunate enough to get a job on the staff of the Courtauld Institute of Biochemistry, Middlesex Hospital. Professor John Yudkin had kindled my interest working on hormone assays. My boss, Sylvia Simpson, was working with the physicist James Tait to develop a method of estimating mineralocorticoid activity of adrenal cortical extract. I started trying out the 'new' technique of paper chromatography in order to separate fractions of this extract. It is hard to appreciate now what terribly primitive equipment we had to employ --- I began running chromatograms in drainpipes (borrowed) only later graduating to old fish tanks which someone had noticed on sale in a scruffy second hand shop in Goodge Street. On achieving a good enough separation to allow bio-assay, I got a rocket for mixing up the fractions because the activity was not with any of the known steroids. Fortunately for me, repeat experiments confirmed my results. Our continued research revealed the presence of a hitherto unknown and highly active mineralocorticoid. I had the thrill of going to Paris to the 2nd International Conference of Biochemistry to hear Jim Tait tell the world about our work!

Enormous effort went into separating, assaying and attempting to identify this exciting new compound. Eventually, Jim and Sylvia (by now Mrs Tait) in collaboration with the Swiss team of Reichstein et al elaborated the structure and it was named **Aldosterone**. Subsequent research has shown that it is fundamentally involved in the regulation of blood pressure and is thus the basis for many anti-hypertensive drugs which are now in use. At the Royal Society meeting I learnt that one of the exciting new possibilities was the prospect of its application to the problems of heart failure.

It was very sad that neither of the Tait's was at the 50th celebration which they had been preparing with so much interest. Professor James Tait FRS was hospitalised; Sylvia Tait FRS had died in February 2003, and it was decided that the meeting should be dedicated to her memory.

For further information see:

Grundy, H.M., Simpson, S.A.S., Tait, J.F. Isolation of a highly active mineralocorticoid from beef adrenal extract. Nature 169, 795-797 (1952)

Tait, J.F., Simpson, S.A.S., Grundy, H. The effect of adrenal extract on mineral metabolism. Lancet1, 122-129, (1952)

Proceedings of the Aldo 2003 Conference at the Royal Society.

NEWS FROM MEMBERS

I was very sorry to read about the theft of the painting of KCHSS. There was a huge gap in the building from the flying bomb while I was there - we took exams in pre-fabricated huts. They had 'poured down' plastic floors, which melted in the heat, so legs of chairs and desks got stuck!! I remember Miss Esdaile, who was invigilating, walking around spraying water to try and make it set again....

Life certainly was never dull - winter of 1947 - no heating or light, very few staff, and no day students. We couldn't even light a bunsen burner - there was no gas.

So students **must** be more comfortable these days.

Mrs E.G.Hirstbrown (ne Gillian Hirst)

... The print of the College and the picture of the Old Refectory brought back instant memories. All this has made me browse around finding bits and pieces from my old stay at KCH&SS. I have my Student's Union card, dated 21/10/49 and signed by EM Gillow. I have the panoramic picture of the entire college dated May 1950. Also my 'Manual of Modern Cookery' by Jessie Lindsay & V.H.Mottsam - the former Head of the Household & Social Science Department, the latter, Professor of Physiology. It has travelled with me for many thousands of miles, all over the world....

... What I did learn stood me in good stead. As an ex pat wife (and a memsahib) I was expected to entertain, and when entertaining was very formal. Also, I taught for a few months - the oil camp in the desert had a school for European & American children - a cookery teacher was needed - I had done the course....

I lived over three decades in various parts of the world, and now I have come back and am within a 15 mile radius of where both sides of my family originated.

Yvonne Rhys-John (née Jones)

I remain in touch with my college friends - Sheila Freer (Livesey), Vivien Trew (Bridge), Ailsa Melton (McLellan) and Mary Peel (Davies) who all graduated with me in 1948. After a lifetime of teaching Biology, and raising 5 sons, I retired but still keep busy with voluntary work and a big garden. Sadly, Ailsa and I are both widowed, but we still have regular re-unions with all the others, and I think we have all found that our rather odd degree enables us to fit in to various different careers.

Christina Kitchen (née Morgan)

... I emigrated to Canada in 1966 and worked in Biochem at the University of Toronto and in the University of Guelph. However, the past 20 years I have been selling real estate in Oakville Ontario.

I often wonder how my old class mates are. Has anyone heard from Apollo Plato Econimedes and his sidekick Mike Cannon? Gary Balien went to the States, I believe. I still keep in touch with my old flat mates Gwen (Bakewell) Singleton and Betty (Pryor) Cooper.

If anyone is in Canada or coming over give me a heads up. I would love to hear from any others who were around when I was.

Gillian (Harries) Cockcroft

Biochem/Zoology 1964

(Please contact membership sec for contact details)



Executive for 58-59 pose for bathing beauty contest.....

..... and Ducking of Beauty Queen in College pond.

Photos courtesy Ann Browning

Can You Help?

For various reasons, complete records of QEC/KCHSS alumni do not appear to exist. But you might be able to fill in some of the gaps. If you have a copy of your class list (probably sent to you upon completion of your course) I would be grateful if you would send me a copy. Originals will be returned. We will try to list the missing years on the web site (www.qeca.org.uk). Please include any other students or staff that you know of that do not appear on the class lists.

Thank you for your help

Henry Embling
(Membership Secretary)

FINDING OLD FRIENDS

If you are trying to contact old friends from school or University, it may be worth trying the website

friendsreunited.co.uk

which links members of former schools, colleges and workplaces.

In Touch also has a website to help people to contact each other: *www.kcl.ac.uk/alumni*

Better still, please encourage old friends to join the QEC(K) Branch of the Association.
See back cover for contact details.

OBITUARIES

Professor Kenneth Denbigh, 1911-2004 **Principal QEC 1966-1977**

Members will be sad to hear of the death of Professor Denbigh on 23 January 2004 at the age of 92. He graduated from Leeds in 1932 with a first class honours degree in Chemistry, completing a PhD two years later. He joined the Billingham Division of ICI before taking a lecturing appointment at Southampton in 1938. During the war, he returned to industry, heading the laboratories at the Royal Ordnance Factory at Bridgwater, and becoming increasingly involved in the engineering aspects and interested in thermodynamics. Following the war, he was invited to a lectureship in Chemical Engineering at Cambridge, moving later to Edinburgh and then on to Imperial College where he became Courtauld Professor of Chemical Engineering. He was elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1965. He became principal of QEC in 1966 until 1977 when he became Director Council for Science and Society until 1983.

Prof. Denbigh authored several successful textbooks: *The Thermodynamics of the Steady State* (1951), *The Principles of Chemical Equilibrium* (1955) and *Chemical Reactor Theory* (1965). He was a member of the British Society for the Philosophy of Science, and a fascination for time led him to write the philosophical books *An Inventive Universe* (1975) and *Three Concepts of Time* (1981). His final book, *Entropy in Relation to Incomplete Knowledge* was written in 1985 in collaboration with his elder son.

Professor Denbigh was married and had two sons.

He will be remembered by his students and colleagues as a gentleman, always kind and courteous.

(Obituary based on information in the Independent)

Professor Garth Chapman 1917-2003 **Professor Zoology QEC 1958-82**

We are sad to hear of the death of Professor Garth Chapman on 1st November 2003. He was born in Cambridge in 1917, and was assistant lecturer in Zoology at Queen Mary College from 1945-46. He moved to QEC in 1958 and became Emeritus Professor Zoology. He was Vice Principal from 1974-80 and Acting Principle from 1977-78, during which time he was also Dean of the Faculty of Science at London University. He was elected Fellow, Kings College London in 1985.

He was married in 1941 to Margaret Wigley, and a sadly suffered the death of a son, but leaves behind another son and a daughter. He died at Bury St Edmunds in November 2003.

(Obituary based on information in the Independent)

Patricia Margaret Anne Dunn 1932 - 2002.

It is with great sadness that we record the death in May 2002 of Pat Dunn, known to most of us as Pat Maggiore, a friend and colleague to many within the dietetic profession. Pat's many and outstanding contributions to the profession were significant at many levels over many years to us all.

Born as Pat Oldham in Boston, Lincolnshire, she completed her BSc in 1953 at QEC, and went on to train as a dietitian at the Royal Infirmary School of Dietetics in Edinburgh. There she met Elizabeth Owles (dec) and began a life-long friendship, travelling to Australia in 1958 for two years of experience and adventure. They were offered temporary work in the kitchens at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital in Sydney then set off to travel around Australia. In Melbourne, Pat worked as Assistant Dietitian at the Queen Victoria Hospital (1959-60) and then at the Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital (1960-61) then went on to become Chief Dietitian at Fairfield Hospital (1961-64).

In 1964, Pat Maggiore, as she was by then, moved to Perth where she combined clinical work at Princess Margaret Hospital with her first lecturing position at Perth Technical College. Following a brief return to the UK in 1967, Pat began her 28 year association with Western Australian Institute of Technology (now Curtin University of Technology) in Perth as a senior lecturer in nutrition and food science. She branched into areas of clinical nutrition, where she researched human lactation, obesity and weight loss as well as in food science, taking on the chemical analysis of bush foods. During this period Pat undertook study leave at the Dunn Nutritional Laboratory, Cambridge, England where she assisted in a 3 year mother/baby study of breast feeding.

She accepted nomination and election to President of the WA Dietetic Association in 1968-1969 and in 1970-1972 to President of the Australian Dietetic Council (ADC).

Pat was instrumental in the initiation of a national newsletter, **Locusts and Wild Honey** in 1972, which became the official Australian Dietetic Council publication.

Pat was actively involved in the Committee of Overseas Professional Qualifications (COPQ) and helped establish standards for the entrance of incoming professionals to Australia.

Pat, regularly contributed to public information sessions involving food, nutrition and lifestyle issues, including ABC educational radio talks and lectures to general medical practitioners, nursing mothers and weight watchers groups. Pat contributed articles on budgeting for the home-maker for the West Australian newspaper and a series on kitchens for "About Homes" (1980-81). *Tables of Composition of Australian Aboriginal Foods* co-authored with Jennie Brand Miller and Keith James

and published in 1993, culminated Pat's long-term interest in the nutrient composition of Aboriginal foods.

After many years in Curtin University's Department of Home and Consumer Studies, serving as Head for the last 2 years of this Department's life, Pat was a welcome addition to the Department of Nutrition and Food Science, part of the then School of Community Health. Over her 28 years at Curtin, Pat influenced students who have taken on many different roles in the health arena - home economics teachers, home economists, public health nutritionists, and clinical and research dietitians. During this time Pat maintained a private practice on Saturday mornings, always wanting to be in touch with clients: In the words of her old friend, Elizabeth Owles, Pat had the ability to present the necessary facts with human interest stories, no doubt gleaned from her rich and varied professional experience. Even in retirement Pat continued to fuel her interest in and care of people - she continued supervising dietetic students until 1998 and was a Silver Chain volunteer from 1998-2001.

Over the years, Pat's colleagues came to know and respect Pat's artistic and creative talents as well as her zest for gardening, cooking, travelling, cricket and rugby. She touched us all and we miss her dearly. We are comforted by the fact that Pat enjoyed 5 years of a very active and fulfilling retirement. With her husband Peter, she spent a few months of each year in the UK, catching up with her daughter Louise and her brothers and their families, and the good friends she had kept in contact with during the time she lived in Australia. Australia's nutrition community certainly benefitted by the decision that she and Elizabeth made 44 years ago to visit Australia.

Extract courtesy of Jan Pritchard (Melbourne) and Jill Sherriff (Perth) from obituary printed in Nutrition and Dietetics 2002; 59(3) 228-229

We are also sorry to hear news during the year of the deaths of the following:

Miss Molly Rayment (KCHSS BSc 1939) died in September 2001 following a hip operation at the age of 85. She was an intelligent and active and was looking forward to moving into a new house, but she slipped on her staircase and never recovered from the hip operation. *(Sad news courtesy Peter Loble)*

Mrs Edith Whitburn (former staff)

Mrs Dorothy Newsham (KCHSS-1940)
(d November 2001)

Mrs B.D. Vordeman (d 2003)

Mary Estall (née Wilmot) (BSc HSS 1952-54)(d March 2004)

Sue Robolham

Don't miss the next
**QE(K)A
ANNUAL REUNION**

on
16 October 2004
at the
QEC and Chelsea Colleges Room
in the
FRANKLIN WILKINS BUILDING

Guest Speaker:
Professor Barry Keverne FRS

Cost: £20
To book, please contact Membership Secretary, Henry Embling

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