

Burford School Association

The **2nd AGM** of the Burford School Association ('BSA') was held on
Wednesday 4th October 2017

Present: **The Chairman** (Mr S Norridge)
 The Vice Chairman (Mrs J Norridge)
 The Headteacher (Mrs K Haig)
 The Vice Chairman of the Governing Body (Mr R Martin)
 The Alumni Officer (Mrs C Bishop)
 The Treasurer (Miss E Martin)
 The Secretary (Mr L Jackson-Ross)
 Mrs S Duckworth (**The Marketing Manager**)

Apologies: Mr P Count
 Mr D Hopkins
 Mr M Allen
 Ms S Wright
 Ms S Lofthorse

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Mr Hopkins, Mr Allen, Ms Wright, and Ms Lofthorse.

2. Minutes of the last AGM (and matters arising)

The minutes of the first AGM were approved in the first Committee Meeting, and were again reviewed and approved by those present. Some matters arising were noted:

- The Chairman noted that Mr Martin is now the Vice Chairman of the Governing Body, and no longer in attendance on behalf of the Chair of the Governing Body. This should be reflected in future versions of the minutes.
- Those present noted that, in line with the minutes of the last AGM, it would be useful to hold future AGMS at times which would coincide with other school events, to encourage good turnout.
 - The Chairman noted that though this was a good idea in principle, it had not yet worked for the Old Burfordians, of which he is a member.

3. Chairman's Report

The Chairman reported that the last twelve months have seen BSA membership increase to over 1000, and he applauded the BSA's work in a number of events throughout the year. The Chairman's report was received and accepted by those present, and is included in full in Appendix 1 of the minutes.

- In addition to this report, the Committee joined the Chairman in thanking those whose contributions to the BSA's first Reunion made it a success. In particular, thanks went to Mrs Martin for providing vegetarian burgers, the Headteacher for use of the school premises, the Alumni Officer and Treasurer for overseeing ticketing, and the Vice Chairman of the Governing Body for his work on the display map.
- The Alumni Officer clarified that BSA membership is now at 1077 members, up from 500 when the first BSA newsletter was distributed.

4. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer reported that the total income from the recent Reunion was £2,349.81, with total expenditure at £886.03; this means a total profit for the Reunion of £1,463.78. The Treasurer's report was received and accepted by those present, and is included in Appendix 2 of the minutes.

- The Treasurer noted that it has been difficult to keep track of the BSA's finances, as some payments were made before funds were submitted to the school for safekeeping, and some BSA money is currently in the Blanket Hall's bank account because of the way ticket payments were received for the recent reunion. The Treasurer further noted that this was necessary because the BSA is still without a bank account, as the issue of what name such an account should be registered under is ongoing (see item 6). To help keep track of the BSA's financial activities, a written ledger will be purchased; the Treasurer requested that all issues relating to the BSA's finance be directed through her.
 - The Headteacher gave her support to this proposal, noting that there is a general need to be clear about the particular responsibilities of individual committee members are responsible. These responsibilities were outlined and agreed by those present (see item 8).
 - The Headteacher also noted that, as the BSA is still establishing itself, the school would assist financially by covering the cost of staff overtime related to the recent reunion.
 - The Committee thanked the Headteacher for this kind gesture.
 - There was also some discussion about merchandise and how it is sold, and it was generally agreed that preparing for Christmas sales would be advisable (see item 7).
 - The Committee agreed that any BSA money currently waiting in the Blanket Hall's bank account, and any other BSA money, should be taken out in cash and submitted to the school for safekeeping until the BSA are able to set up a bank account.

ACTION: The Treasurer to purchase and implement a written ledger to record the BSA's financial activity.

ACTION: Any BSA money currently in the Blanket Hall's bank account, and any other BSA money, should be taken out in cash and submitted to the school for safekeeping until the BSA are able to set up a bank account.

5. Election of the Committee

Those present discussed the ways in which the current, and first, BSA Committee had performed its duties, and the ways in which this might be developed in future years.

- In the absence of expressions of interest from any other members, the Vice Chairman of the Governing Body proposed that the current committee be re-elected. This proposal was seconded by the Alumni Officer, and approved by those present.
- The Vice Chairman of the Governing Body noted that recruiting two additional members of the Committee would be beneficial to the BSA's aim of engaging with all former students of the School, as both Mrs Duckworth and the Alumni Officer are *ex officio* members through their roles at the School. He also noted that the School's recent policy (of automatically signing Year 13 students up to the BSA when they leave) will mean that within five years the proportion of BSA members who are under 25 will be significantly higher than it is presently, and more will therefore need to be done to engage this group.

- Those present agreed that an agenda item should be added to the next meeting, to facilitate a discussion about potential new committee members. It was suggested that such new members might be given particular responsibilities (for example, organizing sporting events) and that it would be useful if such members could be recruited from more recent former students; it was acknowledged that while sporting activities between former and current students were problematic, sport-related activities are generally more likely to engage the younger groups which so far have had little involvement with the BSA.
 - The Headteacher reminded those present of the importance of suitably age-bracketed activities to engage former students.
- The Treasurer further noted that as only two members of the current Committee are former students who have not then been a member of staff at the School, it would be to the benefit of the balance of the Committee for any new members to be similarly disposed.
- Mrs Duckworth noted that Mrs Bishop, the Alumni Officer, is now the Lead on Alumni at the School. Mrs Duckworth, as Marketing Manager, is now the interface between Alumni and the School's marketing, and while still a member of the BSA Committee, will no longer be involved in the usual running of the Association.
 - The Committee thanked Mrs Duckworth for her early involvement with the BSA, and agreed that she need not be included in routine committee communications.
- The Chairman and Vice Chairman reported positive experiences as committee members over the past year, and look forward to another year of connecting with former students.

ACTION: The Secretary to add an agenda item to the next committee meeting, to facilitate a discussion about potential new committee members.

ACTION: All committee members to consider who might be eligible, mindful of the criteria discussed at the AGM, as potential new members of the Committee, for discussion at the next committee meeting.

6. Identity of the Alumni

There was some discussion about the name of the BSA, as those present noted that there is an ongoing name clash with the BSA, and the School's PTA. Though usually referred to as 'the PTA', the organization already has a bank account registered as 'the Burford School Association', and is registered under that name as a charity. Those present acknowledged that this added complexity meant it would not be reasonable for the BSA to insist that the PTA change their name, and a new name for the BSA therefore needed to be considered.

- The Vice Chairman of the Governing Body suggested that the BSA should change its name to 'the Old Burfordian's Association', noting that this naming convention ('Old X's') is often used by schools to refer to its former students. He further noted the difficulty in using the word 'Alumni' correctly, and suggested that many former students would not be familiar with it.
 - The Chairman reminded those present that 'the Old Burfordians' Association' already exists, and emphasized the need to be sensitive when making changes in the BSA which might affect that group. The Chairman agreed to contact the Old Burfordians' Association to find out their thoughts on a possible name change.
 - The Secretary noted that current members of the Old Burfordians' Association are technically eligible to be members of the BSA, and that should the decision be taken to rebrand the BSA as 'the Old Burfordians' Association', it may be possible to incorporate the existing Association into the new and larger organization without disbanding the original group.
 - The Chairman also noted that rebranding the BSA may risk reputational damage, and that care would need to be taken here to avoid undoing the BSAs existing positive marketing efforts.

- The Secretary expressed concern about the unfortunate imagery which might be brought to mind by the proposed name change, noting the link with 'Old X's' and the negative 'old boys' stereotype.
- Mrs Duckworth noted that the proposed name change might alienate potential members of the BSA, who may not identify with an organization with 'old' in the name.
- Mrs Duckworth suggested that the BSA could instead change its name to 'Burford School Alumni', noting that this would more specifically describe the purpose of the organization, and as it would remain 'the BSA', would not require an extensive rebranding exercise.
 - The Treasurer noted that the BSA's social media does refer to the BSA as 'Burford School Alumni' for clarity, but agreed that 'alumni' might not be clearly understood by many of those at whom the BSA aims its efforts.
 - The Headteacher agreed that the current name is not sufficiently clear in describing the purpose of the BSA, and that a clearer name would be desirable.

Reflecting on the issues discussed at the meeting, and with some concern that the BSA remains without a bank account, those present agreed that a change of name would be desirable. Two options for such a new name emerged:

Option 1: The Old Burfordians' Association (OBA)

Option 1: Burford School Alumni (BSA)

Those present agreed that the existing Old Burfordians' Association would need to be consulted before a final vote could be taken, and that the Chairman should invite their representative to the next committee meeting.

ACTION: The Chairman to contact the Old Burfordians' Association to find out their thoughts on a BSA name change, and invite Diane Blackburn to the next committee meeting.

7. The BSA's first Reunion

Those present agreed that the BSA's first Reunion had generally been a success, and at the suggestion of the Headteacher and Vice Chairman, discussion for the minutes therefore focused on potential ways in which future events could be improved while the Reunion was still a recent memory.

- The Treasurer noted that the BBQ had been run by Ollie Weaver, and she suggested that costs for the BBQ could be reduced in future years by taking a different approach.
 - Those present noted that Ollie Weaver did allow the young people who were part of the orchestra/jazz band/string quartet to eat for free.
- The Headteacher noted with disappointment that the alumni ties were not ready in time for the Reunion, and agreed that any profits made by the ties subsequently would be passed on to the BSA.
 - Those present agreed that it would be good to ensure sufficient stocks of merchandise are available for future events, and that Christmas merchandise would soon need to be prepared.
- The Headteacher also noted that the PTA had been asked to run the bar, on the understanding that the proceeds would go towards the BSA, but changes in the PTA Committee meant these details had not been clearly communicated to the wider PTA. To maintain good will, the Headteacher therefore agreed to split the bar profits 50/50 between the PTA and BSA.
 - The Treasurer suggested that, for future events, it may be more effective for the BSA to run the bar themselves, however she also acknowledged the importance of maintaining good will between the BSA and PTA.

- The Headteacher further noted that, while it had seemed an efficient use of resources at the planning stage, in reality it had put a strain on staff at the School to hold the Reunion so close to the School's open evening. The Headteacher also reported that the Reunion had taken place when many young people who might have wished to attend were required to leave for University.
 - Those present agreed that the date of future Reunions should be carefully considered to avoid strain on the School, and to maximize attendance.
 - The Chairman noted the importance of agreeing a date for the next big BSA event as soon as possible, so that plans can be made.
- The Headteacher reported that there had been unnecessary duplication of effort in communicating with staff at the School, and suggested that the division of labour be made clearer for future events (see item 8).
- The Alumni Officer noted that the timing of future events like the Reunion would need to be reconsidered, as the Reunion seemed to go on for too long.
 - The Vice Chairman of the Governing Body noted that the two parts of the day could have been split more literally into two separate events, and that coloured decade badges would have been useful in helping attendees network.
 - The Headteacher agreed that the BSA would do well to target events more specifically at certain age groups.
 - The Secretary noted that the colleges in Oxford target their alumni events at sets of year groups (for example, years ending in 7 over several decades) as a way of catering to specific year groups while ensuring good attendance; this may be a method the BSA could adopt.
- The Vice Chairman of the Governing Body noted that, for future events, it would be good to make better use of the lighting in the Hall, and if the musicians could display their name banners during their performance.
- Mrs Duckworth suggested that future events not be split across the school site, as some attendees found the walk between the Hall and West Dining Hall disruptive.
- The Headteacher noted that some attendees visited the Boarding House, despite this not being part of the day, and it would be good to try and avoid this happening in future events when the Boarding House is not involved.

8. Any other business

Those present discussed several items of other business:

- The Vice Chairman of the Governing Body noted that a display board for the BSA, in School, would be useful in engaging current students with the activities of the BSA.
- The Headteacher confirmed that the BSA has been given another hand-drawn picture from Eileen Baglin Jones, drawn by a former Art Teacher of the School.
- The Headteacher noted the need to be clear about communication, to ensure that effort is not duplicated unnecessarily, and to avoid confusion. To that end, those present confirmed that:

Committee Role	Areas of responsibility
Chairman	-Communication between the BSA and other organisations (such as the PTA, Old Burfordians, or Primary School) -Personal 'thank you' messages
Vice Chairman	-Deputizing for the Chairman -Personal 'thank you' messages
The Alumni Officer	-Administering and reporting on BSA membership and communications to all members and the public (eg. formal 'thank you' letters from the BSA) -Communication between the School and the BSA
Headteacher	-Representing the School at BSA meetings

	-Managing the relationship between the School and the BSA
Vice Chairman of the Governing Body	-Representing the Governing Body at BSA meetings -Communication between the BSA and the Governing Body
The Treasurer	-All financial matters/queries relating to the BSA
The Secretary	-Providing administrative support by preparing agendas, writing up minutes, and preparing for meetings

- The Headteacher further noted that any questions about these responsibilities should be directed towards her.
- The Vice Chairman of the Governing Body proposed an amendment to the BSA's constitution, which would require the Treasurer to present a set of accounts at each AGM. He also noted that reports from the Chairman and Treasurer should be sent out with the agenda for AGMs, to ensure that those planning to attend would have time to read them.
 - Those present approved the proposal to amend the constitution, and agreed in principle that reports should be sent out with the agenda for future AGMs.
- Those present noted the need for future AGMs to include a report on marketing and communications (including social media). It was also agreed that such a report could mention the impact of email contact about the newsletter.
 - The Alumni Officer noted that there have been three newsletters since the first AGM, and that the second went to more recipients than the first.

ACTION: The Alumni Officer, in consultation with the Headteacher, to arrange for a BSA board to be displayed in the School.

ACTION: The Vice Chairman of the Governing Body to draft an amended clause for the Secretary to include in the constitution.

9. Date of next meeting

The Committee agreed to find and set a date for the next committee meeting using Doodle poll, which the Secretary will organize by email.

ACTION: The Secretary to send out details of a date-finding Doodle poll, to find a suitable date for the next committee meeting.

Appendix 1: Chairman's Report - 4th October 2017

The last 12 months has been an enormous success for the BSA with the numbers joining now amounting to just over 1000. This is a 100% rise in numbers over the last 12 months.

Last October 2016, we held a tremendously successful Photographic Evening when ex - staff and ex-students ranging from the 1950's up to the 2000's came along to help us try and name people in

photographs that are held in the school archives. Mr Pip Cartwright (ex – Head of Geography) brought along some of his old mark books which also proved of particular interest to a number of people.

Members of the BSA Committee have also had a presence at a number of school functions during the year – ranging from having a stand at Open Day in September, at Charter Day in November, Miscellany in December and at the school’s musical production of Oliver in March/April of this year. It was felt important to “fly the flag” for the BSA and ensure more people became aware of it as well as having the opportunity to display some of the archive material we possess – old trophies, Burfordian magazines etc. It was lovely to meet up with many ex – students during the year and of particular joy was catching up with Robert (Chick) Harvey who came along with his wife and sons to see Oliver having played Bill Sykes in the school’s production of Oliver in 1973. Also in July I met up with Tom Webster who is now the Strength and Fitness Coach for Lancashire County Cricket.

The Alumni newsletters and the Christmas Card sent out during the year have also been a success. The “big event” this year has of course been the Re –Union held on September 23rd 2017. This was open to any ex – students and staff of Burford School. Approximately 200 attended the occasion which started at 3:00 and ended at 10:00 pm. The afternoon involved tea/coffee and cakes in the West Dining Room, a chance to walk around the school to see how it had changed, a chance to look at photos ranging from the 1930’s to the 2000’s in the gym, a chance to leave a message on the map board, buy some Burford memorabilia and get a drink from the bar. In the evening there was the BBQ and the school Jazz Band. All in all it gave many people a chance to catch up with friends they had not seen for a long time. Particularly moving was meeting with John Amor who had come all the way from Australia and attended Burford in the 1950’s who managed to meet up with 3 classmates while at the Re – Union. People came from far and wide and it is a testament to just how much Burford School remains part of an affectionate link to the past for many people.

Thanks must be given to a large number of people ranging from the BSA Committee itself, the Headteacher Kathy Haig and staff (particularly Mr Frankcom, the Head of Music), the site staff, Carlene Black in the canteen, Ollie Weaver who did the meat BBQ, Eleanor’s mum who did the vegetarian BBQ and the PTA who ran the bar. Without the support of all these people, the Re – Union would not have happened.

We are now looking forward to the next 12 months when we hope to see the numbers joining the BSA continuing to grow and a Re-Union possibly being held down at the Boarding House.

Appendix 2: Treasurer’s Report – 4th October 2017

Income			Expenditure	
Ticket Sales	Cash	£950.00	Mugs	£354.60
	Cheque	£70.00	Table Cloths	£20.00

	Card	£700.00	Flowers	£30.00
	Paypal	£236.98	Balloons	£4.00
			Rafia	£5.20
Donations		£15.00	Tea and Cakes	£387.00
			PDQ charge	£14.00
Mugs		£85.00	Ticket Printing	£27.65
Umbrella Sales		£23.00	Printing	£43.58
Bar		£269.83		
TOTAL		£2,349.81	TOTAL	£886.03
Profit		£1,463.78		
Cash/Chq to Andrea		£1,120.00		

Mugs		
17 sold		£85.00
17 cost		£60.28
Profit		£24.72