

REPORT ON THE LONDON CLUB LADIES' NIGHT DINNER – 27th November 2009

Members of the Old Bradfordians' London Club and their partners enjoyed the annual dinner at the Carlton Club on 27th November. The President Christopher Parkin, with his wife Rachel, welcomed members and their guests, especially Chief Guest Andrew Oddy (OB '52- '61), retired Keeper of Conservation at the British Museum, Stephen Davidson Headmaster and Gavin Craig, President of the Old Bradfordian Association, and their wives Patricia, Carol and Sally.

Brigadier Anthony Cowgill a member of the Club who died recently in his 93rd year was remembered with a period of silence. Tony Cowgill attended the dinner regularly; a remarkable man with distinction in both his military and civil life.

David Ellis said Grace. During the evening David was presented with a gift from Club members and the OBA for 21 years outstanding service as the London Club's Hon. Secretary. The gift comprised a Bird Bath with engraving and a Cheque with thanks and good wishes to David and Barbara for their continuing enjoyment of gardening, travel and support to the Club.

Dr Oddy proposed the Toast to the School. Following degrees in Chemistry at New College Oxford, Andrew combining his studies in science and interest in archaeology was appointed as a researcher in the laboratories of the British Museum on the deterioration and conservation of materials and ancient technology. He rose to be 'Keeper of Conservation' receiving in 2002 the OBE for Services to Museum Conservation and was recently President of the International Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works.

Dr William Andrew Oddy began by assuring us that he was Oddy the conservationist and not a certain Bill Oddie for there were occasions when he received invitations for the naturalist (of TV fame), which he was tempted to accept but suspected his host and audience would be surprised by his contribution! He recalled with illustrations both the times when things could go wrong, notably a fire in the laboratories, damage beyond repair to a priceless antiquity, a 9th century crucifix, but also the satisfaction and reward for pursuing painstaking scientific investigation, for example proving the original source of the stone for the horses of St Marks Cathedral and the discovery of new methods of cleaning protecting and conserving limestone. He is well known internationally for developing accelerated aging tests that continue to carry his name – the Oddy Tests – to measure the effect of types and severity of corrosion of materials particularly with pollution.

In his response, Stephen Davidson illustrated the strength of demand for School places and the meritocratic intake of pupils, the outstanding achievements of students referring to those supported in part by the London Club, the varied experiences and many opportunities available (see BGS News, October 2009), not least though the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. He outlined the new approved £4 million building programme for Chemistry and for the Social Sciences including Business Studies with an atrium style linkway to the neighbouring and main buildings, made possible by the generosity of benefactors though with the need for continuing support.

In thanking the speakers, Christopher Parkin remarked that the Headmaster and School had much of which to be proud. As Old Bradfordians we are privileged to see the continuing development of the last 14 years. While we recognize our heritage, in the summary words of the Australian Commission for the Future 'the future is not some place we are going to but one which we are creating'. It is good to know and feel BGS continues to create its future. In conclusion Valerie Lister on behalf of the Ladies thanked the London Club and the President for an enjoyable evening. We look forward to next year.

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