



THE BEVIN BOYS ASSOCIATION

FOUNDED 1989

CHAIRMAN & MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

A.Lane,
Snipelands,
Bourton Combe,
Flax Bourton,
Bristol. N.Somerset
BS48 3QL.
Tel. 01275 463703

SECRETARY

D. E. Todd (Mrs)
"The Chalet",
24 Oldfield Way,
Heswall, Wirral,
Merseyside.
CH60 6RG
Tel. 0151 342 3703

TREASURER

H. Parkes,
12 Stonesby Vale,
West Bridgford,
Nottingham,
Notts.
NG2 7UR
Tel. 0115 8465354

NATIONAL REUNIONS

M. Rose, (Mrs)
Willow Lodge,
Victoria Lane,
Fakenham,
Norfolk.
NR21 8LB
Tel. 01328 863986

NEWSLETTER FOR AUTUMN 2013.

Chairman's Message.

Welcome to everyone including new members reading the Autumn Newsletter! Hope you have all enjoyed this warm and sunny summer. Many new members were gained as a result of the publicity the Association was given at the Dedication by The Countess of Wessex of the new Permanent Memorial to ALL Bevin Boys at Alrewas in May.

When suddenly and sadly our newly elected Chairman Gordon Todd passed away in April of this year, I was nominated by the Committee at our last Committee meeting to stand in as Chairman until the AGM in October. This I was happy to do. Gordon was a much respected committee member from 1994. He will be greatly missed by everyone who knew him, he was outspoken and unafraid to call 'a spade, a spade'!

At the next AGM in October in Norwich, if anyone wishes to propose a fellow Bevin Boy Member as Chairman or committee member, after first gaining the written permission of the nominee, will they please notify in writing with the name of a Seconder, to Elizabeth Todd, our Secretary, by **21st September 2013.**

**Wishing you all a Happy Christmas and Healthy 2014,
Alan (Lane)**

MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY.

As we move into "The seasons of mists and mellow fruitfulness" I know from your letters and telephone calls how many members look forward to the second Newsletter of the year.

First I wish to thank those who have sent messages of condolence on the death of Gordon, he was a larger than life character and a loving and much loved husband, His attendance at committee meetings during the last twenty years will be remembered for the valuable common sense contributions he made to discussions & decisions in meetings particularly for those not used to working in a committee.

Reading through my old copies of the minutes, I was reminded of the important part played by past and present members of the committee behind the scenes, with Warwick " front of stage". When we went to our first committee meeting Phil Wood was the very active Chairman, whose wife Sylvia, made and designed the Association Banner; Phil Coates Treasurer; Ron Green first Secretary; Ken Thomas Membership Secretary and his wife Brenda. Others included Vivienne Slater, a founder member who later took on Secretary, Treasurer & then Sales roles. The Reverend Phil Pearson, was the original Archivist, and member John Jenkins. Warwick Taylor joined in 1994. The Reverend Maurice Turner, was the member who instigated the idea of the Remembrance Book, originally only to record the deaths of those who died during their service, but now used to list all deaths of Bevin Boys - an important part of the Associations records. This was the Book originally carried by Vivienne Slater at the Parade at the Cenotaph each November in London. Alan Lane joined the team in 1998.

In those early years meetings were held in the Stoke on Trent/Midlands area, where most committee members lived. Warwick travelled from Dorset with Phil Yates, Alan Lane from Bristol, Gordon and I from the Wirral. Later meetings were held on Saturdays to accommodate Anne Lane who joined us with her special computer skills and expertise, and now Newsletter editor – who was still working then! In the year 2000 John Burgess took on the Chairmanship with Peter Jackson as Treasurer, until Harry Parkes as Treasurer stepped in when Peter's health failed. Margaret Rose had always been an active Area Rep joined the committee, and continues her hard work as Reunion Organiser with a well attended AGM and four day holiday get together.

Following our attendance at the unveiling of the Permanent Bevin Boys Memorial we have gained new members and more enquiries from sons, daughters and even grandchildren, wishing to know more of their relatives contribution to the war effort. As many of you may not appreciate, Harry Parkes before joining our Association and becoming Treasurer, had set up a small working party & committee to raise money for the erection of the Memorial, most of the money had been raised before we got involved, with members sending contributions to Harry. All of which he has acknowledged. Our small memorial garden would not have survived long term and we had no funds for a BBA update, other than the new bench Gordon and I took to the Alrewas BBA site two years ago. Harry's efforts resulted in that wonderful day on May 7th at the Arboretum, when the Countess of Wessex officiated. All could attend the unveiling, but numbers were restricted to those who had applied to attend the chapel service, as accommodation was needed for the many Local Authorities and individuals who had contributed donations. No Bevin Boy who had applied to Harry for a place in the chapel, was disappointed. Denys Owen writes his own impressions of the day later in the Newsletter.

Where Are You Now?

Alan Jennings has reported on the latest publication on Bevin Boys by Michael Edmonds, called "War Underground" memoirs of a Bevin Boy in the S Wales coalfield, The book was launched by ex MP Kim Howells. The author was an artist and Architect in Cardiff and responsible for a huge mural at Llanclough Hospital for the **Pneumoconiosis** Research Unit (for more information Google on South Wales Record Society)

I had from Brian Standly copy of an envelope dated 1941! Addressed to A.P.Barre, a Bevin Boy at Indian Trainees Hostel, Letchworth. There is a web site for the hostel. Can anyone throw any light on this? Let me know.

In a letter from Lesley Powell, she asked to hear from anyone who worked with her father. He was Eric Powell who worked at Walbottle Colliery in Northumberland, then Chislet Colliery in Kent. He exchanged many letters with Jack Stoddart whose address then was 185 Ponteland Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, also 377 Bath Street, Glasgow. Also, an Alan (?) who in October 1948 lived at 50 Church Avenue, Wantehill? Bolton, Lancs. If we do not get any response the letters could be donated to a museum as they are entertaining and descriptive of their times together down the pit.

Ronald Truin writes of his memories of waiting for the 5 am bus on grim, snowy mornings going to Markham Colliery. In retrospect, an experience he would not have missed -a privately educated middle class boy transported to another world!

Robert Harvey would like to hear from Roy Stow, both worked at Bestwood Colliery, Notts. A good musician Robert recalls, telephone Robert on 0188370041.

Does anyone remember Frank Edward Jones -a keen footballer, who worked at Fairy Hill mine, Durham? His brother David wants to talk to anyone who has memories of that time Tel 01406 424205.

I have news of Phil Yates. Phil was the first member from the South of England to attend a reunion. Jim Hutchinson – founder member and the first Chairman, asked Phil to write the first book on the Bevin Boys experience. The book was published in 1993 and called 'The Bevin Boys' Story. Many of our long-standing members will remember this. Phil is still actively writing. He has just finished Pubs, Breweries and Hotels in Winchester called, 'Time Gentlemen Please' to be

published in October. Also, to commemorate 100 years of the Winchester Theatre Royal, Phil has written the history of those years, which will be published in September.

Andrew Sinclair was a Bevin Boy at Horden Colliery from 1944-1947 (3 and a half years.) Andrew worked 21/2 miles under the North Sea, crawling on his stomach, to keep the escape routes open. His shift began at 2.30 am. He has often spoken of those days to me, his widow, Jan. If you do recollect serving with him, please let me know Mrs J.Sinclair, 4 Horace Brightman Close, Luton, Beds. LU3 3UR or email@martina01.plus.com or telephone 01582 563095. Thank you.

Cedric Ellsworth (aka Bud or Buddy) worked as a Bevin Boy at Canterbury Colliery(?) his daughter Sue would be interested in anyone who worked with him. Ring Liz.

Sally Tigwell is keen to talk to anyone who remembers her father Kenneth Francis Keane (Kenny) who died in 1997. He worked at Betshanger Colliery, Kent and set up the Kenny Keane Jazz band. He injured his back at one time. Not unusual for anyone working in haulage. Sally's telephone number is 01997 414 739.

Finally, some members have been asking about the Banner and The Remembrance Book, both the property of the Bevin Boys Association. Warwick Taylor had custody of these for the Association. I have written to him twice to ask for their return, but so far have not received either item.

Here to help, Best wishes,

D. Elizabeth Todd (Liz)

MESSAGE from the HON.TREASURER.

I am happy that this year again I will be able to present a satisfactory Annual Financial Report to our A G M on Thursday 3rd October 2013 at the MAIDS HEAD HOTEL NORWICH. Our income is slightly up on last year, although the final analysis figures are not yet complete. The Newsletter subs and sales are the main contributors, after members and friends private donations.

The expenditure figure also shows an increase. Postage costs, the setting up our new Website and the replacement of our worn out printer, are the major items.

The Social Fund administrated by Margaret Rose, our National Reunion organiser will produce a supplementary report.

Following the completion of the National Bevin Boys Memorial and Dedication ceremony on the 7th May 2013 at the National Memorial Arboretum Alrewas, Staffs., a number of our members have asked "What costs were there from BBA funds?

The answer is 'There was NO COST to us!'

The Memorial Project was an independent organisation, which generated it's own funds and financed all the costs of the Memorial and it's Dedication, by Her Royal Highness The Countess of Wessex to ALL Bevin Boys not just Association members..

Harry P.

DEDICATION OF THE BEVIN BOYS MEMORIAL.

On Tuesday 7th May 2013 an event occurred of which those of us who attended will forever remember. In glorious sunshine we arrived at the National Memorial Arboretum when after light refreshments we attended the Chapel and waited in eager anticipation for the Royal party to arrive, upon which the Rev.Francis Luckcock delivered a powerful sermon commencing with the history of the Bevin Boys with considerable force and accuracy. As one who sometimes gives local groups a talk on the subject, the writer has to admit that this was far better than his!. Despite some craning of necks to catch a glimpse of the Countess and perhaps a little

manoeuvring in order to catch the eyes of the TV cameramen, we listened intently to the most interesting service. The Chapel was full to overflowing although it was later learned that regretfully one or two members failed to obtain entrance as they lacked a ticket. However they were free to join the dedication ceremony afterwards.

We were then ably marshalled to the site of our splendid new memorial, which is certainly something of which we should be very proud. The writer believes "Our Harry" is responsible for the concept and design, so congratulations must go to him for his magnificent work. Congratulations should also go to him for somehow driving the beautiful Countess to tears and to be hugged by her.

Again the TV men were very busy and those of us who returned home in time were able to view the ceremony on TV. I did notice that BBC W.Midlands dwelt on it for rather longer than in the North West or Wales. But I suppose the occasion was of even greater interest for the Midlands area.

The sunshine continued, enabling those who were agile enough to spend time wandering through the arboretum and to enjoy further refreshments and we were free to wander home at our leisure.

There is no doubt this was indeed a most memorable occasion, remaining in our hearts for the remainder of our lives, and sincere congratulations are due to our committee and those responsible.

Denys Owen.

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT.

We have again received a great many letters saying how much you all look forward to reading the Newsletters and for your committee to 'keep up the good work'. Although we do seem to be dwindling each day! Please would you write, telephone or e-mail me, as Membership Secretary, to notify me of Change of Address and/or Telephone numbers and if you hear of any Bevin Boys, members or not, who have sadly passed away. My address and Telephone number is at the top of this Newsletter, e-mail address is alananne2749@gmail.com

This Autumn Newsletter will be distributed to nearly 300 members, including sons, daughters and wives this time, some whom receive it via e-mail. Unfortunately it is very sad that we now also have 1292 names who are deceased.

Best wishes,
Alan.

Sales.

Total Sales for Postal & the AGM Reunion last year were £260.59p. For all Sales, please apply to Mrs A. Lane, Snipelands, Bourton Combe, Flax Bourton, Bristol. BS48 3QL. Tel: 01275 463703. All cheques to be made payable to **THE BEVIN BOYS ASSOCIATION.** Please add **£1 for the lighter items & £2 for the books & BB Cap, as they are expensive to post, especially with the increase in the postal charges!**

Blazer Badge	@ £7.50	New Blue Enamel Badge	@ £2.00
Miners Lamp Keyring	@ £4.00	Ladies Brooch	@ £5.00
Maroon Tie	@ £10.00	BB Veteran Baseball Cap	@ £7.50
Digging Up the Past	@ £10.00	A Bevin Boy Remembers	@ £5.00
The Forgotten Conscript.	@ £10.00	Bevin Boy Banner Postcard	@ £0.20

2 different Black & White postcards of prints from A Bevin Boy Remembers @ £0.20 each
& 2 colour & 2 black & white prints of A4 size from A Bevin Boy Remembers @ £0.20 each
Many Thanks to all our 'customers', as always!

Anne.

National Reunion & AGM

It gives me great pleasure to report that our AGM to be held on Thursday October 3rd 2013, will attract at least fifty-five people. Taking into account age, illness and other commitments, that is a good number and enough to fill the coach for our outing to Sandringham on Wednesday October 2nd.

After the AGM on the Thursday, the evening will start with a gala dinner in the Minstrel Room at the Maid's Head Hotel in Norwich in the company of guests including the Lord Mayor of Norwich, the Reverend Andrew King and Mr Colin Burleigh, who will no doubt give us an hour of Norfolk entertainment.

The Reunions are an important event for the Association. Firstly, it gives chance to meet and chat with committee members. Secondly, there is opportunity to learn of events which have taken place in the past twelve months. There will be experiences to share as, with pride we recall the honour the Countess of Wessex gave us when she so admirably fulfilled her role unveiling the National Memorial to all Bevin Boys. Camera men and interviewers were everywhere as pictures and reports were sent round the world. Such as Australia, America and soldiers in Afghanistan.

The Church service was a meaningful occasion and everyone was very moved. All Bevin Boys could hold their head up high with personal pride being part of such a group.

For the Association, AGM's are so important and we are pleased that the Lord Mayor has agreed to attend our gala evening. The Committee members look forward to our forthcoming reunion starting September 30th and ending October 4th 2013.

I remain your reunion organiser and will continue in that capacity as long as you wish.

Margaret R. Tel. 01328 863986.

REUNION DATES for 2013.

Sept. 30th - 4th October - AGM & Reunion at The Maids Head Hotel, Norwich.
(Margaret Rose Tel: 01328 863986.)

Wednesday October 16th - Cheshire, Lancs & North Wales Group at Thornton Hough, Wirral.
(Liz Todd Tel: 0151 3423703)

Bevin Boys Association Website.

Just to remind you all that we now have an **Official** Bevin Boys Association website. This contains information about the Association, pictures of the Bevin Boy's plot at Alrewas, the contact details for all the Committee. Also the Newsletter, Rules and Regulations which are password protected and only accessible to Bevin Boy members who have paid their subs. Please go to:-
<http://www.bevinboysassociation.co.uk>

If you prefer to have access to the Newsletter online or email or have any input or news items for publication please contact me

Tel: 01275 463703 or e-mail: alananne2749@gmail.com

Anne.

Essex & Northeast London Regional Reunion.

A group of fifteen gathered at our home in West Mersea on 17th July in glorious summer weather for a buffet luncheon in our garden.

After lunch, our guests challenged each other to the Dutch pub bar game of Schula.

Altogether an enjoyable day!

Eric Johnson. (Area Rep.)

11th Annual National Service Day Reunion

The **11th Annual National Service Day Reunion** was held on the afternoon of Sunday 30th June this year at the National Memorial Arboretum Alrewas, Staffordshire. The organiser Gerald Rose contacted me to invite the Bevin Boys to again be represented at the official Service of Remembrance and the March Past.

A warm sunny day, our 20 reserved seats filled by Bevin Boys, their families and friends with more sitting close by on the grass. Following the formal Laying of Wreaths ceremony, Six Bevin Boys, wearing their lapel badge and white helmet (newly donated by Thorseby Colliery management) paraded with other contingents from the fighting services. The salute was taken by General Sir Mike Jackson G.C.B. C.B.E. D.S.O. D.L.

Marching past our new Bevin Boys National Memorial we performed a smart Eyes Right. After the ceremony ended I collected our Wreath from the saluting base and placed it at our Memorial where a number of small wooden crosses had been left.

I do thank ---

Those who bravely marched.

All who attended and helped to ensure we were noticed.

A date for your diary. Next years event is planned to take place on Sunday 29th June 2014, again at Alrewas.

Harry Parkes.