



RHRH REGGIE



ISSUE No. 3

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
KING'S COLLEGE LONDON ENGINEERS' ASSOCIATION

SEPTEMBER 1994

KCLEA ANNUAL DINNER 1995

**Its on, its off, its on again!
The infamous KCLEA
Dinner is back again from
the dead, bigger and better
than ever!**

Dr. Norman Borrett, Senior Tutor and Admissions Tutor in the Mechanical Engineering Department, has enthusiastically agreed to organise THE event of 1995.

In order to cement relations with the recently revived King's

College London Engineering Society, the dinner will be a combined event for both students and graduates and their respective guests.

The date is Friday 10th February, the venue is the beautifully refurbished Great Hall of the College, and the evening kicks off at 7:00pm for 7:30pm.

KCLEA has agreed to subsidise the event, and the staggeringly

low price of £20 per head includes reception drinks and wine with the four course meal.

Why not get a group together and make it a real reunion? A flyer and ticket application are included with this newsletter, so put the date in your diary, fill in the form and apply for your tickets now! Early replies are advisable as this is sure to be a sellout.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1994

Your presence is requested at the Annual General Meeting of the King's College London Engineers' Association, which takes takes place on Friday 25th November, 6:45pm in the College Council Room.

This is your once a year chance to come along and meet the Committee in person and tell them what you think of them!

Seriously, though, the Association is nothing without its members, and what it does depends on its members. So why not come along and tell us whether you approve of the way we spend your money, and chose

those you would like to represent you for the next year.

Yes, this really is democracy in action. You can nominate the members of next year's Committee, thus ensuring that you really do get what you want. If you would like to serve on the Committee, or know someone who would, send your nominations to the Secretary as soon as possible.

If for no other reason, then come along anyway for a gossip, meet old friends, and partake of a drink and a light supper.

What better way could there be of filling a cold November evening!

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Editorial

Welcome to the third issue of the new look HRH Reggie, and the good news is we're still here, and still publishing on schedule!

Many thanks to all of you who have written in - even the smallest of comments is taken as a good sign. My apologies for not being able to include all of your messages in the newsletter, and please keep sending the suggestions, anecdotes etc.

On the subject of content, I hope to be able to rationalise the format of the newsletter over the next six months, as well as bringing you the promised updates on the College and the Engineering Faculty. Any members interested in advertising their services, please get in touch - it would be nice to increase the number of pages, and maybe even add a little colour! Any suggestions you have as to what you would like to hear about would be most welcome.

I would also like to see more news from members. What are you up to, family information, and details of anyone you are still in touch with who may not be on our database.

In the meantime, I hope to see many of you at the forthcoming AGM and the dinner in February, both detailed elsewhere.

Finally, may I be the first (surely?) to wish you a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous 1995!

Yours,

Alistair Steger-Lewis
pp. HRH Reggie

Life in Retirement

Colin Wilson, a former President of KCLEA, and now retired, gives us the benefit of his insight into his 'new' life.

There used to be a pension advertisement consisting of a series of cartoons showing men at ten year intervals from 25 to 65. The 25 year old was happy-go-lucky with no interest in pensions. As the decades progressed the subjects became more and more concerned until, at 65, the pensionless man was seemingly suicidal. Perhaps you remember it?

Nowadays most of us will have acquired, or organised, a proper pension arrangement, but money is not the only aspect of retirement which needs preparation and probably not the most difficult.

Many professional engineers seem incapable of, or reluctant to, 'let go'. A few, probably very few, are so well qualified, specialised and competent that their abilities are needed long after they pass the retirement date.

Probably preparation for retirement at the same time as your pension scheme. A good range of interests is worthwhile. If your entry in Who's Who says under "interests" only "rock climbing" for instance, will you be able to

continue past 65? - perhaps with a dicky ticker?

Many sports, enjoyed as a participant at 25 can be continued through coaching, management or just a spectator for years. Other pastimes and interests - such as painting, woodwork, photography and such like can be continued for many years. Or you could read (books), learn (evening classes) and inwardly digest (try cooking!).

As the date approaches, those of you who are married may discover that your wife's circle of friends have been taking her on one side and saying things like "You poor soul, whatever will you do having him under your feet all day?" Lucky you if she can honestly reply "Actually I am looking forward to it." Probably for years in other professions it is the lady who is retiring and the husband getting the 'sympathy'. Soon it will be the same in Engineering.

If you have already retired, this will have been too late for you. Either you will be one of the lucky ones who is enjoying the new life, or you will not - but whichever you are, you will probably agree that the Boy Scout's motto of "Be Prepared" lasts longer than the uniform.

A significant number of members are listed in the database as being retired - we'd like to know what you are doing to fill your time, and what advice you have for those of us with that pleasure (?) to look forward to. If you could have your time again, would you change anything about your 'preparations' for retirement? Please send your comments to the Editor at the address on the back page.



Letter from the President...

Dear Fellow Beers,

The time has once again arrived for me to put finger to keyboard and compose a stirring epistle to you all. As I am due to retire from the Presidency at the next Annual General Meeting this will also be my last opportunity to encourage you to support the activities of the Association and its aims. I would like to thank the Committee for the support they have given me during the past two years. All have contributed willingly and none more than Sue Doran as Secretary and Al Steger-Lewis as Newsletter and Directory editor/publisher.

Since the last Newsletter we have held another wine and cheese party for third year students in the Great Hall at Kings with a marked improvement in turnout compared with the previous year. This cannot have been due solely to the lure of free alcohol as a significant quantity of orange juice was also consumed.

Our aim of increasing our representation at the KCLA dinner in March this year was highly successful with at least three of the fourteen or so tables being comprised of Old Engineers and their partners. I hope that next year will see an even stronger turnout although, I hasten to add, I would not wish this to be at the expense of the success of our own function. More information on this particular event is given elsewhere in this Newsletter.

Unfortunately, we were unable to publish the Directory last summer but every effort is being made to bring this difficult undertaking to a successful conclusion in time for the AGM. We have, however, managed with this edition to maintain our target of two Newsletters a year. Thanks must go to the contributors and to our editor for his efforts.

In the last Newsletter I appealed for help and information to enable us to update the history of the Engineering Society. To date there has been remarkably little response to this appeal. Remembering some of the events that took place in my own time in College, not least the dawn raid on UC, the capture of Phineas and subsequent handing back, suitably treaced and feathered in Trafalgar Square, I find it difficult to believe that life for Engineers and the Engineering Society was uneventful in the intervening years. As a start, we are attempting to compile a list of Presidents of the Engineering Society. Please write to Sue Doran or myself, naming the Presidents in your time and their period of office. This at least will give us a start in our attempts to chronicle the Society's activities.

Finally I would like to draw your attention to the date of the Annual General Meeting. This year it is to be held on 25 November in the Council Room at Kings. I urge you to attend, even if only to tell the Committee what they are doing wrong, to offer to serve on the Committee, or to sample the College wine provided after, and sometimes during, the meeting. Do not forget, it is your Association, existing to meet your requirements. To meet these requirements, however, the Committee needs to know what they are.

Yours sincerely,

Keith Newton, President, KCLEA



Committee Profile: Ray Horner

Ray graduated from King's in 1935 with First Class Honours at the age of 18.

His pre-war experience was on road construction, reinforced concrete structures, bridges and sea defence works, with local authorities and consulting engineers.

Service during World War II was with the Royal Engineers on road and airfield construction in Iceland, India and Iran.

Post war, after experience with local authorities and contractors, he joined the Main Drainage Department of the London County Council in 1950 working on the major extensions to the large sewage treatment works at Beckton and Crossness.

He was appointed Deputy Chief Engineer of the Main Drainage Department of the Middlesex

County Council in 1962 and on the formation of the Greater London Council in 1965, became Regional Engineer, Sewerage and Sewage Disposal for the London Region.

In 1968 he was asked to undertake an investigation into the Thames tidal flood problem as Project Manager of the investigation team.

Following the Team's report, the decision was taken in 1970 to build a tidal defence barrier in Woolwich Reach. He was appointed Project Manager for the design and construction phases of the work and was promoted in 1977 to Deputy Director of Public Health Engineering with special responsibility for the Thames Barrier Project until his retirement in 1981. He was then retained as a consultant by the GLC on special studies on various aspects of the Project.

Members' News

Graeme Ware (84-90)

Graeme is now living and working in Germany (the lengths that some people go to just to get out of editing a newsletter!).

He is now working for AVKISEG GmbH & Co KG at Kempen and living nearby in Krefeld. His work now takes him all over the world, especially Europe and even a small island called England!

Due to this relocation, he has had to resign from his position as Hon. Editor of 'HRH Reggie' but wishes to thank all those who sent information for publication (this has been passed on for inclusion in future issues).

Graeme would welcome contact with any other King's Engineers currently in Germany (02151 317 632), or anyone visiting on business or holiday

UPDATE

KCLEA Directory & Prize Draw

Many thanks to the hundreds of members who put pen to paper to return your membership update forms.

Unfortunately the overwhelming response, combined with a change of job, holidays etc. has led to a small delay in production of the new directory, but nevertheless, at the time of going

to press we still hope to publish before the end of November, in time for the AGM.

The winner of the Prize Draw will be announced in the next newsletter (March '95) by which time we should have worked out how to deliver the staggeringly enormous, but still secret, prize!



THE WAR YEARS - KINGS ENGINEERS AT BRISTOL

J.D. Harris, stalwart of KCLEA, recalls his years as an evacuee at Kings' Bristol.

During the war (1939-1945) King's College was split into sections and evacuated - the Medicals to Birmingham University, the Arts, Science, Theology and Engineering to Bristol University.

I joined the Engineering Faculty in 1940. Our faculty was united with its Bristol counterpart and we were both housed in the Merchant Venturers Technical College at the bottom of Park Street and thus had a fast five minute uphill walk to reach the Arts faculty buildings and the best coffee shops cum trysting places.

The teaching was partly King's from London and partly Bristol University. The co-operation and standard was excellent and we behaved as one and prospered.

The Student Union buildings were The Victoria Rooms which comprised a large hall with a stage and numerous other meeting rooms - these were all close to the main buildings at the top of Park Street.

In my first term Bristol was bombed after dark and a great deal of damage was done to Bristol and to the main buildings including the burning of the King's Arts Library in the main hall - no students or staff were injured.

Male students were encouraged to join the Senior Training Corps (Army) or the Air Squadron (RAF).

The Engineering Society, on which two of us were the First Year Reps, said we should join, so we did, only to find that we were the only ones so to do!

However, next year, by which time we had passed the various grades required, it was made compulsory for all and we were immediately promoted and our required attendance cut by half.

The Senior Training Corps ended up of battalion strength (600) with a permanent army staff to instruct us and two of us became Sergeant Majors.

Meanwhile, we all took turns at fire watching in any of about six locations, which used to work out, for the men, as once a week staying the night and being paid five shillings for food.

The female staffing was less than the male. Watch was kept for two hours each during the night.

I managed to do my duty in the main buildings where the control room was in the music room high in the tower which was furnished with two chaise-longue. It did not pose great difficulty to arrange a suitable partner on the duty roster.

Raids still occurred now and again but never so bad as the first, so dances were held in day-

light in the Victoria Rooms which were blacked out so the illusion of outside darkness could be maintained. One of the RAF dance bands used to play for us on payment of about £9.00! Each faculty would turn on a dance each term.

Sports continued - rugby, hockey (male, female and mixed), rowing (male and female but not in the same boat!), and swimming. The women's Hockey Club were privileged to have Margorie Pollard as coach who had captained England winning in Berlin under the eyes of Hitler before the war! Amateur dramatics prospered as also did 'The Dansants' at the Berkeley with their quartet headed by Mr Brooks.

Students enjoyed exploring the empty countryside on foot and bicycle.

I married Pauline de Guerin - Arts Faculty, a year after I graduated before going to the Far East in the Royal Navy, so I did not waste my time - 50 years ago.

I have said too little about the excellent teaching staff who watched over us all both academically and personally with great care, but credits would not be complete without mentioning Mr Dunkley (Dunk), the faculty clerk, who has recently died. He kept us all happy and working at a pace which he considered would be sufficient - he was never far wrong.



Members' Letters

From Alec Leggatt, 45-48

In turning out some old papers the other evening, I came across a letter I wrote to the Union Society in 1950. The background is that my first job after graduating was on the Resident Engineer's staff at the Glen Affric Hydro project, Inverness-shire. I was amazed one day to hear that Reggie had arrived in Drumnadrochit, about 20 miles away. Seemingly he had been captured by University College and despatched by them to the most remote and unlikely sounding place they could think of. As I had to be the only King's man within miles, I contacted the Union. My letter tells the rest of the story. The sad sequel is that UC got to know (through the press I suppose) of Reggie's return journey and he again fell into their hands on arrival at Euston.

The amounts in my expense account may amuse some of your younger readers, but the total of just over £7 has to be compared to my weekly salary then of £5.

Cozac Lodge,
Glen Cannich,
Beauly, Inverness-shire

30th March 1950

The President,
King's College Union Society,
London W.C.

Dear President,

Presumably Reggie is now back in safe hands once more and it only remains for me to account for the expenses incurred to close the matter.

The following is a diary of my activities with expenses run along side for convenience:-

<u>March 1950</u>		£. S. D.
Wed. 15th	Saw notice of Reggie's arrival at Drumnadrochit in morning paper. Wired Union for instructions.	1. 8.
	Phoned Drumnadrochit Hotel for information and told them to keep Reggie until I arrived.	4.
	Received telegram telling me to get Reggie back.	
	Phoned Drum Hotel arranging to collect Reggie in afternoon	4.
	Arrived at Hotel and was told that Inverness Police wanted to speak to me. Phoned Insp. MacIntyre and learned that a letter of authorisation from Union Society President was necessary before I could collect Reggie. Personal phone call to KCL to ask for letter.	6. 6.
	Arranged for carrier at Drum. for Saturday morn.	
Fri. 17th	Phoned Inverness Police in evening to see if letter had arrived yet. It had not. Phoned carrier at Drum. cancelling tomorrow's journey.	10. 4.
Sun. 19th	Arrived home late after wild weekend to hear that Police wanted me urgently! Phoned Insp. MacIntyre who said he wanted to hand over Reggie as soon as possible. Could I collect him tomorrow? I agreed to try to arrange it and would phone him in the morning.	1. 2.
Mon. 20th	Tried to phone various people but found that the phones over the whole district were out of order (official explanation - the batteries were flat!!). By late afternoon, however, someone had evidently pumped them up a little and I started organising the transport of Reggie for that evening.	



Members' Letters

	£.	S.	D.
Carried forward.....			
Phoned Inverness Railway station to enquire when the Parcels Office closed at night. Answer 8pm.		1.	2.
Phoned Carrier at Drum and arranged to meet him with lorry 6.30pm.			4.
Phoned Inv. Police telling them I would collect Reggie at 6.30pm.		1.	2.
Arrived Drum 6.30 to find lorry, Police (hordes of) and Reggie waiting to go. Set off for Inverness. At station local press much in evidence. Handed over Reggie to Parcel Office Clerk who weighed him with due ceremony gave me a receipt (encl.) and charged me.	4.11.		4.
He also enquired if I would pay his fare up here. I declined. I thought that it would not be wise to tell the press where he was going lest Reggie be met by strangers at Euston. This involved tipping Railway Clerks to keep labels hidden until press had gone.		5.	0.
Evidently failed for the morrow's papers told all. However, the departure went smoothly and after paying Carrier I returned home.	1.10.		0.
Tue. 21st Telegram to the President notifying departure of Reggie			<u>2. 2.</u>
	TOTAL.....	<u>£7.</u>	<u>3.10d</u>

That concludes the expenses. I regret they present a rather alarming total but apart from the two major items, the long distances here make telephones very expensive. I could have economised by sending Reggie by goods train: but I feel you will agree that he is worthy of something better.

In times past when Reggie was as yet unstuffed and easily transported, the expenses would have been greatly reduced for I could have arranged for private transport to Inverness gratis.

As I was a strong advocate of Reggie continuing his hollow state I can't help saying to the royal stuffers 'Serves You Right'

Yours seriously,

From George P. Barden

Dear Editor,

Thank you for the copy of Reggie. I was pleased to be able to resume contact with the KCLEA. Since returning from Canada, where I did belong to Friends of King's in Canada, I have not been in touch.

I was sorry to read of the passing of Harold Dunkley. My first year at College was in Bristol and I recall his fatherly advice to we youngsters and his ability to keep us encouraged and up to date with coursework.

It is nice to be back in Bristol after 50 years. There have been

many changes since those days but I still recall dashing up Park Street, between lectures, to enjoy coffee in the Berkley. We knew that the girls would be there. (Socialising was somewhat different then compared to modern college life). The Berkley, though, is now a series of shops and one can no longer linger over a coffee to the sound of the Palm Court Trio.

Being in Bristol makes attendance at evening functions somewhat expensive. May I suggest the idea of dinners, or lunches, in the regions. Bristol would be a good centre for the South West. The Friends in Canada, although largely centred on Toronto, did have functions in other cities. In

fact we had an enjoyable evening entertaining Professor Sutherland and his wife in Ottawa in 1989.

I shall look forward to receiving further issues of Reggie,

Yours sincerely,

Any opinions expressed in Members' Letters are not necessarily those of the Editor or the Committee of KCLEA.

Please send your letters to the Hon. Editor (address on the back page). We will attempt to publish all letters received, but cannot guarantee a reply.



Obituary

Jack Cobden Purser

We are very grateful to Mrs Joyce Purser for sending us this obituary for her husband, Jack. Our condolences go to Joyce and the family.

Conceived in the highest inhabited point in the Chilean Andes, born in Dover in 1913 (his mother went out to Chile round the Horn and returned through the Panama Canal), married in Peterborough, died in Cabanas de Tavira, on 5th March 1994, and buried at Taviras, Portugal:- Jack Cobden Purser, King's College London 1930-34.

Various state schools in Sussex, Maidstone Grammar School and Ardingley College preceded work on the Aswan High Dam at Naghmadi before KCL, where Presidency of the Engineering Society was one of the proudest achievements of his life.

After sampling jobs in the Great Wen (Murex Welding, LCC, Meik & Halcrow), he opted for open air and quality of life rather than affluence, and spent the rest of his life in land drainage.

He was first with the old Nene Catchment Board (intimately concerned with the Nene's well-being because for the first six years of his married life he lived in a houseboat on that river). He then became engineer to the North Level Internal Drainage Board, taking over just before the great inundations of 1947, and spent the rest of his working life ensuring that some of the most productive fenland in the country should never be flooded again.

He retired early, and never spent another winter in England, on doctor's advice, though he always looked robust and fit. For several very happy winters he and his wife acted as decorators and handymen to an Englishwoman's villa in the Peloponnese in a little fishing village, but after that was sold the Algarve became the favourite retreat.

He leaves four children (a fine bequest) and a widow. The sort of man who couldn't make an enemy if he tried (which he didn't), of courage, humour, gentleness, compassion, wit and integrity.

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Meeting Dates & Events

Committee Meetings:

21st September
1st November

AGM:

2nd December

Annual Dinner

10th February 1995

Committee Members

President: Keith Newton
Vice Presidents: Ray Horner
Al Steger-Lewis
Bob Hawken
Colin Wilson
Charles Turner
Stanley Earles
Honorary Secretary: Sue Doran

Hon. Treas: Bev Steger-Lewis
Past Presidents: Liz Beckmann
Ron Marsh
Memb'ship Sec: Peter Weitzel
Honorary Auditor: Ian Williams
Trustees: Philip Brierley
Dennis Cooper
Maurice Kenn

Ctte Members: John Harris
Roddy Haswell
Norman Borrett
Julian Bean
Lara Brookes
College Liaison: Dr M Clode
Honorary Editor: Tamer Emer