

Chairman's Report 2020

Despite the ravages of the pandemic, the Club did manage to squeeze in a number of notable events before lock-down.

Towards the end of 2019 the traditional drinks parties were held in London (at the Cavalry & Guards Club), Birmingham and Shrewsbury. Overseas there was a gathering in Dubai, where a planned OS v The World cricket match in March had to be abandoned to make way for the stranded Chinese national football squad. In February two more university OS student gatherings took place in Oxford and Bristol, the latter involving Salopians at Bristol, UWE, Bath, Cardiff and Birmingham.

The Arts winter programme was sadly curtailed, but not before another memorable Epiphany service at St Mary-le-Bow in January, featuring an outstanding Old Salopian choir, as well as Evensong and a tour of St Paul's Cathedral in February. A healthy number of Old Salopians also supported the School Chapel Choir singing Evensong at Tewkesbury Abbey in January and the School's orchestral concert at Birmingham University in March.

A number of Old Salopian sports clubs have remained active before and after lock-down. In Fives the OSEFC had one of their most successful seasons to date, retaining both the Division 1 and Division 2 titles and winning the EFA Competition. The OS Hunt had their traditional fixture and dinner at the School in late November and did well to come 4th out of 34 competing Schools at the annual Alumni Race at Roehampton in December. Despite the difficulties of social distancing the Saracens assembled a party of 24 for their traditional Devon cricket tour in August, and the OS Football Club has shaken off the disappointment of being relegated from the top division of the Arthurian League with a recent convincing win in the first round of this season's Arthur Dunn Cup. The OS Golf Society has managed to organise a number of meetings, and the Sabrina Club has seen both men's and women's crews training out on the river. At the time of writing the OS Girls' netball team was due to start competing in their league in London.

Much of the Young OS planned programme has had to be postponed, but there is an active and representative group on the committee who will be keen to spring back into action, once restrictions are lifted.

The recently arrived Head of Futures (Careers) at the School has rejuvenated our careers programme and Old Salopians are both contributing to and benefitting from the burgeoning careers network, assisted by an increasing use of OS Connect, the alumni platform launched at the end of last year.

In August the Club transferred shares valued at almost £90,000 to the School for a dedicated fund designed to build up capital for the future.

Maxine Dimmock stepped down as Membership Secretary in August and has not yet been replaced at a time when Club activities continue to be restricted. However, I remain most grateful to Nick Jenkins and Christine Stephens at the Salopian Club office for keeping the show on the road, and we look forward to better times ahead.

Miles Preston

Chairman