



THE OLD CICESTRANS



The Alumni Association for Chichester High School for Boys

Enquiry from Mr Mike Baker rearding Mr Brian Derek Price, former mathematics master at CHSB

Mr Baker's interest in Mr Price began whilst carrying out work for Falmouth Art Gallery where the name kept cropping up, recorded as having donated over 200 paintings to the gallery's Henry Scott Tuke collection. His researches have shewn that Mr Price left Emanuel College Cambridge with a pass degree in mathematics in 1945 where, as a keen campanologist, he had been Master of the University Guild of Change Ringers. Mr Price first taught at Appleby GS in Westmorland before leaving to take up a post at CHSB around 1948. It seems that all his teaching appointments were short lived and, despite having managed to accumulate a valuable art collection, he seemingly died in reduced circumstances in West London in 2012, aged 87.

CHSB ARCHIVE SEARCH

The school magazine, *The Martlet*, Vol 5, No 6, July 1949, records that Mr B D Price MA Cantab had joined the staff in September 1948. In the same issue, in a report about a school concert held on 31 March 1949, Mr Price is listed as playing cello in the orchestra— indeed he was seemingly the only cellist!

In the next issue of *The Martlet* (Vol 5, No 7, December 1949) the School Notes section carries the following entry regarding the end-of-term service which had been held, as always, at Chichester Cathedral:

At the Cathedral Service on July 22nd, for the first time, the School provided its own ringers, under the leadership of Mr Price. This made the service an entirely School service, and the only unfortunate aspect was the failure of the organ just as the service was about to begin.

Mr Price the campanologist had obviously recruited and trained ringers from the school, and this training can only have taken place at the cathedral bell tower as no Chichester parish church had a peal of bells. These entries apart, he attracts no mention in *The Martlet* and is not listed as an assistant house master.

Geoff Wills, the OC's President, was at CHSB at the time and has provided the following memoir of Mr Price:

Yes, I do remember him. He took me for Maths during the academic year 1948-49 when I was in the Vth form. I remember him as a "good" teacher who could keep good order although being a somewhat languid individual. He was not a sporting type in any way and to the best of my knowledge was not involved in any of the school societies. I got on quite well with him and he always seemed to have time to discuss maths problems, I believe he was only at CHSB for a relatively short period of three years and at the back of my mind I seem to remember asking him when he left what he was going to do and I believe his reply was back to college for further learning. My main recollection is of him wearing a fairly distinctive blue sports jacket and grey flannel trousers ! Very sorry to hear that he died in sad circumstances.

The late Roger Wardale, in his book *Chi High 1928-1958*¹, records that Mr Price left CHSB for health reasons in 1950, during a period when the Headmaster, Dr Bishop, was having great difficulties in recruiting maths and science masters. To find the precise date – and official reason – for his departure it would be necessary to consult the CHSB records² held at West Sussex Record Office (WSRO). Records E35N/19/89 – *Staff List of qualifications and experience*, and E35N/12 *Headmaster's Log Book* would doubtless contain the answers, but unfortunately will be covered by the 100-year rule which means they are not available for public consultation. However, for a fee, WSRO staff are allowed to search such records for specific requested information. Their website is the best way into this.

The latest addition to the OC's own archive (which is deposited at WSRO) is three volumes of minutes of the Staff Common Room Meeting which provided the forum for staff grievances against 'The Magagment'- i.e the headmaster. Mr Price is not mentioned by name in any of the minutes from 1948 – 1951.



Mr Baker has provided a newspaper clipping from the *Bristol Evening World* of 31 October 1961,(left) carrying a report of Mr Price, then teaching at the Lord Weymouth School in Warminster, having invented an 'Electroic Bell Ringing Machine'. He is is pictured with his invention and, despite the 12 year gap, the photograph enables him to be clearly identified in the 1949 staff photo carried in *The Martlet* Vol 5 No 6., below.



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¹ Privately published in 2011

² The Chichester High School for Boys records are to be found under WSRO catalogue Ref E35N
www.oldcicestrians.co.uk