

The Old Cicestrians

Andrew Berriman 1950 – 2023



It is with deep sadness that we record that Andrew Berriman, member of CHSB staff from 1982 to 2009, died on Monday. 31 July after a three-year battle with cancer.

This first part of our tribute is written by John Child, who was also appointed to the staff of CHSB in 1982 as the Head Design Technology whilst Andrew was appointed as Head of 6th Form at CHSB.

We quickly became good friends as we both had young sons of a similar age who went on to select CHSB as their secondary school of choice.

Andrew was a very talented, hard-working teacher who inspired many students with his enthusiasm and depth of knowledge for his subjects, namely History and Politics. He joined a young, department of enthusiastic history teachers who engaged their charges in wanting to know more. They organised field trips to bring history to life including annual school minibus trips to the Battle Fields of Northern France. These seemed to frequently end up with the teachers having differences of opinions as to which way it was to the next monument; this brought much hilarity from the youngsters!

The trips helped to make the boys realise the enormity of the wars that had occurred so close to their own country and the devastation they had wrought. This was Andrew's style of teaching.

Andrew was a keen observer of Politics and when possible he would invite local politicians to come to the school to talk/debate with the A level students. This was very revealing. I recall I was asked to sit in on one of these 'debates' where the serving local MP was clearly 'squirring' under such incisive questioning by the gathered group. This was soon resolved as the MP's 'Minder' took over and only allowed 'easy questions to be put to his boss!!!

It was during this period that Andrew worked with Roger Tilbury (who was his very talented assistant in the 6th form) to develop a CHSB Public Speaking Team. They were most successful. The CHSB team reached the National finals for 3 years out of 4 and won the National Final in 1988. A quite exceptional achievement!

Beyond the classroom Andrew worked tirelessly to encourage all students to realise their potential. CHSB was becoming known as a very successful school in many areas, be they academic, sporting or supporting areas of the community.

Andrew invited Anita Roddick, MD of the Body Shop in Littlehampton to talk about being a world leader. He encouraged the Sixth Form committee to fund-raise each year for local charities. This was most successful and gave the 6th Form a very positive profile in the local press.

One of his abiding wishes was for students to realise their potential, take opportunities when they presented themselves, to think BIG. He would meet small groups of Sixth form students considering their University applications and guide them on how to present themselves in a positive light. The school had exceptional success in students applying for places at Oxford and Cambridge Colleges. Just a few examples: 1990: Six Students gained places at Oxford & Cambridge, 1993: Three students achieved First Class Honours from Oxford & Cambridge. 1995: 7 students went to Oxford or Cambridge. These are just a few examples of CHSB students not only realising their potential but also proving that state schools could mix it with the best.

In 1995, at last, Andrew could open the brand new 6th Form Centre, a superb facility (designed by former CHSB student David Seaman) built on the Main School site. This was a great improvement on the old buildings and brought about a true combining of CHSB and CHSG into One Sixth Form. It went down very well with the students and staff alike.

The students continued to excel in their achievements in this stimulating environment; Edward Sawyer, in a national A level French Examination was awarded the highest mark of all students nationally in the AEB examination. Six other High School sixth formers gained places at Oxford or Cambridge. It is unfortunate that it is mainly Oxford and Cambridge who publicise their results in this way as so many other students were equally successful in their own respective universities.

Whilst all this academic success was being achieved the school was also achieving great success on the Sports Field. In particular the School Rugby 1st XV had an exceptionally successful year culminating in them being awarded the Daily Mail Team of the Year 1993/94.

Whilst all this success was being achieved the sixth form students were also undertaking their annual charity fund raising, raising £5,000 for local charities.

Finally, it would be wrong to close this recollection of Andrew and his contribution to CHSB without mentioning his sporting interests! Throughout his time at the school he was a keen member of the Staff Cricket Team (often wicket keeper). We played matches against other local cricket clubs but our 'needle match' was when we played the annual game against the Boys Cricket Team!! Andrew was very keen that we showed the boys how the game should be played!

His other sporting love that he played against the students and staff was tennis during the summer term. In later years he joined a small group of staff members who after weekly staff meetings took out their frustrations by hitting a very small, defenceless ball on a squash court!! He was always rather cautious of how some of us had rather large elbows flying about the court in what he would consider as a reckless manner!!

While there were several changes of Head teacher at CHSB, Andrew continued to put his heart and soul into 6th form and the success of the Chichester High School 6th form continued to flourish. His retirement from CHSB in 2009 was in some ways the end of an era; but Andrew did not see it that way and he channelled his energies into pastures new that he had always wanted to explore.

We thank him most sincerely for all he gave to Chichester High School over so many years. There will be many former CHSB students who will be very sad at his passing but very grateful for all the enthusiasm and support he gave them in realising their own potential.

Thank you Andrew,

You were an exceptional Teacher and motivator.

John Child, Friend and former CHSB Deputy Head.

The second section of the tribute is by Alan Green who was a fellow local historian

I first encountered Andrew at Chichester Local History Society where we quickly discovered our joint connection with Chichester High School for Boys – he as a member of staff and me as a former pupil, albeit my time there was way before his tenure. We also discovered that we were born just three days apart in November 1950 – he being the junior one!

At the school he had taken on the unofficial role of School Archivist and, as no-one else seemed to be interested in the history of CHSB, he saw to it that, before he retired, important documents and photographs would be deposited at West Sussex Record Office rather than ending up in a skip. I spent many happy afternoons with him after school going through and helping to sort the collection he had amassed over the years in a filing cabinet in his office. Little did we realise that in 2016, seven years after his retirement, CHSB would be no more thus making this exercise even more important.

Outside school he took a very keen interest in the history of his adopted city, and early on joined the aforementioned Chichester Local History Society, giving his first talk there in 1986. He became a regular contributor to the Society's journal *Chichester History* which he edited between 1988 and 1990 and again from 2010 to 2014. For his final edited issue all the articles were written by authors who had a CHSB connection! He was Society Chairman from 1997 to 2003 and had been its secretary since 2011. Of recent years he has been writing an historical feature for *Sussex Local* – a monthly freebie magazine - as well as contributing to *Lavant News*. He had established the link with Lavant through having played cricket for them, and his daughter having been married there in St Mary's church.

He self-published his first book, appropriately titled *In search of Lavant*, in 2020 followed by *In Search of Fifty South Downs Villages* in 2021 and *In Search of Chichester* in 2022. Many would never have suspected that he had produced these books whilst fighting the cancer he had been told was terminal, but he went about their production and marketing himself with great zeal. He was working on his next opus, *Forty Coastal Villages*, when death finally overtook him.

He also took an active role in the life of the city and other organisations with which he became involved after retirement were the Friends of Brandy Hole Copse, where he led work parties, Heartsmart, for whom he conducted weekly country walks, the Walls Walk Trust and, if that were not enough, he was also a City Green Badge Guide. When not engaged in these activities he could be found on the golf course, on the tennis court or looking after his grandchildren with his wife Mari.

He remained very active almost to the last, and In April this year he and I provided a double-bill of talks for the first-ever Lavant Heritage Festival, and just five weeks before his death he had been walking in the north east and playing tennis as normal. The end when it came was to be very rapid.

In accordance with his wishes he had a direct cremation which is to be followed, at a date to be advised, by a memorial service at St Mary's Lavant.

His passing has left a big hole in the very fabric of Chichester Local History Society as well as the other organisations to which he belonged.

Alas, as with his beloved Chichester High School for Boys, Andrew Berriman is no more. *Requiescat in pace* - as we would have said at CHSB.

Alan Green, Friend and Archivist to the OCs