

OW Dinners in Australia

The Headmaster and David Fellowes, Director of the newly created Winchester College Society, were both delighted with the very warm welcome given to them by such a wide variety of members of the Wiccamical family, whether young or old, during their recent travels to Australia, the Far East and the West Coast of America over the Easter break.

PERTH

The Perth contingent of OWs, under the aegis of Michael Harford (E, 39-44), have held an annual reunion for the past ten years, taking it in turns to host their Dinner at their respective homes. This year, the Dinner was held on Monday, 2nd April and kindly hosted by Andy Byk (F, 82-87) and his wife. The assembled company of fifteen included six OWs, (of whom John Prince, Coll, 37-41, was Sen Man), an Old Quirister, wives, and also the widow of an OW, which provided all the evidence we could possibly need that Winchester's flag still flies strongly on the other side of the world. This very happy occasion made for the perfect start to our tour. The next Dinner had been scheduled for 28th March, 2008 before everyone had had the chance to retire home!

SYDNEY

Ten days later, on Thursday, 12th April, we were guests at a strictly OW Dinner at the Union Club in Sydney, with over 30 OWs in attendance. The Dinner was magnificently organised by Peter Young (C, 61-66), whose inspired idea to invite our Australian Headmaster to this Dinner quickly became the catalyst for the whole trip. We were entertained by several speeches, including recollections of his wartime experiences at Win Coll from the evening's Sen Man, Leslie Walford (A, 41-45). A Headmaster's Commendation was awarded to Peter Hadden (D, 88), who had flown in from New Zealand in the late afternoon, only to be due back at work early the next morning! Plans were already being laid for the next Dinner to be held in Melbourne in 2010; a hot was then held.

The photographs are by kind permission of John Swainston (G, 63-67).

HONG KONG

Thanks to the generosity of its chairman, Sir David Li, The Friends in Hong Kong held a Reception on the 22nd Floor, The Bank of East Asia Building on Monday, 16th April. This was attended by many parents, past, present and even future, with several current Wykehamists and also OWs in evidence. The occasion enabled the Headmaster to meet many of those in attendance and also to announce the launch of 'Win Coll Soc' to one of its principal constituents, the parents, whether past or present. It is to be hoped that similar reunions will take place on an annual basis in the future.

The photographs are by kind permission of The Friends in Hong Kong.

Within the hour, we were in the Hong Kong Club for a splendid Dinner for about 30 OWs, most generously hosted by Piers Litherland (A, 69-74). As at all the Dinners we attended, the Director briefly outlined the concept of the new Winchester College Society, followed by a key-note speech by the Headmaster, who eloquently painted the educational landscape in which the College finds itself and in which it is currently flourishing.

SAN FRANCISCO

Our final stop exposed us to the extreme generosity of some parents, who had so kindly volunteered to host a reunion for 'all-comers' within the Wiccamical family. 37 were in attendance for a magnificent Dinner in their beautiful house overlooking the harbour, held on Thursday, 19th April. OWs and their wives, parents, and a retired don all enjoyed the occasion to the full, with Boris Ruebner (H, 39-41) taking the honours as Sen Man. This was the first reunion of any size on the West Coast for many a year and, it is to be hoped, not the last, judging from the reactions of those lucky enough to be in attendance.