



18 October 2020

PRESENTATION BY INCOMING CHAIRMAN – Phillip J Plato (73-77)

Ladies & Gentlemen,

I hope that everyone currently serving on the Old Pangbournian Society (OPS) has at least received one email from me with my CV attached introducing myself to you.

I have since had the pleasure of speaking with some of the Committee on the telephone but sadly due to unexpected work commitments of late, I have yet to speak with all the Committee Members. Several have spoken or exchanged subsequent email messages with me but if any of you have not yet communicated personally with me, I apologise and I hope I get to know you all individually very soon.

I am honoured to be considered as the next Chairman of the OPS albeit the current public health crisis brings numerous challenges not just for the Society but the College as a whole. I am determined to ensure the OPS prevails through these difficult times but I also want to develop the Society in several areas that I hope will both support the College whilst providing clearer pathways to how the Society achieves its agreed Objectives.

The Rules of this Society stipulate our Objectives as being: “

- a) *To maintain the tradition of the College and the ideals of its Founders.*
- b) *To keep Old Pangbournians in all parts of the world in touch with each other and the College.*
- c) *To promote united action in any scheme for the benefit of Old Pangbournians and the College.*
- d) *To support the Pangbourne Association.”*

I regard these Objectives as the definitions of “What” the OPS aspires to achieve. However, in talking to several of you, it is apparent that it is less clear, “How” we will achieve or measure our success towards these goals and “Who” is needed within the Society to be successful in achieving them. Accordingly, I hope my tenure will see some answers to these crucial questions emerge.

Many of you will perhaps wonder why I have not referred to the issues of “Why” or “When”, and the answer is that I hope as a Committee we can review these issues in the course of

specific projects, but for now the general question of “*Why*” we need to be focused is I hope self-evident in that the Society must be as supportive as it can to the College in these challenging and Covid chastened times.

More specifically, under my Chairmanship I hope to establish.

- How the Society will manage its affairs generally given the reduced supportive resources at its disposal, notably without Karen Hartshorn, who sadly leaves the College in January, and as Robin Knight understandably seeks less demanding involvement?
- On this related theme, I will want to clarify who will oversee the maintenance of a regular OP Magazine and in what format will it be published in future and how the OP Society will contribute to the content of that publication?
- How can the Society engage with the Governors and other stakeholders in the Pangbourne Association? Whilst I hope the Headmaster will maintain his much valued attendance at OPS meetings, I *also* hope to offer an open invitation to the Chairman of Governors or a representative of the Governors to attend any OPS meeting too and I hope this may result in a reciprocal offer that promotes a free flow of ideas between us whilst doing likewise with other stakeholders in the Pangbourne Association such as parents of students & OP’s.
- How can the Society extend its appeal to *more* OP’s particularly those more recent College leavers? It is a personal challenge of mine to get more OP’s engaged with the Society *regularly* possibly by the Society adding to the number of successful sub groups that are currently championed by OP Golf & Sailing, either by reinvigorating OP Cricket, Hockey, Rugby & Rowing or possibly by exploring the creation of new recreational sub groups such as (say) Motoring & Motorcycling or Aviation?
- Who will be the new people to administer any such new or reinvigorated subgroups? How do we incorporate *overseas* OP’s groups into these activities?
- Likewise, I want to explore how the Society can raise its profile to attract more OP’s for life, *especially* the younger and *female* OP’s, and how we can inspire them to see the Society as part of a lifestyle community with a *global* network? My hope is that *early* engagement with pupils whilst they are still at the College, possibly by the Society being more active at College Careers Fairs and by highlighting the career networking opportunities the Society should offer from say enhancing the OP LinkedIn page or from developing other potential Business To Business (B2B) networking initiatives that I hope the Society may develop. Other College events may also be utilised to illustrate to students what we do and how *they* can benefit socially and professionally *throughout their lives* by engaging with the Society.

I realise these are challenging questions and tasks, particularly in the current climate, but I hope that with the Committee’s assistance, I can develop these thoughts so we can achieve the Society’s overall Objectives. I look forward to working with the Committee and exploring these ideas further with you all! Thank you

Phillip Plato FIoD DipSurv MRICS