

ROOT '76, The 1976 Reunion, 19th/20th November 2016.

Steve White

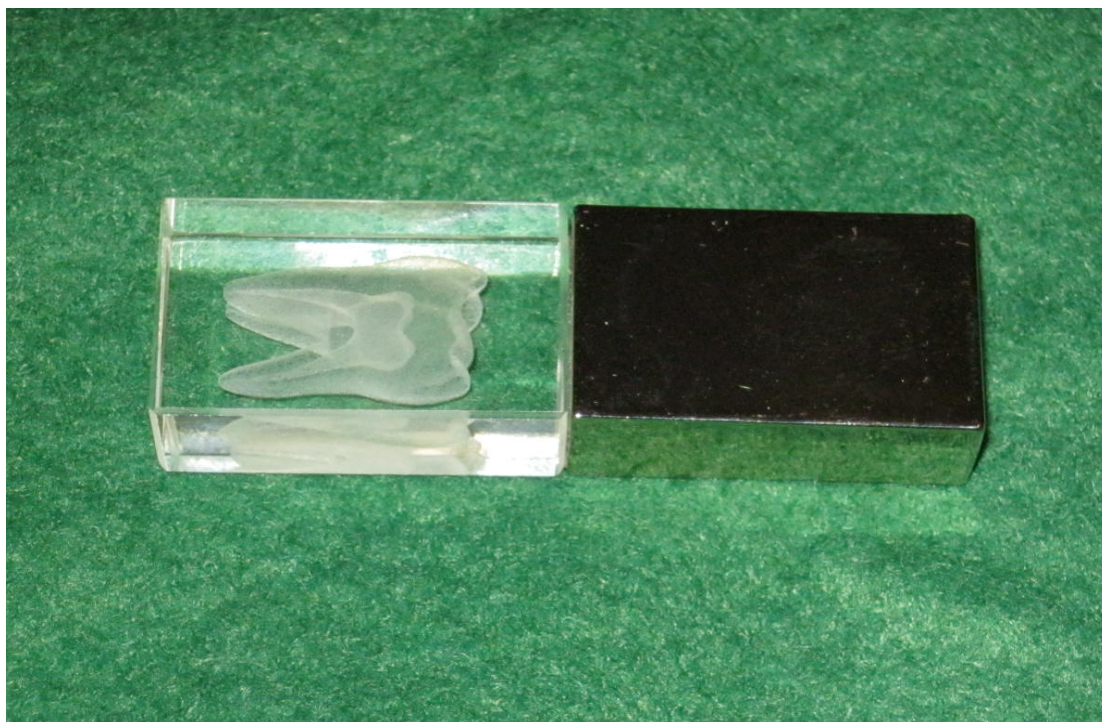
The organisers of this reunion faced some tough questions: is anyone still working? Is there any point in 'reunioning' if they aren't? Are there any of the year of '76 left alive? And will our combinations of ill-health and medications allow us to share a glass of wine in comfortable surroundings? Well, I am delighted to report that in spite of some serious doubts at the outset a very enjoyable time was had by all. Yes we are all a little greyer and older, but on looking around the roomful of attendees we are doing fine.

Thanks to the efforts and organisation of Geoff van Beek and Paul Baines we had a delightful Italian meal on the Friday evening, full of life and conversation and, dare I say, a little something alcoholic that set the mood for the whole weekend. It was wonderful to welcome both Reg Andlaw and Chris Stephens and that, though now of course off-duty, they remain very much alive and active.

It had been five years since our previous reunion, and there was a lot of catching up to do. It was wonderful to see the wide variety of activities our classmates are following, both inside and outside dentistry: the Saturday morning talk subjects ranged from a 'Heliganesque' restoration of lost Victorian gardens to a short film of Bristol life, via philosophy, dentistry both good (for kids worldwide) and bad (for anyone still practising in Holland!), TV film sets, ecclesiastical health and safety, and a little Chinese NHS makeover.

At previous reunions there have been opportunities to see the changes in the dental school but this year we had a free afternoon in which to explore the very changed heart of Bristol. I think most of us will admit that over the past forty years the city has moved on, with many major redevelopments to the point where a 'satnav' is essential for getting around. Nevertheless the atmosphere on the streets in Bristol is vibrant. The inhabitants on Saturday were overwhelmingly cheerful in spite of the weather and we were well prepared for a formal dinner at the Bristol Marriott Royal Hotel in the evening.

I am delighted to report that the ladies have still 'got what it takes' dress-wise, the men still fitted into some very smart dinner suits and the conversations which started over dinner continued until well after midnight. Of course we remembered all who weren't with us that evening, but in a celebration of the good times, we wished that they were. To help us remember, a work of art was given to every graduate: the modernity of a memory chip married to an artistic portrayal of a molar seen in cross-section, the whole set in crystal with a silver cap. A real treasure (see photo below)



All of which brings me onto breakfast: an excellent meal but sadly a sign that the weekend had ended all too soon. On a happier note it was clear that all those who managed to attend have high hopes that we will have another 're-une' in five years' time. And I would like to pose the sixty-four thousand dollar question now: will anyone *still* be doing dentistry? I look forward to seeing you all again in five years.



From L to R

Back Row: Paul Baines, Hugh Devlin, Pete Duke, Dave Hardy, Paul Davies, Bert Jukes, Geoff van Beek, Pete Grimes, Richerd Rycraft, Raman Bedi, Steve White, Dave Reekie, Bill Falconer-Hall, Reg Andlaw, Chris Stephens.

Front Row: Cathy McDade, Jane Wood, Jacky Thckeray, Sophie Rudge (née Heppenstal), Louise Sowden, Claire Foster, Anne Muirhead, Judith Chapman (née Pym)