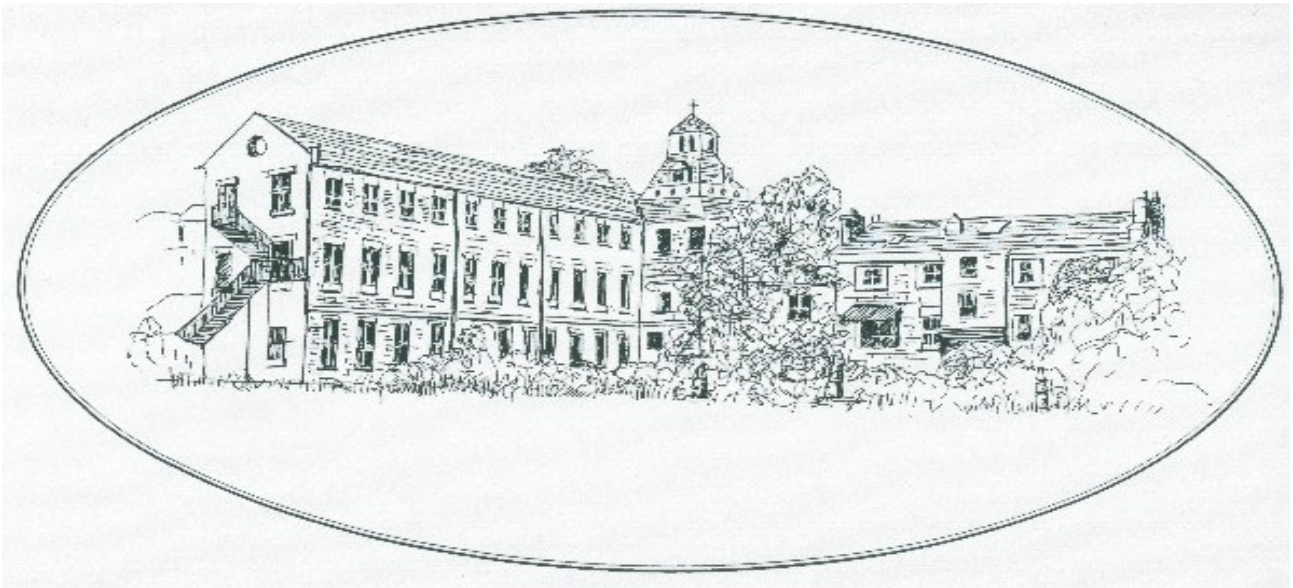


Clapper

The Newsletter of the Clapham Old Xaverians' Association

Summer 2009



Concordia res parvae crescunt

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Editorial

It has been an honour editing this newsletter and I am very grateful for all the help and encouragement that I have received from other Old Xaverians during the last two years. When I accepted the challenge of editing Clapper one of my objectives was to place past editions on the Clapham Old Xaverians' Association web page where they could be read by former pupils of the College who may have lost contact with the Association. All the editions from Summer 2007 are now available in this way and can be read from anywhere in the world.. So this is my final edition. One day I will look back at this time and plough into a parked car (with apologies to Evan Davis).

Football Club Captain's/Honorary Secretary's Report Season 2008/09

We still have an amalgamation of **Eddie**, **Spencer** and **Luke** dealing with the responsibilities of Hon Secretary and Club Captain. **Eddie**, again relieves much of the burden by reporting the results on top of his onerous Match Secretary role. **Luke** has also assisted greatly in dealing with Captain's Meetings and the general management of the football section. We have not yet split the roles of Club Captain and Honorary Secretary so it is still correct to have one report dealing with both matters.

The gravest problem of 2009 is finance – we will be making a loss of over £2,000 and therefore a budget for 2009/10 has been agreed by the existing committee after great debate that will require the increase in Annual Subs for all to £50, Match fees for the waged to £8 and to introduce Match fees for Students in Full Time Higher education to £3 – schoolboys will still not be required to pay either Annual or Match fees. Without these increases, which still represent value for money compared to other clubs then it would not be long before the club would not be able to afford to continue. Great support is required by players paying up on time, captains reporting the receipt of monies efficiently to the Club Treasurer.

On the social side, we do need more fundraising and to support functions at the clubhouse in greater numbers as a great deal of effort goes into running these events from the likes of **Lisa** and **Jackie**. In addition it is hoped to run a raffle for FA Cup final tickets that is open to members of the football club and association. The profits generated from these events will help to cover the running and maintenance costs of the clubhouse, without which we will merely be a pub team. In addition, the more we put in the more we get back, if we help the Association to make a profit, they will be more likely to assist us in funding new kit, replacement equipment and even maintenance of the Norbury pitch. All of which, if we chose to proceed with without support from the Association would lead to a further increase in Annual subs and/or match fees. I appreciate that Norbury may not be the centre of most people's social world, but surely it is not much to ask for teams that play at home to get back there for a quick couple (orange & lemonades if driving) and to support a few functions a year on a Saturday night??? I do note that for those playing away, especially if you do not live in the Norbury vicinity, it is not so easy to return, principally because we should have accepted hospitality from the opposition.

Whilst mentioning the Norbury pitch, it is in need of remedial work and is included within the budget for the forthcoming season.

On the football field, great strides have been made, the 1st XI now under the guidance of **Matthew Arnold** have returned to Premiership football.

The 2nd XI won their division to be promoted to Intermediate South under **Bernie Mensah**.

More difficult times were felt lower down, but with late surges the 3rd XI, 4th XI & 5th XI all survived in their divisions. Unfortunately the 6th XI were hampered by too many long term injuries and were relegated despite great efforts on the part of Chris Finch.

After the discussion over pulling up players after Thursday etc, there was a great movement of players between the 1st & 2nd XIs. Lower down lines of communication seemed to run pretty well between the captains but as players we need to support all captains and seek to play where we are asked to and for whatever team we are asked to play in.

On the disciplinary side, we received more cautions than last year and again just one dismissal. Ideally, we should strive to get the number of cautions down and not have anyone sent off. Do please eradicate dissent, there is NO excuse for it!

We have had to attend a Hearing at the AFA on behalf of one player accused of striking a referee, the result being that the AFA accepted that the player had accidentally caught the referee, even so a lengthy ban and hefty fine were two punishments he has had to accept.

On the refereeing side of things, we have been blessed with the support from Eamonn Taggart for most of the season, not only a very good referee, but will also return to the bar and spend most of his fee there as well. If there are any more ex players wishing to referee Clapham fixtures, you will be more than welcome and it will relieve one more burden from Eddie's shoulders.

Once again, many thanks to all involved with running the club for making our jobs relatively simple and relieving various tasks from our shoulders. This has been another enjoyable and successful season, let's look for more success next year. (the use of a WP saves typing these words yet again but with the support received will always be words that are meant)

Spencer McGuire & Luke Roszkowski

Football 1st XI Report

A season that can only be described as a huge success resulted in the COXA 1st XI returning to the top division in AFC football for the first time in 14 years.

After re-joining the 1st XI as captain from SAL side Nottsborough the main objective was to set about strengthening the squad to build a team with the capability of pushing for a place in the top tier of the AFC. This saw me working closely with the brilliant 2nd XI captain **Bernie Mensah** to ensure the relationship between the 1st and 2nd XIs worked more effectively to enhance the quality of both squads.

Position		Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	For	Against	Goal Difference	Points
1	Old Minchendenians	20	14	3	3	76	24	52	45
2	Clapham Old Xaverians	20	11	5	4	43	29	14	38
3	Old Suttonians	20	10	4	6	37	33	4	34
4	Old Belgravians	20	9	5	6	51	36	15	32
5	Sinjuns Grammarians	20	9	3	8	47	35	12	30
6	Old Challoners	20	8	5	7	27	32	-5	29
7	Old Ignatians	20	7	2	11	41	47	-6	23
8	Glyn Old Boys	20	6	5	9	31	48	-17	23
9	Hale End Athletic	20	6	4	10	32	52	-20	22
10	Enfield Old Grammarians	20	5	6	9	27	43	-16	21
11	Old Meadonians II	20	3	2	15	22	55	-33	11

After a brilliant pre-season, which saw the 1st XI blend several new players including the immensely talented **Michael Baffour** and **Chris Wall**, Clapham started the season fantastically, winning 6 of their first 7 games and topping the table in the run up to Christmas. Notable results were a 2-0 away win at Sutts on the opening day of the season, a thumping 4-1 away win at Ignations and a 3-0 home win against Sinjuns.

After such a good start the inevitable mid season wobble came. A horrendous spate of injuries – which included long term lay-offs for influential players such as **Darren Fox**, **Felix Asante** and **Mick Gorman** – co-incided with a dreadful loss of form and confidence. No wins for the next 5 games (and a couple of thumping defeats) meant the 1st XI were still in the top 2 but on a slide and fighting for every point if they were going to keep themselves in the promotion hunt.

The turnaround for the team – and the season – came in the away game with Michendians (who would go on to win the league). In an end to end barnstormer COXA prevailed 3-2 and regained some much needed confidence. With confidence back, and new addition **Olly Lee** making an immediate impact, momentum started to grow. **Simon Lambert** began to really grow in stature in the middle of the park and the goals of **Rio Bogle** and **Paul Hamilton** kept the 3 points coming.

The run in continued in the same vein with excellent results against Old Belgravians, Hale End and Ignations. These games saw the introduction of young 2nd XI players **Jo Pratley-Jones** and **Sam Thurston-Price** – two excellent players with fantastic futures ahead of themselves. Their contribution in the final weeks of the season was invaluable. Promotion was only definitely sealed on the last day of the season where a nervous 1-1 draw against Challoners was enough to secure second place and the promise of Premiership football next season.

The skipper was a proud man at the end of the season, and he recognised the hard work that had been put in over the course of the year. The campaign was built on a solid defence, containing two standout centre halves – **Chris Wall** and **Peter Codd** deservedly picked up COXA Player of the Year and 1st XI Player of the Year respectively. The midfield worked tirelessly and **Rio Bogle** and **Paul Hamilton** provided the goals up front to see through promotion. A special mention must also go to

Antony Kierney who broke his leg in the away game with Minchendenians. We're glad to see that **Antony** has made a fantastic recovery and will be pushing for a place back in the team once pre-season is upon us.

Next season promises a new challenge and we go into it with the hope of competing, not just making up the numbers. The standard of football will be higher, the levels of commitment needed greater. The overall objective is to consolidate our position in the Premier league, and then to build and press for honours. To do this the squad will need to grow in both confidence and quality, and it will do this by continuing to nurture the young talent at the club, whilst also looking to bring in established players from outside. The captain hopes the success of the 1st XI this season, coupled with the capturing of a new 1st team pitch, will work to help achieve these goals. A stronger 1st team will only benefit the rest of the club moving forward.

The captain would like to pay a special tribute to **Eddie O'Brien** for his tireless work – the club would simply not function without him – and everyone else who took part in a fabulous season, including those players who have not been mentioned.

Matt Arnold

Football 2nd XI Report

Position		Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	For	Against	Goal Difference	Points
1	Clapham Old Xaverians II	18	12	1	5	45	35	10	37
2	Old Sedcopians	18	10	5	3	52	33	19	35
3	Old Pauline II	18	9	5	4	45	34	11	32
4	Old St Marys	18	8	5	5	43	25	18	29
5	City of London	18	7	6	5	38	28	10	27
6	Glyn Old Boys II	18	8	1	9	30	33	-3	25
7	Old Tenisonians II	18	5	4	9	31	40	-9	19
8	Sinjuns Grammarians II	18	5	3	10	34	53	-19	18
9	Reigatians	18	4	4	10	37	51	-14	16
10	Old Whitgiftian	18	4	2	12	33	56	-23	14

Bernard Mensah

Football 3rd XI Report

Position		Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	For	Against	Goal Difference	Points
1	Marsh	18	13	2	3	57	27	30	41
2	Economicals II	18	13	1	4	48	31	17	40
3	Witan	18	11	5	2	76	40	36	38
4	Old Tenisonians III	18	9	3	6	52	44	8	30
5	National Westminster Bank II	18	9	1	8	43	31	12	28
6	Old Suttonians III	18	6	4	8	27	44	-17	22
7	Tilburg Regents	18	4	6	8	37	42	-5	18
8	Clapham Old Xaverians III	18	5	1	12	28	44	-16	16

Sam Vennart/Denis Sekula

Football 4th XI Report

Clapham 4th XI struggled through the first half of the season after being promoted two leagues up from last year. However, after Christmas break our keeper **Sasha Goryunov** returned and with a regular keeper the team fought back to end the season in 8th place. **Wesley Monford** played outstandingly in central midfield all year and was rewarded with his team's vote for MVP. However, all of the 4th XI played excellent week in and week out and are keen to start of next season strong with some experience now behind them. We also welcome new co-captain **Adam Price** who does and will continue to provide excellent leadership on and off the field.

Position		Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	For	Against	Goal Difference	Points
1	Economicals III	20	16	1	3	55	18	37	49
2	National Westminster Bank III	20	14	4	2	62	22	40	43
3	Malvern Chase	20	14	1	5	58	33	25	43
4	Old Wokingians II	20	10	5	5	49	29	20	35
5	Old Tiffinians II	20	10	3	7	44	37	7	33
6	Old Dorkinians II	20	8	2	10	47	54	-7	26
7	Reigatians II	20	7	3	10	44	62	-18	24
8	Clapham Old Xaverians IV	20	7	2	11	43	62	-19	23
9	The Comets	20	6	2	12	35	56	-21	20

Position		Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	For	Against	Goal Difference	Points
10	Old Guildfordians II	20	3	1	16	37	68	-31	10
11	Old Suttonians IV	20	3	0	17	24	57	-33	9

Mark Weyers

Football 5th XI Report

The 5th XI season can be split into 2 sections – the first lasted for 14 games, yielded 8 points and saw the team rooted to the bottom of Division 4 South. Despite the occasional encouraging performance, and good commitment from former members of the 6th XI and some new recruits to COXA, the team failed to gel and was punished for its lack of goals and overstretched defence.

Then came the final 4 games – a couple of people out, a couple of people in, three crucial wins, 14 goals scored and a surge of team spirit despite the team being down to its bare bones.

After nerves had set in at Woking (losing a 2 goal lead before a late winner, the scorer of which is still disputed to this day.....), and a heavy loss to the run-away side in 2nd place, the situation was simple – go to Tiffs, win by as many as possible and pray that results went our way.

An exciting 6-2 win made it simple – as long as Dorking didn't win 9-0 that day, the 5th XI were up. After 3 postponements, the best that Dorking could manage was a 5-1 win, leading to drunken calls from Munich from the captain to his squad. Never has a goal difference of -18 been so valuable!

Massive thanks must go to **Johnny “Sticks” Marr**, who held things together in the darker times.... **Francis Orioha** – in his debut season – won player of the season for playing in almost every position other than where he wanted to play.... **Nathan Joseph** won the golden boot with 14 goals in 15 games..... But full credit must go to those who stuck with the task, played like a team to the end and never gave up.

I'm sure those green shoots of recovery will turn into something spectacular next season...

Position		Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	For	Against	Goal Difference	Points
1	Royal Bank of Scotland II	18	14	2	2	71	18	53	44
2	Royal Sun Alliance	18	11	6	1	55	28	27	39
3	Temple Bar	18	9	2	7	39	26	13	29
4	Glyn Old Boys III	18	7	4	7	41	37	4	25
5	Standard Chartered Bank	18	7	4	7	37	44	-7	25
6	Old Sedcopians II	18	7	2	9	42	41	1	23
7	Old Wokingians III	18	6	4	8	37	45	-8	22
8	Clapham Old Xaverians V	18	5	2	11	33	51	-18	17
9	Old Dorkinians III	18	5	2	11	34	56	-22	17
10	Old Tiffinians III	18	4	2	12	22	65	-43	14

Football 6th XI Report

The 6th XI experienced a tough season this year - certainly the hardest one I've been involved in during my time at COXA. The squad we had struggled in a league which was probably (if I'm being honest) at a standard slightly too high for our collective talent!. Couple this with the fact that most weeks we were forced to field a patched-up side (due mostly to lack of numbers), and it wasn't really a great surprise that we spent the entire campaign either in or around the relegation zone.

With the exception of a purple patch straight after the Christmas break in which we managed to string a few decent results together, it was pretty much an uphill struggle from start to finish. However, the league position doesn't tell the full story. Apart from one or two games (notably against the top sides) in which we were on the receiving end of a drubbing, the majority of the matches in which we did lose were very close calls - literally one goal would end up deciding the outcome - some of which were harsh on our lads and undeserved. That's football !!.

My thanks must go to all the players who pitched in with the fight - both core regulars and the lads from other teams who rolled up their sleeves and got stuck in when it most mattered. With a bit of luck, we'll be able to keep the nucleus of the team together for next season, and with one or two new faces we'll be able to push on and up the ante !!.

Position		Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	For	Against	Goal Difference	Points
1	Old Bromleians II	18	15	1	2	59	36	23	46
2	Old Thorntonians III	18	12	5	1	67	24	43	41
3	Citigroup	18	13	2	3	65	32	33	41
4	Old Sedcopians III	18	7	3	8	48	50	-2	24
5	Old St Marys II	18	7	1	10	49	56	-7	22
6	City of London II	18	6	4	8	36	47	-11	22
7	Kings Old Boys III	18	6	2	10	39	44	-5	20
8	John Fisher Old Boys II	18	5	2	11	39	60	-21	17
9	Glyn Old Boys IV	18	3	4	11	27	51	-24	13
10	Clapham Old Xaverians VI	18	3	2	13	35	64	-29	11

A special shout should go to **Martin Donald**. He spent almost the entire season wearing the Number 1 jersey without any fuss (well, without too much fuss anyway!!), despite it not being his regular position. He also helped run the side when I was not available, and he thoroughly deserved his player of the season award.

Roll on 2009/10 !!!!!

Christopher Finch

Football Awards Night Report

On Saturday, 9th May the COXA football section met to celebrate another excellent season playing in the AFC and to hand out some well earned silverware.

Overall the season has been a massive success for the club on the pitch with 2 promotions, 3 teams sticking and unfortunately the 6th XI going down (after being jumped numerous leagues last season). Money has been a slight problem and the section is endeavouring to get the pitches at Highbury Avenue playable again in the very near future. This will ensure a good turn out at the clubhouse and hopefully keep attracting new motivated players to the club.



The awards were handed out as follows.

1 st XI Player of the Year	Peter Codd
2 nd XI Player of the Year	Richard Rooney
3 rd XI Player of the Year	Sam Vennart
4th XI Player of the Year	Wesley Monford
5th XI Player of the Year	Francis Oricha
6th XI Player of the Year	Martin Donald

Young Player of the Year	Sam Torres / Jo Pratley-Jones
Player of the Year	Chris Wall
Clubman of the Year	Berard Mensah

Huge congratulations to **Matt Arnold** and **Bernie Mensah** with the 1st and 2nd XIs. Lets' hope it continues next year. As the success continues on the pitch we are striving to make the club and clubhouse a welcoming place for players and prospective players alike. Hopefully the top two sides' promotion will filter through the club and help strengthen us as a whole. Roll on 2009/10.

As always the last thank you goes to **Eddie O'Brien**, without whom there is no COXA.

Luke Roszkowski - Football Club Captain

Cricket 1st XI Captain's Pre Season Report 2009

Following the footballers' success during the winter, it is now the Cricketers chance to bring even more triumph to the club in the forthcoming 2009 Cricket season, with the realistic goal for an immensely talented side being promotion to the Premier.

Before I continue with my report I would like to take this opportunity to thank **Kevin Horkan** for all his hard work and effort during 2008 campaign; sadly it was a very difficult and somewhat disappointing season for the club, as we merely escaped relegation by default with the withdrawal of another club from within the league. However during the off season the prospect of relegation appeared to ruffle a few feathers within the section and we immediately decided that if the Cricket side were to survive then drastic action was required. The decision was taken that we had to work together and recruit some fresh new players for the new season by advertising on various websites, networking and word of mouth. This has been a resounding success so far as the club has managed to draft in some fantastic new talent and from struggling to get just the one Saturday team out we're now pushing for two Saturday sides, which I believe is an incredible achievement. I'd like to say a massive thanks to all involved. Having returned from a year away travelling it was extremely encouraging and refreshing to see so many new faces ready for the challenge that lay ahead, and players from all over the world, not just the normal cricketing nations but also a young exciting player from Afganistan.

We started the season with a friendly away to Magdalene CC and after winning the toss I elected to bat. This proving to be the correct decision as we set a mammoth total of 312-3 off just 40 overs (**B. Walsh** 100, **P. Robinson** 96, **J. Cole** 77*), **Cole** and **Robinson** making their club debut, and the home side falling way short, finishing on a mere 136-7.

Our second Friendly was played away at Godalming CC. The toss was won by the home skipper and he elected to bat. It was a good start by the boys picking up 2 early wickets; however old habits begin to creep in with a number of dropped catches, mis-fields and a typical Clapham lull during the middle period of the Godalming innings enabling them to post a tough total of 191-3 off 40 overs. Despite what we believed to be a good total posted by the home side it actually turned out to be a stroll in the park for our boys and we knocked off the runs by the 27th over (**R. Macintosh** 82* **D.**

Costello 48, **M. Benedict** 36).

After a very successful pre-season it was now time for the serious business to begin. Our first game would be against newly promoted Morden Corinthians CC who won 15 out of 15 the previous season, so we were fully aware of the challenge that lay ahead. After winning the toss and electing to bat it wasn't long before we found ourselves in a woeful position at 54-6, however the lower order rallied well supporting **M. Benedict** by batting out the overs and guiding us to a competitive total of 175-9 (**M. Benedict** 82). Despite a valiant effort by the boys in the field we fell just short losing in a highly spirited and entertaining match by 2 wickets, (**T. Benedict** 3-24, **R. Macintosh** 3-44).

The defeat to Morden in the opener taught the team some valuable lessons and we've since bounced back with fine victories against Old Wimbledoians CC (**N. Khan** 4-14), and comfortably chasing down 210 with the loss of just 4 wickets against Beddington Village CC in our first home game (**J. Cole** 4-43, **D. Costello** 95, **R. Macintosh** 43*, **T. Maslona** 40).

Season so far:

I hope come September I'll be writing my end of season report having successfully been promoted to the Premier, as these are exciting times for not only the Saturday 1st team but for all three COXA

Played	Won	Lost	Drawn
5	4	1	0

Cricket teams representing the Club. There is great enthusiasm and expectation amongst all involved within the Cricket section and I believe good times lie ahead, so as a collective group let's keep up the good work!

I would just like to add the address of our new home ground; support from club members is always welcomed...

Rutlish School,
Mostyn Road,
Wimbledon,
SW19 3LP

Tom Benedict , 1st Team Captain

Joe Cole Signs for Clapham

Having spent the past half-dozen years claiming that cricket was 'my sport' yet failing to justify it by not playing a single game, I decided it was about time I bought some new whites and rolled my arm over. Without a team in mind I asked around and fortunately **Sam Vennart** ushered me in the direction of Clapham Old Xaverians.

Within a few days I was in touch with **Matt Benedict** and heading down to South Wimbledon for an overdue winter net. First impressions were poor. I was alarmed to see so many blokes wandering

around in white shell suits displaying the words “cox” and “ass” and in my confusion caused upset by mistaking **Matt** for his younger, but equally good looking, brother **Joe**. That aside, the facilities at Rutlish school (new home ground for the season) were brilliant, and with a bowling machine in action I guessed the cricket had to be of a good standard – although I did have further concerns with ‘**Damo**’ the Brash Aussie sniggering behind the controls. As the weeks went by numbers increased and before long a regular rabble of twenty plus had been established. A turn out which resulted in pre-season trial matches for those of us who hadn’t taken to the field as an Old Xaverian before.

My time came against Magdalene CC on a perfect late April afternoon, we won the toss, chose to bat and I was given the nod at four. Openers **Brendan Walsh** and **Phil Robinson** looked solid and soon began scoring runs for fun, so with **Richie Mac** at three and the overs running out I felt my chance to prove my worth in the side was slimming. With his head glistening in the sun (and **Brendan** soon to retire), I saw my chance and ‘accidentally’ flicked a ball in **Richie Mac’s** direction. Direct hit. I made my apologies but with mild concussion he lasted just 3 balls leaving me with 20 odd overs in which to bat. Although the bowling attack could easily be described as a buffet, I carried my bat and did just enough in the field to grab a spot in the first league game of the season two weeks later.

We lost the first league game, but it was a fighting loss and showed what the team was all about. After a poor start, the bottom order dug in and allowed **Matt Benedict** to score a vital 82 which put us right back in the match. We went out into the field with our tails up, rattling their top order and created an incredibly tense final few overs. Sadly they nervously edged their way to victory but that attitude awarded us with comfortable success in the following two league games and should stand us in good stead for the rest of the season.

All in all a great find of the cricket club; I think having 22 guys out in Balham every Saturday night speaks for itself.

Joe Cole

The cricket section runs two Saturday teams (one league and one friendly) together with a Sunday friendly team and a mid-week Twenty20 team. Anyone interested in playing should contact Matt Benedict (matt_benedict76@hotmail.com).

This year’s cricket tour is to the Isle of Wight from 24th to 28th July with matches against Ventnor CC (25th July), Sandown CC (26th July) and Arrerton CC (27th July).

Matthew Benedict

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Personalia

Congratulations to Clapham 5th XI's **Dave Halpenny** on becoming a father on the 20th March 2009 . Samuel (7lb 13oz), the new arrival, and his mother Soula are both doing

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We learnt from **Laurence Milligan** that his brother **Deacon Paul Milligan** had spent a few weeks in the Mayday Hospital following a heavy fall on ice in early February. He broke his tibia and fibia and had two metal plates fitted. He returned home on Monday 2nd March following some complications. Because of the medication he was given, he could not drink alcohol, which provided him with an ideal opportunity to give it up for Lent.

Laurence Milligan tells us that, having left the police service, he is now working at the Salesian School, Chertsey and that changes are afoot at our old rivals

Tony Piwowski has reported that **Keith Monteiro**, who is thought to have left the College in 1978, set out to cycle round the world on 1st April to raise money for charity. You can read about



his progress - and sponsor him - at

<http://www.theworldcyclist.com>

The last entry in Keith's log shows that he reached Odessa on the 11th July having covered 11,000 km in ten weeks at an average of 101.5 miles a day. In Keith's own words it was an awesome experience and achievement.

Congratulation to **Joe Benedict** and his wife **Louisa** on the birth of their baby boy. Jacob Ruben Samuel Benedict was born on the 6th June weighing 7 lb 11 oz.



We were sorry to learn from **Brian Sanders** that his brother-in-law, **David Carter**, had passed away in South Africa in February at the age of 68. **David** was a pupil at Clapham College in the 1950s. An outstanding Chemistry student, on leaving school he went to work for Crosse and Blackwell, subsequently Nestle, for whom he worked for the rest of his working life mainly abroad, in Switzerland, France and finally in Johannesburg. **David** was born in Chorley, Lancashire, the eldest of two sisters and six brothers. His family moved to London, just after the war when his father took up the position of Registrar in the then borough of Camberwell. Of the six boys, three attended Clapham College (**David**, **Julian**, and **Paul**), and three St. Gerard's (**Peter**, **Adrian**, and **Kevin**) so all were ultimately Old Xaverians. May he rest in peace.

Congratulations to **Julian Carter** and his wife **Karen** who celebrated their 20th wedding anniversary on Saturday, 13th June. **Brian Sanders** was there to join in the celebrations as were his sons **Stephen** and **Philip Sanders** and fellow Old Boy **Peter Carter**. **Stephen** had flown in from

Vancouver, especially for the occasion and the next day, persuaded by **Philip**, took part in the annual North Downs 30 km. race. For the record, **Philip's** time in the race was 2 hr 8 mins.



Francis Browne has very kindly sent me a collection of photographs of former members of the College staff, some of which I have included in this edition. The photograph of **Mr Pocock** eating an ice cream at a summer fete in 1967 was taken by **Martin Farrell**, who subsequently sold it to **Cecil** for six pence, and was assumed to be lost until recently. Recently **Francis** has been contacting contemporaries from the class of 1964, 6 of whom attended the Chairman's Luncheon and a larger number met for a convivial Curry Evening in Coulsdon the following day, 31st January. **Alan White**, who drove down from Ipswich for the event, picked up **Martin Simmonds** and **Kevin Bond**, en route and tells me that, despite a break of over thirty-eight years, conversation flowed throughout the evening as though it had scarcely been interrupted. The other diners were **Mike Murphy**, **Mike Collins**, **Martin Farrell**, **Mike Galtrey**, **Peter McFall**, and **Adam Kondziela**.

Sharp eyed contemporaries of **Raymond Quinlan** will probably have seen the obituary of his brother **Sir Michael Quinlan**. **Sir Michael**, who was educated at Wimbledon College and Merton College, was a leading strategist in the MoD during the cold war and a defender of nuclear deterrence. His obituary said that he 'was admired for his powers of analysis expressed in his unique style and his integrity'. May he rest in peace.

I am grateful to **David Leatham** for drawing my attention to an article by Simon Barnes in The Times of 10th January. Writing of the 'Big Freeze' of 1963-64, Simon Barnes says:

*Nash and Dixon won a bobsleigh gold medal in the Winter Olympics, but even they would have had to take second place to Barnes and **Murtagh**. We had the fastest sledge on Streatham Common.*

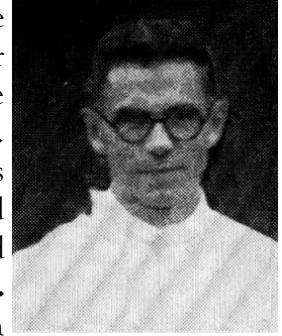
The run was sheet ice and vertiginous: initially daunting but in the weeks it stood we mastered it utterly. From the top of the run, just before Hill House Road, you could scoop beyond Hopton Road at the bottom, passing little kids and tyros and sticky-runnered sledges and fearful sledders with feet glued to the ground.

Asked to comment, **Matthew Murtagh** confirmed that Simon Barnes was a neighbour of theirs in their family home in Streatham, three doors along the terrace. He went to Emanuel School. The **Murtagh** referred to must have been his elder brother **John Murtagh** (left Clapham 1969) as they used to hang around together - Simon had two sisters but no brothers so the Murtaghs provided male company. Simon's father Edward Barnes was a BBC Producer on Blue Peter. **John** got in to see Crackerjack while **Matthew** was asked to read out a child's letter which Mr Barnes recorded and broadcast on Blue Peter - practically his only appearance on TV despite later working for the BBC for 18 years!



John McKenna contacted the Association through the website to mention that at the age of 76 he had just completed a degree at the University of St. Thomas in Fredricton, New Brunswick. **John** is a contemporary of **Chas Lawrence**, **Bill Bailey** and the late **Pat Breslin**. He recalled that he can still hear **Pat Breslin** singing Al Jolson songs in 'his own inimitable way' and that he went to the University of Hull with **Chas** and **Pat** in 1950. He and **Chas** joined the University Air Squadron. However, **John** liked the Air Squadron more than the University so he left Hull after a year to enlist in the Royal Air Force, where

he served for 25 years before taking an early discharge to emigrate to Canada. He told me that **Chas** refused to go beyond National Service and was "punished" by being trained as a second pilot on the Comet. **John** is pictured in this photograph of the 1949 1st XI standing between **Brian Sweett** and **David Nichols**. **John** remembers being taught to bowl the googlie by **Br. Damian** and climbing in the Lake District with the headmaster **Br. Joseph** (pictured on right).



From the other side of the world **Tony Curtis** also contacted the Association through the website. I think that **Tony** started at the College in 1952 as he was in the same form as **John Bunce** and **Jean Bouchard**. He remembers travelling to school with **Phil Leeder** and that he probably got the best of the bargain when he swapped bicycles with **Willie McGrath**. On leaving school **Tony** worked for British Relay Wireless before joining Marconi in Chelmsford and subsequently Cambridge Consultants. While living in Cambridge, **Tony** and his wife paid a visit to the College and he was distressed to find **Br. Dunstan's** greenhouse demolished with one of the grapevines still flourishing..



They dug it up and replanted it in the garden of their house in Bar Hill, Cambridge. Before leaving the UK, **Tony** paid a visit to **Br. Dunstan** at Mayfield. He recalls **Br. Dunstan**, riddled with arthritis, taking him to watch a cricket match that was in progress and pointing out a small green plot where the brothers were buried. **Br. Dunstan** pointed out **Br. Xavier's** grave and where he would go when he "retired".

Tony corresponded with **Br. Dunstan** until his death at the age of 92.

The photograph above shows **Tony** playing bowls with **Br. Dunstan** near the greenhouse. Tony was probably in 2 alpha at the time.

Mick Power has advised me that the two brothers who attacked and killed the banker, and former College pupil, **Frank McGarahan** were each given 7 year jail sentences at Norwich Crown Court recently.



Paul McCarthy has kindly sent me a photograph album that was given him by **Colin Luke**. **Paul** regularly travels to the Cayman Islands and meets **Colin** who acts as a consultant to a client of **Paul's** company. I believe the photographs were taken by **Mik Hodges** and they used to be kept in the reception room where we saw the school doctor in Broad Oak. I last saw them when I was being interviewed by **Br. Joseph** in 1953. The photograph on the left shows **Henry Pinsent** winning the Open 440 yards at the Diocesan Sports in May 1951.

Brian Sanders tells me that Brian Glasser, the husband of **Jeanette Hribal** who taught French at Clapham College, has written a portrait In A Silent Way of Austrian organist/pianist/composer Joe Zawinul. Considered the most important European in the history of jazz, and quite simply one of the finest bandleaders and composers in the history of the music, Zawinul with his group Weather Report pioneered the last seismic shift American jazz has known - the incorporation of world rhythms and new electronic tonalities, loosely known as fusion. Weather Report enjoyed 15 years of unmitigated success because they spoke the language of the common man without sacrificing musical complexity - exemplified in their hit Birdland. Before that, Zawinul had already made his mark in the bands of Cannonball Adderley and Miles Davis, for whom he composed the seminal In a Silent Way.

Harry Mellor has advised me of the death, at the age of 79, of **Peter Hayland**. **Peter** was the brother of **Michael Hayland**, a former Treasurer of the Association, and a contemporary of **Dennis Quin** and the late **Pat Breslin** and **John Prince**. May he rest in peace.

Tom O'Dee, who left the College in 1972 to study at Birmingham University only to leave at the end of the autumn term, has been awarded a B.Sc (Hons) in Matematics and Statistics after studying part time for the last six years while holding down a full time job. **Tom** now intend to use his new qualification by teaching several evenings a week while studying for a teaching qualification in the adult education sector.

Simon Cowdry, a former teacher at Clapham College and now at St. Thomas the Apostlle, attended the funeral of **Roy Keen** in June. **Roy**, who lived in Winchester, attended the College between 1947 - 1952. May he rest in peace.

Obituary

Dennis Hook (1926- 2009)



Dennis was born in Balham in 1926, went to Holy Ghost Primary School, and proceeded to Clapham College in 1937. Amongst his friends were **Len Powell**, **Freddie Walsh**, and **Tony Frost**. He told the story that they were all terrified by **Mr. McLoughlin**, the English teacher, who seemed particularly ferocious on a Monday morning - **Dennis** later found out that "Glockie" went out drinking each Sunday evening with Mr. Mulvihill, his future father in law!

In 1939 the whole school was evacuated to East Grinstead. **Dennis** described it as a time of adventure, yet one of great sadness - he remembered a boy called **Curry** dying in the cinema, when it was hit by an incendiary bomb ; he remembered **Brother Aloysius** calling **Westwood** off the football field to tell him his brother had been killed in action; and he said that **Brian White**, **Frank Mulvihill** and **Steve Ward** had been strafed by an enemy fighter plane, as they crossed a field.

After leaving Clapham, **Dennis** went to Durham University on the officer cadet scheme, as a way of entering the RAF. In 1945 he went to Arizona, as part of the Allies' fighter training plan.. He returned to the UK when the war was over. He then began training to be a surveyor, and qualified in 1953. In the same year he married **Brenda**, whom he had met at the Holy Ghost youth club. Over the years **Dennis** and **Brenda** had five children - Peter, Martin, Paul, John RIP, and Anne. Needless to say, his family meant everything to **Dennis**.

Dennis was an active Old Xaverian - how could it be otherwise, with two of his brothers in law **Don** and **Frank Mulvihill** as Chairmen of COXA? He played football with **Don**, **Steve** and **Maurice Ward**, **Tony Brinn**, **Bernard Farrell**, **John Flynn**, **Ken Torpey**, and youngsters, **Denis Quin** and **Pat Breslin**.

Dennis had been ill for some years, but remained active, cheerful, and full of fun right up to the end in May. His funeral at Virgo Fidelis Church was attended by, amongst others, Old Boys **Tony Frost**, **Ken Torpey**, **Len Powell**, **Mary Griffin**, **Mary Breslin**, **John Keenan**, **Harry Mellor**, and myself.

Dennis will be sadly missed by all Old Xaverians. May he rest in Peace.

Colin Garvey

Annual COXA Golf Day 2009

This year the event was held at a new venue, Darenth Valley and with a new trophy, the **Stan Miller** Memorial Trophy.

Let me start with a word about **Stan**. **Stan** will be more remembered for his years playing cricket, but he and I were irregular golfing partners. The last time we played together was when I invited **Stan** to play a four ball at my club with my brother **Frank** and **John McGuire**. **Stan** absolutely loved the day and often asked me when we were going to do it again. I hadn't arranged anything but there was a Golf Day coming up and I knew **Stan** would be there and I would be able to set up a date then. Of course **Stan** wasn't at the Golf Day and I could have kicked myself for having let an

opportunity slip. At a Chairman's Lunch one year I was talking to **Stan** and he was telling me how much he loved the Association. It was 'great the way people who hadn't seen each other for years just picked up where they left off'. The Association's greatest asset he said was camaraderie. Yes, we both said it together, "the little Italian boy". How we laughed!



Now back to the day itself. A field of 28 assembled to contest this year's competition. If you haven't played at Darenth I can tell you that the course is very forgiving and set in truly beautiful surroundings with fantastic facilities.

After a week of heavy rain it was a relief to find the weather was being kind to us. No rain and even a glimpse of the sun after a couple of hours on the course. Overall the scoring was very good but at the end we had a runaway winner. In third place was **John McGuire**, making a spirited defence as last year's champion. In second place was **Chris Smith** but on this day he had to give best to his son **Paul** who came in with 42 points to claim the trophy. Unlike previous years the prizes were restricted to best Old Boy score, best guest score and a nearest the pin. Having consumed the 'Chef's pie of the day, chips & peas' (the catering was excellent), we had a brief prize giving and **Brendan Williams** presented **Paul Smith** with the trophy plus a bottle of Champagne and a bottle of Champagne each to **John Kateley** (best guest score) and **Eddie Redding** (nearest the pin). The prize giving over we adjourned to the bar to enjoy a glass or two.

Finally, I would like to apologise to all those golfers who have supported the event in the past but were unable to attend on a Friday. My thanks go to **John McGuire** for his assistance in procuring the new trophy and his support along the way and also to **Aidan Coletta** who collected the cards and checked scores. My thanks also go to all those who supported the event and, as ever, brought along 'the little Italian boy'.

Paul Hixson

Annual Remembrance Day Mass



This year's Annual Remembrance Day Mass will be held in the College Chapel on Sunday, 8th November. The celebrant will be **Fr. Anthony Richins**. Mass will start with the traditional two minutes silence at 11:00 am. The Chapel may no longer look as it does in this photograph but the Annual Mass is nevertheless an opportunity to meet and remember old friends. Refreshments will be served after Mass and drinks will be available in the Plunkett Club afterwards.

Annual General Meeting of COXA and COXASASC

The Annual General Meetings of the Clapham Old Xaverians' Association and the Clapham Old Xaverians' Sports and Social Club will take place on Thursday 15th October 2009 at the Norbury Clubhouse at 8:00 pm.

In recognising the COXA Sports & Social Club as a Community Amateur Sports Club, Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs required the club to make two amendments to its constitution so that it fully complies with the Community Amateur Sports Club Scheme.

The two changes relate to membership.

In Section 8(i) it is necessary to insert the clause 'irrespective if they play sport or not'. HMRC are not just thinking of social members but anyone who may wish to contribute to the club by managing, coaching, refereeing, repairing pitches, supervising juniors, etc.

8. MEMBERSHIP

(i) Membership of the Club shall be open to anyone interested in

Association Football or Cricket irrespective if they play sport or not on application regardless of sex, age, disability, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, religion or other beliefs. However, limitation of membership according to available facilities is allowable on a non-discriminatory basis.

Secondly, Section 9 will also need changing as it contains a provision for candidates to be proposed and seconded by voting members of the club. This provision discriminates against a candidate for membership who does not know two members to propose him/her and therefore at odds with the open membership policy required by CASC legislation and should be removed.

Therefore the proposed new section should read:

9. NEW MEMBERS

A copy of each of the Constitution, Bye-laws and Rules shall be made available to all applicants for membership.(deleting the following 'who must be duly proposed and seconded by members entitled to vote.')

The current constitution is available on the website:

www.claphamaoldxavetriians.co.uk

Eddie O'Brien

400 Club

This is one of the main sources of income for the Association, which has to meet expenses each year for such things as - two issues of Clapper to several hundred members; Association correspondence; maintenance work at Norbury etc. Started more than thirty years ago by **Mick Power**, it had in its hey day over 400 members, and netted the Association perhaps £2,500 each year. In recent years the number of contributors has dropped to just over 300 members. In many ways this is still a very high figure, considering the school closed 20 years ago, and we're in a recession etc. However on closer examination we can see that some members have multiple tickets, bringing the number of actual paying members down to 100. (**John McGuire** has 10 tickets, as does **Eric Tope**, the **Amuras**, **Jimmy Burke** etc.)

The purpose of this message is three-fold -

If you are a member of the 400 Club, please don't drop out - we do need your support.

If you want more tickets, please let me know.

If you do not have a ticket, and would like to join, again let me know. Remember, we had 190 at the Chairman's Lunch, but only 100 have 400 Club tickets.

What do you have to do? One ticket is £12 a year. More than that - multiples of £12. Join immediately by -

Send me a cheque made out to COXA each year. or

Do it by Direct Debit quoting the following information.

Alliance and Leicester Commercial Bank, Bootle, Mersyside, GIR OAA.

Sort Code 72 03 54

Account number 583056903

Account name Clapham Old Xaverian Association. Sport and Social Club

Whatever you do you please let me know -

Colin Garvey, 84, Norbury Hill, London, SW16 3RT

or 0208-764-0313.

or mrcolingarvey@aol.com

The latest winners are shown below:

	£100	£50	£25
December	18 Club	E.Tope	E.O'Brien
January	P.Brown	P.West	S.Gavigan
February	F.Ryan	L.Williams	J.Connor
March	M.Preece	M.Duffy	K.Horkan
April	P.Flaherty	A.McPherson	J.Sheridan
May	I.Anderson	P.Leeder	K.Howard
June	E.O'Brien	D.Murtagh	M.Duffy

Colin Garvey

B EIJING 2008

Since 2001, when Beijing had been announced as the venue for the 2008 Olympics Games, my wife and I had harboured a “yen” for going to China. For many years I had been a judge at athletics meetings and Sue, a not unwilling spouse, had through circumstances got drawn into the media side of the sport. We had been to several major international competitions as spectators and so, as the summer of 2008 approached, decided that the Games would provide the excuse to start our retirement with that trip to China, albeit only to the eastern side; the west would have to remain for another time.

And so, at the beginning of August we set off for the stopover. On arrival in Bangkok, we were pleasantly surprised not to be uncomfortable with the weather. It was a short taxi ride to a very modern, five star riverside hotel in central Bangkok. Our trip, as usual, had been organised through the major operator of tours for track and field athletics and so its choice of hotel was superb. We promptly met our guide for the two days, a local Thai, whom we shared with never more than two other couples from other tours. He was great company and was to provide the usual tourist information but in a very humorous and pleasant manner.

We visited the Golden Temples and the Floating Markets. We had hoped to make a side trip to Angkor Wat, but the added time and cost made it prohibitive. Our tour operator assured us that seeing the Golden Temples would more than recompense.

The effect of the strong sunlight on the temple roofs was spectacular. Set in ordered courtyards planted with exotic blooms and presented in an orderly and simple fashion, the temples housed several Buddha's, some seated, some reclining. They are impressive in size and appearance. We enjoyed the peacefulness of the settings and had to be mindful of visiting Buddhist worshippers. The hustle and bustle of the Floating Markets is a stark contrast to the tranquillity of the temples. Traders display their wares waterside in a maze of narrow canals where you bargain from your narrow boat as your pilot negotiates the manic traffic jams that occur in some spots. The boats are driven by what I can only describe (possibly incorrectly) as large ex-car engines with long exhaust systems!

In the city, rather than a visit to the usual tourist night life, we took our evening strolls around the riverside streets, where much local business seemed to incorporate peoples homes, with all manner of entrepreneurial activity going on. If you needed something repaired, whatever it was, here was the place. It would appear that nothing is thrown away, spares abound. But! We were impressed by the tidiness and cleanliness of a sort, in what one would only describe as scrap yards. No litter and no graffiti! People, spilling out of the buildings and socializing street side, were friendly in appearance. We felt safe.

After our short stopover, we flew to Beijing by China Airlines, in a plane that could only be described as adequate and safe but lacking some niceties. Seat comfort could have been better, shall we say. However, after a breakfast of mainly noodles, this was made up for by the hot towels with which we could refresh ourselves before landing. Notable on the flight, was the appearance on board, minutes before take-off, of an officious looking gentleman who was promptly given a bundle of what appeared to be Chinese passports, who spent what seemed the entire flight, perusing them.

There followed a lengthy and somewhat heated discussion with a woman whom I can only guess was head of the cabin crew. All seemed to end amicably but I shall forever remain intrigued!

It was with some apprehension that we flew into Beijing. The city was said to be permanently covered by a pall of smog; would that have lifted for the start of the Olympics? As we stepped off the plane, we were met by what I would only describe as a 'foggy day in Beijing town'! So, I thought, the Chinese had not quite yet achieved what they were promising. Our worries had perhaps been confirmed.

The airport terminal is very new and built on a grand scale. Everywhere around had been organised for accommodating the large number of visitors arriving for the Games. We were politely and efficiently processed by immigration control. Despite the rigorous visa system and other information gathering in London that preceded our tour, documentation and passport photographs were examined intently and cross-checked on computer. However all was carried out in a friendly manner with much smiling all round.

We were met by our host who would be our Chief Guide for the whole of our time in China. Michael, as he asked to be known, was Mongolian, spoke excellent English and proved to have quite a sense of humour. He was from the China Tourist Service and, I suspect, had been a guide in the days when foreigners were accompanied at all times.

The hotel for our fifteen days stay was in a pleasant part of the city close to modern shops and substantial offices of the commercial business world. First impressions were that the hotel was in the style of what I would term "Chinese Baroque" and had perhaps been used in past times by the government elite; solid, business like but comfortable. Our luggage was quickly brought to our room and after a refresher, we set off for a walk around the district to establish our bearings. There was much evidence of new building and anything that was as yet uncompleted, was hidden by very smart hoardings. For the duration of the Games, all building work had been halted. From our hotel room, we could see into a building site where all within was neat and tidy. This was repeated throughout Beijing. At first glance along the new thoroughfares, one could have been in any western city but leading off were narrow streets, the "Houtons", where some of the old China remained. An old clothes-market was easily accessible but nevertheless separated from the modern by discreet use of various facades. The inevitable Starbucks, McDonalds et al, were much in evidence, their usual menus supplemented by items catering for more local tastes. I must make special mention of Pizza Hut. I watched with amazement how the Chinese achieved the maximum one salad plate can take. Whereas here in Britain, the plate is extended by careful layering of large lettuce leaves (provided they haven't been shredded!), in Beijing they build upwards, using as building blocks, chunks of fruit and vegetables cemented together with mayonnaise. Some structures were quite 6 - 8 inches high and thus one starter could feed a whole table!

With nearly a week before the start of the athletics, there was ample time to find our way around the transportation system and to visit a few places. We did not have tickets for the Opening or Closing Ceremonies, so those would be watched on China TV.

The Metro is superb. It is very extensive, regular and comfortable, with convenient English sub-text on the maps. Of course, the most modern state-of-the-art line is that serving the route from the city

centre out to the Olympic Park; a journey of about fifty minutes. Travelling by bus was a good way of seeing the city and simple to negotiate. At times it was standing room only and one was grateful for the breeze from open windows. However, there was one drawback. At about midday, one sometimes found that the bus would stop without any apparent advance warning and all would have to get off because that was as far as the bus was going. We believed that lunchtime had arrived! We heard that similar stops occurred at night when the driver's home time has been reached.

One thing Beijing's traffic does not do is stop – apart of course, for traffic lights. All goes forward, vehicles moving in and out of lanes and across each other's paths, cyclists, some with trailer attached, see a gap and go for it. Absolutely amazing and no collisions. In three weeks, we only saw two very minor collisions.

Our major sites to see were Tiananamen Square, the Forbidden City and the Great Wall.

The Square, a vast area, as such places in are, is a major place of interest for the Chinese, being the site of Mao's Mausoleum. Down one side is a very imposing raised area from where dignitaries view the massive parades. It was hard to envisage the area ever getting full. But there was nowhere to sit for a while! This seems to be a feature of large public areas in China. As if there is a fear of people congregating!

On day of our visit, we were on a guided tour of the square and so a big group. There were many visitors to the square on that day many, especially children, wearing regional dress: a draw for photographers. We would indicate politely that 'could we take photographs?' and were always greeted with great smiles and nods of assent. But then the tables were turned. We became the focus of attention and were incorporated into the pictures of many family groups!

The Forbidden City has within its outer walls, large areas that accommodated the imperial courts of the emperors, the royal apartments being a major interest. Some are still furnished and one is struck by their smallness.

Part of the Great Wall is close to Beijing, at Badaling, With great excitement we set off in two coaches of China State Tourist organisation that so ably handled all transport during our trip. As we approached, we were struck by the scale of the wall's ramparts and towers, as they go up and down along the hills into the distance, in both directions. It is easy to realise how the myth of being able to see them from space has arisen. The paths between towers are all quite steep and so we only went along for about two towers, enough to say that we had 'walked the Great Wall'. That proved to be a wise move, because without any advanced signs, the hills were engulfed in a storm of torrential rain that must have been very frightening for those on the wall at the time.

On the return to Beijing, the coaches took separate routes, our driver anticipating the flash flooding that surrounded the city and that delayed the others by an hour. Our driver declared that he was the best in the world and the other, the second best!

As the Games got under way we quickly got into a routine that ten days of major athletics at world

level requires. With the exception of the odd “free” afternoon or rest day, it was to be rise at six, breakfast around seven and set off for the Bird’s Nest by eight. Athletics sessions would start about ten with either an afternoon or evening session to follow. Some evening sessions did not finish till gone ten, so it would be almost midnight before we would be back at the hotel. Fitness is the key!

Anticipation would build up on the hour long trip to the stadium, the metro train gradually filling with spectators going to the stadia within the enormous Olympic Park. The trains on the major Olympic route are state-of-the-art and unmanned, with TV screens in the carriages, so that you can watch events live or see reprises of the previous days events. Some tunnel walls have painted scenes that provided the effect of moving pictures as the carriages go past.

The nearest entrance gates to each of the venues are about ten minutes walk from the Metro station along very wide boulevards on that vastness of scale that was a lasting impression from our trip. Congregating around most of entrance gates for the Birds Nest stadium were not only the usual hawkers of all sorts and people offering tickets, but others that just seemed to be there to soak in the atmosphere. To get through the gates one had often to join the end of a queue that snaked up and down, eventually leading to the inevitable security check by a metal detector and being “frisked” for whatever. It was all good hearted and done with many smiles by the welcoming volunteers who took every opportunity to practice their English. But there were always those in the background keeping a discreet eye on things. Once through the checks, that never really took more than fifteen minutes, one could relax and take a leisurely stroll to the stadium still several hundred yards away and the final hurdle of turnstiles to check ticket validity.

The Birds Nest is a vast arena-bowl seating around ninety thousand. The seats we had been allocated varied from session to session and were often in a top tier of seating. On our first visit, we did as told and climbed many stairs to reach our seats. Thinking there must be better ways and watched a little while at ground level for other options. It became apparent that some doors guarded by young volunteers gave access to lifts. So, we would choose a door close to the section for which we had tickets and then “go for it”, i.e. you proceed with confidence and with ticket prominently displayed, loudly announcing you have every right to enter as you cannot possibly go any other way because of age and physical ability. The techniques is not to stop. I would love to speak with the designers/engineers of the Birds Nest and ask why there is no better general access!

Once inside, I can only commend the venue for its comfortable seating with good sight lines. There was however, a drawback sometimes. If seated on the side of the stadium opposite to the Olympic Torch, ones view was often obstructed by groups posing for photographs. By carefully positioning themselves, they could appear on camera to be holding up the torch in the background! Stewards quickly got the message that the athletics cognoscenti seated nearby were not amused at this whilst events were underway.

The Birds Nest is one of several venues within the Olympic Park. The area is huge and can accommodate large crowds. But as with all the public areas we saw on our trip, we got the impression that ‘authorities’ do not want people to congregate in large numbers. There was no seating and we could only compete with others for a piece of what little grassed areas there were. Another “feature” was that the inevitable McDonalds and adjoining official merchandising store were quite a walk away from the stadium. It was amusing to meet people, doubtless seeking a food

option less unfamiliar to them, welcoming the sight of the building with its familiar red and yellow livery, when back home, they would never entertain the thought of a hamburger!

The athletics, needless to say, we had thoroughly enjoyed and whilst a focus of our trip, are really the subject for a separate piece. The many records have been well reported. On our final night in Beijing, with no tickets for the closing ceremony, with many others in the hotel, we watched it on Chinese television. Highlight of the evening was standing to sing the national anthem as the Olympic Flag was handed to Boris for safe keeping until 2012 watched with much interest by the hotel staff and great amusement by fellow Europeans!

With a great Games over, we met with Michael our chief guide, to begin our touring part of the trip. Several plane journeys over thousands of miles. Still no let up to the energy required.

First stop was Xian, site of the grand tomb of the first Chinese Emperor and of the underground tombs of the Terracotta Army. The hotel was first class and within it had a couple of two/three storey sculptures of ancient emperors that were most impressive.

The driver of our coach that took us to the resting place of the warriors claimed, he had a brother associated with the guardians of the site and that this had been influential in his ability to park within yards of the site entrance whilst other tourist coaches could only park at least a quarter of a mile away. I rather feel that this was a benefit of a tour organised by what I had come to think must be a state tourist organisation!

The Warriors, in battle formation, are a huge army of personnel, horses and equipment, that were constructed over several years, to accompany the Emperor Qin Shihuang Ling and many of his court, on their journey to the afterlife. Each figure is nearly six foot high and each head has an unique face. First discovered around thirty years ago, they have been excavated and occupy several "pits" inside a covered area of several thousand square metres. One can get quite close to exhibits, still in situ and not fail to be impressed by the awe inspiring scale of the site.

Now we would fly to the south, to Guangxi province, a much more fertile land of much rice growing. Next stop was Guilin in an area of stunning scenery, close to Vietnam. Guilin is famous for the cormorants used by fisherman to catch fish, often at night by the light of lanterns. The birds are well trained and keen to fish. Their keepers care for them well, allowing them sufficient ability to retain some fish. A must, is a trip down the river Li Jiang that runs between exotically shaped peaks of limestone hills. As you travel along you are asked to think of what each peak might remind you.

Our trip was nearing its end. A flight of some hours brought us to our final stop in China, Shanghai. Again, a first class hotel in the downtown area of modern high buildings. We stayed only one night but were able to get a brief impression by visiting the Bund home, especially during the Concessions, to many banks and trading houses, and by taking a night trip on the river, with its stunning views of the illuminated skyscrapers of modern Shanghai.

We flew on to Tokyo, for our final stopover. Now beginning to tire, we were somewhat reluctant to

stray very far from our hotel. Nevertheless, we thoroughly enjoyed walking along with the crowds, window shopping on the nearby Ginza. Only a short metro trip away, we visited Asakusa, which was Tokyo's leading entertainment centre some centuries ago. Its main attraction now is the Sensoji Buddhist Temple approached via Nakamise, street of small traditional shops.

Suitably refreshed by our two night stopover, we were in very good time to check-in for the flight to Heathrow and so were close to the start of the queue. After the usual perusal of passports and weighing of luggage, I was slightly alarmed by the booking clerk who, having printed out the boarding tickets, tore them up and started again. Seeing the look on my face, she smiled, "We are upgrading you, Sir".

What a superb ending to our trip!

Jean Bouchard, 1952-1960

The Clapham College Cohort of 1950-51

The first week of January 1951. Farewell to **Strzaker** (held down into our class to repeat his first year) who has now been bumped up to 2A because his Christmas exam results were quite tolerable. Forms 1A and 1Alpha continued with their usual interclass football matches timetabled for Thursday afternoons on Clapham Common. Each football captain selected a first eleven and a second eleven (although the second eleven sometimes numbered more or less than a regular team depending on the number of winter sicknesses and shirkers and those who'd forgotten kit). A trek in old fashioned leather football boots with studs, led by **Charlie Cox** carrying a net of old fashioned heavy leather footballs, took us from the changing rooms in the basement of Hollywood across the road to the middle of Clapham Common. We envied the first eleven teams who always played on the red clay pitches inside the "Clapham Common Sports Cage" refereed by Mr Cox whilst our second elevens matches were played outside "The Cage" on a progressively muddy pitch with no goalposts refereed by Latin master **Mr Olive!** After the games we all trooped back to the changing rooms where the hardier team members indulged in horseplay under the showers. The showers I recall were cold and best avoided – remember that even school boiler-house coke and coal were still rationed in the post war Britain of 1950 (though rumour had it that caretaker **George Day's** house never went short!).

Then, to our great surprise, the following week we were allowed to play our matches on the clay pitches inside "The Cage" – it was that season of the year for inter-house matches. As **Bill Blight** would say, "Find all the combinations of two that you can from Canterbury, Glastonbury, Charterhouse and Walsingham." On every Monday morning school assembly was conducted in house line-up in the school yard and the house captains and prefects coerced younger boys for pocket-money donations towards the legendary School Building Fund. This Monday was a little different. The senior football sports in each house organised first year house football captains and goalkeepers. We new boys were made aware that the Inter-house sports cups and The School Cup were major competitive features of life at Clapham leading to house-points gained. You were reminded you could also get points for your house academically with an outstanding piece of homework, drawing or painting, being first in class exams, etc..

Form 1Alpha was the end classroom by the fire escape, whilst 1A was the middle room, and 2A the other ground floor room next to the Gym. As new boys we took our lives in our hands to gain access to 1A or 1Alpha through the 2A domain. In the middle of that second term some event sparked off a diplomatic incident between 1A and 1Alpha. It was a matter of geographic necessity that enabled 1A to politely walk through 1Alpha – perhaps going to the Art Room, Geography Room or the Science Lab. Whatever! At the end of morning break or lunch time after our kick-about games in the yard the 1A boys began to cause disrespect to 1Alpha as we slowly strolled and swaggered through their room to our class. The crowd in 1Alpha initiated a raid into 1A, firstly using pellets and elastic bands and then a general melee using gym slippers and school scarves rolled and twisted into coshes. We would counter-attack and on one brilliant occasion actually cleared 1Alpha out of their class room into the school-yard denying them access to their own territory, only to see victory turned into defeat by the late arrival of the form master. Impositions of 200 lines for both classes. The campaigns were over.

There were the usual phases and crazes for paper flying darts, pellets fired with rulers or elastic bands, water pistols and peashooters. The most unusual was a development of the peashooter. One week a couple of peashooters with appropriate dry pea ammunition appeared. Now pocket money was scarce and generally reserved for tuck-shop fare: Pepsi-Cola, Coca-Cola, crisps, etc. But one entrepreneur went round to a small local grocer and hardware shop at the top of Balham Hill and came back with a couple of bamboo sticks and a pound of pearl barley. This was quickly cut up into short lengths and sold on with a handful of pearl barley. In the absence of a teacher between lessons that afternoon the air was thick with a hail of mouthfuls of pearl barley spattering in all directions. At home time you could barely see the parquet floor beneath. Next morning we had a visit from **Brother Joseph**. The cleaner had refused to sweep the floor! Desks and satchels were inspected and all our home-made apparatus of war confiscated. The whole class was given a Saturday morning detention for register call at 9.30am. The free bus passes were not valid on Saturdays and the bus conductor was adamant I had to pay (and I'd paid for my makeshift peashooter and ammo too). The detention was taken by Brother Joseph and the task set was not the usual 1000 lines but to correctly add the numbers from 1 – 100 and bring out the answer to himself. Strictly, strictly no talking. If I'd only known a bit of the Maths I taught later I'd have finished in a minute (proof as well!). Most of us kept getting it wrong until being released at noon.

Towards the end of the second term we were told that one football afternoon was to be replaced by School Cross Country. The first years, in shorts and plimsolls, were marched off from school onto the Common (I seem to remember some tennis courts nearby) and set off to be guided by small clusters of teachers and Brothers directing us at strategic points, to run round Clapham Common West Side, along Clapham Common North Side and then diverted into the heart of the common to a vague finishing line across the muddiest stretch of ground that could be found somewhere near the bandstand. For some obscure reason I now remember being told I was thirty-third out of sixty. Canterbury "Null House Point".

Then came the summer term which meant Thursday afternoon football on the Common was replaced with cricket at the Wandsworth Common pitches on the east side of the Southern Electric railway lines. This was about a mile walk from school down Nightingale Lane and along Bolingbroke Grove. The class cricket captains had the privilege of carrying the cricket bag filled with pads, gloves, balls and stumps. Some boys biked it and could pedal off home afterwards. Most of us

walked rather than pay the 1½d bus fare there and afterwards wearily walked back again to school. Everyone wanted to bat and to bowl. Matches started at 2 pm and finished at 3.30 pm at latest. No side ever won a match! There was never enough time. It was much more combative and vociferous playing unsupervised in the yard. Surely some day a form of the game could be invented for schoolboys (and girls!) so that everyone in the team batted and bowled for two overs each, no matter how many times you were out or took a wicket. You could even have teams numbering other than eleven players. Wisden look out!

After the Easter holidays we in 1A started with a new History teacher, **Mr Mogford**. He was a tall, thin, intense man with a permanent 7 o'clock shadow, yet almost good-looking. He was introduced by **Brother Joseph** for his first lesson and seemed quite nervous of us still fairly shiny faced new boys. I recall sitting by one of the open windows during one History lesson vaguely watching **Brother Joe** bowling at some sixth form cricketers on the lawn in front of the head's office. But there was mischief afoot in the class that day. We'd naturally nick-named our history teacher "**Moggie**" and this could cause bursts of random miaowing around the room. **Mr Mogford** would studiously ignore this and try to carry on teaching Greeks and Romans.

There was fun to be had this day. All the desks were singles with metal runners on the parquet floor and arranged in five columns. As in most classrooms the villains always sat at the back of the class with the more scholarly and diligent boys at the front. The blackboard was set on a trestle with wheels. While **Moggie** chalked up his historical gems on the board for us to copy down the villains started to push their desks forwards. The scholars found themselves sliding towards **Moggie** at the blackboard and in response vainly thrust backwards. A hilarious infection of pushing and reverse thrusting developed across all five columns in the room. Thoughts of history and learning went out through the open windows. But there were more villains than scholars present that day. Inch by inch the remorseless columns of desks made their way towards the blank front wall of the classroom. That is, all except the two columns, one pushing the masters high podium desk and one menacing poor nervous **Mr Mogford** and his blackboard. As the front boy in column 2 reached the masters high desk he had to grab it to save it from toppling backwards to the floor until eventually it too reached the safety and stability of the front wall. The front assiduous scholar in column 1 found his desk gingerly pushing at the knees of the now tense **Mr Mogford** who nervously pushed his blackboard away towards the wall, only to be harried by more remorseless knee pushing. He ended up with the blackboard jammed in the corner, himself pinned against it, his back towards us, a class rolling with suppressed laughter, and a sporadic chorus of cruel miaows. Then the bell tolled for the end of the lesson. Desks and boys quickly resumed their normal positions ready for a more authoritarian pedagogue to arrive. Poor **Moggie** seemed to have just disappeared from the room when we weren't looking.

At the next History lesson on the timetable we waited excitedly in our desks, probably pondering what to do next. **Mr Mogford** did not appear. About five minutes later **Brother Joseph** arrived. Was our headmaster to take us for History? He was filled with anger and contempt towards us. We were despicable animals. He told us **Mr Mogford** was a first class historian that the school was most fortunate to employ; that he had recently come out of hospital after a health breakdown; that our intolerable actions had necessitated his return to hospital. Many of us felt shame to the depths of our souls. There were to be no more History lessons with **Mr Mogford**. To this day I wonder who was **Mr Mogford** and whatever happened to him.

There was a new student history teacher taking 1Alpha, by name **Cecil Pocock** (Cantab). He then took us for a few history lessons until the end of term. He seemed a no-nonsense sort of master, a quite acceptable fellow as teachers go. I recently asked **Cecil** if he remembered **Mr Mogford** but he said that in his teaching practice time during Spring/Summer 1951 at Clapham College there was so much and so many names and faces to take in that this was not a person he could recall.

There was one great national event in 1951 that impinged upon the whole school. This was “The Festival of Britain”, a chance for post war British engineering, science and commerce, to show itself to the world and us. And to commemorate the Great Exhibition of 1851 initiated by Albert the Prince Consort. Headmaster **Brother Joe** dedicated one whole day free of lessons to be used for every boy to visit the Exhibition. We made our way in full school uniform by various modes of transport, trying to persuade bus conductors with our bus-passes that we deserved a free journey or confidently flashing our tube passes to the ticket collectors at Waterloo. On arrival we reported to our form teachers who were all armed with registers. The one instruction we had that morning was to freely make our own ways about the South Bank festival site to see whatever interested us and report again for roll-call at 3pm when we could go home if we wished. Many of us stayed until late. What might we recall: the Dome of Discovery, the Skylon, the Shot Tower, railway engines, routemasters, shiny assorted cars, model solar systems, model atoms, home-made egg sandwiches, an ice-cream and a fizzy drink.

Suddenly it was nearing the end of the summer term. The end of year exams arrived. There was no way I could catch up with the amazing **Przednowek** – he was bound to be first in class again. When he got marks of 80% and 90% it seemed I could only get 70% and 80%. The hardest exam that summer was Algebra: **Bill Blight** must have given us the 2A paper instead of 1A. **Przednowek** came first with 63% and I was second with 28%. When all the 1A exam marks were totalled I once again came second in class. **Przednowek** would get the 1A book prize to be presented by **Lord Pakenham** or some similar luminary on School Prize Day. Now I wish I'd been put in 1Alpha with my three primary school compatriots **Michael Cassella**, **Brian McCann**, **Terry Sacker**, from St Francis – my exam marks total was more than **John Noulton's** who came top in 1Alpha. I would have got a book too! What book did you get **John**?

The last week of the school year was amazing. There were to be no lessons. We first years were utterly overwhelmed with the freedom. We could bring in comics, books, games or puzzles to entertain ourselves each morning. The afternoons we made our way to indoor Swimming Baths at Tooting Broadway, activities like tug o' war in The Paddock, or off to Wandsworth Common to indulge in sports or watch the Masters v Boys cricket match. On Thursday morning we cleared our desks of school books and marched them off to “The Bookroom” to hand them in to **Brother Stephen** or pay for lost books and to pack our satchels with the new books we had to take home and would be using in our second year at Clapham. On the morning of Friday 20 July the whole school assembled in the Gym where **Brother Joseph** handed out the sports cups to the various successful sports Captains and the School House Cup to the house that had achieved the most house-points that year. It wasn't Canterbury! We then attended Benediction in the Chapel where the partitions had been opened into 3Alpha so the whole school could be present. Finally we trooped down the tower stairway, prefects at each corner to discourage talking, and reaching outside to scatter away in all directions at once. We were free for six whole weeks to be filled with delectable idleness.

Tony Gilford

Membership

The cost of Annual Membership remains at £5.00. Life Membership is available at the following rates according to age:

80 or over £10.00

70 or over £20.00

60 or over £30.00

50 or over £50.00

Under 50 £75.00

I would like to welcome the following new life members: **Jean Bouchard, Francis Browne, Tad Dippel, Stephen Fitzgerald, Gerry Fitzpatrick, Jim Gallagher, Sean Gavigan, Bill Haley, Allen Kelly, Ron Kirby, John McGowan, Martin McGrath, Gerry Morrison, Mick O'Mara, Derek Penfold, Will Pepper, Mick Powell, Peter Pozzoni, John Rudd and Peter Serafinowicz.**

Friday Club



The Friday Club continues to meet on the second Friday every other month. For a chat, a drink and a bite to eat. Having forsaken the Pied Bull near Streatham Common and after a brief sojourn at the Greyhound, the next meeting on 11th September will be at the Alleyn's Head in West Dulwich. If you would like to be reminded of the date and venue nearer the time please send the editor an email so that you can be sent a reminder.

The Chairman's Luncheon - A Personal View

This year's Chairman's Luncheon provided yet another opportunity to spend some time in the past, remember remote occasions, look at people you knew all your teens and can't believe they're in front of you, looking older, but no older than you. I find my speaking voice also returns to those years, my accent loses more recent clippings, and phrases re-emerge from an almost forgotten past.

Above all though, it is a fun day. An old classmate who shall remain nameless (**Wilson Bowers**), campaigns vigorously for a change of venue, and whilst I understand his viewpoint, perhaps agree with him to an extent, I still don't want to miss these opportunities to catch up on old friends, they may soon be gone.

I had to laugh at one conversation with a few old boys a couple of years junior to me, who recalled me being the First X1 goalkeeper, and they commented on my collection of different coloured matching shorts, socks and 'keeper's jumpers! I'd forgotten about that! I had canary yellow, Bonetti green, dark red, blue, and black, all matching. I'd heard an influential manager – probably Brian Clough – say that to play well you had to look good. ("Hey, Sonny, tuck your shirt into your shorts"). I know it didn't help my game much but sometimes, just sometimes, there were girls watching matches. I also had a predilection for old-style footie boots, hard caps, great for goal kicks and penalties, and forwards' goalies. As I couldn't direct a ball anyway, my reasoning was I could kick it hard and long, and if an attacker got in the way, well . . . he didn't get in the way again. As you can tell I learnt the game from the Ron Harris academy of soccer.

I'd thought about those multi-coloured outfits once before. Years ago now, probably in the early 80s, I saw a brilliantly funny film called 'Zorro, The Gay Blade', with George Hamilton as Zorro's gay English cousin. In the film Zorro is incapacitated for a short while so his cousin takes over his mantle. Now being a gay sailor lad he makes up costumes in canary yellow, mauve, sage green and the like, nothing as dowdy as black for him. Needless to say, as I associated myself with the character I considered perhaps I should've just stayed in Bonetti green – not a great reputation to be remembered for, I thought. For all Zorro fans, don't rent the movie, it'll ruin your perception of your hero.

The Lunch itself was fine; it always is. What a difficult task to serve nearly three hundred hungry lads at the same time! I'm just grateful we don't have to walk a couple of miles to the Henry Cavendish. This year it was a different occasion for me. Sobriety plays little part on these occasions, but this year I'd had my first gout attack about a week beforehand, at my daughter's wedding reception, imagine trying to speak in front of a couple of hundred people with a painful foot and a shoe off. Everyone was laughing, thinking there was a joke upcoming.

Perhaps that's why I remember this luncheon so well. I restricted myself to a single beer – if I'd known a glass of wine would be better I'd have had that instead. I can tell you now, drink masses of distilled water, add as much apple cider vinegar as you can stand, stay off booze, especially beer, and rest your foot. It goes away after a few days, so you have to time your binge sessions not to coincide with big events in your life.

Meanwhile at the luncheon conversation flowed as always – just like back at school really, and I have to admire the ability of people to get up in front of a large crowd and speak – no, not just speak, respond to comments with quit wit, crack jokes, make points, talk sense even. I have the highest regard for these speakers, **Colin Garvey** in particular, what a skill to have, and I do wonder if he'd ever be serious. He's the sort of chap you want at a funeral, just to bring out the real person inside the coffin, warts and all! Remind me to book him . . .

Sat at the next table to me was a group of people I didn't recognise, several guests, but there was one name I knew; **Karl Sabbagh**. I think **Karl** had left Clapham the year before I started, my brother **Chris** remembers him, and he clearly went on to do quite well. His speech started with a quotation from his recent book "Palestine; A Personal History".

“I am the son of a Palestinian father . . .”

and in it **Karl** gives detailed history of his family, at the same time showing the culture of his homeland over the past several hundred years. Thus it helps explain the fury and anger of the Palestinian people who had their lands snatched away.

It hit me because just as I started my working life as Cabin Crew with BOAC I was almost hijacked by the PFLP. The VC10 I was working on left Mumbai for Hong Kong about the same time as another left for London. I was lucky and got to my destination, the other aircraft was taken to Dawson's Field, Jordan, where, after negotiations to release Leila Khaled from an English prison, it was blown up. This became an iconic moment in hijacking, and for the PFLP. Swissair, BOAC and TWA aircraft were all destroyed, and it escalated an era of hijacking, such was the overwhelming newsworthiness of the event. At this particular time I stood up for the Palestinians without knowing too much about the background history, but believed that any people that feel this strongly must have been wronged. Anything I read backed this up, but the popular thing was by far to support the Israelis. I faced verbal abuse by colleagues as I called them freedom fighters, but learned to be quieter about the subject rather than face arguments. I can still recall the ease of flying around the world in the sixties and early seventies, walking out to the planes across the tarmac area, in some American airports there would be a small unguarded picket fence that you couldn't go beyond unless you were a passenger, and people obeyed that. Only about ten years ago I recall talking to a friend of my son, whose grandmother is Palestinian, and we discussed the transfer of land to the Israelis by the English government. He was equally vociferous in his accusations against British politicians of that time. I am not personally involved, even with a name like Salmon I have no desire to see anything other than fair play; but for this country's government to give someone else's country to a third party sounds unbelievable. It happened; it was a recipe for disaster. We all still pay the consequences.

So I found **Karl's** talk extremely interesting. Any other year the wine and beer would have meant I didn't absorb what he was saying, but this year the gout, ensured I knew exactly what he was saying. As Perry Como once famously said, “I feel sorry for people who don't drink, when they wake up, that's the best they'll feel all day”. I fully concur with the sentiment. Back home that evening I searched the web for the book, bought it there and then, and I am certainly wiser for having read it, and have even more guilt for being British. I tried to contact **Karl** to comment favourably, but by then I was back in rural Canada, and connections are harder to make, and other things took priority.

The repeat performance of tossing coins and getting us to stand, thus rewarding sheer luck with a lump sum again showed that my luck hasn't improved over the years. **Brendan's** face was once again lit by the success of his game, and more so the day in general. It had been another glittering success.

It still amazes friends of mine that after forty years away from the school I still return to see old friends, old teachers, and that I have a grin from one ear to the other and anecdotes to tell for days afterwards. I still don't understand how the teachers still seem unchanged, and yet we've aged so much. Catching up with **Paul McCarthy** from my year at the bar afterwards also gave me insight as to what many from our year have done since. It's also the only time I see **John Coletta**, who I'm sure has a pact with the Devil, or was it he simply looked older than us in his teens?

I've bumped into several Old Boys in my travelling days; **Bill Kidd** sat right next to me by the pool in Dubai once about 30 years ago, **Tom Judge** I bumped into in New York even before that, not knowing he was a work colleague too. Further encounters with **Paul Gilmore**, **Paul West**, and one of our pilots who went to the Manchester Xaverian version. The strangest was in Auckland, New Zealand. I jumped on a local bus to go and seek out relatives – very tired and jet-lagged – and paid my fair. The driver looked at me and said “You’re Salmon”. I recognised him as a fellow pupil about three years junior to me, but cannot remember his name (that’s part of gout I think). So even that remote bus journey holds special memories for me. I even saw a sign in deepest darkest Africa in the Rift Valley outside Nairobi for the Francis Xavier School. Even in the foothills of the Canadian Rockies in Edmonton there’s a St Francis Xavier School – this guy knew how to travel!

But the strangest meeting was moving to Portishead about five years back. Our immediate neighbours are a little older, and after a few days we met for drinks. **Mike Hart**, having been a London boy from Putney asked what secondary school I went to. Our wives couldn’t believe it when we both owned up to being Clapham Old Boys!

In the winter months we enjoy our returns to England, catching up with our families, resting for the hard summer months ahead, when we move to our alternative life in rural Canada, building up a small vineyard and enjoying the ‘fruits of our labour’.

Because of our lives in Canada now we don’t get too much of a chance to run a normal life here, so the Annual Chairman’s Luncheon is a very special day for me, and long may it continue. A very special thank you to all of you who work so hard for this day to be such a success.

Gerry Salmon, 1961 – 68.

C OXA Lunch, January 30th – Speech by Karl Sabbagh

Very rarely has a speech at the COXA annual lunch begun with a reading from Marcel Proust’s master work, *A La Recherche du Temps Perdu* – in French. In fact, when Karl Sabbagh, this year’s guest speaker, saw the expressions of incomprehension on the faces of the assembled Old Boys, he switched quickly to English. The extract he quoted described a lunch near the end of the novel during which the Narrator sees vaguely familiar people who look as if they are wearing makeup, wigs and clothes to simulate great age, and realises that these are the characters he remembers from his own youth.

For **Sabbagh**, the same shock of recognition was present at the lunch, he said, as he saw boys he had known fifty years ago now looking much the worse for wear. No one was rude enough to point out the deterioration from his own boyish good looks of fifty years ago, but at least he still had his own hair, mostly devoid of grey.

Sabbagh then reminisced about the years between 1953 and 1961, describing the twin pillars of Clapham life, sport and religion, and he produced a sick note, lovingly preserved over half a century, written by his mother which sought exemption from sports on the ground of a ‘bad leg,’ an ailment which apparently lasted for the full period of his time at Clapham. Clearly no member of staff had the idea of sending Karl to the doctor to deal with such a chronic ailment, not did any games master

think to confiscate the note – undated – to prevent it being produced every week for seven years.

As for religion, Sabbagh confined his remarks to a number of dubious stories involving priests, rabbis and nuns, allegedly concerning **Brother Peter** and the disgraced **Brother Julian**, which had such an air of implausibility that it was hard not to suspect the speaker of just retailing old jokes.

However, he concluded on a serious note, with the following fable from the writings of the Lebanese mystic, Kehlog Albran:

“A priest asked: What is Fate, Master?

And he answered:

It is that which gives a beast of burden its reason for existence.

It is that which men in former times had to bear upon their backs.

It is that which has caused nations to build byways from City to City, upon which carts and coaches pass, and alongside which inns have come to be built to stave off Hunger, Thirst and Weariness.

And that is Fate? said the priest.

Fate ... I thought you said Freight, responded the Master.

That's all right, said the priest. I wanted to know what Freight was too.”



Attendees at the 2009 Chairman's Luncheon

Michael Aldrich	Brendan Duggan	Scotty MacDonald	Cecil Pocock
Martin Armstrong	Dean Eaton	Joe Mansi	Mick Powell
Lisa Balkassoon	John Egan	John Mansi	Mick Power
Paul Barber	Martin Farrell	Rudolf Massara	Paul Pozzoni
Kevin Barnaville	Lorcan Farrelly	Robert Maxwell	Peter Pozzoni
Frank Barretta	Fr. Vlad Felzmann	Errol McCarthy	Mark Preece
Phil Barrington	Pat Fitzgerald	Paul McCarthy	John Quirk
Stephen Beck	Terry Fitzgerald	Jim McCoy	John Rayer
Ben Benedict	Gerry Fitzpatrick	Ray McDonagh	Angela Reeves
Matthew Benedict	Chris Flaherty	Joe McElligott	Matthew Renton
Bernie Borland	Martin Flaherty	John McGowan	Arthur Richardson
Jean Bouchard	Pat Flaherty	John McGuire	Fr Anthony Richens
Terry Boylan	Peter Flaherty	Spencer McGuire	Dorothy Robinshaw
Steve Bradford	Martin Fowler	Kevin McKenna	Phil Roderick-Jones
John Brandon	Peter Fry	Mick McLoughlin	Connor Rooney
Ron Brosnan	Jim Gallagher	Tom McLoughlin	Vic Roszkowski
James Brown	David Gartland	John McNicholas	Joe Rowe
Francis Browne	Colin Garvey	Jim McQueeney	Alan Rowles
Gerry Burgess	Sean Gavagan	John McTaggart	David Rowles
Mick Burke	Tony Gilford	Fr. Eric Mead	John Rudd
Seamus Burke	John Gilhooly	Harry Mellor	Frank Ryan
Jim Buttress	Mick Gowan	Brendan Milligan	Karl Sabbagh
Colin Bygraves	Phil Gray	Laurence Milligan	Gerry Salmon
Terry Cain	Tony Griffin	Paul Milligan	Tim Salter
Nini Caraccio	Bill Haley	Richard Mills	Brian Sanders
Julian Carter	Richard Harris	Alec Morrish	Phillip Schwenk
Andrew Cashmore-Till	Paul Hixson	Tony Morrish	Stephen Schwenk
Serge Cefai	Ryszard Hryniewicz	Gerry Morrison	Peter Serafinowicz
Rich Clark	Peter Hughes	Lawrence Mullane	John Sheridan
Ray Clarke	Frank Jordan	Dave Munns	Paul Shimell
Tony Cleather	Tom Judge	Steve Nash	Chris Smith
Terry Clegg	Brendan Kearns	David Nathan	Jackie Smith
John Coll	Geoff Keast	John Noulton	Paul Smith
Aidan Colletta	Peter Keen	Mark Noulton	Bernard Spoor
John Colletta	John Keenan	Stephen Noulton	Mrs Spoor
Bob Collins	Peter Keenan	Eddie O'Brien	Dr. Michael Straiton
Mrs Sylvia Collins	Allen Kelly	Sean O'Connell	Paul Tehan
Kevin Cooney	Bill Kidd	Mick O'Mara	Mick Weir

Malcolm Corey	Jim Kirby	Tony O'Shea	John Wentworth
Franco Cornelli	Peter Kirby	Mick O'Sullivan	Paul West
Damien Costello	Gerry Lambe	Sean O'Sullivan	Brian White
Terry Cremins	David Leathem	Steve Parker	Brendan Williams
Larry Davis	John Leathem	David Pearson	Richard Williams
Joe Davorn	Phil Leeder	Henry Perales	Kevin Williamson
Derek Davy	John Lloyd	John Pettley	Pete Wills
Adie DeCoursey	Jan Luba	Henry Pinsent	Sir Michael Wilshaw
Tad Dippel	Norman MacDonald	Bernard Plummer	John Wybar
Brian Donnelly			

C OXA Hall Of Fame / Football Reunion

We have decided to do what other football clubs do and have an evening when we get together and induct 3 or 4 players (or former players) into the Clapham Hall of Fame. These players will be honoured for their achievements mainly on the field. They will receive a certificate, and their name will be engraved on the main board at Norbury. It will also be an opportunity to meet old friends and to drink enormous quantities of beer.

Date: Saturday 10th October 2009 - put the date in your diary.

Time : 5 pm to 8pm (I'll believe that when I see it!!!!)

Place: Norbury, County Road, Thornton Heath, CR7 8HN

The SatNav will find it.

Nearest station: Norbury

We hope to have up to 100 present for this event, including current players, as there will be one current player on the list to join the Hall of Fame.

If all of this sounds a bit American, don't worry - it will be 100% Clapham.

Colin Garvey

The Way We Were

On holiday earlier this year, I met a slightly younger man who told me that he was responsible for the provision of IT services to six primary schools. I asked him to tell me what this involved and he explained that every classroom was equipped with a computer for the teacher to use and that every child had access to a laptop. Taking my courage in both hands, I suggested that this was an extravagant waste of time and money and that most of the children would be better off with a pencil and paper. Much to my surprise he agreed, stating that although the teachers made good use of their computers most of the children only used them for playing games. Recently, **Colin Garvey** passed me the late **Br. Peter's** contribution to the Summer 1961 edition of the school magazine, the Clapham Xaverian,



*“Form VI is now the proud possessor of a television set. It was bought out of the General Purposes Fund, mainly for the benefit of the language students. It is kept in the Arts Room in Hollywood, and is not intended to be used for anything except purposes of study. **Mr Gilmore** examined it before it was bought, and guarantees it is good value. For **Mr. Smith** a complete set of classical records was bought. **Mr. Marshall** also derived considerable benefit from the same fund. With a bit of luck, we might, during the course of next year, be able to buy a tape recorder. “*

Later in the same report, he notes:

“The first swallow was seen on May 6th, and the first butterfly on May 13th. The butterfly, as usual, was a cabbage.”

What different lives we were living in 1961!

**Chairman**

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