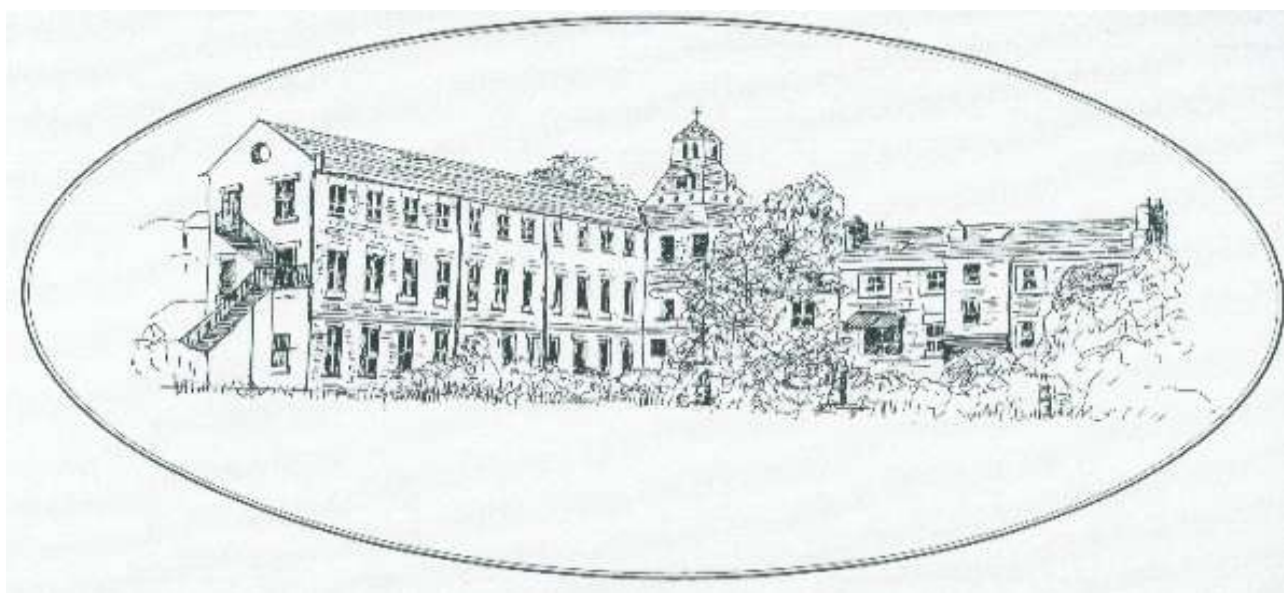


# Clapper

**The Newsletter of the Clapham Old Xaverians' Association**

**Winter 2008**



**Concordia res parvae crescunt**

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**E**ditorial

I am not sure whether it is really as easy to edit this newsletter as I first thought or whether it gets easier with each issue. However, I do know that it is very rewarding receiving unexpected letters and emails from fellow Clapham Old Xaverians of whatever age. Please keep them coming! I am now in the happy position of having more articles than can comfortably be accommodated in the current issue so I must apologise to anyone whose contributions have yet to be published.

In these gloomy economic times, it is sensible to count our blessings rather than obsess over our difficulties. And so I would like to thank everyone who has helped me to produce this latest edition and to wish all its readers a very Happy Christmas.

**C**hairman's Report

Having a drink after work in the New Moon, near Leadenhall Market with Tom McLaughlin and Dave Leathem and some business colleagues, I was asked how long I had known Tom and Dave. My business colleagues were genuinely astonished when I explained that we had been friends since the age of eleven: that we had been to school together; had played football and cricket together at school, and subsequently for the Old Boys, and that we still



socialised at Old Boys' functions like the Remembrance Day Mass and the Annual Chairman's Luncheon. Greater mobility and changed patterns of employment make such long-term friendships much harder to maintain than in the past. That is why the Clapham Old Xaverians' Association Sports and Social Club should be more than a collection of individual sports teams. By meeting in the Club House after a match and attending social functions, younger players can meet and learn from older, more experienced players. And when their playing days are over they can enjoy the slightly less exuberant functions organised by the Association itself.

*Brendan Williams*

**F**ootball 1<sup>st</sup> XI Report

The first part of the 2008 / 2009 season has been one of progression and success. Following a comprehensive pre-season schedule – which saw players from the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> given the opportunity to test themselves at the top level of the club – a squad has been put together that stands a real good chance of promotion to the Premier division. The captain's philosophy is that if you're good enough, then you're old enough, and the squad now boasts an excellent blend of youth and experience, but more importantly quality in all areas of the pitch. The 1<sup>st</sup> XI has been extremely unfortunate with injuries for much of the season – with key players missing for over 6 weeks – however players have come into the team and really stepped up a level, ensuring the overall quality of the performances has not dropped. Praise must also be given to Bernie Mensah, the 2<sup>nd</sup> XI captain, who has had to deal, on a weekly basis, with players being pulled up to the 1s, thus weakening his squad and affecting his own promotion push. He has been both gracious and accommodating.

Moving forward into 2009 the captain is expecting the 1<sup>st</sup> XI to continue delivering against his high expectations for the squad – six wins and one draw in the league has set the bar high, and he wants

the same level of consistency to be shown as the league becomes more competitive in the New Year.

With two games to play the 1<sup>st</sup> XI lead the AFC Senior One League, having won six out of their seven games without loss.

Position		Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	For	Against	Goal Difference	Points
1	Clapham Old Xaverians	7	6	1	0	19	6	13	19
2	Old Minchendenians	6	5	0	1	38	6	32	15
3	Old Belgravians	8	4	2	2	25	16	9	14
4	Sinjuns Grammarians	8	4	1	3	17	14	3	13
5	Old Challoners	6	4	1	1	13	12	1	13
6	Old Ignatians	7	2	2	3	22	18	4	8
7	Enfield Old Grammarians	6	2	2	2	11	19	-8	8
8	Old Suttonians	7	2	1	4	8	14	-6	7
9	Old Meadonians II	8	2	0	6	7	21	-14	6
10	Glyn Old Boys	6	1	1	4	9	21	-12	4

In the London Old Boys Senior Cup they lost 0-2 in the first round to Old Uffingtonians. However, they are prospering in the Surrey/Kent Senior Cup having beaten Old Tiffinians 4-0 in the first round and Old Tenisonians 3-1 in the second round. They are now due to play Old Salesians in the Quarter Finals on 24<sup>th</sup> January at Norbury. The match starts at 13:45.

The captain's only real disappointment thus far relates to training and the lack of numbers – from all teams – that are attending the sessions at Crystal Palace on Wednesday evenings. These sessions are offered free to all members of the club and, as far as he is concerned, more players should be demonstrating the commitment to get to training one night in the week, especially at the top levels of the club. Most other amateur clubs would be envious of the training facilities we have, so to not exploit them seems a shame.

*Matthew Arnold*

## Football 2<sup>nd</sup> XI Report

Now that we have a settled side and have got over early injury setbacks the 2<sup>nd</sup> XI have been able to put a good run of results together in the league. With one game to play, and one game in hand, the 2<sup>nd</sup> XI lead the AFC Division One South by one point from Old St. Marys.

Position		Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	For	Against	Goal Difference	Points
1	Clapham Old Xaverians II	8	5	0	3	19	17	2	15
2	Old St Marys	9	3	5	1	21	11	10	14
3	Old Pauline II	7	4	1	2	24	18	6	13
4	Old Sedcopians	8	3	4	1	20	19	1	13
5	Reigatians	9	2	4	3	22	25	-3	10
6	Old Tenisonians II	6	2	2	2	16	15	1	8
7	Sinjuns Grammarians II	6	2	1	3	15	17	-2	7
8	City of London	6	1	3	2	15	14	1	6
9	Glyn Old Boys II	5	2	0	3	11	12	-1	6
10	Old Whitgiftian	8	1	2	5	16	31	-15	5

*Bernard Mensah*

## Football 3<sup>rd</sup> XI Report

With one game to play the 3<sup>rd</sup> XI are towards the middle of the AFC Division Two South.

Position		Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	For	Against	Goal	Points
1	National Westminster Bank II	8	6	0	2	27	10	17	18
2	Marsh	7	6	0	1	22	6	16	18
3	Witan	7	4	1	2	33	22	11	13
4	Old Tenisonians III	5	3	1	1	13	12	1	10
5	Economicals II	7	3	0	4	16	21	-5	9
6	Clapham Old Xaverians III	7	3	0	4	13	18	-5	9
7	Tilburg Regents	8	1	3	4	12	20	-8	6
8	Old Suttonians III	5	1	2	2	6	11	-5	5
9	Centymca II	8	1	2	5	12	22	-10	5
10	Sinjuns Grammarians III	6	1	1	4	5	17	-12	4

In the London Old Boys Junior Cup they lost 4-2 in the first round to Old Hamptonians 3<sup>rd</sup> XI.

*Sam Vennart/Denis Sekula*

## Football 4<sup>th</sup> XI Report

With four teams in close contention for the top position in the AFC Division Three South, the 4<sup>th</sup> XI are slightly below the middle of table.

Position		Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	For	Against	Goal	Points
1	Malvern Chase	6	4	1	1	23	9	14	13
2	Old Wokingians II	6	4	1	1	19	9	10	13
3	Economicals III	5	4	0	1	19	9	10	12
4	The Comets	6	4	0	2	19	16	3	12
5	National Westminster Bank III	6	3	2	1	20	9	11	11
6	Reigatians II	6	3	1	2	19	14	5	10
7	Old Tiffinians II	7	3	1	3	17	16	1	10
8	Clapham Old Xaverians IV	8	2	1	5	15	33	-18	7
9	Old Suttonians IV	7	2	0	5	11	26	-15	6
10	Old Dorkinians II	6	1	1	4	11	19	-8	4
11	Old Guildfordians II	7	1	0	6	16	29	-13	3

In the London Old Boys Minor Cup they had a walk over in the first round when Teddington withdrew but lost 5-1 to Lancing Old Boys II in the second round.

Mark Weyers

## Football 5<sup>th</sup> XI Report

With Royal Bank of Scotland II clearly leading the AFC Division Four South there are few points separating the remaining teams.

Position		Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	For	Against	Goal Difference	Points
1	Royal Bank of Scotland II	7	7	0	0	33	6	27	21
2	Temple Bar	7	4	0	3	15	7	8	12
3	Old Sedcopians II	8	3	1	4	17	17	0	10
4	Standard Chartered Bank	7	3	1	3	19	21	-2	10
5	Old Dorkinians III	7	3	1	3	14	23	-9	10
6	Glyn Old Boys III	5	2	2	1	14	10	4	8
7	Royal Sun Alliance	5	2	2	1	8	8	0	8
8	Clapham Old Xaverians V	9	2	1	6	14	23	-9	7
9	Old Wokingians III	7	1	3	3	12	12	0	6
10	Old Tiffinians III	6	1	1	4	5	24	-19	4

The 5<sup>th</sup> XI were beaten 4-3 by Centymca III in the first round of the London Old Boys Minor Cup.

*Paul Bailey*

# Football 6<sup>th</sup> XI Report

Although currently one from bottom of the AFC Division 5 South East, the 6<sup>th</sup> XI have games in hand over teams nearer to top of the table.

Position		Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	For	Against	Goal Difference	Points
1	Old Bromleians II	9	6	1	2	30	26	4	19
2	Citigroup	7	6	0	1	30	16	14	18
3	Old Thorntonians III	8	3	4	1	30	15	15	13
4	Old St Marys II	8	3	0	5	21	28	-7	9
5	City of London II	7	2	2	3	15	17	-2	8
6	Glyn Old Boys IV	6	2	2	2	13	18	-5	8
7	John Fisher Old Boys II	7	2	2	3	20	26	-6	8
8	Old Sedcopians III	7	1	2	4	19	23	-4	5
9	Clapham Old Xaverians VI	6	1	1	4	14	25	-11	4
10	Kings Old Boys III	3	1	0	2	12	10	2	3

In the London Old Boys Minor Cup the 6<sup>th</sup> XI suffered a first round defeat at the hands of Old Suttonians IV with Old Suttonians winning 4-0.

*Chris Finch*

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Congratulations to John and Val Sheridan who recently celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary.

Brian Sanders, Mick Power and Colin Garvey were the guests of honour at the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Bash of the class of 1958 at the Lord Clyde off Marshalsea Road in the Borough. The event was well organised by Terry Cremins. Peter Fry tells me that the following members of that year were in attendance: Alan Phipps, Bill Haley, Chris Smith, Joe Rowe, John Brennan, John Wood, Paul Shimmel, Stan Frank, Mike Foy, Michael Morcombe, and Phil Schwenk

On Saturday, 25<sup>th</sup> October, at the Brands Hatch Place Hotel, Tony Amura, with about 30 relatives and friends, sat down to an excellent dinner in celebration of Tony's 70th birthday. Old Xaverians were there in force- Ted Hayter, Lynn Carpenter, Philip Leeder, John Bunce, Chris Smith, Kajik Ostrowski and Brian Sanders. Together with Tony himself and his two sons Gerard and Dominic, that would have made up a pretty useful cricket team (yes, it was not unknown for the team to turn up one player short!). Remarkable as it may seem to have so many former pupils from the same secondary school gathered at such an event, it is even more worthy of note that four of them - Tony, Ted, Phil and Brian were also together as pupils at the same primary school, English Martyrs, Walworth.



In the aftermath of Kevin Keegan's resignation as Manager of Newcastle United, Tony Jimenez has left the club. Brixton born Jimenez, a former pupil at Clapham College, was appointed a Vice-President of the club in January this year. In a brief statement the club said he was leaving "to pursue other interests". Another job in football is thought to be in the offing.

Former teachers at the College meet regularly for a drink and a chat under the auspices of the Mushroom Club. The 250th meeting of the club on Wednesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> October was very successful with a near record attendance. Just one new member was recruited - Angela Reeves - but it was good to see Martin Boyd and Dave Watkinson (all the way from the Lake District) after a long absence. Simon Cowdery, who regular readers might remember was last reported driving a *borrowed* Sinclair C5 around the College yard, is now Deputy Head of St. Thomas the Apostle College, Nunhead. The full-time Lay Chaplain at this College is John Foley, who was taught French by Brian Sanders in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Form and left Clapham College in 1979.

Brian Sanders tells me that he has had a long chat with Brian Harris, who must have been a year ahead of him at the College. He reminisced at length about classmates and teachers and enquired about Philip Angel whom he had met at Reigate Priory Cricket Club where they were both members. It turned out that Philip was also a Clapham Old Boy who, so he said, went back to the College to teach. Philip died earlier this year in his mid-eighties. May he rest in peace.



Brian Sanders also tells me that his son, Stephen Sanders, whom he visited in Canada this summer, is now the proud possessor of two passports having been accepted as a Canadian citizen on 21<sup>st</sup> August.

In August Harry Mellor had a joint celebration with his daughter, Penny, and his granddaughter, Charlotte. For Harry it was to mark his 80th birthday. One hundred family and friends gathered in Virgo Fidelis School Hall for a most friendly party (many were in fancy dress). Harry's wife, Pat, his sisters, Doreen and Anne, his brothers, Gordon and David (also an Old Xaverian) and his daughters and grandchildren joined with friends to offer him congratulations. His brother in law, Michael Loughlin, gave a brief outline of Harry's life. Harry grew up just off Manor Place in Walworth, just a stone's throw from Tony and Alec Morrish and Colin Luke. After primary school at St. Joseph's, Camberwell, he went to Clapham college, and was promptly evacuated to East Grinstead. Harry claims that the Brothers taught him right from wrong and English Grammar. After the War Harry studied night and day for his law exams. His break came in an interview with Freddy Baldwin, who had a firm of solicitors. Of course they talked about the College, about football and cricket, and of course Freddy took him on, and made him a partner two years later. Their firm famously defended Christine Keeler in the trial of the century (well they would, wouldn't they?). Harry worked for 50 years as a solicitor, no doubt hoping that another Christine Keeler would come along. In his time, Harry was President of the South. London Law Society, President of Norwood Catenians, a Freeman of the City of London, a member of Surrey County Cricket Club, a season ticket holder at Millwall, and an active member of his parish and COXA. Many people paid tribute to Harry that night. All Old Xaverians would like to offer him their congratulations.



Sincere apologies are due to the family of the late Michael Bench whose obituary appeared in the last issue of Clapper. Michael was born in 1946 and not 1947 as stated. Furthermore, although his burial took place on the 20<sup>th</sup> May 2008, the tree was not planted over his grave until his birthday on 28<sup>th</sup> October. **Michael's family made a very welcome appearance at this year's Remembrance Day Mass where prayers were said for deceased Old Xaverians.**

Congratulations to Colin and Mary Garvey, who celebrated their Ruby Wedding earlier this year. As well as family celebrations they hosted a very enjoyable dinner party for Peter and Angela Keenan, Bernard and Mary Schwenk, and Alec and Susan Morrish. Fortunately, after forty years of marriage, there were many things to discuss in addition to their time in the 6<sup>th</sup> Form in the early 1960s.

Fr. Michael Creech CSsR wrote to the editor in August to say how pleased he was to see the reference to his brother, Fr Terry Creech CSsR, in the Summer issue of Clapper and to invite fellow Old Xaverians to the Golden Jubilee Mass that the brothers would be celebrating at St. Mary's, Clapham in September. Colin Garvey and Mick Power (both former pupils at St. Mary's Primary





School) represented the Association and were pleased to see Paul and Laurence Milligan in a packed church. Fr. Michael (on the right in the photograph) was celebrating the Golden Anniversary of his ordination, which had taken place in St. Mary's, and Fr. Terry (on the left in the photograph) was celebrating the Golden Anniversary of his profession as a Redemptorist. There were fifteen priests on the sanctuary as Mass was celebrated before a large congregation, which included family and friends. Both brothers gave short talks recalling their different personalities and ministries. The preacher was Fr. Tim X Buckley CSsR, who said that the Redemptorists were often jokingly called Liguori's Allsorts and that the Creech brothers epitomised this description.



Fr. Michael Creech subsequently sent me this photograph. I suspect that the boy third from left is Fr. Michael himself and I thought that the boy in the middle was my brother, Tony Morrish. However, Tony assures me that it is not him. From the appearance of the boys, I would assume that the photograph is from the late 1940s. If any of our older readers can shed any light on who the boys are and when it was taken please let me know.

Fr. Terry Creech told me that, Fr. Edward Lumley-Holmes, a fellow Redemptorist and former pupil at Clapham, where he was taught by Br. Dunstan, died in South Africa some time previously. Fr. Lumley-Holmes was a gifted organist, having a professional musician as a father. In the second World War his sister was one of Churchill's personal secretaries. After being ordained as a Redemptorist priest, he fulfilled many distinguished roles, including Parish Priest of St Mary's Clapham; Rector Superior of St Mary's, Perth; and for many years Novice Master, helping potential priests in their first formative year before formal study for the priesthood. Out of the blue he was appointed to South Africa and remained there for the rest of his life, dying aged 82 and being buried there. May he rest in peace.

Steve and Emily Gordon are proud parents of a daughter Grace Emily born on 23rd October at the Princess Royal Hospital, Farnborough. She weighed in at 6lb 6oz and mother and child are doing really well.



Many Old Xaverians will have read in the national press about Frank McGarahan, the Chief Operating Officer of Barclays Wealth, who died from the injuries sustained when he intervened to protect a homeless man in Norwich in the early hours of Sunday, 28<sup>th</sup> September. Not everyone will know that he was a former pupil of the College. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife Alison, his young daughter and wider family. May he rest in peace.

Philip Schwenk tells me that he recently played golf with Martin McGrath who started at the College in 1957. Martin is the Captain of Purley Downs Golf Club and might attend the Chairman's Luncheon in January.

We were sorry to learn that Bill Simpson died in July 2007. Bill started at the College in 1958. Mick Power informs me that he played football for COXA in the late 1960s/early 1970 and that he was a tigerish right-winger with an eye for a goal. Other players from that era are Alan Fulker and the late Brian Baker. Bill was nicknamed 'Wild Bill' because of his love of denim jackets, waistcoats, jeans and high-heeled leather boots. May he rest in peace.

Mark and Eve Preece recently produced a baby boy, Nathan Thomas, born on 24th May 2008 at Mayday Hospital. The young fellow weighed in at 8lbs 7oz. Mark also tells me that the christening will be taking place in the College Chapel early November.



COXA was well represented at the Seventh Lyndwood Lecture on the 12<sup>th</sup> November at Westminster Cathedral Hall. The lecture, which was organised by Paul Barber, and entitled *Engaging with the State for the Common Good: Some Reflections on the Role of the Church*, was given by The Most Reverend Peter Smith LLB JCD, Archbishop of Cardiff. Brian Sanders and Colin Garvey were in the audience. All are former pupils of the College and members of the Association.

I mentioned, in a previous issue, that I had read **Karl 'John' Sabbagh's** book *Palestine: A Personal History*. After writing to compliment him on an interesting story well told, I invited him to last year's Chairman's Luncheon. Fortunately, he was able to accept and we have been able to resume a friendship after nearly fifty years. Since January we have met twice for lunch together with Tony Gilford, Colin Garvey, and Ben Schwenk. Tony has read another of Karl's books - *The Riemann Hypothesis: The Greatest Unsolved Problem in Mathematics* – and we all had half a life time's experience to discuss. One topic of discussion was why, despite being more intelligent and diligent than the rest of us, Karl had become more successful and famous. Karl left us after lunch to visit some publishers leaving Tony, Ben, Colin and myself still discussing the reason for Karl's success in the *Red Lion*, near St. James's Square, long after. Having finished our third or fourth pint, the sudden sight of Karl walking purposefully down Duke of York Street, his afternoon business successfully concluded, finally answered the question.

Another very successful former pupil from the same era, Professor Michael Turvey, was in town in with his wife, Claudia, at the end of October on his way to speak at a conference in Madeira. With their usual generosity Mike and Claudia hosted a lunchtime reunion at Green's in Duke Street St. James for Mick Gowan, Colin and Mary Garvey, myself and old friends from Herne Hill Harriers.

Congratulations to Henry Pinsent, Peter Hughes and Tony Morrish who all celebrated their 75<sup>th</sup> birthdays earlier this year. Lee and Julian Minghi were surprise but welcome guests at Henry's party. Peter, who was not well enough to attend Henry's celebration, has now had a bi-ventricular defibrillator fitted and is feeling fit enough to resume his activities with the Royal Marines Association with

renewed vigour. Tony spent the weekend of his birthday with June, his children and their growing families in Southwold

**Edwin 'Charlie' Entecott** has written to say how pleased he was to find a reference to Nigel Lynch in the last issue of Clapper. He and Nigel were great friends when the school was in East Grinstead during the War. He tells me that Nigel's mother took them both to the Oval to see the Victory Test against Australia. He also chides me for the references to Mr. Bharrier contained in the last issue. In his words "I cannot believe that the man I knew as cheerful, helpful, and a good physics teacher, could ever attack anyone with a dangerous weapon. In Taunton, still in the summer holidays, he took us swimming, and taught us how to dive. **Great Bloke.**" I had to admit that when he thrashed me with the baseball bat after he found me wrestling with a fellow pupil on the floor of the Physics lab it must have looked far worse than it felt. He was also a very supportive House Master when I was captain of Charterhouse.

Congratulations to Bernie Borland, the Head Teacher of St. Francis Xavier Sixth Form College, who was awarded a CBE earlier this year for services to education.

What does Lloyd Grossman have in common with Gerry Lambe, Frank Cornelli, and David Munns? The three Old Xaverians, members of the 1970s band the Skunks, shared the bill with Lloyd Grossman and his Birthday Party Band at Bar 12, in Denmark Street, London, on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2008. For the reformed band it was their first show in 30 years. Camera footage of the show, photographs and a full history of the band are available on [www.myspace.com/skunksukofficial](http://www.myspace.com/skunksukofficial). You could also Google on Gerry Lambe and see what comes up!

Francis Browne has written to tell me about his attempts to track down members of the class of 1964. He describes the results as 'inevitably disappointing' but mentions that there have been two reunions and that more are planned. Nevertheless he has successfully assembled some information on Hugh Atkinson, **Bernard 'Ben' Benedict**, Kevin Bond, Michael Carucan, Julian Carter, Michael Collins, Tadeusz Dippel, Martin Farrell, Pat Flaherty, Tony French, Michael Galtry, David Hillier, Peter Kirby, Adam Kondziela, Seamus Leahy, Chris McFadden, James McQueenie, Kevin Murphy, Michael Murphy, Pat Pearson, John Ryan, Michael Seymour, Brian Shorthall, Martin Simmonds, and Alan White. Francis has also sent some interesting photographs to Brian Sanders showing how his contemporaries looked in their youth and how they look now. In his retirement Francis is devoting much of his time to reading French literature; he has finished translating the text of Bach's Cantatas into English and is also planning to read the German philosophers (Kant, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Marx, and Heidegger) in the original. His email address is available on request.

Reading through the information about Francis' classmates, I was struck at the variety of careers and occupations they have pursued. However, none were as strange as that currently enjoyed by Paul Curtis, formerly the lead singer of *Buddy Curtis and the Grasshoppers* who used to play football for COXA with Ben Benedict. Paul immigrated to the United States about 21 years ago and is now one of the three-man ice crew for New York Rangers. Working between major concerts and sporting events at the start of the National Hockey League season the crew have less than 24 hours to lay a sheet of ice on which professional athletes will perform, a sheet of ice that will remain in place until the second month of next year. In February the playing surface will be melted so that the Garden can stage a track event. Immediately after this, the season's second rink will be frozen into place and

will remain frozen until the end of the New York Ranger's season. Creating the rink involves chilling the arena to 9°F; laying water on the surface and freezing it; painting markings and logos on the surface with water-based paint and finally pumping 10,000 gallons of cold water onto the painted floor at a carefully controlled rate of just under 1,000 gallons an hour.

**Jean 'Noddy' Bouchard** recently contacted me through the Clapham Old Xaverians website. He married his wife, Sue, in 1968 and has four grown-up children: three daughters and a son. After a career in computing with ICT (and its successors ICL and Fujitsu), he took early retirement some ten years ago and for the last seven years has worked part-time ferrying adults with learning difficulties to their day centre. This summer he and Sue went to China to see the Beijing Olympics, visiting other parts of China and Bangkok and Tokyo along the way. I last saw him at Cecil Pocock's retirement party. Based on that experience Noddy and Sue seem to think that we are all clones of Michael Caine. Not a lot of people know that!

Wilson Bowers has written to say that he would be interested to know what former members of his classes are doing and what happened to bring them to where they are now. We discussed incorporating such personal histories into the Clapham Old Xaverians website but agreed that this could be fraught with problems of security and confidentiality and that it might be better for people create their own profile on Facebook or MySpace. More of that later, for the moment here is Wilson's contribution:

*Wilson Bowers (1961-68) Glastonbury, despite the claims of other houses. Departure from Clapham with no A levels meant work had to be sought. I turned up at a local office of the Board of Trade and asked if I could work there. Despite this being "irregular", they let me in and gave me a teacup. Some 40 years later I find myself semi-retired having moved from Whitehall only to enjoy the attractions of a Quango in Ipswich. In the interim I knocked about with Gerry Salmon (1968) - because he was School Captain and made me do it - and Paul Zazzi (1968) - because he was raffish...and everything you were not. Highlights of a Civil Service career included some spells in private office\* (who says civil servants can't work magic?), working with a future head of the Home Civil Service, dealing with nuclear energy policy and the privatisations of gas and electricity. The move to a Quango (Ofgem) and Ipswich followed marriage (in 1986) to Hazel - who advised me that people didn't have to live in London. Children arrived in 1986 and 1990 (Andrew and Philip). I really left London so that I didn't have to pick up my long-service award for the Old Boys' football teams: no compensation for countless dinners at which one was passed over not only for Player of the Year, Clubman of Blessed Memory, Bar Bore of the Decade; but even Shapeliest Bum. Also played cricket for COXA (in that non-specific role that was so popular). Religious devotion must now be classed as "poor", although "once a Catholic" twinges still stir. Health excellent - despite walking into cars after Chairman's Lunch. Contact with the Old Boys now limited to (most) Chairman's Lunches and meetings (failed) arranged at the Lunches. Still in regular correspondence with.... [here Wilson's imagination failed him - Ed].*

*\*working directly to a government minister*

Following the mention of Brian Donnelly in last winter's issue of Clapper, **Bernard 'Ben' Schwenk** has been in touch with Brian and learnt that, after belatedly reading PPE at Oxford in his thirties, he specialized in designing and establishing vetting systems. He finished his career as a Principal at the Home Office. One of his more interesting tasks was working with Bishop, now Archbishop, Vincent Nicholls in setting up the Catholic Office for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (COPCA). He is now supposed to be retired but works for a small legal practice specialising

in employment law, on line, when he is in France and in the Holborn office when he is in London. He has also been a magistrate for about twenty years and sits in the Thames court in East London. Brian says that he will try to make the Chairman's Luncheon in 2009.

One of the pleasures of editing this newsletter is unexpectedly hearing from near contemporaries. Lynn Carpenter, who was two years ahead of me at the College, has written to remind me that in the late 1950s and early 1960s many of the College 1<sup>st</sup> XI used to turn out, with some Old Boys, to play for either Balham FC (Holy Ghost, Nightingale Square) or Clapham Park FC (St. Bede's, Clapham Park) to play in the Catholic Youth Confederation Sunday League. A look at the team sheets from those times reveals that many of those players still feature at Old Boys functions:

Balham FC: Pat Fitzgerald, Mick Fitzgerald, Terry Fitzgerald, Dave Rowles, Bill Collins, Will Pepper, Pete Brown, Martin Dunn, and Timmy Higgins

Clapham Park FC: Willie McGrath, **David 'Ben' Hogan**, Tony Amura, Phil Leeder, Mick McCartney, Lynn Carpenter, Bert Leen, John Keenan, Peter Keenan, Dave Conduct, Colin Luke, Peter McDermott, Dave Mellor, Vlad Feltzman, Guy Montgomery, John Farrell, and Tony **'Doug' Insole**

Lynn also sent me this photograph of an Old Boys' five-a-side team taken in the paddock in April 1963 after they had been runners-up in a competition at Hampton Court. From left to right: Tony Amura, Will Pepper, Lynn Carpenter, John McGuire, and Frank Hixson. The photograph was taken by the goalkeeper, Colin Luke..



Not being a footballer, my own memories of those times are of travelling to school with Colin Luke and being told about a mysterious Panamanian called 'Cisco, who was the team's benefactor and chauffeur. Apparently 'Cisco, through his connection with the Panamanian Consulate, supplied



Lynn with cheap booze and *Camel* cigarettes and taught him about horse and greyhound racing and 3 card brag. Immediately after leaving Clapham College in 1958 Lynn played for the Old Boys with Chris Scott, Henry Pinsent, Pat Breslin, Joe Cernuschi, John Keenan, Will Pepper, and Pete Brown during times when it was a struggle to get two teams together. By the time he moved to Sittingbourne in 1965, Colin Luke, Ted Newman, John McGowan, Michael Ivers, Phil Leeder, Will Pepper, Frank Hickson, Tony Amura, John McGuire, Jim Howard, and Sean Gavigan were the basis of the 1<sup>st</sup> X1. I remember him at school throwing the javelin because I have a fear of flying object having been hit on the head by a discus thrown by Bill Kidd



The congregation at this year's Annual Remembrance Day Mass was very sad to hear of the death earlier that day of Dr. Savino Ravetto. Readers may remember that 2007 was the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Savino's graduation from University College Medical School. His funeral Mass took place at the Holy Family Church, Stayton Road, Sutton, Surrey on Friday, 21<sup>st</sup> November and was attended by the following Old Xaverians: Rudolf Massara, Henry Pinsent, Raymond Quinlan and Gabriel Fazi. Rudolf and Gabriel went to the cemetery and to the gathering in Sutton afterwards. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife and family. May he rest in peace.

James Thynne has made contact from Sydney via the Clapham Old Xaverian. James, who is an Australian, spent two years in the United Kingdom during the 1950s. One year at the Xaverian College Manchester and the second year, 1957/8, in the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> Form at Clapham College. He admits that his memories of that times are rather vague but he does distinctly remember Denzil Heatherley as being a great friend. He enjoyed his year at Clapham and recalls that the standard of teaching was rather high. He would be interested to hear from any contemporaries who remember him.

The evil that men do .... Mick Power has alerted me to a story that appeared in the South London Press in 1978 and was recalled earlier this year:

*Warm weather was costing a Clapham pub as hundreds of glass beer mugs went missing or were smashed by drinkers sitting outside. Frank Reeves, licensee of The Windmill, estimated that he was losing around £150 a week.*

The culprits know who they are and the Club House benefited. Do the ends justify the means? Discuss.



Despite the Credit Crunch and Recession, Richard Clarke has still been able to fly from Norway twice since the last issue to meet his old friends in the Falcon at Clapham Junction. Thanks to some fine detective work by Peter Wills, Allen Kelly made an unexpected appearance at the last get together on Friday, 21<sup>st</sup> November. The earlier gathering consisted of Tony Cleather, Alec Morrish, Mick Power, Richard Clarke, Tony Gilford, John Quirke (in back row), Lorcan Farrelly, Ben Schwenk, Colin Garvey, and Peter Wills (in front row).

John Nash, who left the College in 1955. has written the following from Johnson City, Tennessee:

*After I left Clapham College in 1958 I earned a BSc(Eng) degree from Queen Mary College, London, and a diploma from the Von Karman Institute for Fluid Dynamics in Belgium. Then, after working at the National Physical Laboratory in Teddington for several years, I received a PhD degree in engineering from the University of London. Soon thereafter, Jan 1967, I emigrated to the US. I worked in private industry for some years, and then returned to school to earn a master's degree in business. For the last 30 years of my working life I taught at the university level, first at Georgia State University and then at East Tennessee State University in Johnson City, Tennessee. For several years I served as associate dean for graduate studies at East Tennessee State University. During my professional life, I wrote 10 books and published more than 100 articles in the academic literature. Since "retiring" in 2002 I have written three more books, this time on religious philosophy and history. My latest book, "Christianity: the One, the Many," came out early this year. I still live in Johnson City, a pleasant town of 60,000 people in the*

*Southern Appalachian Mountains. Despite some health issues, I remain active in a number of nonprofit organizations. My two grown children live in Atlanta, Georgia. My only living relative in the UK is a sister who lives in Suffolk. My last trip to Europe was in 2006. Unfortunately, I don't think I will be able to make it "across the pond" again. I look back with pride to my time at Clapham College..*

## **T**he Friday Club

The Friday Club continued to meet on the second Friday of every second month. Fol-



lowing a problem with food at the July meeting, the venue has changed from the Pied Bull to the nearby Greyhound. Because it is sometimes difficult to remember when the meetings take place email reminders are now sent to anyone wishing to attend. If you would like to receive a reminder please let the editor know. The next meeting will take place on Friday, 9<sup>th</sup> January 2009 at the Greyhound from 8:00 pm.

*Brian Sanders*

## **C**ecil Pocock - The Authorised Version

In July Cecil celebrated his 80th birthday. When I reported this to the COXA committee, they asked the editor to get somebody to write something for Clapper, but they said it shouldn't read like an obituary, because Cecil looks younger than we all do! I happily agreed to write a brief article.

Cecil, as he told us all in his History lessons, had an English father and a Russian mother (he used to speak Russian, but I don't know if he still does - we'll have to ask him at the Chairman's Lunch.) He went to Chiswick Grammar School, and won a scholarship to Cambridge. At Christ's he had a great time, discovering the delights of beer (huge fines for staggering back to College after midnight) and refereeing, but not playing, rugby. He became a Catholic at Cambridge - I don't know if this had anything to do with beer or rugby! During his teacher-training year at St. Mary's, he was sent on



teaching practice to Clapham College. So impressed was he with the College and the spirit there that he asked Brother Joseph if there were any vacancies. There was one, so Cecil joined such legends as John Gibb, Bill Blight, Nat Bharrier, Harry Escott, Ernie Wright and Alec Begley, as well as Brothers Peter, Xavier, and Damian.



Cecil was an unorthodox teacher. He looks young now but he looked old then - with his formal suit and gown, his sleeked hair, moustache, and 1950s glasses. His lessons began on the dot - if the previous teacher were slow finishing off, Cecil would prowl around with that irritated look. He would begin "Rrrrrright" and then launch into 40 minutes of facts, comments and anecdotes rat tat tat - we were exhausted at the end. His heroes were most of the English kings and Tory Prime Ministers, his villains were Lenin, Stalin and Hitler, and most revolutionaries, including the Irish rebels of 1916 (funny because most of the pupils had Irish parents!



Refereeing at Cambridge turned into umpiring and refereeing at Norbury each Saturday (what luck to watch such stars as Colin Luke and Tony Amura). Cecil led school camps at Foxhunt and Mayfield. He took groups to the Tower, Hampton court and Parliament. With John Gibb he produced school plays each year and saw such star performers as Karl Sabagh, Peter Smith (now Archbishop of Cardiff) and John Gilhooly. When asked about all this time after school, Cecil said it was not duty, but a pleasure.

It is well known that while at Clapham, Cecil was Mayor of Brentford and Chiswick, and also a magis-

trate., thus his lessons became punctuated with stories about Labour opponents or that week's defendants. We lapped it up.

When the Xaverian Brothers left Clapham in 1970, Cecil became Headteacher and continued to apply the principles of friendship he had learned from the Brothers. When the school merged in 1975 Cecil became Deputy Headteacher, and enjoyed this period as much as any at Clapham (he was now teaching Law as well as History).

In 1983 he retired from full time teaching, and finished altogether two years later. Not surprisingly his leaving party was the biggest I've ever seen.

How do we sum up a career like Cecil's? Impossible. I'll leave it to Sir Michael Wilshaw, a pupil of Cecil's in the 1960s, who was knighted for his services to education after being a successful head in two London schools. He told me recently that if it hadn't been for Cecil, he would never have become a teacher.

We will all offer Cecil our best wishes at the Chairman's Lunch.

*Colin Garvey*

**C**ecil at 80 - A personal view.

What is Cecil like at 80? How should I know? I see the Queen more often in a year (literally), although she doesn't always start the conversation by asking after the health of my much nicer, more talented brother. (She doesn't say anything at all to me, and anyway, I'm always a little bit ahead of her in the Kronenbourg Stakes when we are at Ascot.) Cecil and I see each other at the Lunch and maybe at one of the other events, like the Mass. (Isn't it great how we can talk about the "Lunch" and the "Mass" without further explanation? One of the things I like best about our Association.)



Anyway, what's he like at 80? I don't know, but I do know what he was like in his 40s, and on reflection that's kind of strange in itself, because I'm talking about a man who was 10 years younger than I am now.

Do you remember Bootsie and Snudge? Of course you do. Well of course, he wasn't like Bootsie, was he? No, maybe it was Snudge's 'tache. The shock of inheriting Cecil after all those lovely, cosy Brothers was like suddenly waking up on a parade ground in a fifties film. You knew where you were with Brother Peter – the slightest transgression and your arse got stripes. How was Cecil going to rule without corporal punishment? (Is that a Snudge joke?) Well the answer is that he ruled magnificently.

It has been said that we can tolerate the best and worst conditions of any cycle, be it social or otherwise, but that the transitional periods between extremes are hardest to tolerate. (It was me that said

it.) Cecil proved a master of several transitional periods for me. The Brothers' departure; the merger with that other school; the end of the sixties, teenage years. Cecil was the constant, and although I don't think my classmates and I were particularly brilliant or well-behaved (!), Cecil was in charge of a pretty good bunch of blokes who got us through with an education that would, in some cases (not mine), be the envy of our peers in later life.

He kept it fun, if you played it fair. He even kept it fun, when you were in trouble. Although detention and lines were much more of a drag than the cane, he administered the punishment with a smiley sneer (and an invisible twist of the moustache, as if he were tying a damsel to the railway lines).

Cecil's transition into the 70s was great fun for us, sometimes. Anyone who witnessed his tirade against obscene graffiti in the toilets can only, in hindsight, be sure that there was some modern training course on the subject the week before from some trendy from a Sociological Think Tank. Enunciating clearly each obscene word, in his clipped and most theatrical style, the final -ckuh, and -tuh, and -nkher of the trio of extreme examples had me and several others biting our knuckles to avoid horrible punishment or identification as perpetrators (I only did the drawings).

As a Scotsman I hold Cecil partly responsible for my love of England (calm down lads, I don't rate the English quite so highly). He pointed out that we (you) were the luckiest race on the planet, and I still believe it to be so. His sometime mayoral status gave us something to boast about to our friends at home. I guess that this was not un-connected to his enthusiastic teaching of British Constitution. I got past the examiners because I liked it, not because I learned it.

Cecil was a bit posh really. You'd never know it the lovely way he spoke to my parents on parents' days. They loved him, liked the way he was so severe with us all. Liked the way he left all the beating to them. Liked that he wrote to them to try to help with this troublemaker's progress.

A bit posh he may be, and a bit "officer class" to our "other ranks", but whether he likes it or not (and I hope he likes it), Cecil is one of us, and one of our best.

Happy Birthday Cecil.

*David Leathem*

**C**urry Night. Every October the Football section organizes a social night to mark the start of a new season and to make some money for the bar. I seem to remember a "Cheap Cocktails Night" and a "Drink Norbury Dry Night" (very subtle!) This year Mike Garvey organized a Curry Night, whereby 60 curries were delivered at 9.30 - it should have been 8.30, but why worry about food, when Scotty McDonald is in full flow?

Suffice to say it was a great night, supported earlier in the evening by current players, including Matt

Arnold, Bernie Mensah, Paul Hamilton, Rich Williams, Steve Gordon, Rich Rooney, Rio, Josh, Dave Charlton and Eddie O'Brien. There was a great turnout of older and former players, thanks to John Pettley sending out emails claiming that it was my birthday - which it wasn't, but who cares? So, Frank Barretta, Mick Power, Mick Powell, Andy Brannon, Ged Dolan, Vic Roszkowski, Lawrie Mullane, Colin Brown, Mark Preece, Steve Parker, Dan Condon, John Leathem, Ben Benedict, Joe Davorn, Martin Donald and Andy McDonald spent £600 at the bar and listened again to Scotty's story about John McGuire being unable to speak at the Chairman's Lunch, on account of consuming 8 pints at lunchtime with Spencer and Gary. Best of all was the story of Alan Webber trying to break into his Ford Capri at Balham Station on match day - coat hangers didn't work, so he threw a brick at the driver's window - the glass didn't break, but the 4 buttons all sprang up!

Why was it no surprise that Clapham had staged another brilliant evening? So let us thank Mike Garvey and John Pettley for organizing it.

*Colin Garvey*

## C lapham College 1950-51

It is June 1950 and four eleven-year-old kids of St Francis School, Friary Road, Peckham SE15, London, England, The World, are walking up the curving drive of an imposing building on the south side of Clapham Common to ring the doorbell of a great door. Michael Casella, Tony Gilford, Brian McCann, Terry Sacker had passed their 11-plus and were hoping to be admitted to a Catholic Grammar school - Clapham College, Nightingale Lane, SW4. A few questions from then head master Brother Joseph elicited tentative answers. Then came the jackpot question, "Do you intend to study here until you are eighteen?" Thinks. "You bet!, we said. And we were in.

An afternoon visit in the summer holidays followed and parents paid a week's wages to purchase the bright blue blazer, cap and badge, tie, scarf and PE kit. Clapham looks very posh compared to Peckham, I thought, with its tree-lined roads, a park, a tube station and no bomb-sites.



On a September Monday morning we met up with our predecessors from St Francis, Johnny Vaughan, Micky Platt and Eddie(?) Bartholomew now in their Second Year at Clapham. The number 36 bus took us from Peckham to the Oval in fifteen minutes in the morning rush-hour; some days we would even go by tram! (The same bus journey today is thirty minutes and rising). The Northern Line tube train from The Borough via Oval to Clapham South became dotted with more and more blue blazers old and new. Soon some sixty bright-eyed and respectful first years congregated in clusters in the playground and at the bell found themselves pushed into one amorphous huddle whilst the rest of the school formed

untidy serried lines for morning assembly and prayers led by Brother Joseph.

The serried ranks marched off to their determined destinies whilst we new boys waited for ours. There seems to be some secret deciding rule that distinguishes an 'A' from an 'Alpha', which to this day I have never been able to fathom. I found myself in '1A' and my three ex-Franciscan compatriots in '1 Alpha'. Bagging a brand new desk by the window I spent my first lesson taken by form master Mr Olive (Latin) inscribing my name with my Stuttgart penknife into the pristine wooden lid. At the end of the week I was one of four inscription artists arraigned in Brother Joseph's office to be charged half-a-crown each (a whole week's pocket money) to have their handiwork professionally obliterated.

On the Tuesday morning most new boys arrived in the school yard about 8.15 am (in mortal fear of being late). One prescient boy owned a tennis ball and we started a kick-around. "Clear off our pitch!" was the message from the few assorted second, third and fifth form early birds. There seemed nowhere we could play until a couple of fourth formers came over. To us first-years they looked like giants. "You can play on our pitch, first against fourths, if you want." Of course, they hadn't a ball between them!! We mostly outnumbered them three-to-one until about quarter to nine when the stragglers arrived. These were some of the most enthusiastic kick-about I can remember and much enjoyed. For the rest of the season it was firsts against fourths, before school, break-time, lunchtime, and even sometimes after school. We played the short pitch against the east wall of the playground till the end of that school year – football and cricket. Fourth form names I still recall in Cohort '47 are Sanders, Brown, Higgins, Keenan, etc.

Our '1A' teachers at this time were Mr Olive (Latin), Nobby Norton (English), Bill Blight (Maths), Br Damian (RI), Mr Delahunty (Gen Sci), Mr Escott (Geog), Mr Higgins (Hist), Mr Thomas (Art), Mr Smith (Music), Mr Cox (PE).

#### 1 a Register 1950

Amura, Brown, Casserley, Colman, Cook, Dempsey, Donovan, Duff, Forbes, Gilford, Hennessey, Insole, Kidd, Kirk, Lilliecrop, Marooney, McBrien, Mills, Morris, Munden, Neale, O'Leary, Przednowek, Rourke, Shanks, Southwell, Strzaker, Sweeney, Thompson, Tibbits, Urquart, and Wilkins

#### 1 alpha Register 1950

Atkinson, Casella, Chambers, Dixon, Hagger, Ivers, Juby, Luke, Maugham, McCann, Neill, Noulton, Rosati, Sacker, Sparks, Sullivan, Thompson, and Thomson, ....

All new boys had to be ducked – fortunately this tradition was administered in the washroom and it paid to give in and not struggle too much. In later years some duckings took place in the bogs.

Most boys in those days had school dinners (some qualified for a free dinner otherwise it was sixpence a day in advance on Monday mornings). The dinners were served in Hollywood House in

what later became the Library. A stern Brother Stephen invigilated and we first years were made to sit at tables in alphabetical order and strict silence. I presume the food was prepared on the premises by someone we knew as Brother Cookhouse. To this day I wonder if the Brothers took the same fare as we boys. Most boys had pocket money (mine was half-a-crown a week). This was sufficient to provide a Pepsi-Cola at 4½d or a Coca-Cola at 4d. The rest could be used on Arrowroot biscuits or some kind of pastel sweets called Peewits or Nitwits? The tuck shop was situated in the corner under the shed administered by the amiable Brother Damian and a couple of trustees from his form class.

One week off for half-term and it is now November. Coke fires were lit every day and on the wet and cold days we struggled to stand and steam in the radiant heat of red hot coke glowing almost white. Remember that in the early fifties families still suffered food and fuel rationing. Coal, coke, sweets, chocolate biscuits were in short supply. This was the time of school year when seats by the windows were not at a premium.

December 1950 brought a heavy overnight snow. Playground football was abandoned for this festive event. Snowball fights started and soon expired. The main attraction became a huge ice slide constructed by the early-comers, along the longest yard diagonal from the foot of the fire escape to the far corner walls. The competition to get in the queue was frantic and vociferous. At morning bell the assembly wisely took place in separate classrooms. Those first three morning lessons dragged. We were all itching to get out again onto the giant slide. Morning break came and we weren't to be let out – Brother Joe had ordered caretaker George Day to cover the slide with ashes and clinker from the school boiler house. It seems some rampant adventurer from the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> year had taken the opportunity on his way from his classroom to the Physics Lab to test the full length of the slide with an unhampered run-up. He'd smashed his face into the corner (interior) angle of the walls – blood and teeth spattered the snow and perhaps to this day there would be teeth marks in that wall if it had been still standing. He'd gone off to hospital and the construction of ice-slides was strictly forbidden thereafter.

We were settling in as first years. We were getting used to having ten different teachers instead of the single teacher each year at primary school. Most of us had achieved some degree of regularity with homework. Mostly the teachers seemed to be getting used to us too. But for Mr Delahunty who took us for General Science. Some of the lessons were conducted in the Demonstration Lab with its raised tiers of benches that made entry and exit a game of who could be first out the door at the end of a lesson. Mr Delahunty brooked no talking in these lessons – perhaps controlling an experiment without a lab assistant and simultaneously keeping control of a class of cocky boys is tricky. To silence the talkers he would often throw a piece of chalk at them. The ebullient Paddy Sullivan was in 1 alpha. Paddy couldn't stop talking that day – maybe it was his birthday. Delahunty let fly with the piece of chalk – but it wasn't a piece of chalk in his hand, it was a board-duster. It cracked Sullivan on the head and terrified the rest of the class. They were all telling us about it as we walked fearfully in to General Science. Fear of a teacher has a strange effect on a class – you hate the teacher, the lesson, the subject. Paddy Sullivan's mother complained to Brother Joseph.

The Christmas Holidays were almost upon us. I can still visualise the magic date printed on my bus and tube passes: "Valid until Friday 22 December 1950". The last week of the autumn term involved the tradition of "House Parties". For one night each from Monday to Thursday in that last week of term each of the four houses Canterbury, Charterhouse, Glastonbury, Walsingham, was allocated use of the gymnasium. We first formers went home at 4 o'clock and returned to school at 6 o'clock



to be let into the gym to see it decked out with bunting, trestle tables and candles. There were sandwiches of assorted fish-pastes and cheese spread and savoury mix, bread rolls stuffed with margarine and jam, sausage rolls, orange or lemon squash, tea. Remember that post-war food rationing and shortages were still in place! All this prepared by prefects, housemaster and associates and a few of the cleaners. There were some ninety boys in each house.

After the feasting and chucking of rolls there were some competitive games including something called 'British Bulldog' while tables were cleared and chairs reorganised. Next came the entertainments. Usually Harry Escott set up his film projector on **Charlie Cox's** gym horse and we saw cartoon shorts and "Nanook of the North" or some similar adventure. Then the fifth formers did a bit of a comedy routine. Finally a large white sheet was set up with a spot-lamp behind it casting a shadow of a bed onto the sheet. Several sixth form prefects had dressed up as a doctor and nurses in a kind of Marx Brothers take-off and appeared in front of the screen leading an enfeebled elderly patient (was this one of our teachers?). The doctor was waving a large hand-saw and one nurse had gigantic pincers and another held garden shears. The patient was led behind the screen and the mesmerised audience gazed in horror at the activity on the shadow-screen. Conversation between doctor, nurses and patient were stentorian. We thought we saw the extraction of several gigantic molars, an appendectomy for bellyache complete with yards of a string shadow of sausage like intestinal objects, followed by several amputations accompanied by loud howls and protestations. Did we really end that evening with 'Auld Lang Syne' and 'God Save the King'?

Enter January 1951. I was feeling pleased with myself: Przednowek was first in class, but I'd come second and Dave McBrien was third. By January 1951 Mr Delahunty had left. We now had some General Science lessons with Ernie Wright and Brother Dunstan. The popular Mr Norton had left to be replaced by a Mr Begley. We also lost our admired History teacher Mr Higgins. To replace him Brother Joseph had found a young teacher, Mr Mogford, an unfortunate man. There was also to be a bright young Cambridge graduate in his PGCE year (from St Mary's Teacher Training College) doing his teaching practice in History and RE at Clapham College, one by name of Cecil Pock, who was destined to make a significant impact in the years to come.

*Tony Gilford*

## Golf Day Under New Management



The date will be Friday, 12<sup>th</sup> June with a first tee-off time around 1:00 pm and the likely venue will be the Darenth Valley Golf Club near Sevenoaks. Details will be confirmed for the Chairman's Luncheon when a flyer will be available.

*Paul Hixson*



## C lapham College: Urban Myths

Further to Colin Garvey's collection of urban myths, I experienced the strange goings-on of Nightingale Lane before even starting there, having an elder brother Tom who came home with stories of this mysterious place, several of which featured Bill Blight, mathematics teacher extraordinaire.

Firstly I heard about the pell-mell lunchtime journeys to Balham for lunch, and I recall myself how in my first year we would be desperate to get out the classroom last lesson before lunch to run down to Hydethorpe Road, bolt down whatever was on offer and get back to Clapham South for a decent game of playground football. Tom came home one day with a story of Bill Blight getting very annoyed at the pre-bell fidgeting, no doubt a chronic problem. He made everyone take off their left shoe and had them piled up in the corner of the classroom. When the bell sounded and he dismissed the class, he stood back and observed the mad scrum for shoes. The other story involving Mr Blight involved his glass eye; on having to leave the classroom temporarily, he enquired of the class as to whether they would behave in his absence, and despite assurances to that effect took out his glass eye and placed it on teacher's desk threatening retribution to anyone who misbehaved in his absence, as he would know who they were.

Bill Blight always took the first year, and the A-level classes in the fifth and sixth forms while I was there. Certainly there was no more fearsome teacher for a 12 year-old. Do you remember the ZFU routine? (Z: "Alternate angles on parallel lines equal", F: "Corresponding angles on parallel lines equal"; U: "Supplementary angles inside parallel lines add up to 180 degrees".) Having learnt this geometrical triple we would be tested upon his entry to the classroom. Exercise books and textbooks had to be on desks opened at the correct pages and oriented correctly with edges parallel to sides of desk, while he would patrol the class, inspecting books for the prescribed arrangement and occasionally pointing at a shifty-looking urchin with hand formed into a handgun intoning Z, F, or U and awaiting the correct response, as though it were a sacred chant between priest and congregation. An incorrect answer would result in withering invective and some form of penance. If books were not on desk or were left closed you could be thrown out of the class; no words, just a thumb jerked towards the door and you would realise that you were to vacate the premises. Some began to leave books closed deliberately to escape 40 minutes of high discipline and low excitement; Bill threw about 4 or 5 out in one lesson after which he realised I feel that he was being 'done', and stopped the practice. It's also possible that Br Peter enquired as to why the playground was so populated during lesson time. I'm not sure what Bill Blight would have made of the current vogue of making mathematics "fun" in order to improve learning.

We got to 2 alpha and a different maths teacher, but did not totally escape Bill Blight's terror. For some reason he had taken a dislike to a particular member of our class, Barry Byrne. I don't think Barry liked or excelled at maths; therein perhaps originated the antagonism. Barry did do well at History however. Bill invigilated our mid-year History exam set by Cecil Pocock our History teacher for that year. Barry had finished his exam before the end of the allowed time, put up his hand to tell Bill that he had finished and enquired as to whether he could he leave the room and what he should do with his paper. "Bring your paper here and I'll show you what to do with it." On being handed Barry's script he tore it up and threw it in the waste bin, and told Barry to clear off. The class collectively gasped. At break Barry came back in and retrieved his paper, sellotaping together

the various scraps as best he could and took them to Pocock with the seemingly preposterous but in fact veracious explanation, which crucially the rest of us could corroborate. We all wanted to be flies on the wall during the anticipated showdown between Messrs Blight and Pocock; we never did find out what happened; Pocock would just brush our questions away though he indicated that he was not amused by the incident. I do recall that Barry in fact did quite well in the exam.

Bill Blight was just one of the many characters and eccentrics (or nutters?) who taught at the school. We learnt as much from them outside the classroom as inside. Certainly being such a small school by today's standards at least, pupil-teacher interaction was more personal and varied, and could be more informal, than what happens in today's schools of near 1500 pupils, at least in my brief experience of teaching maths over the last 3 or 4 years in such impersonal institutions. If the Clapham College we went to were open today, I have a feeling that Ofsted would want to close it tomorrow.

*Mick Duffy*

## 2 008 Cricket Tour to Brittany

The Tourists: Matthew Benedict, Ben Benedict, John Mansi, Joseph Mansi, Ray Clarke, Damien Costello, Richard McIntosh, Brendan Walsh, Simon Pickering, Connor Rooney, Mick Power, Arthur Richardson, Chris Smith, Aidan Coletta, Taxi Tim



Saturday/Sunday: After a crushing victory over St. Luke's and a few beers in the Clubhouse, the tourists set off for Portsmouth to catch the ferry. The 8-hour journey through choppy waters in-

volved a bit of sleeping; lots of drinking and inevitably singing. Arriving in Brittany at 7 am, a waking Ben Benedict did not enjoy the swirls of the ferry's patterned carpet and Damien Costello, who had been drinking all night, decided to get friendly with a nice German man. Having run through his repertoire of Basil Fawlty style German jokes in the German's car, Damo was swiftly dropped off halfway down the road. Luckily one of our cars drove past in time to pick him up.

We didn't have much time to relax once we got to our Gites as our first match against, CC L'Ouest was meant to start in the next 15 minutes. Just because you are on tour doesn't mean you can't uphold the Clapham traditions and so we turned up late, lost the toss, re-negotiated the toss, batted first. Having a Benedict as Captain does have some advantages!

The pitch was how I imagine the old County Road pitch was. Grass, cut just a bit lower than the outfield so you know that's where you put the stumps and every ball doing something different even if it pitched on the same spot as the ball before.

Alcohol and casualness caused us to be 7-2 off four overs when Ben Benedict making his triumphant return joined Joseph Mansi at the crease. After a couple of played and missed he walked down the pitch and said 'I can't hit the ball' which prompted a reply of 'hit the middle one!'. Ben was soon off the mark to raucous cheers from the Clapham tourists who had already started on the beers and the comeback was set in motion once Ben was out for 4. A couple of 40s from Joseph Mansi and Richard McIntosh got the score up to 150 off 35 overs. The CC L'Ouest batting was no match for the Clapham attack and they were bowled out for 50 with Simon Pickering, Connor Rooney, Ray Clarke and Matt Benedict sharing the wickets with Ben Benedict's leg breaks unlucky to be wicketless.

After a few beers at the ground we went to a local bar where we met Ben Benedict's long lost brother. Ben was absolutely speechless and I have never seen such a big smile on Chris Smith's face! Ben was out done at every turn and in the end just sat down and started laughing although that stopped when in a moment of brotherly love he got his nipple bitten. Ben had to respond and as only he can he asked the waitress in the nicest possible way if she would take her clothes off. She said she would do it if he asked her in French, so in the most ridiculous French accent he asked her to take her clothes off! We were all back on his side, he was the funnier brother again and so we went home. A big vote of thanks is due to Taxi Tim, who on his fourth change of shirt of the day, bought champagne to help with the entertainment.

Roger Federer v Rafael Nadal followed and an awesome BBQ by Damo and Ritchie Mac ended a good first day.

Monday: This was a day to either play golf or drink all day in pubs. Ten of us braved the golf course by the ocean, which was very wet and very windy. Having delayed our start for an hour to let the rain stop Aidan, Chris and John went out first and had no sooner teed off when the rain started again although it didn't last long. Simon Pickering won the tournament with Aidan Coletta two points behind. However the two moments of the day belonged to Damian Costello. His tee shot found a greenside bunker and after a further three shots, each of which managed to move the ball an inch, he threw his club further than the ball then picked up his ball and threw it behind him only to see it hit his trolley and roll back down to his feet. We got to the 18<sup>th</sup> and by this time an old French couple had caught up with us. Damo putting his ball on the tee turned round and said 'Watch this you French bastard'. He then proceeded to miss the ball, injure his back and fall to the ground all in the

same motion. Having realised no one was going to help him up as we were too busy laughing he struggled up and played his shot.

We then had a minor mishap. The group of four cars split up on the way back to the hotel. Unfortunately one group had Satnavs the other group didn't. Also the group with no Satnavs had the greater majority of people that had been drinking all day and a few arguments ensued via the mobiles. We eventually all met up at the restaurant we had booked and once everyone had calmed down hilarity ensued as everyone had been given a nickname and we all had to guess the reason for it.

Tuesday: Our second game involved an hour's drive to St. Malo, where we had a game in the grounds of a chateau. Unfortunately it wasn't as good as it sounds. The local council would not allow them to cut the wicket or alter the outfield in any way, so again we had a shocking wicket, this time with the added bonus of six trees dotted around the outfield. We didn't even bother to toss this time we just asked them nicely to let us bat first. We were in trouble at 60-6 before Damo hit a brutal 97 leaving St. Malo a target of 197 off 35 overs. Then followed one of the strangest stints in the field ever!

Connor Rooney, who had been steadily drinking all day decided to take his beers on to the field with him and Ray Clarke, wearing a tartan hat with comedy red hair on the sides, started talking in Scottish. Three quick wickets from Ritchie Mac, including an amazing one handed diving catch by Simon Pickering in front of Ben Benedict, who was taking evasive action, ended the game as a contest. However, we continued to discuss the following talking points:

Connor Rooney failing to get to two catches at mid-off because he had to put his bottle of beer down first.

Brendan Walsh taking his bowling histrionics to new levels as the state of the pitch helped his variations and shouting, probably the first time ever on a cricket pitch, of 'Mamma Mia'.

Ray Clarke pulling a lost ball out of the square leg umpires bottom after it had been mislaid (he wasn't amused).

Ben Benedict taking his first wickets for 12 years, claiming two.

Umpire Mick Power giving a batsman not out as Ben Benedict celebrated his catch at second slip. Mick claiming it was a deviation off the pitch before quickly changing his mind saying he was just winding Ben up. Ben talked about this more than his two wickets

Connor Rooney bowling one over with his run up getting longer every ball, tripping over a divot on his 5<sup>th</sup> ball and claiming it was the Germans still living down there from the War and not on alcohol

We went back to the Gite and again the BBQ was warmed up for another Aussie treat. A few of us decided to get into the hot tub that we had in the garden. Being respectable we kept our shorts on. Being drunk Connor got in naked. Being the nice guys that we are we kept making Connor go to the kitchen to get us more beers, which was funny to us but a bit of a shock to the ten people in the

Gite who had to deal with a wet, naked Connor striding towards them.

By the time the BBQ was ready Connor had disappeared to be later found asleep naked on John Mansi's bed.

After a few more hours in the hot tub, five of us were sitting round the dining room table when we saw the owner of the site's cat wander out of the bedroom where Connor was sleeping. Intrigued we went up the stairs to find Connor asleep on the bed with jam around his privates. Shocked at this bizarre drunken sexual practice and the fact that he had awoken from his drunken slumber while we were in the hot tub, we went downstairs to continue drinking.

Tuesday: The morning after the night before. Jamgate\* was in full flow. A five-hour drive to the ferry gave everyone time to reflect. Unfortunately Ray Clarke's car blew a tyre meaning they wouldn't be able to catch the ferry, although it sounded like the night they stayed in Paris was better than tour, they are keeping very tight lipped.

The boat journey was very uneventful as everyone slept through it apart from when they were replying in the negative to Connor's question 'Did you put jam on me' leaving Connor to ask out loud 'Did I do it to myself?'

I am sure I speak for the other tourists when I say a big thank you to Matthew Benedict for organising a great tour and that we are looking forward to the next one already.

*Joseph Mansi*

\*An Apology: I don't think I should end this report without apologising to Connor Rooney and explaining about the incident with the jam. It is time to reveal the truth! I am not proud of what happened. However, at the time it seemed very, very funny!

I had just sat down at the kitchen table when I was told that a cat had been put in the room with Connor. About ten minutes passed when the idea of the jam, a ladle and his crotch came up.

Sorry Connor! Console yourself with Ben Benedict's opinion that the cat preferred Thick Cut Marmalade!

**A**nnual Remembrance Day Mass  
Fr. Eric Mead, who attended the College between 1952 and 1959 and is currently Parish Priest of St. Anne's, Cliftonville, Kent, celebrated this year's Remembrance Day Mass in the College Chapel. Fr. Meade's homily reflected on remembrance, death and the redemptive power of love.

As well as recalling the Brothers, staff and past pupils of the College he dwelt on the lives of two priests. The first of these priests, Fr. Edward Daly, celebrated Benediction in the Chapel on the first

Friday of every month for many years. Few of us at the time knew that he had been awarded a Military Cross for gallantry while serving as a chaplain during the First World War or that his ability, learnt under fire at the front, to say Mass in ten minutes had unsettled his post-war congregation. Some of us may have known that he was Catholic Chaplain at Wandsworth Prison, where he was obliged to witness the executions that were not infrequent in those days. However, we wouldn't have known of his personal opposition to the death penalty or his belief that innocent men were sometimes wrongly executed. The second priest, the Reverend David Railton, had been an Anglican Chaplain on the Western Front. Struck by the sight of so many graves marking the final resting place of unknown soldiers, sailors and airmen, he promoted the idea of bringing the body of an unknown warrior back to the United Kingdom for burial in Westminster Abbey. Between four and six bodies were collected from each of the main British Battle Areas on the Western Front on the night of 7<sup>th</sup> November 1920 and taken to the chapel in St. Pol, northern France. Each was covered with a Union Jack and one was selected, placed in a coffin, transported to Boulogne and taken to Dover aboard HMS Verdun. On the morning of the 11<sup>th</sup> November, two years after the armistice, the coffin was drawn in procession to the Cenotaph. At 11 o'clock there was two minutes silence before the body was taken to Westminster Abbey, where it was buried in the west end of the nave. In the following week an estimated 1,250,000 people visited it.

On a more personal note, Fr. Eric recalled how he had been born in Australia during the early years of the war. His father had been captured by the Japanese and was one of 1,816 Allied Prisoners of War who were being taken from Hong Kong to Japan on board the troopship Lisbon Maru when, on the morning of 1<sup>st</sup> October 1942, it was attacked by an American submarine, the U.S.S. Grouper. The Lisbon Maru was disabled by the attack. Most of the Japanese soldiers on board the Lisbon Maru were transferred to other Japanese ships leaving a few behind to guard the prisoners who were confined to the holds with no food or water and very little air. Eventually, believing they had little to lose, the prisoners attempted to escape and many were shot in the water. Fr. Eric's mother spent many anxious days in Australia worrying about the fate of her husband and it was not until the end of the war in 1945 that she learnt that he had died in this tragic incident. Like many who have suffered in war Mrs. Mead found it hard to forgive such brutality. Suggesting that death was not necessarily the worst fate in such a situation, Fr. Eric related that Fr. Barry Angus had told him that, as a young child, he had innocently asked his mother about the identity of the man returning from imprisonment in the Far East. His father was so hurt by this apparent betrayal that their relationship was permanently damaged. Bitterness and pain can be offset by love and kindness. Many years later, while he was a curate in Orpington, Fr. Eric met a family who had been involved in the same tragedy as his father. While the husband was berating the cruelty of the Japanese guards, his wife recalled the kindness and bravery of a Japanese soldier who had risked everything to bring food and encouragement to the prisoners.

Mr Cecil Pocock was the reader and Brian Sanders, who as usual made the arrangements for the Remembrance Day Mass, served and read the bidding prayers.

The Mass was attended by Jackie Hall, Rudolf Massara, John Egan, Mick Power, Brendan and Anna Williams, Harry Mellor, Kevin Williamson, Peter Serafinowicz, John Pettley, Colin Garvey, Gerald Rowe, Bernie and Mrs Borland, Bernard Farrell, Bernard Regan, John Keenan, Eddie **O'Brien**, Bernard Schwenk, David Sanders, Dennis Hook, John Mansi, Julian Minghi, Tony & June Morrish, Dave Rowles, Chris Smith, Colin Brown, Matthew Benedict and Freya (his very well behaved baby daughter), Claire Colleran (the College Chaplain), Ben Benedict, David & Lyn

Leathem, Mrs Maureen Bench (the widow of the late Mike Bench), Annette (Mike's daughter), Mathew (Mike's son, a former pupil at the College) and Nicolette (Mathew's partner).

After the welcome refreshments provided in the College by Mark Preece, many Old Boys and their partners adjourned to the Oliver Plunkett Club to chat, quench their thirsts and recall old friends and former times.

**4** 00 Club  
A ticket in the 400 Club costs £12.00 a year. Each ticket contributes to COXA funds. If you would like to join the 400 Club please contact me on 020 8764 0313.

The latest winners are shown below:

	£100	£50	£25
June	J Connor	S McGuire	P Keenan
July	R Hartnett	P Leeder	V McGuire
August	E Hayter	K Horkan	18 Club
September	I Anderson	S Burke	R Williams
October	J Thornton	L McLoughlin	T Cain
November	B Casey	K Howard	J Thornton

*Colin Garvey*

**M**embership  
The cost of becoming a Life Member is now age related. For the over- eighties it is £10.00; for the over-seventies it is £20.00; for the over-sixties it is £30 and for the over-fifties it is £50.00. For the under-fifties it is still £75.00. The Annual subscription is £5.00.

Life Membership			
Frank Attwood	Lyndon Davis	B E Lawrence	Brian Pryke
Brian Baldock	Adie Decoursey	David Leathem	Tom Purcell
Paul Barber	David Donnelly	John Leathem	S P Quick
Kevin Barnaville	Mick Duffy	Phil Leeder	Dennis Quin
Philip Barrington	Brian Earp	Jan Luba	John Quirk
Matthew Benedict	John Egan	Mike Lynch	John Rayer



Life Membership continued			
Richard Benson	Tom Ennis	Nigel Lynch	Kevin Ridge
Terence Boley	Bernard E Farrell	Scotty MacDonald	Phil Roderick-Jones
Peter Bonthron	Lorcan Farrelly	Mick Magee	Connor Rooney
W L Booth	P J Fitzgerald	John V Mansi	Vic Roszkowski
Wilson Bowers	Terry Fitzgerald	Joseph Mansi	Gerald C Rowe
Martin Boyd	Peter Flaherty	David Martin	Joe Rowe
Andrew Brannon	John Freddi	Brian McDermott	David Rowles
Mick Brien	Peter Fry	Will McGrath	Frank Ryan
R C Brookes	Pat Furey	John McGuire	Michael Ryan
Gerard Burgess	Colin Garvey	Tom McLoughlin	Patrick Ryan
James Burke	Tony Gilford	John McNicholas	Gerry Salmon
Michael Burke	John Gilhooly	Jim McQueeney	Tony Sanchez
Patrick Burke	Mike Grice	Mick Meade	Andrew Sanders
Seamus Burke	Pip Gunn	Chris Megoran	Brian Sanders
Michael Butler	Richard Harris	David Mellor	David Sanders
Paul Butler	Ted Hayter	Harry Mellor	Ben Schwenk
Brian Campbell	Hugh Hickland	David Miles	Phil Schwenk
Nino Caraccio	D A Hicks	Laurence Milligan	Guy Sheppard
Terry Carroll	Tim Higgins	Julian Minghi	John Sheridan
Kevin Cassandro	Frank Hixson	Lawrence Mullane	Paul Shimell
Joseph Cernuschi	Paul Hixson	Robert Murphy	Chris Smith
Lt.Col. F Cetri	Tim Hixson	Matthew Murtagh	Robert Speight
Jim Chambers	Briony Horkan	David W Nathan	Eamonn Taggart
Rich Clark	Jim Howard	John Norton	Gerard Taggart
Terry Clegg	Rysard Hryniewicz	John Noulton	Paul Tehan
Kevin Clouter	Peter J Hughes	Sean O'Connell	Eric Tope
Aidan Coletta	Peter Hurst	Tom O'Dee	C Truss
John Coletta	Barry James	Anthony O'Shea	R A Tuft
Mike Collins	John F Jones	Mick O'Shea	Mick Ware
R T Collins	Trevor Jones	Mick O'Sullivan	Alan Webber
W C Collins	Tom Judge	A C Page	Michael J Weir
Daniel Condon	John A Keen	John Pettley	Paul West
Derek Cooper	Peter Keen	R F Pierce	R F Westwood

Life Membership concluded			
Andrew Cordani	John Keenan	Henry Pinsent	Brian P White
Malcolm Corey	Peter Keenan	Bernard Plummer	Arthur Williams
Franco Cornelli	Peter Kelleher	Len Powell	Brendan Williams
Ted Corrigan	L Larkin	Mick Power	John Williams
Terry Cremins	Brian D Lawlor	David Price	Peter Wills
A V Crichton-Smith			

The following members paid by Standing Order in September.

Annual Subscriptions			
Tony Amura	Mark A Conneely	Douglas H Hadida	Paul A Meggyesi
Frank Barretta	Jim Connor	Michael R Hadida	Alec Morrish
John Boyd	Paul D Cousins	Michael Hayland	David A Murtagh
Keiron F H Brady	Nick Crean	John Henderson	David W Nathan
John Brandon	Kev Curtin	Mik Hodges	Rob E O'Brien
Andrew Brannon	Joe Davorn	Peter Hounslow	Mick O'Flynn
Prof. Ray V Brooks	Peter Doran	Kevin Howard	Kevin Ridge
Peter Brown	John Egan	Anthony J Morrish	John Ryan
John Bunce	Martin F Farrell	Richard Januszewski	Chris Scott
Patrick Burke	Martin Fowler	Frank J Jordan	Andrew S Tworkowski
Frank Burkhard	AJ Frost	Paul Kanssen	David Walters
Terry P Cain	Alan E Fulker	Brendan Kearns	Michael J Weir
Lynn Carpenter	Sean Gavigan	Tim J Kelly	Paul West
Paul Carter	Michael Gibbons	Bill Kidd	Dr Alan White

In addition there is an Annual Subscription that was paid from a company account (Merc Ltd). To keep the records straight could that member please let me know his name. Over time the following members have moved and we no longer have their current addresses. If anyone knows their current addresses please let me know.

W L Booth	John McDermott	A C Page	R A Tuft
Tony Corrigan	Mick O'Flynn	R F Pierce	Mick Ware
A V Crichton-Smith	Mick O'Shea	S P Quick	
L Larkin	Kazik Ostrowski	C Truss	

*Alec Morrish*

## Cricket News

The cricket AGM took place on the 11<sup>th</sup> December 2008 at the Five Bells in Streatham.

Next year's four/five day cricket tour to the Isle of Wight is expected to start on Thursday, 25th June.

*Matthew Bendict*

## Chairman's Luncheon

The next Luncheon will take place on Friday, 30th January 2009 in the England Suite at the Oval, Kennington, London SE11 5SS. There will be a complimentary bar from 12:00 am until 1:15 pm, when Luncheon will be served. The menu is

.oOo.

*Spiced winter pumpkin , honey & sage soup*

.oOo.

*Braised daube of English beef, parsley pressed English heritage potatoes, roasted root vegetables with Guinness jus*

.oOo.

*Spotted dick & custard*

.oOo.

*Coffee*

The cost of the event is £39.50. Cheques should be made payable to COXA.

Invitations have already been sent to members but if you have mislaid yours, please make your reservation by Monday, 19th January 2009 by contacting either Mick Power, 9 Cheviot Close, Sutton, Surrey SM2 5SB (020 8642 6959) or Eddie O'Brien (020 8644 1803 Home, 07891 713693 Mobile). Eddie's email address is [eddieobrien@tesco.net](mailto:eddieobrien@tesco.net)

Please note that entry to the OSC stand, and the England Suite, is located at the Vauxhall End of the ground on Harleyford Road. Enter through the Alec Steward gate and report to reception. Note that there is no access via the Hobbs Gate.



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