



# MOREANA

NEWSLETTER OF ST. THOMAS MORE ALUMNI

## A DIAMOND OF A PARTY!

Next year sees the 60th birthday of the school!

We realise that, to some, it seems as if it's been around for ever, and to others it seems like only yesterday that it was flinging open its hallowed portals to welcome them into its embrace. But the Diamond Jubilee looms large on the horizon nevertheless.

This roving reporter can reveal that his investigations have uncovered fledgling plans for a number of events to mark this auspicious occasion, some of which will involve opportunities for past pupils and members of staff to also join in the celebrations.

Perhaps the most elegant and grandest of all will be the **60th Anniversary Diamond Ball** to be held at **Stock Brook Country Club** in Billericay on **Saturday 9th May**.

This prestigious occasion is being planned by the Friends of St Thomas More High School (formerly the PTA) and provides the perfect opportunity for everyone to dress up in their finery for a sumptuous celebration.



The evening will feature

- **Welcome drink**
- **3 Course meal with wine**
- **Live band**
- **Table Magician**
- **Disco**
- **Photographer**
- **Memento gift**

Members of the Alumni are being actively encouraged to attend this glittering occasion with their partners.

Tickets are priced at £62 per person and payment may be made in three instalments. A deposit of only £20 is required to secure your place.

When booking your tickets be sure to state that you are members of the Alumni if you wish to be seated on one of our tables.

Word is being spread far and wide and the very real ambition is that, amongst the guests, will be a good smattering of former teachers and past pupils mingling with today's teachers and the parents of current pupils.

Sarah Burns, the Chair of the Friends, has paid this esteemed association the honour of inviting our President to co-host the occasion in order to represent those who have passed through the

school during the past six decades. They very much hope that he will be accompanied and supported by a large contingent of our members to endorse that sentiment.

To book simply email Sarah at [fostm@st-thomasmore.southend.sch.uk](mailto:fostm@st-thomasmore.southend.sch.uk) or call 07703 128827

Let's see if we can't make this an occasion to remember!



## FREE AT LAST, WE'RE FREE AT LAST!



### A message from the President...

As members will recall, the big lead article on the front page of the last edition of *Moreana* was all about the need for this association to change and adapt to the needs and trends of today's world.

Consequently, at one of the best attended AGMs in recent memory those present discussed long and hard the arguments for and against removal of the annual membership fee.

The main thrust of the discussion hinged around the need to retain existing, and recruit new, members. Which in turn, of course, boils down to the simple

questions of "Why would you join?" and "What does the Alumni offer that can't be got elsewhere?"

The answer to those ponderables is increasingly difficult to determine given the ready availability of social networking opportunities nowadays... *Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn* and others all provide easy ways of maintaining contact with like-minded people. And none of them require the completion of application forms or the parting with cash for the privilege of joining.

So after lengthy and informed debate those present voted unanimously to remove the annual fee for membership as from June this year.

All existing members at the time were then contacted with this news and invited to cancel their Standing Orders if they wish to.

So what will happen now? Nothing much will change

in the ambitions and structure of the Alumni. We shall still aim to organise and hold an annual dinner and the Memorial Mass, supplemented from time-to-time with various ad-hoc and member-organised events. But the pricing structure may change to reflect not only the need to keep a closer eye on finances, but also to embrace yet more shifts towards becoming more appealing.

Check out the article concerning our new Facebook page and, if you haven't already done so, become a "friend".

Finally, is any of this going to work? The simple and blunt answer is we don't yet know. But if the fact that since the AGM we have received applications from at least six new members is anything to go by, then the signs are certainly looking good. That's six more than we had at the same time last year!

**Paul Driscoll**

## YOUR CHANCE FOR SOME REAL INPUT

Every year since this esteemed association was formed back in 1998 we have held an annual dinner for the enjoyment of members. That's 21 dinners, a lot of food, an even greater amount of beer and wine and over 60 rounds of Intercourse Bingo!

In all that time only two major things have ever changed: The venue and the time of year!

The very first dinner was held at Southend Hockey Club, and every one since has taken place in the school.

For about half of this time we held the dinner in October and then, after seeking feedback, moved it to its current month of February.

Every dinner has consisted of a four or five-course meal and finished with a speaker from our membership giving a brief talk about either their job (a barrister, a military medic, a Hollywood screenwriter and so forth) or something unusual that they have done (participated in a round the world yacht race, been a volunteer at the Olympics, experienced a major flood, etc).

We've always played a few rounds of a fun, fund-raising game that's almost become our own: Intercourse Bingo.

But as the song says: the times, they are a-changing. So, in a spirit of genuine interest in making effec-

## A NEW BLOCK AND A NEW LOOK

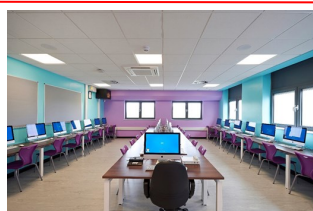


September saw the latest addition to the property portfolio open in the grounds of the school when a posh new edifice opened on the site of what used to be the cricket nets!

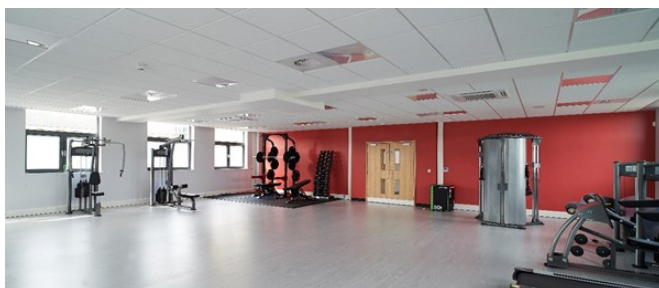
Featuring basic and specialist teaching rooms as



well as extra facilities for those with special educational needs the



building also boasts its very own internal fitness suite!





## MEMBERSHIP AS AT OCTOBER 2019

1961	Graham Lewis	1970	Michael Davis	1978	Richard Clegg Sean Cray Kevin Thomas	1990	Christopher Hull
1962	Kevin Butt Michael Hughes John Lewis	1971	Bernie Brooker Mike Donovan Kevin Flynn	1979	Michael Ashkuri Pete Chambers Paul Clarke Paul Driscoll John Lawrie David O'Ryan Sean Tyrrie	1995	Paul Bending
1963	John Bowman John Sheehy	1972	Paul Culleton David Thompson	1980	Sean Leggett Martin McKeown Nial O'Callaghan	1998	Ben Gibson
1964	John Griffiths Ronald Patchett	1973	Martin Carroll Phil Mahoney	1981	Sean Conlon Malcolm Patterson	2000	David Cook Martyn Rickard
1965	Brian Dalton Alan Dobby Terry Knights Frank McEvoy	1974	Kevin Bonham Paul McArdle Simon Millyard	1982	Richard Chadon Sean Corr Mark Harvey	2001	Chris Thompson
1966	Stephen Barker Patrick Clancy Bill Clegg Paul Hutchinson Paul Wenham	1975	Eamon Day David Ekers Keith Exley Chris Fairchild John McDermott Andrew McGregor Gerry Thomas	1983	Richard Allard Anthony Crowley Keith Traynor	2005	Jack Brudenell Jonathan Fenn
1967	Tony Cane Paul Clancy Glen Sweeney Mike Thompson	1976	Christopher Barber Laurence Blainey John Chambers Guy Francke Clive Knight Andrew McWilliam Simon Ravinet Martin Sullivan John Todryk James Tyrrie	1984	Michael Barry Mark Denton Stuart Humfrey	2011	Dale Claridge
1968	Martin Duggan Geoffrey Lewis Peter Mahoney	1977	Phil Coath John Cobbold Mark Hidveghy Martin Hodson John Judge Liam Rand	1985	Tim Allard	2014	James Driscoll
1969	Peter David Paul Marsh Chris McHale	1986	Iain O'Connell	1987	Martin Corr Martin Diggines	2015	Ethan James
				1989	Damian Dillon Justin Hennessey Paul Lynch	Chpln	Rev Daniel Kelly
						Assoc	Matthew Hardiman Jed Marshall Ben Micklewright Chloe Spillett Nick Spillett Tom Wiltshire
						DateTBC	Peter O'Callaghan
						H/T	Gemma Ackred
						F/T	John Askew Ian Britt James Devor Mary Donaldson Tom Kennedy David Milne John O'Connell* David Sims
						Hon	Frank Keenan Jan Lewis Helen Wigmore
						In Mem	Richard Copley Tom Mayhew

## WHO WAS THAT GUY?

Avid readers may recall in the last edition of this sought-after publication that we ran a couple of images of Bishop Casey blessing the Concourse Area back in 1973 and posed the question: **Which of our members can be seen in the picture?**

The answer was John Lawrie (1978) who was enjoying (or was it enduring?) his first year at the seat of learning. He can be seen



singing his heart out second from right!

In fairness to John, he himself coughed to being the subject of our inves-

\*John O'Connell is currently a member of staff having previously left.

tigation and is now eagerly awaiting his consignment of *Spangles, Pacers, Bar Six, Aztec* and other 1970s delicacies!