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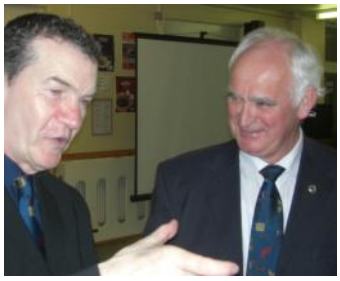
MOREANA

NEWSLETTER OF ST. THOMAS MORE ALUMNI

DINING WITH THE STARS

Saturday 28th February saw more than 30 Alumni members gather in the school Dining Hall for this year's annual dinner.

After enjoying a superb four-course meal accompanied by plenty of liquid refreshment and our traditional intercourse bingo (which, this year raised £100)everyone settled back to listen to this year's speaker—our very own membership secretary **Liam Rand** (1977).



Over the course of the next 30 minutes under the title ***A Career In Celluloid,*** Liam proceeded to both astound and educate us about his career as a Hollywood script editor.

Our speaker looks on as David Milne limbers-up

Who would have thought that someone who had shared the same classrooms, playing fields and assembly hall as the rest of us would go on to edit scripts for some of the best-known films of recent times?

Without the slightest hint of hubris Liam casually mentioned that he had worked on *The Shawshank Redemption, Miss Congeniality, Love Actually, Meet Joe Black* and a number of other, well-known Hollywood movies.

Whilst quick to explain that he had benefitted from his time at STM he also pointed out that he didn't particularly shine in English lessons, and began his working life in the retail trade.

But an Open University degree in English Literature led to him becoming a script writer first for *Eastenders* in the late 1980s and then *Coronation Street*. When his agent suggested that he might be more suited to editing he jumped at the chance and has never looked back.

His talk not only focussed on his own particular experiences but also explained the complexities involved in writing a screenplay: getting the plot points in the right places, ensuring it runs to time, and so on.

He not only spoke, but also showed clips of his work to demonstrate the point. So we saw scenes of Oscar-winner Sir Anthony Hopkins speaking Liam's lines in the final act of *Meet Joe Black*, enjoyed Morgan Freeman's first encounter with Tim Robbins in The *Shawshank Redemption* and heard how it was Liam that had suggesting using *Bye Bye Baby* in the funeral scene for Liam Neeson's wife in *Love Actually.*

All in all, a most enjoyable speech that perfectly rounded-off a great evening!

BUZZING WITH ENTHUSIASM

This hard-pressed Editor was delighted recently to receive a submission from a member. Not only was I surprised that anyone educated at STM could actually write, but I was stunned that someone had actually bothered to send something. So with thanks to Kevin Butt (1962) we are delighted to feature the following article on the benefits of bee-keeping…

The keeping of bees is a terrific hobby and the study of bees is absolutely fascinating. As well as a way of fulfilling my retirement the bees and the honey give me both pleasure and education in the ways of these industrious and very social insects.

Honey is one of nature's most palatable gifts. Made from the nectar of flowers, heather, hedgerow and most kinds of blossom it is one of the cheapest and most pure foods available. Honey is rapidly absorbed into the digestive system and, as a carbohydrate, is a great help in increasing muscle and energy. It is also, of course, a medicinal aid, is easily digestible and is ideal for all ages, wonderful on cereals and in home baking being much healthier than added sugars.

Contrary to popular belief there are no restrictions as to the situating of hives. The majority of people will locate a friendly farmer, or smallholding for a suitable site - even school sports fields are used up here in North Yorkshire. Keeping bees enables observers to study their social behaviour. Bees can fly up to two miles for nectar from crops and flowers, and in addition to providing honey, the bees pollinating your apples, pears and soft fruit can sometimes double the yield!

The Queen (the mother of the colony), is the only perfectly developed female in the hive and her body is longer than the other bees. Her sole function is to deposit eggs, from which the other hive occupants, (drones, workers) emerge.

Keeping bees is an interesting and rewarding hobby for ALL members of the family and if thoughts of bee keeping interest you, I would advise initially contacting your local bee keepers' association, who will point you in the right direction. Yields depend as ever on the weather, but a good summer ought to give around 60-70lb of honey!

Kevin was kind enough in a rare trip to Southend just before Christmas to drop off a cache of the honey produced by his bees which long-time stalwart of the association, John Bowman (1963), has kindly decanted into 6 jars.

These jars of honey are available to the first six members to request one via the usual e-mail address on the front cover.

Kevin has also donated a copy of Steve Benbow's book ***The Urban Beekeeper—A Year of Bees in the City****, which will be available to the highest bidder, with proceeds going to the association.*

REMEMBER TO REMEMBER

Just a little reminder that this year's **Memorial Mass** will be held at **8.00pm** on **MONDAY 22nd June**.

As always, the Mass will be followed by a free buffet and drinks to allow those present to renew acquaintances and enjoy the summer evening. The occasion is open to all past pupils and their partners.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

One of our most distant members, Andrew McWilliam (1976), has kindly sent a much-needed, and very interesting missive about the career he enjoys across the pond in the "Land of Opportunity"…

I am an astronomer at the Carnegie Observatories in Pasadena, California, USA; our telescopes are situated at Las Campanas Observatory in Chile, at the edge of the Andes. I spend most of my time in Pasadena, working on the data that I acquire during the week-long trips to the telescopes that I make once or twice a year.

The first photograph shows most of our telescopes in the snow, including the two Magellan telescopes: Baade and Clay; with their 6.5 metre mirrors, they are amongst the largest optical telescopes in the world! Below are the library, offices and a warehouse. In the distance, to the left, are the duPont 100-inch and Swope 40-inch telescopes, and just a glimpse of the Polish 1 metre telescope.

The other photo is of Baade at night. In the background, at an angle, you can see the plane of our Milky Way galaxy, including obscuration from dust; the central bulge of the galaxy is on the left. To the right you can discern the Large Magellanic Cloud, which is a dwarf galaxy satellite of our galaxy. The photograph closely resembles how it actually appears to my eye on a really good night, ex-

cept that the colours are less distinct by eye. The red glow at the top of the telescope is from a neon calibration lamp, on for only a few seconds.

Introduced me to Calculus

The reason for writing is to express my gratitude to the teachers at STM who helped me on this path. My profound regret is that I cannot thank Mr. Thompson (a.k.a. Ronnie), now deceased; he expected more from me, he forced me to work harder, and he introduced me to Calculus. Thanks Mr. Thompson. And thank you Mr. Britt, Mr. Phillips, Mr. Milne and Mr. Askew; you enabled me to learn in the encouraging atmosphere that I needed.

My work involves the chemical analysis of stars. This requires taking a spectrum of star light (splitting the light into its constituent colours). Each element, and molecule, present in the star's outer layers absorbs light from the spectrum at a unique set of characteristic wavelengths, like a fingerprint. The more of the element in the star there is, the more light is absorbed in the characteristic pattern.

The goals of my work are to understand the origin of the elements and to employ their abundances, like a fossil record, to understand the evolution of our Milky Way galaxy, and other galaxies.

Gold and Platinum

My recent work provides constraints on our ideas of chemical evolution in dwarf galaxies, and also sets limits on the origin of gold and platinum. A popular scenario is that these two elements were produced by merging neutron stars, in binary systems. If this is true, then the gold and platinum in your wedding ring is, actually, neutron star crust material.

My wife once asked me for a fresh glass of water. I told her that the hydrogen in the water was made in the Big Bang 13.7 billion years ago, while the oxygen was, on average, roughly 9 billion years old, but some of the oxygen is only 4.5 billion years old. *"Is that ok?"* I asked. She was not amused.

Most people know that we are made of stardust, but my everyday work gives me an ever-deepening appreciation of my connection to the universe and the nuclear furnaces in stars…

...The calcium in my bones and teeth, the iron in the haemoglobin of my blood, and the oxygen I breathe all come from supernovae. The carbon and nitrogen in the proteins of my body and food results from a mix of nuclear fusion in longer-lived stars, that end quietly as beautiful planetary nebulae, and short-lived massive stars that end in supernova explosions that briefly outshine the whole Galaxy.

If it were not for the radioactive heating of the earth by thorium and uranium we would have smaller mountains, volcanoes and earthquakes; but the earth's magnetic field would also be weaker, leaving our atmosphere vulnerable to ablation by the solar wind. Thus, without thorium and uranium (possibly also made by merging neutron stars) Earth might be more like Mars is today.

These are just a few things that I get to think about in my work. I am so very fortunate.

Wow! It just goes to show when you're a bored 11 year old in a science lesson wondering when they're ever going to let you loose with a bunch of chemicals and a Bunsen burner that if you just stay the course the sky is, quite literally, the limit. Carl Sagan eat your heart out!

MEMBERSHIP AS AT FEBRUARY 2015

Efforts are continually being made by our esteemed Membership, Secretary Liam Rand, to increase the membership numbers and he has been gainfully chasing those members who have, unfortunately, let things drop.

There are a few who used to be amongst our number whose e-mail addresses no longer appear to be current so, if you notice anyone missing from this current list, please nudge them to get in touch with the e-mail address on the front cover.

We have also decided to introduce, in response to a request, a ***"Memorium"*** membership, whereby someone may continue a membership of a past pupil who has died. This will also be open to anyone wishing to join a deceased past pupil or member of staff for the first time.

HATCHES, MATCHES & DESPTACHES

It is with sadness that we must report yet another death of a past pupil. Martin Hutchinson, brother of past President Paul, and who left the school in 1967 passed away on 26th January. He was 62 and had been ill for some time with lung cancer.

Tragically Paul's sister also died of the same illness only one month later.

Our thoughts and prayers go out for Martin, his sister and their families at this time. May they both Rest In Peace.

1961	Graham Lewis
1962	Kevin Butt Michael Hughes John Lewis
1963	John Bowman John Sheehy
1964	John Griffiths Ronald Patchett
1965	Brian Dalton Alan Dobby Terry Knights
1966	Stephen Barker Patrick Clancy Bill Clegg Paul Hutchinson Paul Wenham
1967	Tony Cane Paul Clancy Glen Sweeney Mike Thompson
1968	Martin Duggan Geoffrey Lewis
1969	Peter David Paul Marsh Chris McHale
1970	Michael Davis
1971	Bernie Brooker Mike Donovan Kevin Flynn
1972	Paul Culleton David Thompson
1973	Phil Mahoney
1974	Kevin Bonham Paul McArdle Simon Millyard
1975	Eamon Day David Ekers Keith Exley Chris Fairchild John McDermott Andrew McGregor Gerry Thomas
1976	Christopher Barber Laurence Blainey John Chambers Guy Francke Clive Knight Andrew McWilliam Simon Ravinet Martin Sullivan John Todryk James Tyrie
1977	Phil Coath John Cobbold Mark Hidveghy Martin Hodson John Judge Liam Rand
1978	Kevin Thomas
1979	Paul Clarke Paul Driscoll David O'Ryan Sean Tyrie
1980	Sean Leggett Martin McKeown Nial O'Callaghan
1981	Sean Conlon
1982	Sean Corr Mark Harvey
1983	Richard Allard Anthony Crowley
1984	Michael Barry Mark Denton Stuart Humfrey
1985	Tim Allard
1986	Iain O'Connell
1987	Martin Corr Martin Diggines
1989	Damian Dillon Justin Hennessey Paul Lynch
1990	Christopher Hull Ben Micklewright
1995	Paul Bending
1998	Ben Gibson
2000	Martyn Rickard
2001	Chris Thompson
2005	Jack Brudenell Jonathan Fenn
2008	Jed Marshall
2011	Dale Claridge
Chpln	Rev Daniel Kelly
Assoc	Matthew Hardiman 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

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

MANY THANKS

After many appeals over the years for articles, like buses, two come along together.

This idea-bereft editor is extremely grateful to Kevin and Andrew for sending contributions for this edition and would urge all members to think of doing the same for future editions.