



MOREANA

THE ST. THOMAS MORE OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

CHRISTMAS ??? DINNER

In true St. Thomas More tradition the Executive decided, once again, to buck the trend this Christmas and not have a Christmas Dinner.

But hold those letters of complaint! It would be more than the mere bucking of a trend were they to avoid an opportunity for imbibing. With an eye for the fact that we all have far too much to do at Christmas they simply moved the event to after Christmas (rather like the Orthodox church I suppose). Not content with moving

the date they also changed the menu ("hurrah" I hear, not just from all those members who are sick to death of turkey, but also from all those turkeys who are just sick to death!).

The dinner will take place at the **REGENT INN ORIENTAL RESTAURANT**, London Road, Leigh on Sea (opposite *The Elms* public house) on their special party night **FRIDAY 11th FEBRUARY 2005** to celebrate the Chinese New Year!

The menu consists of:-

Grilled Jumbo Prawn with
Spice Peking Sauce

Aromatic Crispy Duck
with Pancakes

Satay Chicken
Deep Fried Crispy Whole
Prawn on Toast
Roasted Shredded Beef
Sliced Pork Chop with
Chilli and Salt
Crispy Spring Roll
Crispy Seaweed

Grilled Chicken in Fresh
Mango Sauce
Quick Fried King Prawn
with Garlic Pepper & Basil
Grilled Fillet of Pork in
Barbecued Sauce
Quick Fried Spinach in
Oyster Sauce
Thai Special Fried Rice

The cost will be £26.00 per head plus 10% service charge.

The dinner is open to all members and their partners, but we only have a limited number of places booked so it would be advisable to telephone Gareth Lewis on 01702 478105 in order to check availability.

So, as they say in China, Kung Hay Fat Choi!

DINERS LEARN

Saturday 23rd October saw a large number of Old Boys gather for one of the highlights of the Association's calendar - the Old Boys' Dinner.



This was the first to be hosted by our new President Paul Hutchinson and by all reports was indeed a sterling affair!



Once again Bev and her team produced a marvellous meal (although a certain past Membership Secretary was seen to be forlornly chasing the cheese around the tables) and there was the traditional display of modest restraint when it came to alcohol (!!!???)

Unfortunately your roving

reporter was unable to attend this year but



relying heavily on the trusted reports of those who were there and having studied the pictorial evidence it



seems that a good time was had by all.

Damian Dillon delivered the speech this year reminiscing about his fateful trip to Boscastle during the flash floods (a career at Thomas Cook, strangely, doesn't beckon) and Association Chaplain Rev. Kevin Hale gave the blessing. You can read an abridged version of Damian's "disaster despatch" on page 2 of this esteemed publication.

DAMIAN'S DELUGE

Former Membership Secretary Damian Dillon decided to holiday in Boscastle during the floods of 2004. Here he kindly submits the facts...

The day in question, 16th August began as normal and was actually a nice warm and sunny summers day. My wife and I were travelling back from Newquay and heading north towards Boscastle and our hotel. On the horizon was a big black mass of cloud which stood out like a sore thumb because everywhere else it was sunny and over the 30 minute drive back it was obvious that this cloud mass was not



Calm before the storm - Boscastle Harbour shops

moving.

As we approached Boscastle, the weather changed in an instant from sunshine to pitch black and torrential rain. The wipers were on full speed, and headlamps were on as if it was evening. I approached the river Camel at a place called Slaughterbridge which incidentally is the place where the Met Office record rainfall. The river Camel isn't a big river but I couldn't get near the bridge which was still a few hundred yards down the road because the river had burst its banks and this normally quiet stream had become

a torrid smashing machine.

We turned the car around and tried to enter Boscastle by many of the small B roads in the vicinity but we ended up in a convoy of about 50 cars all trying to do the same thing.

Eventually we hit a roadblock, where the policewoman told us to head for a main town such as Bude or Bodmin. So we headed back towards civilisation and Newquay. At the roundabout for Newquay the road was also closed.

OK. Where next? Well Bude was further north. Lets go to Bodmin.

We arrived in Bodmin in bright sunshine and we entered a pub! We saw the devastation on the television there, and heard that Bude was on the danger list and that the storm was heading East with another 30mm of rain expected in the months rainfall they had already taken in 2 hours.

When we did finally return to Boscastle the road resembled an earthquake. There were chunks of slate pushing up vertically out of the tarmac, and in other sections the road had collapsed into huge holes. We reached the hotel, and the owners asked us if they could move us out of the apartment that we were in (which was a part of the hotel) because they had no house to go to since the whole of

their ground floor had been submerged in the storm!

Now to dispel some of the myths that were spoken about the disaster at Boscastle. Firstly, it was the harbour that was devastated not the whole village.

The petrol station next to our hotel was charging the TV crews £250 per vehicle per day to park there and she was very nasty about it as well. Most businesses that were operating were doing the same thing. Some of the buildings that were damaged were so old that the foundations they were built on were not very substantial and were disasters waiting to happen. Many of the business owners whom I have got to know over the years were so excited by the prospect of a big payout that they could not help but smile constantly.

The business owners in the village who were not affected were livid with all the reports that the whole village was destroyed especially the hotels who saw virtually all their bookings get cancelled with immediate effect.

Things that stick in my mind:

Watching an interview



Aftermath - wrecked cars at the harbour

with the village postman which I could see taking place outside the hotel. He was saying that whilst walking his round he could see the devastation building up etc, etc.

Complete fabrication - for starters, there are two postman in the village and neither of them walk as they both have vans and have always had vans!

Watching two suited engineers discussing the condition of one of the roads that was risen in places and one of them saying "I think we should get the Land rover and drive it up and down to see if we can flatten that bit over there!" Don't they use steam rollers for that sort of thing?

Another thing that startled me was seeing a police car passing me on the road in the heavy rain without any lights on. And wait for it..... IT WAS A VOLVO!

Well that was the shortened version of my summer holiday and needless to say after that weeks holiday - I needed another break!

But please, next time I go on holiday.....DON'T FOLLOW ME!

AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

That stalwart supporter of Moreana, Mike Thompson (1967) has taken to heart this beleaguered Editor's plea for articles and sent in this very entertaining and interesting piece about his life after STM (I'm sure Frank Keenan is delighted to learn that there is life after STM).

1967-2004

As I fell out of the buffet car having just arrived at Plymouth Station from Paddington on a cold, wet, Monday morning in February 1971, I reviewed my seemingly rash decision a few months earlier to join the Royal Navy. I decided I needed another drink.

Before I could climb back into the warm, smoke fugged buffet car however, I was 'invited' to accompany a rotund, bearded Petty Officer to the luxury transport that was waiting outside the station. The Bedford 3-tonner was not quite what I had in mind. Myself, 20 or so other worst for drink recruits and what baggage we had not left on the rapidly departing train, were then whisked off to the Royal Navy New Entrants Training establishment at HMS Raleigh in Torpoint. Grimly hanging on to the wooden bench in the back of the truck, with my feet perched on a pile of suitcases and with the canvas sides of the truck flapping around my ears, I began to think that the

buffet car might have been a better option.

I had left St Thomas More in 1967 having finished my CSE's and after completing a year in Belfairs 6th form, ended up at the Inland Revenue Valuation Office in Victoria Avenue. I joined the Royal Naval Reserve Communications Unit in Westcliff in 1969 on a whim, (I enjoyed sailing and I thought the uniform would help me with the chicks - it didn't!). However, it did open my eyes to the wider world outside of Southend-on-Sea. Having therefore trained as a Naval Communicator, I was welcomed into the Royal Navy as a Pay and Records Specialist - a branch in which I was to spend the next 22 years, leaving as a Chief Petty Officer in 1993.

Having now completed my 6 months basic and initial professional training, which also involved 5 months in Chatham, I had been drafted back down to Plymouth in my first 'trained' role. About that time, attending a 'social evening' in the Cherry Tree pub in Devonport, I happened literally to bump into a certain good-looking Wren, who said her name was Jan. There were two consequences to that evening - the severe headache the morning after, (there was a lot of flu going round that year) and a marriage 2 years later to that Wren. We celebrated our 30th anniversary earlier this year.

My naval service consisted of the usual cold war era of routine postings around the country, with the following being to the forefront of any memories. The old Ark Royal (of *Sailor* fame) 1972 to 1974, (my first visit amongst many to the USA and West Indies) and the new Ark Royal 1987 to 1988, (9 month round the world voyage culminating in an extended stay in Australia attending the Bi-Centennial celebrations). The winter of 1976 with the Royal Marines in the Arctic Circle, playing soldiers and living in snow holes, (pay has to be calculated and correspondence completed in all conditions) and the summer of 1985 when I was part of a tri-service Royal British Legion pilgrimage to the Far East. There, accompanied by Far East veterans and war widows, we laid wreaths at some of the war cemeteries in Thailand (Kanchanaburi - Bridge over the River Kwai), Singapore (Changi prison) and Burma (Rangoon). The stories told by the veterans will forever remain with me as an example of sheer courage and fortitude.

On being pensioned off from the Royal Navy after 22 years, I had a job as an office manager



*Mike as a Chief Petty Officer
onboard HMS Bristol in
Hamburg circa 1980.*

in a solicitor's, and as a contracts clerk with the Ministry of Defence. I am now back in Portsmouth as a civilian working with the Royal Navy in a training establishment. I have few regrets of my time with the RN and watching the youngsters now coming through their training before they join what is left of the Fleet, hope that they have the adventure, comradeship and job satisfaction that I was lucky enough to experience. I still occasionally think though, what would I be doing now if I had managed to climb back into that buffet car way back in 1971?

Any other such articles from members would be gratefully received for future editions of this esteemed publication. (In fact I like the idea of a regular feature so much that I've stolen Mike's original title to use for the column - Ed!)

MEMBERS AS AT 1st January 2005

1961	Graham Lewis	1972	Paul Culleton		Kevin Thomas		Douglas Walter
1962	Michael Hughes		Toni Imossi	1979	Paul Clarke	1997	Elliott Clark
	John Lewis		David Thompspon		Paul Driscoll	2000	Daniel Kelly
1963	John Bowman	1973	Martin Carroll		David Kitchens	2001	Chris Thompson
	Frank Daley		Michael Glen		David O'Ryan	2003	Chris Barker
	Tony Howlett		Phil Mahoney		Tony Parsad		Andrew Cooper
	John Sheehy	1974	Simon Millyard		Sean Tyrrie		Sean Perrotton
1964	John Griffiths		Ray Allum	1980	Paul Glynn		James Smith
	Ronald Patchett		Nick Cousins		Sean Leggett		Alison Walker
1965	Terry Knights		Paul McArdle		Martin McKeown	2004	Liam Dean
	Brian Dalton	1975	Victor Peretti		Nial O'Callaghan	H/M	Frank Keenan
1966	Martyn Barker		Eamon Day	1981	Richard Baker	Chaplain	Rev Kevin Hale
	Patrick Clancy		David Ekers		Sean Conlon	FT	John Askew
	Bill Clegg		Keith Exley	1982	Sean Corr		Ian Britt
	Paul Hutchinson		Christopher Fairchild		Mark Harvey		D Fanning
	Gareth Lewis		Guy Francké		Michael Mullally		David Finnigan
	Paul Wenham		John MacDermott	1983	Richard Allard		Richard Jarman
1967	Tony Cane		Andrew McGregor		Anthony Crowley		Elsie Kemp
	Paul Clancy		Kevin O'Hanlon	1984	Michael Barry		Tom Kennedy
	Glen Sweeney		Andy (Guy) Thomas		Stuart Humfrey		John O'Connell
	Mike Thompson		Gerry Thomas	1985	Tim Allard		Rev David Peck
1968	Geoffrey Lewis	1976	Trevor Barr	1986	Paul Cotgrove		D.P McGregor
	Martin Duggan		Laurence Blainey		Alan Martin		Tom Mayhew
1969	Peter David		John Chambers	1988	Martin Corr		
	Paul Marsh		Tony Harmon		Martin Diggines		
	Chris McHale		Clive Knight		Christopher Hall		
1971	Bernie Brooker		Andrew McWilliam	1989	Steven Hurren		
	Mike Donovan		Simon Ravinet		Paul Baynes		
	Kevin Flynn		Martin Sullivan		Damian Dillon		
	Brendan J Foy	1977	John Todryk		Justin Hennessey		
	Nigel Hurley		Jim Tyrrie		Paul Lynch		
	Robert Murphy		John Cobbold		Brian Martin		
	Charlie Sheppard		Richard Copley	1990	Christopher Hull		
			Martin Hodson		Stuart Saggars		
			John Judge	1991	Graham Diggines		
		1978	Richard Clegg	1995	Paul Bending		

WHAT'S THE ANSWER?

That loyal supporter of *Moreana* Eamon Day has submitted a suggestion for a regular column whereby members can submit a question they need answering and anyone who can help simply submits a possible solution for the next edition. A bit like our very own version of *Ask Jeeves*!



Eamon obviously had an ulterior motive since he was more than happy (and perhaps a tad too eager) to supply a problem that he is obviously keen to find a solution for:

Having cut down a row of privet hedges with a view to planting something else instead, does anyone know how to remove or kill off the roots?

If anyone can help Eamon do his roots then please send the remedy to the

address on the front page.

Indeed if any other members have a question that they'd like to submit please also send it to the same address and we'll run this column whenever there's a problem that needs solving.

Of course Frank Keenan and his staff will be monitoring it to ensure that no-one submits questions that they should remember the answers to from their schooling!!

MANY THANKS

Members will have noticed that this edition contains two bumper articles from other members together with an idea for a regular column. Hurrah!

When the Association was set-up six years ago one of the foundation stones of its operation was to be the regular *Moreana* newsletter.

It has always existed both to be a means of imparting news of the Association and the school AND a vehicle for members to fill with their own submissions.

So a massive thank you to those who have submitted material over the years. Please keep 'em coming - it's these articles that keep *Moreana* fresh and interesting!