



# MOREANA

NEWSLETTER OF ST. THOMAS MORE ALUMNI

## REMEMBERING 22 JUNE

As we mentioned (perhaps all-too-briefly) in the last edition of this esteemed publication, this year's **Alumni Memorial Mass** will take place on the actual Feast Day of St Thomas More—**THURSDAY 22nd JUNE**—in the school at 8.00pm.

Old hands and regular attenders will know that the evening is a far from sombre affair commencing, as it does, with the actual Memorial Mass itself. This



incorporates not only the inauguration of the new President but also the far more important prayers for the deceased mem-

bers of the school community.

The list of known deceased past pupils, staff

and governors is read out in order to allow us all a momentary pause in the frantic rush of life to remember and recall those who are no longer with us. Perhaps they were classmates, or just in the school at the same time as us; perhaps they taught us or even disciplined us; perhaps they guided the school for us and our successors.

Once the sober part of the evening has finished it's time to kick-back and enjoy a lavish buffet (past attenders can testify to the amount of food on offer) with plenty of free wine and beer to wash it all down.

The evening is open to all past pupils, members of staff and governors. Partners are warmly welcomed and the evening is FREE!

So make a note in your diaries, cancel the football or pub, tell any other "old boys/girls" that you may know and come along to honour our departed and to enjoy a good summer evening's relaxation.

## JOHN'S WALK AND TALK



Stalwart supporter of the Alumni and long-serving Head of Biology and Deputy Headmaster, John Askew, has lived in Shoebury for much of his life. Now in his 80s he has, since retiring from STM, walked around the entire coast of England and the length of Hadrian's

Wall [not both on the same day you understand - Ed]. His knowledge of local history and interest in walking have led him to make the offer to members of this esteemed association of a guided "history walk" around the coastline of Shoebury.

Taking in such sights as the re-generated garrison, the sea wall, the old town and the wild North Sea shores of deepest Shoebury, the walk will finish at the delightfully twee Angel pub (not too far from Asda) with a talk over a pub lunch in the upper room.

Details are still being finalised and the date is likely to be in the spring/summer/early autumn. So if you fancy a wander through time and Shoebury just drop us an email via the website ([www.stmalumni.co.uk](http://www.stmalumni.co.uk)).

The event is open to all members and their guests. Participation will be free, but you'll be responsible for paying for your own lunch and drinks at The Angel.

Nothing will be finalised until we have an idea of numbers so please get in touch sooner rather than later in order that we can make a decision about dates, etc.



## UP-CLOSE AND PERSONAL

Many members who still live in the Southend area will remember that on 7th September last year the huge chimney visible across the estuary on the Isle of Grain was demolished.

At 244 metres (800 feet) high it was the tallest ever concrete structure in the UK to be brought down.

Constructed in the early 1970s it had dominated the view across the Thames for more than 40 years, yet it all came to an end in a combination of graceful descent in an ever-growing cloud of dust followed, some seconds later, by an extremely loud bang!

It just so happened that this intrepid editor was in the north Kent area a matter of weeks later and decided to pop-on to the Isle of Grain as he was passing in order to see if there was any sign of the remains.

After what seemed like an eternity driving through barren, post-apocalyptic scenery (Southend definitely got the more attractive location on the river banks) he came across the twisted, but surprisingly neat, stump of the once-mighty colossus.



## IT'S ENOUGH TO MAKE YOU THINK!

Now here's one to prick the interest of the school geology teachers [*Matt Hardiman take note, there will be test at the next Annual Dinner—Ed*].

Our esteemed President spent a couple of days in Chamonix over the New Year holiday and decided to pay a visit to the Mer de Glace glacier. At 7km long and 200m deep it is the largest glacier in France.

The trip involved nothing more arduous or heroic than a rack and pinion train journey up the side of a mountain and then an incredibly long walk down a staircase attached to the sides of the glacial valley.

It was at this point that the President, not noted



for his "green" credentials, was struck by how much the glacier is melting. He had actually visited it once before in 2005 and in the latter stages of his descent this year he suddenly came across a plaque riveted to the rockface indicating where

the surface of the glacier had been those eleven years ago. Yet the descent continued for some time until the current surface was finally reached.

So the top tip: Book your future summer holidays at Christmas in the alps!

## BROWSE TO YOUR HEART'S CONTENT

Some years ago this esteemed association hauled itself into the electronic age when the school designed and built a website for us [*well done ex-pupil and current member of staff Richard Shorten - Ed*]. Sadly, however, if the stats are anything to go by it doesn't seem to get many visits.

The Executive attempt to keep it up-to-date with details of forthcoming events (the dinner, the Memorial Mass, the AGM, ad-hoc events, etc) so it really is worth popping into during a lazy brows-

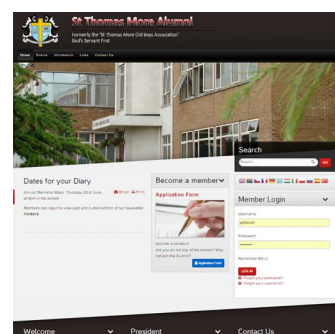
ing session from time-to-time. In addition to these "hot ticket" events it also features a fairly lengthy archive section with information (gradually being fleshed-out) of past events held by the Alumni as well as back issues of this sought-after publication.

To get to the old *More-anas* you'll need a log-in password but to get one of those all you need to do is to visit the website ([www.stmalumni.co.uk](http://www.stmalumni.co.uk)) and send an email from it. We'll issue the password on receipt and get straight back to you.

So do please take a look and let us know what you

think. The beauty of websites is that they are a constant work-in-progress and we'd be delighted to receive suggestions on how it could be improved and built upon to become a real source of information for and communication between all former pupils/teachers and the school community itself.

Go on...sneak a peek!





## PAUL'S MAYORAL MEMOIRS

A large attendance of 36 members and guests enjoyed a sumptuous five-course meal at the Alumni Dinner on Saturday 25th February. Those present included a good helping of first-timers from across a wide range of years. These very welcome newcomers included Pete Chambers, Head Boy in 1978/79; Keith Traynor, who left in the mid-1980s; and much more recent leavers Ben Gibson, Aaron Lyons, David Cook and James Driscoll. This combination of ages ranging from one of the oldest past pupils through to one of the youngest, made for a very entertaining and enjoyable evening.

Past Alumni president Paul Hutchinson (1966), was our speaker on the subject of his year as Mayor of Chelmsford. Paul has lived in the County Town for more than 40 years and has been a councillor for many of those years. He was elected Mayor for the year 2015/16 and in the course of those 365 days attended more than 400 engagements in his official capacity.

In response to a particularly relevant and searching question Paul explained that his interest in politics was due partly to the fact that his mother had been a local councillor but also to two particular experiences whilst at STM back in the early 1960s. Firstly a mock council meeting when he had to present one side of a debate and, secondly, when he had to represent one of the main political parties in



a mock parliamentary debate that the school staged in 1965 to commemorate the 750th anniversary of the first English parliament (Headmaster of the time, Don McGregor, performed the role of Speaker). Interestingly one of the other main protagonists on that occasion has gone on to become an eminent QC!

Paul regaled us with many interesting and amusing anecdotes concerning some of the many engagements he undertook. Some were very serious such as the Remembrance Day and Armed Forces Day parades when it seems the most he could coax out of any of the participants was a very official "Yes, sir"; and some much more light-hearted such as an official visit to the Essex County Cricket ground when he was officially received and welcomed by none other than former STM geography teacher John Barker!

He remained impressed and moved by what he termed "the goodness of people" that he had en-

countered so much during his year in office when he had engaged with all ages and walks of life.

## WORDS ARE SPACED OUT

Yet another of our number has made it into print with his debut science fiction/thriller novel called *Space School* published in early April this year.

Paul Sorak was at the school in the 1970s and there are a few subtle references to the old place written into the story.

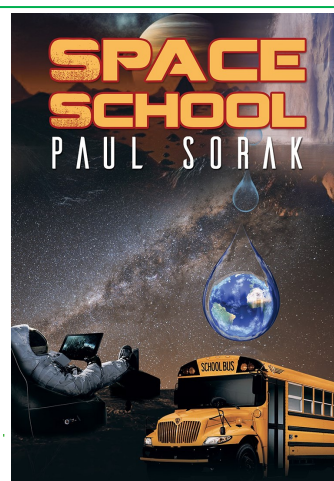
Quoting from the blurb *"When a US survey team investigate an area where there is no ice, despite being in the Antarctic, they find more than they bargained for."*

*At the same time a deep space observatory detects puzzling bodies entering the solar system.*

*Meanwhile 16-year-old gamer, Josh, is starting his new year at high school, when a summons to the principal's office opens up a whole new*

Throughout the year he had been amused by the way in which some people had become totally flustered upon being introduced to the city's "First Citizen". This manifested itself both in terms of speechlessness and unexpected gestures such as whole classrooms of college students standing up when he walked in and women dropping elaborate curtsies in his presence.

His charity had been the YMCA and he was proud to have raised £27,000.



*world for him. Soon he has a duplicate, a role in a secret Deep Space organisation and a whole new set of problems.*

*The secretive surveillance team outside are concerned about activities at the school. The astronomers have their doubts about the objects heading for Earth. The military are worried about invasion. Which 'Josh' is actually at school? Who are the mysterious others and who exactly is controlling it all?*

I guess this means that at least someone was paying attention in those English lessons!

## MEMBERSHIP AS AT APRIL 2017

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 Martin Carroll  
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 Pete Chambers  
Paul Clarke  
Paul Driscoll  
John Lawrie  
David O'Ryan  
Sean Tyrie

1980 Sean Leggett  
Martin McKeown  
Nial O'Callaghan

1981 Sean Conlon  
Malcolm Patterson

1982 Sean Corr  
Mark Harvey

1983 Richard Allard  
Anthony Crowley  
Keith Traynor

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

1995 Paul Bending  
1998 Ben Gibson

2000 David Cook  
Martyn Rickard

2001 Chris Thompson

2005 Jack Brudenell  
Jonathan Fenn

2008 Jed Marshall  
Tom Wiltshire

2011 Dale Claridge

2014 James Driscoll

Chpln Rev Daniel Kelly

Assoc Matthew Hardiman  
Ben Micklewright  
Chloe Spillett  
Nick Spillett

DateTBC Peter O'Callaghan

H/T Gemma Ackred

F/T John Askew  
Ian Britt  
James Devor  
Mary Donaldson  
Tom Kennedy  
Tom Mayhew  
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.

## YESTERDAY'S FOOTBALLERS

Just as the school were celebrating some recent success in the SEE Cup they were contacted by Joe Adkins, a past pupil from 1964, with a photo of the school team of that era.

By his own admission they were *"not all that successful but tried hard"*. Joe, who joined the army after leaving school and retired as a Lieutenant Colonel, can remember most of those in the photo but has lost con-

tact with all them. He's keen to know if any of them are out there? He is the second from the left on the front row.

So come on you members from the early 60s, let see if we can help. Any information can be emailed via the website.



## HATCHES, MATCHES & DESPATCHES

Yet another sad announcement this edition since it has come to our attention that Chris Axe (1979) died within the last year or two.

May he Rest In Peace.