



MOREANA

THE ST. THOMAS MORE OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

OLD BOYS' MEMORIAL

On **Thursday 20th June** we shall be holding the annual Old Boys' Memorial Mass and Social.

This is one of the main events of the Association's year when we take the opportunity to remember those past pupils and former members of staff who have died. It is also the oldest Old Boys event having been held continually since 1980.

It is, perhaps, a sobering thought that no past pupils should have yet died from old age and yet the list that is read out during the Mass totals more than 40 and continues to grow every year! Each year members comment that there

is someone new on the list that they were at school with, or that they used to be friends with and weren't aware that they had died.

However, in true Catholic tradition it is not a sombre or dismal affair. Rather the deceased are remembered with respect and prayed for, but so too are the living Old Boys and current members of the school.

It is also the occasion that marks the official beginning of the Association's year and the President is sworn in during the Mass.

Once the liturgical proceedings have concluded the evening turns into a social gathering with a lavish buffet and plenty to drink. It is a time for



renewing old acquaintances, reminiscing with former teachers (and, perhaps, informing them of one or two crimes that they hadn't discovered), and generally relaxing in what certainly used to be familiar surroundings.

The evening is open to members of the Association and their partners, together with other past pupils and teachers who aren't yet members. It is usually attended also by some current long-serving (or is that long-suffering) members of staff.

The evening commences in the school with the Mass at 8.00pm. Obviously everyone is encouraged to arrive on time, but if you are unable to get there until later, don't be put off coming along for a drink. - IT'S FREE!

DINNER DATE

Advance notice of this year's Old Boys' Dinner.

Saturday 19th October at 8.00pm is the date to clear on your calendars and the venue will be the school as usual.

AGM 2002

DON'T FORGET - The date for this year's AGM is **Wednesday 15th May** at 8.00pm in the Dining Hall.

This is your chance to have a say in how the Association is run, comment on its development and make your suggestions/thoughts/ideas known.

By now you will have received in the post the official notification as well as a membership renewal form. Please don't



delay in returning this (that is unless you already have a Standing Order set up for the Association) in order to ensure that your membership doesn't lapse.

This is also your last chance to stand for President if you wish.

We look forward to seeing a room heaving with people (the meeting has been deliberately moved to be in advance of the World Cup - so there's no excuse). Coffee and biscuits will be served.

THANK YOU

This seems to be a bumper 1960's issue! Thanks to those who contributed.

All contributions gratefully received for future issues - hows about something from the 70's, 80's or 90's?

CHRISTMAS ???



It gets earlier every year. Just when you were thinking about restocking your sun tan oil collection and dusting off those extremely dubious shorts for the summer, that dreaded word Christmas rears its head again!

It is perhaps a sign of the age in which we live that

even this esteemed Association has to arrange it's Christmas Dinner before Easter.

Whilst that in itself seems a guaranteed recipe for indigestion, it does mean that the Executive are on the ball (or the bottle), and can spread their choices a little further than before.

As a result, this year's Christmas Dinner will be held at **The Roslin Hotel** in Thorpe Bay on **Saturday 7th December**. As usual, it will be open to members and their partners.

Full details will appear in future editions of *Moreana*.

WHEN IN ROME ...

David Finnigan writes ...

Whilst reading Issue 15 of *Moreana* it was good to hear from Frank Daley and his reminiscences of the school trip to Italy in 1963. As he and other members of the school party will recall I organised that trip and I am able to fill-in one or two details. In addition to myself there were two other members of the staff on the trip - Dave Tozer and Dave Minette - thus we had a trinity of Davids!



Dave Tozer & David Finnigan in Rome

We left for Italy on the day after the last day of the summer term and it had been arranged that we would gather at St Helen's Church at 8.00am for a prayer and a blessing from Canon Bishop who at that time was Chairman of School Governors. Unfortunately, having celebrated the end of term the previous evening at *The Plough*, I slept in, and was wakened at 8.30am by some very concerned parents (Mr and Mrs Phipps). Apparently my late arrival had prompted some vague suggestions that I had absconded with the money! As though the Head of the Divinity Department would do such a thing!!!

However, we got underway and in no time at all had arrived in Florence where we stayed for the first night. During that first night I awoke suddenly, aware of the presence of intruders in my bedroom. Having millions of lira of the boys' spending money under my pillow I was terrified. When I quickly switched on the bedside light I discovered two of our boys

who, in an attempt to return to their own room, had arrived on my balcony by mistake. I can't imagine where they had been at 2.00am. During our stay in Florence we visited the Cathedral and the famous Baptistery.

Our next stay on our way to Rome was in the little town of Perugia. It was here that the incident mentioned by Frank Daley took place. Just after the evening meal, when the boys had been given an hour to look around the town, all the lights in Perugia fused and the town was in total darkness. In their confused



The group in Florence. Frank Daley is one of these cherubic faces

state, four of them who will remain nameless (out of charity), bought a litre of Chianti (or was it four litres????) and drank this delicious Italian wine, not realising that it was alcoholic!! When they were led back to the hotel in a very inebriated state I made them take a cold shower in a vain attempt to sober them up, and then they were told to pack their bags for their immediate return to England. We forgave them, however, and allowed them to stay with us. From then on, as far as I can remember their behaviour was exemplary!

It was a very enjoyable week and we visited many of the famous places in Rome. We were invited to visit the Villa of the English College in the Alban Hills where there were lovely gardens and an open air swimming pool. We spent the day there, being looked after by two students from our Diocese who are now parish

priests in Harlow (Fr. Michael Butler) and Harwich (Monsignor Michael Corley). During the afternoon we were taken to Castelgandolfo, the Pope's summer residence where we saw, and received a blessing from, the newly-elected Pope, Paul VI.

On our return journey the train stopped at Florence for quite a while when many of the boys were leaning out of the windows talking to each other along the length of the train. Then the whistle blew and as the train pulled away we realised the last carriage,

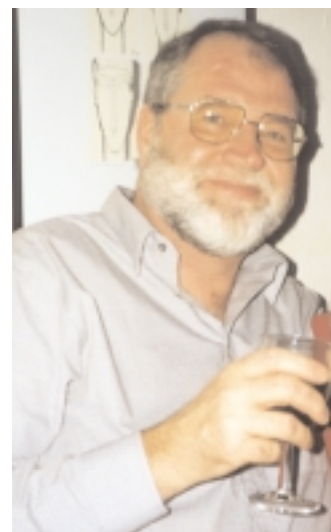
from which one of the boys was waving to his friends, had been uncoupled and was left standing whilst we headed north. I can't remember how, but we managed to get him back with us and we all arrived back in Westcliff safe and sound and well-experienced travellers. They were indeed truly happy days.

TOM WILBRAHAM

We have recently learned that Old Boy Tom Wilbraham (1989) has been seriously ill in Southend Hospital. Tom was admitted two weeks ago and seems to be pulling through although he is still extremely unwell.

He is a friend of our Membership Secretary who has further information for anyone who is concerned for Toms' condition and can be contacted at either of the addresses on the front page.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



As I come to the end of my presidential year I take the opportunity to thank the people who have made my life easier by their hard work and efforts.

Tony Cane has managed the money so effectively that we are now financially on a very sound footing and improving all the time and here I would also express my thanks to those anonymous sponsors of *Moreana* over the past few editions. Gerry Thomas has worked hard on the social side and a programme is in place for the rest of 2002.

Damian Dillon, the 'serial e-mailer' has worked unstintingly to increase membership numbers and the current roll reflects his hard work.

Paul Driscoll continues to produce *Moreana* in his inimitable style. These four guys deserve my and your unreserved thanks.

Frank Keenan's interest in the Association throughout the year has also been a great support.

I hope as many of you as possible will attend the AGM on 15th May when I look forward to hearing your views about the past and future of the Association. With your help it will go from strength to strength.

GARETH LEWIS

TO BE FRANK ...

Having read David Finnigan's article about the Italy trip of '63, it was a great coincidence to receive the following information from Frank Daley about his life since school. To those who were born after the world become colour, it gives an interesting insight into career paths, etc in the 1960's.

I can remember the shock of leaving school in the summer of '63. I had just failed my school leavers in Maths - never my best subject, and although I was due to retake it at Southend Tech., I somehow knew I would fail it once more, and I was correct.

My father decided that I would follow him into the Motor trade and arranged for me to learn the trade at the bottom, as he put it. I soon found out that the motor trade was not for me.

I tried other paths, until a chap I had been working with at a small building firm until it went bust said he had found me a job. He took me into Southend, stopped outside the Army Recruiting Centre, and said "you are going to join up". In we went and before I knew it I had, as the army put it, been awarded a vacancy in the 9th/12th Royal Lancers.

I was a tankie. After basic training at Catterick, the place that time forgot, I was posted to Osnabruck in Germany. From there I went to Berlin and was promoted to I/cpl then cpl. A short detachment to Thailand was next. Never did find out why we were there. Very hush hush. Back to Berlin then onto Detmold.

By this time 6 years had passed I had got married, so I decided to come out and return to civvy Street.

What to do next? I joined the M.O.D. Police and became PC 1484 Daley stationed at the P & E E Shoeburyness. After training as a police dog handler and coming second in the area trial and fifth in the UK trials I parted company with the force, went to work for a major security company and moved up to the Midlands, where I still live and work as Head of Security for a storage and transport company.

Not a very exciting time to-date but rewarding. I have served my country been shot at a couple of times, been around the world a couple of times, and am still married to same girl I met in Berlin. I have four grandchildren, go flying as often as I can with my son in his plane and am taking the safety course this year to learn to land the aircraft in an emergency.

That's about it. Just wish my memory for names was better. When I look at the list of Old Boys I feel I must know some of you, but I just can't remember. Must be the years of drink. Ha, Ha.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

Continuing our occasional series gleaned from the original School Log we have discovered many developments in the early 1960's that have since become traditions that current pupils would simply take in their stride (such as exams!).

The second school year began on 12th September 1961 with 5 new permanent members of staff - Mr Syed (*English & History*), Mr Tozer (*History, English & Maths*), Mr Sharpe (*Woodwork & TD*), Mr Pedrette (*P.E.*) and Mr Evans (*English & History*) - bringing the total school compliment to 12 staff and 279 boys.

On 21st September the school garden and pond were vandalised. In those days, apparently, the school site was open to the public without railings or gates and the actual school grounds were an overgrown wilderness.

Activities within the school now included a trampoline club and the Literary Society were way ahead of their time when the Headmaster addressed them on "*The Religion of Islam*". Despite this increase in activities and diet of culture there was, apparently, a waning of interest by staff and boys in the weekly Saturday morning House Matches (I wonder why? - Ed). The health of the boys was, however, high on the agenda with the **whole** school receiving a routine inspection by the dentist in January 1962!

1962 saw two firsts for the school. The first of these was the introduction of school reports in April, with the Headmaster's highest commendation being to award the citation of "*A Thomas More Boy*" to the chosen few!

The second was the first sitting of O-Levels in the school in June. Nine boys sat English Language (goodness knows how this would have affected the league tables).

A Mrs Gardiner (*English, French & Divinity*) joined the staff in the summer term and then the entries in the log cease until February 1963 due to the Headmaster's prolonged absence due to illness.

That month Mr Rosario and a certain Mr Finnigan are mentioned for the first time. The entry coincides with a note that "Monks Table" was extended to the whole school on Wednesdays and Fridays during Lent (apparently this meant that lunch had to be eaten in silence!).

A Mr Brown is mentioned for

the first time in March and on 10th April 1963 Mr Wilson Curry made his last entry as Headmaster.

Strange as it may seem in a Catholic school, the building had never been blessed and this matter was rectified on 4th August (during the school holidays!) when the Chairman of Governors - Canon Bishop - blessed the school in the presence of Mr Fanning and Mrs Hillier.

The interregnum began on 10th September 1963 with Dominick Fanning as Acting Headmaster. Mr Hall (*English, Geography & Games*) joined the permanent staff and Mr Minett (*Maths, Science & Games*), and Mr Smith (*English Maths & Games*) all took up temporary positions. By this time Mr B McCarthy and Mr Evans had left.

Apparently everyone turned up raring to go on that first day of term to discover the school shrouded in scaffolding. Work had commenced to renew the beading on the windows and flashings on the flat roof. But no-one had informed the school!

Autumn 1963 saw the first Mass in the school on 17th September - you don't want to rush into these things after all.

Hopefully there had been previous occasions for parents to meet teachers but the first actual mention of a Parents Evening was 3rd October 1963.

November saw a visit by the Police to deliver a talk on Road safety. They inspected the boys' bicycles and declared 4 unroadworthy!

The school continued to develop in terms of materials when Mr Spary presented the honours board in November 1963 and the school collected 4 old typewriters from Southend College for use in the office - no expense spared!

MEMBERS AS AT 18th MAY 2002

Membership is now standing at its highest since the initial surge when the Association was launched.

There are 54 ex-pupils who have expressed an interest in our Association this year so our numbers could well expand.

1961	Graham Lewis
1962	Michael Hughes John Lewis
1963	John Bowman Frank Daley Tony Howlett John Sheehy Barry Wood
1964	John Griffiths Ronald Patchett
1965	Terry Knights Brian Dalton
1966	Martyn Barker Patrick Clancy Bill Clegg Paul Hutchinson Gareth Lewis Paul Wenham
1967	Tony Cane Glen Sweeney Mike Thompson
1968	Geoffrey Lewis
1969	Peter David Paul Marsh
1970	Ian Clifford
1971	Bernie Brooker

	Mike Donovan Kevin Flynn Brendan J Foy Nigel Hurley Robert Murphy
1972	Paul Culleton Toni I mossi David Thomspen
1973	Phil Mahoney Simon Millyard
1974	Ray Allum Nick Cousins Paul McArdle Victor Peretti Mike Sessions
1975	Eamon Day David Ekers Keith Exley Christopher Fairchild John MacDermott Andrew McGregor Kevin O'Hanlon Andy (Guy) Thomas Gerry Thomas
1976	Trevor Barr Laurence Blainey John Chambers Clive Knight Andrew McWilliam Simon Ravinet Martin Sullivan John Todryk Jim Tyrie
1977	John Cobbold Richard Copley Martin Hodson John Judge
1978	Richard Clegg

1979	Kevin Thomas Paul Clarke Paul Driscoll W Flaherty David Kitchens David O'Ryan John Suff Sean Tyrie Mark Walmsley
1980	Paul Glynn Sean Leggett Martin McKeown Nial O'Callaghan
1981	Richard Baker Sean Conlon Peter Seeva
1982	Sean Corr Mark Harvey Michael Mullally
1983	Richard Allard Anthony Crowley Mick Hawkins Mark Stevens
1984	Michael Barry Paul Deakin Stuart Humfrey
1985	Tim Allard
1986	Paul Cotgrove Alan Martin
1987	Mark Dobson
1988	Martin Diggins Martin Corr Christopher Hall Steven Hurren
1989	Paul Baynes Damian Dillon Paul Fisher Justin Hennessey

	Paul Lynch Brian Martin Thomas Wilbraham
1990	Christopher Hull Stuart Siggers
1991	Graham Diggins
1995	Paul Bending Douglas Walter
1997	Elliot Clark
2000	Daniel Kelly
2001	Justin Dijkstra David Lucas Robert Polkinghorn
	Headmaster Frank Keenan Chaplain Rev Andrew Headon
FT	John Askew
FT	Ian Britt
FT	Pamela Deakin
FT	D Fanning
FT	David Finnigan
FT	Richard Jarman
FT	Elsie Kemp
FT	Tom Kennedy
FT	Rev David Peck
FT	D.P McGregor
FT	Tom Mayhew

HEADS UP!

Over the years since 1960 there have been 5 Headmasters at St Thomas More High School.

A huge number of members will, of course, have been at the school during the headship of Don McGregor (1964-1981), and a fair few during the reign of Tony McDonald (1981-1986) and Dominick Fanning (1986-1990). Obviously those who left in recent years experienced Frank Keenan at the helm (1990 - present).

Strangely, because of the nature of the school, it is quite likely that, even if you weren't there during their

leadership, you probably know 2 of the latter three from their previous incarnations at the school. Dominick Fanning was, of course, Deputy Headmaster from 1960 - 1986, and Frank Keenan seems to have been strangely drawn back to the place as a student teacher and Head of Languages at various times since he first began his connections in 1964.

However, there are very few of us who actually knew the very first Headmaster, Mr Wilson-Curry. He was in charge from 1960-1963 and, sadly, died not long after leaving due to ill-health.

We are delighted, therefore, to include in this issue of Moreana, a picture of this



often-overlooked Headmaster (albeit a small one taken from an early staff portrait), so that those of us who don't remember England winning the World Cup can at least get to see what he looked like.

We are grateful to John Bowman (1963) for supplying this piece of history.

Of course, since three out of the four other incumbents are members of this esteemed Association, you stand a pretty good chance of reminding yourself of their appearance at events such as the Old Boys' Dinner. You just have to remember that weren't usually the worse for drink when running the place!

MEMBER'S WALK IS CHILDS PLAY

Our Membership Secretary has informed us that both he and Daniel Kelly will be taking part in the annual sponsored walk to Brentwood for the Brentwood Catholic Childrens Society on Saturday 25th May.

This is something that they do every year (haven't these people heard of cars? -Ed.)

Anyone wishing to sponsor them, or even take part from anywhere they want to are welcome.



FAR OUT!

One of our newer members, Nick Cousins, who is currently based in the Far East had this to say:

Phillipines - less than 10p a bottle of beer plus the best weather in the world. Kidnapping however, can be a bind.