



MOREANA

THE ST. THOMAS MORE OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

ALL CHANGE AT THE TOP

It's all change at this year's **Annual General Meeting** which will be held in the school on **WEDNESDAY 12th MAY at 8.00pm.**

Not only our esteemed President, but also the entire Executive (Membership Secretary, Treasurer, and Social Secretary) complete their terms of office this time around.

Extra security and special crowd barriers have been ordered to help restrain the sheer number of members who will be desperate to stand for one of these positions, but don't let that put you off coming forward!

Any Association needs a continual injection of new blood and ideas if it is to continually evolve and meet the needs of its members.

The current Executive have done a marvellous job of not only consolidating, but also moving the Association forward under the President's very clear leadership. But now they've done their bit for

king and country and it's time for another 4 good men and true to take up the challenge. The only qualification is that you are an ex-pupil member.

Most of next year's social calendar is already in place so there's nothing too arduous to be organised - just determining how things will be done if you're in charge. The only commitment is to attend a meeting once a month.

So don't let's leave it to the "others", 'cos they'll all do the same. Nomination forms for all four positions are included with this esteemed publication and I do urge every one of you to give it some serious consideration.

FOR YOUR FUTURE DELECTION...

Our ever-vigilant and hard working Executive have already put in place the social calendar for this year. So there's no excuse now, make a note in your diaries...

AGM 12/5/04
MEMORIAL MASS
22/6/04
OLD BOYS' DINNER
23/10/04

AND FINALLY ... CHRISTMAS!

The Association met for the first function of the New Year at the Mulberry Restaurant to celebrate the fact that we had all survived the turkey excess albeit a week later than had been planned. This was due to the restaurant's aggressive negotiations with our



evening. Those that attended had an enjoyable and unrushed evening with new faces attending the dinner joining the seasoned veterans of this now standard Association



esteemed social secretary where he was held to ransom days before the scheduled sitting. The re-arranged date was in favour of some of our members, but was unwelcome to others who

event. A whip was funded (well there's a surprise), and after dinner conversation continued in the lounge area over coffee. Overall, it was a very pleasant night out.

Next year's has already been booked at the Roslin Hotel for next January.



had planned to attend and, just like the West Ham football squad, there were wholesale changes in the line-up for the

NEW CHAPLAIN

We are delighted to announce that the Association's new Chaplain is Rev. Kevin Hale, Parish Priest at Our Lady of Lourdes in Leigh.

GOLFING AROUND!

The 4th Old Boys' Golf day was held at Ballards Gore Golf Club in Canewdon on Friday 19th September. Organiser Simon Ravinet gives this account of the event...

We had a field of twelve participants and everyone enjoyed themselves. To those not familiar this is one of the longest courses in Essex, so after 27 holes it was quite exhausting. We were extremely fortunate that Secretary of the club, Andy Hall is a former pupil of the school and he not only provided an excellent discount for the cost of the day but he ensured we were well looked after. In addition in our party was the forthcoming club Captain and former teacher, Tom Kennedy. The cost including coffee and bacon rolls on arrival, 27 holes, a 3 course lunch and prizes was an incredible £25! The weather was absolutely glorious, so much so the prize giving extravaganza was conducted outside!

The winner of the individual Stableford competition, the 'STM Old Boys Challenge Shield' and super bottle of quality gin (!) was second time winner Sean Tyrie playing off a 14 handicap returning with 39 points. Tom Kennedy picked up the Nearest to Pin prize on the intimidating 14th hole with an excellent effort only yards from the flag, obviously his local knowledge of the course was a great advantage! The afternoon

event was a friendly 9 hole Texas Scramble with four teams of three persons each. The victorious team were Sean Tyrie, Martin Hodson & Steve Hurren .

Special thanks to Tom Kennedy and Andy Hall for their great support and donating some of the prizes.

All in all it was a very successful day and everyone is looking forward to the next outing which is likely to be Spring 2004 and details will follow in due course. If anyone would like to register their interest now, please contact SIMON RAVINET on 01702 478723.

MULLING IT OVER

Once again the Old Boys' Association was on hand at the school's Christmas Carol Concert to provide the much needed mulled wine.

Apparently it went down a treat as usual (especially amongst the mums we're told - Ed).

This has become something of a tradition going back six years, and is a great way of promoting the Association to the school's current inmates!

As the accompanying picture proves, our esteemed President and Social Secretary (who were also joined by our Membership Secretary) used the tried and tested "one for them, one for us" method of distribution!

"SHAKE DOWN" CRUISE

As the majestic new Queen Mary 2 finishes her sea trials ready for a life of opulent cruising for the rich and famous, David Milne is reported to be welcoming this new competition to his domination of the seaways!

In fact he is planning to meet it head-on with one of his now *(in)famous* luxury cruises up old Father Thames itself to the historic landing stage of Greenwich!

Saturday 17th July is the day earmarked for the showdown between these seafaring giants. In the red corner is the collective might of non-other than the Cunard line itself and its hedonistic cruises to all places exotic. In the blue (of course) corner David Milne with the "floating hotel" *MV Pocahontas* and his bargain basement day

trip to Greenwich. But titter-ye not! When you consider the price, the outright winner is a dead-cert! How many mortgages would it cost to travel the world on a twenty storey liner named after an ex-English queen? But on "*David's Dinghy*" (as it's known in the trade) £10 per head gets you a day's ride on an ex-Native American princess!

So, for anyone looking for an interesting, educational and delightful cruise there's the Cunard Line. For the rest of us there's David's day trip on the *Pocahontas* on Saturday 17th July. Departure is from the Pier Head (sea end) at 9.00am sharp!

Anyone interested should contact David at the school on 01702 606763 or send a cheque payable to "St. Thomas More High School" to the school as soon as possible.



"Are you sure it's safe to drink after dying our shirts in it, Gareth?"

WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN

Following on from the last edition we here conclude the history of the birth pangs of our school.

Throughout the 1950's the whole issue of Catholic secondary education within the town had been heating up with some considerable resistance coming from Southend Council

The whole thing began to come to a head in the mid 50's. Minutes of the Southend Education Committee show that on 11th September 1955 the Minister of Education decided that a 2 form entry Catholic Secondary Modern should be built for 340 pupils at a cost of a whopping £93,456! April 1956 shows the Minister as being satisfied with the sketch plans, but the council had to delay the building work until 1st January 1957.

Some time between 1950 and 1956 the site was moved, but the only record of this is a letter from Canon Toft to the Bishop dated 1st December pointing out that the advantages of the new site were (a) a quieter position; (b) the ground was more level; (c) less road frontage (and less road charges?) and (d) slightly larger *site* [*I bet the current building enthusiasts at the school are delighted by that one-Ed*]. He also praises the trees on the site and an "attractive wilderness" at the east end [*that's no*



The original St. Georges house in the first intake of 1960 (The headmaster is seated in the centre wearing glasses)

way to talk about the science labs- Ed]. Unfortunately he didn't put the year on his letter!

Modern education-sector architects would be horrified to discover that the original schedule of accommodation lists one hall with 2 class spaces, 1 library, 7 classrooms, 5 practical rooms and no gym! The 1958 suggested final costs of all this was £104,300, of which the diocese had to find £84,000. This, in turn, was divided up amongst the 9 local parishes (Shoebury, Southend, Westcliff, Leigh, Prittlewell, Rochford, Benfleet, Canvey Island and Rayleigh).

Once the building work was underway thoughts turned to the first intake and a list drawn up in November 1958 details the potential numbers transferring from other schools as 15 boys for the Fourth Year, 21 for the Third, 37 for the Second and 27 for the First (that's Years 10, 9, 8, 7 for younger members).

These would be drawn from a variety of other schools (some no longer in existence) such as Southchurch Hall, Shoebury High, Wentworth High, Rochford Secondary Modern, Rayleigh Secondary Modern, Eastwood High, College St Pierre, Nazareth House and a number of primary schools.

The school, of course, opened in September 1960 and has grown physically almost out of all recognition since then. However, what does come through very clearly from these documents is the tremendous debt of gratitude that we all owe (unless you didn't enjoy your time there!) to those initial tenacious pioneers who made it possible. It wasn't, as many may suppose, just a simple matter of making an application to the council. They had to fight against prejudice and bureaucracy on a very regular basis in order to ensure that the school ever came into being. The

number of letters between Canon Whitfield (Sacred Heart), Bishop Beck and Mr Tolhurst (solicitor) is incredible and they had to attend to every little detail to ensure that bureaucratic delaying tactics didn't scupper the project.

The only thing that the records don't reveal is when, and why, the school name was decided upon. If any members can enlighten us we'd be delighted to include it in a future edition.

HATCHES, MATCHES & DESPATCHES!

It is with great sadness that we report two deaths this issue.

Greg Power who left the school in 1981 died suddenly on 1st January and leaves a wife and daughter.

Daniel O'Leary who left the school in 1993 died at the end of January.

May they Rest in Peace.

MEMBERS AS AT 6th February 2004

1961 Graham Lewis
1962 Michael Hughes
John Lewis
1963 John Bowman
Frank Daley
Tony Howlett
John Sheehy
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
Paul Clancy
Glen Sweeney
Mike Thompson
1968 Geoffrey Lewis
Martin Duggan

NOT QUITE THE W.I.

As part of the school's Advent charity drive to raise money for the surviving children of AIDS victims in Zambia and a homeless charity in the UK, the Sixth Form produced special calendars featuring caricatures of teachers at the school (including David Milne, Frank Keenan, Clifford Segrave, Leroy Ho-Chi and Kevin Vickers). They cost £3.00 each, and ALL the proceeds go to the charities (for which the school raised about £4,800!).

Anyone interested should send a cheque (payable to *St. Thomas More High School*) to the school for Andy Kwasnica's attention.

1969 Peter David
Paul Marsh
Chris McHale
1971 Bernie Brooker
Mike Donovan
Kevin Flynn
Brendan J Foy
Nigel Hurley
Robert Murphy
Charlie Sheppard
1972 Paul Culleton
Toni Imossi
David Thompsom
1973 Martin Carroll
Michael Glen
Phil Mahoney
Simon Millyard
1974 Ray Allum
Nick Cousins
Paul McArdle
Victor Peretti
1975 Eamon Day
David Ekers
Keith Exley
Christopher Fairchild
Guy Francké
John MacDermott
Andrew McGregor
Kevin O'Hanlon
Andy (Guy) Thomas
Gerry Thomas

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Gentlemen,

This will be my last missive in *Moreana* as your president. The next

1976 Trevor Barr
Laurence Blainey
John Chambers
Tony Harmon
Clive Knight
Andrew McWilliam
Simon Ravinet
Martin Sullivan
John Todryk
Jim Tyrrie
1977 John Cobbold
Richard Copley
Martin Hodson
John Judge
1978 Richard Clegg
Kevin Thomas
1979 Paul Clarke
Paul Driscoll
David Kitchens
David O'Ryan
Tony Parsad
Sean Tyrrie
1980 Paul Glynn
Sean Leggett
Martin McKeown
Nial O'Callaghan
1981 Richard Baker
Sean Conlon
1982 Sean Corr
Mark Harvey
Michael Mullally
1983 Richard Allard
Anthony Crowley

A.G.M. is on 12th May 2004 and the whole Executive will be standing down as they complete 3 years in office. My thanks go to Gerry, Tony and Damian for supporting me and showing great commitment over this period.

I should also like to thank Paul Driscoll for continuing to produce and edit *Moreana*, and the various sponsors of the magazine over the past three years.

I urge members to attend the A.G.M. and consider whether you could commit

1984 Michael Barry
Stuart Humfrey
1985 Tim Allard
1986 Paul Cotgrove
Alan Martin
1988 Martin Corr
Martin Diggines
Christopher Hall
Steven Hurren
1989 Paul Baynes
Damian Dillon
Justin Hennessey
Paul Lynch
Brian Martin
1990 Christopher Hull
Stuart Saggars
1991 Graham Diggines
1995 Paul Bending
Douglas Walter
1997 Elliott Clark
2000 Daniel Kelly
2001 Chris Thompson
2003 Chris Barker
Sean Perrotton
James Smith
Alison Walker
H/M Frank Keenan
Chaplain Rev Kevin Hale
FT John Askew
Ian Britt
D Fanning
David Finnigan
Richard Jarman
Elsie Kemp
Tom Kennedy
John O'Connell
Rev David Peck
D.P McGregor
Tom Mayhew

yourself to an Executive position, the various nomination forms and formal notice will be sent to you nearer the date. I have enjoyed my time as your president and wish good luck to my successor.

Regards,

Gareth