



THE OLD PRIORIAN ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2018

1968



2018



President's Welcome

May I welcome you to this splendid Summer 2018 edition of the OPA Newsletter, which I am delighted to say is the most diverse and entertaining yet.

I particularly commend to you the excellent and hugely remarkable telling of the 1967-68 1st XV 50-year reunion article scribed by Jack Peffers; his story highlights the important team work and research that went into organising the event. This convening of the great and the good with their various backstories led ultimately to a successful reunion. Like salmon migrating back to their origins from a global diaspora the majority were traced and able to attend their reunion at their former spawning grounds. This whole story proved such a fascinating and heartening tale of positively constructive 'endeavour for the sake of fellowship', that not only did it justify both the effort and intention but, in many ways, it is a tale worthy of the retelling 'per se'. Let us hope that there are other similar tales from the touchline in the offing - if so the OPA Newsletter team would dearly love to hear from you.

Other articles of note include a major article and update on the War Memorial Appeal, which includes the backstory to the need for its refurbishment with the addition of lost or misplaced names. Sadly, this also includes provision for further additional inclusions, should the need arise. The repositioning in *The Cloisters* of the newly commissioned Memorial hewn from oak, inscribed with the names of those who fell in War in the pursuit of Peace is scheduled for Armistice Centenary Day later this year. Please do attend at least one of the ancillary ongoing fundraising activities for this appeal, as a witness to the bravery of those who gave their lives in pursuit of Peace and Justice.

Old Priorians emerge as a broad church of dispositions and inclinations; there is the report from the Oxford and Cambridge dinner and exciting news from the inaugural OP Networking Evening. News also from specific Old Priorians feature in this edition, notably Angela McHale who was Guest of Honour at this year's OP Annual Dinner. As befits her profession of acting

Angela regaled the diners with various good-humoured tales of episodes from her career in the entertainment world.

Further news from the Sports world include articles from the OPRFC; clearly the hardworking Club, in all its shapes and sizes, features strength in depth and their collection of short articles relates recent events including news of their recent French tour through Montpellier, their Summer Party and their End of Season Dinner. Not to be outdone the OP Cricket Club also provide a good account of themselves and their fourth successful season 'at the stumps'.

So, if you need some light reading material while waiting for your transport to the Continent, or the wilds of Scotland, Wales or Ireland, or while on your sojourn on the beach at Cancun in Central America, might I recommend this excellent Newsletter for your perusal and delectation. Enjoy the summer, everyone!

Lewis Hill (OP 1975)
President OPA

Association Communications and GDPR

No Old Priorian can fail to be aware that GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) arrived in May 2018. The Association's compliance with the new regulations is explained at: <http://theopa.org/data-protection/>

News items (except for Notice of Death) can now only be accepted from the Old Priorian concerned; he or she may not wish for 'their news' to be available to 'all' so third party sources can no longer be accepted.

There is a dedicated page on the website (<http://theopa.org/send-news/>) for the submission of news; alternatively details in a personal email or letter can be accepted.

Richard Baker (OP 1959)
Administrator OPA

2007-08 1st XV Reunion

by Edd Conway (OP 2005)

On the 29th June 2018, OPRFC hosted a reunion for the 2007-08 1st XV, ten years after their unforgettable exploits in the U18 Daily Mail Cup Final and Sanix Youth Invitational World Cup in Japan. OPRFC Director of Rugby, Edd Conway, organised the event and the boys were delighted to see surprise guests in the form of former staff members Jesse Coulson and Irfan Latif. Unfortunately, former staff Martin Knights, Vinny Holden, Rupert Allhusen and Alex MacLennan were unable to attend but sent their best wishes - their

presence was missed. The evening flowed as various OPs gathered to reminisce, catch up and enjoy a few drinks in Chiswick. It was awesome to see the boys catch up with Jesse and Irfan, many of whom wouldn't have had the chance to see them since leaving school.

Those present included: Peter and Kirsty Halsall, Jesse Coulson, Irfan Latif, Alex Pereira-Inacio, Edd Conway, Joe Simpson, Rowan Halsall, Ravi Joshi, Dan Porter, Simon Jukes, Michael Simpson, Charlie Stringer, Conor Dolan,

Ross McIntosh, Ivor Colson, James Booth, Jack Dever, Tom Jewers, Liam Dolan, Will Clarke, Andrew Haston and Aristide Goualin.



1967-68 1st XV Reunion

by Jack Peffers (OP 1968)

April 7th, 2018 - Reunion day of the St Benedict's School 1st XV of 1967-68 to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of their last match together - a personal view from the open-side.

The idea and preparations for the 50th Anniversary reunion of the St Benedict's School 1st XV of 1967-68 started in late 2017. It was stimulated by retirement, the magical appeal of 'half-century', the example of old friends Pat Lavery and Ron Hilvert, who had recently participated in organising the 50th Anniversary reunion of the 'leavers of 1966-67' and the encouragement of former team-mates that I was still in touch with, Peter Doyle and Edmund Matyjaszek.

The focus of the reunion was clear and the principal task crystal clear - to find all those who played during the 1967-68 Season for the 1st XV. The deaths of our coach Elwyn James and of team-mates Mickey O'Sullivan and Peter Green were already known to some.

The Priorian magazines of 1966, 1967 and 1968 held information that proved very useful in tracing team-mates, as did more recent phenomena such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Google; as well as, 'key-informants' such as the Administrator of the OPA, Richard Baker, the School's Development Director, Tara George, and the Secretary of the OPRFC, Alex Pereira-Inacio.

The process of tracking down the remaining 17 players who had played for the team brought both delight and sadness. Three cohorts made up the team; four from the School's Upper 6th, ten from the Middle 6th and four from the Lower 6th. The doctors in the team were the easiest to find through Google, though getting hold of Hugh O'Donnell in New Jersey in the USA was much more difficult than establishing where he was. Whenever I phoned he was always on the wards! It was the letter I sent to his home that was most effective as it elicited the reply I hoped for - Hugh replied that he would attend! Albert Ferrante was to be found close to Bart's where I had last seen him in 1969. Finding out via my Australian son-in-law's use of the advanced

LinkedIn facility that Harry Graepel was a Science Advisory Teacher in Cairns, Queensland, Australia and getting an immediate response from Harry that he would come was a big high early on in the process of organisation and a very good card to play 'pour encourager les autres' when getting in touch.

There were two very low points during the search for team-mates. When googling the name of, probably, the most influential member of the team, Peter Norris, who I knew had been a head teacher in Lowestoft, and in a flash seeing his recent obituary pop up on the screen was a very shocking and sad moment. A high that became a low was when Peter Doyle finally found a route to Andrew Gladwin. He suggested 'Gladwin Ceramics' in Brittany might lead us to him. My follow up to contact Andrew via Facebook was full of the memory of the day in Autumn 1968 when he had taken me to *The Last Night of the Proms*. When I got through to Gladwin Ceramics, Nicola, Andrew's widow informed me of Andrew's death in 2014 and in our chat mentioned Andrew's memories and recollections of our rugby team, as she wished us all a great reunion.

I was particularly keen to meet up with Martin Foot, the team's vice-captain. Martin, the last time I saw him in early Autumn 1968, had waited for me to be discharged

from hospital after a car crash in Cornwall and took me home. I will never forget Martin's display of generosity... even though 10 hours in a car was not optimal after a car crash. MGT Foot alas could not be traced by any media or bush telegraph even though in the search for clues I visited his father's former GP practice in Northolt. Eventually, Peter Doyle, through a process of elimination, established his full name was Martin Gregory Thomas Foot and this took us immediately via Companies House to Martin himself.

It was interesting to note that several, but not all of those contacted, had considered or were considering organising a reunion of the team. It was also interesting to note that while there were differential levels of enthusiasm for the reunion it was relatively easy to gain everyone's support and willingness to be involved if there was not an insurmountable blockage to participation.

Through the recruitment process to the reunion, dialogue was re-established with all the 15 extant, apart from John Dodd, the Captain. Despite the assistance of the Alumni staff of St Luke's College where he studied, the Secretary of Newport Gwent RFC where he played for the 1st XV, the Abbot of Belmont Abbey School where he taught, and the



The Rugby Team (1968)

L to R standing: Mr Elwyn James (Coach), Graham, Green, Gladwin, Graepel, Dempsey, Peffers, O'Donnell McEwen - sitting: Ferrante, O'Sullivan, Codrington, Dodd, Foot, Beith, Doyle

staff from the Teachers' Pension Fund, who agreed to send John our letter of invitation, we did not get hold of John. We did find a young 'John Dodd' on Facebook, who had studied at Belmont Abbey and with a passing resemblance to several of the Captain's features. We think all these contacts helped us to get increasingly close to John but not close enough... yet! The search continues... 2068 the target. One of the bonuses of helping to organise a reunion is that Peter and I are now fully trained up for a new career in recruitment.

The programme for the day of the reunion was driven by five principles. The reunion had to be in Ealing, include a slow-paced meal, a drink at *The Haven*, contain some aspect of rugby and to make the programme as flexible as possible that enabled participants to come and go when they wanted to or had to and/or wanted to create their own agenda.

Having lunch at *The Kent* (now *The Duke of Kent*) in a private room was suggested by Eddie Codrington, an Ealing resident. It was an excellent suggestion. Watching Old Priorians RFC play North Walsham at Ealing Trailfinders ground was agreed with Alex Pereira-Inacio the OPRFC Secretary. *The Haven* was to be the final venue of the day to which other school friends were invited. The only hitch was that the week of the reunion the OPRFC match was moved to Sunbury. In lieu, a visit to the school's playing fields was swiftly facilitated and hosted by Tara and Richard, which some of the group attended while others remained

chatting in *The Kent* and so happily this allowed all the principles of the programme to be implemented.

The reunion day started at noon in the bar of *The Kent* with some ice-breaking time before moving into the room for the team's lunch. We started by remembering and toasting our 'absent friends' at the outset. With the meal being brought in at an appropriately slow pace we went on to update one another over three hours on what we had been doing in the interim fifty years! (450 years were covered so 2.4 years per minute were described). The sensitivity of the staff of *The Kent* to the atmosphere we sought to engender was greatly appreciated. The food was of an excellent standard and all members of the team, able to attend, were very comfortable with one another almost instantaneously and all joined in celebrating and sharing the very varied and wide-ranging successes and experiences of one another over the last 50 years.

It was great that Harry Graepel and Hugh O'Donnell were able to travel from Australia and the USA respectively. We are, after all, in a Global age. Harry's exchange of Rayners Lane for Papua New Guinea was an interesting contrast. His work to partner Australian education with Papua New Guinea education, from where his wife comes, was inspiring (see YouTube entitled 'Lema-PNG children'). Hugh O'Donnell spoke with great eloquence and passion about what St Benedict's School had meant and means to him which helped us reflect together on this important question. His

introduction to brain surgery was gripping. Peter Doyle's experience as a 'super-head' turning around failing Special Schools in two terms was very impressive. Stephen Dempsey's distinctive experiences with a responsibility for PR on Company Boards of a number of large multi-nationals juxtaposed with most of the others' work contexts. Peter McEwen's calm account of a trans-Atlantic crossing piloting a jumbo and being told, in mid-Atlantic by flight control that there was a bomb on his plane kept lips well away from the wine and mouths wide open. Chris Beith recounted his role as a member of Ford's Development team and his travel to the Arctic, as well as to deserts, mountainous and tropical regions of the world testing the developments he was involved in designing. As Chris spoke, I recollected a memorable meandering drive we shared around Twickenham in his mother's car and the faults we soon discovered in its tyres. The work Martin Doyle, who joined us later, experienced with Esso, took him to very many interesting jobs and locations including many in the USA. I was particularly fascinated by his playing rugby for the New Orleans RFC team. Edmund Matyjaszek talked about the work he undertook to establish a new school on the Isle of Wight and was rightly proud of its many successes in a remarkably short period of time. I mentioned my experiences and enjoyment teaching in a Brent Secondary School and of teacher development in the UK and other parts of the world, including the continent of my birth, Latin America, while working at Warwick University and at the Institute of Education. Martin Foot worked in Shell, was an accountant and now runs a specialist centre from the new purpose-built buildings he has added to his house on the south-coast designed to introduce youngsters with special needs to the seaside. In this wide range of work experiences a steely determination and multifarious successes was demonstrated by all, as achieved on the pitches on which we played.

The afternoon visit to the school playing fields that some of us made which was swiftly put together and hosted by Tara George and Richard Baker allowed us to admire the much improved quality of the facilities,



The Gathering at The Kent (2018)
L to R standing: McEwen, Peffers, Graepel, Dempsey - sitting: Matyjaesek, O'Donnell, Foot, Beith, Doyle

the extent of the caps won by the school players over time and indeed of the senior international caps achieved by some OPs. The fields brought memories flooding back. Unfortunately, nobody wanted to indulge me by listening to my description of the try I scored in the match against the Old Priorians when I ghosted past the Wasps and England hooker Bill Treadwell (OP 1957) to put the School in the lead on the stroke of half-time; maybe next time with the pitch marked out, and obviously in slow motion!

Memories of school-day experiences in the main focused on classroom-based events and of rugby matches played and these flowed throughout the nearly 9 hours we were together. *The Haven* was the early evening venue for the group. The pub has been expanded dramatically but the bar and the entrance of the pub are identical to the pub in which many of us paid £1 for a round for the team. The team was joined by a number of friends from across the years represented in the team, which brought an additional dimension to the day.

The only disappointment on the day was that Albert Ferrante was unable to join us as he could not get back from Geneva in time because of the strike of the

French air-traffic controllers.

We have the ambition to meet again and include all those who were unable to attend on this occasion. Alex Pereira-Inacio has informed us about the successes of the OPRFC, now in London and SE Division 1 and the fact that most of the team's home games are at the school's playing fields, which will offer us regular opportunities to keep in touch.

After the OPRFC fixture list is announced, consultation with all team-mates regarding an appropriate date in late 2018 should enable a further get together this year.

Finally Harry - I will be in Cairns in February 2019 and will come by to bring you the marmalade I promised you and to practise our line-out work - the networking will go on!



*Perivale - Fifty years later
L to R: Peffers, O'Donnell, Matyjaeszek and Foot*

We meet at Shampers again

by Richard Baker (OP 1959)

We all grow older, but hopefully wiser! Yet, once again nineteen of us managed to make it into Central London for our IB Lunch on 11th April 2018. We extended a warm welcome to Peter Coleman (OP 1970) joining us for the first time - it is always good to have 'new blood', especially a 'youngster'! As usual we were made to feel most welcome by Simon (Boss at Shampers) and were able to enjoy at leisure good food, good wine, good company and much 'chat and gossip'. Attending this time were (OP Vintages from 1956 to 1970): James Anscomb; Anthony Baker; Desmond Baker; Richard Baker; Geoffrey Bennett; Brendan Caulfield; Peter Coleman; Denis Costello; Andre de Moller; Patrick Gardiner; Kevin Hannigan; Mike Henderson; John Maloney; Stephen Novy; Anthony Phillips; David Randell; Bernard Stutt; Brian Taylor and Gordon Wilson.



Old Priorian Oxford and Cambridge Dinner

by Lewis Hill (OP 1975), President OPA

Within the salubrious confines of the Oxford and Cambridge Club in Pall Mall, and more specifically, the *Princess Louise Dining Room*, I spent a very convivial evening late in January 2018, with Old Priorian alumni of both universities. The décor was breath-taking, the location prestigious, and the company, graduated by degrees of understanding, highly thoughtful. It was a wonderful evening.

Though the oldest seats of learning and scholarship (not only of the British Isles but some of the oldest globally), these universities share the facilities for sport, dining, meeting and post-prandial conversation, gathering cheek by jowl in Central London (within confines frequented by the spirits of Palmerston, Wellington, Gladstone, Attlee and T.S. Eliot).

We convened for the 'bons mots' over the Prosecco, before dining.

The menu promised much: pressed ham hock terrine, roast rump of lamb and a slightly prosaic sounding bread and butter pudding. It did not disappoint; all was delicious.

Much discussion over dinner centred with news and views of the 'Old School', fuelled no doubt by the excellent French and Italian wines. St Benedict's is still the only Independent Catholic day school in the London area and as the Headmaster stood to introduce the evening's guest speaker, he took the opportunity to recount some of the school year's highlights and good news, including continuing academic excellence in scholarship with many excellent offers of places at university (including that of the Head Boy of a potential place at Jesus College); he also briefly mentioned the new Heritage Room in the School, the very successful Careers Fair so well supported by

OPs and parents, Baroness Cox's very moving Prize-giving speech, and the value added by the Cleugh Building and the newly rebuilt Junior School Ark. Lord Patten's continued support of the school is indeed reassuring to many Old Priorians. He highlighted recent successes of the school including the long-haul trips to Vietnam and Russia, both of which were particular successes.

Then stood the distinguished guest of honour: Captain Gordon Wilson, RN, (OP 1960), who was himself a contemporary of many distinguished OPs including Chris Patten, Brian Taylor and Paul Andersson. Associated with the King's Institute for International Relations and the Royal United Services Institute, he has had a varied and interesting career. As I sat next to his brother, Nigel, I learned that before taking up his place at Dartmouth Naval College in his last year of Sixth Form (which Gordon claimed precluded a university education) he had spent a year in Rome at the time of the 1960s Olympics, utilising the Tiber-side sports facilities. Years later Gordon would add a Cambridge MPhil to his naval stripes, having gained a university education. In concluding, he retold the assembled company of one formative incident at sea which left its stamp on his character. In telling the details, once lost to memory, he made a valuable point about loyalty and perseverance. Suffice to say it involved duty to others and not abandoning a ship in a crisis. In quoting the naval aphorism 'it takes three years to build a ship but three hundred to build a reputation', that such is the priceless nature of a good reputation that as we toasted the Old School, I was reminded of the fact that 'Rome wasn't built in a day'.



Andrew Johnson (Headmaster) and Gordon Wilson

WAYN - Where are you now?

It would help us to maintain our database records accurately and it would also help both the Development Office and Careers Department of the School, if you would take a few minutes to visit the Website and complete the WAYN Form which can be accessed from the link on the Portal Page. This applies especially to those of you who have left School in the last few years and are now on the first rungs of the ladder in that great big working-world or still in further education; having said that, don't let us put the rather 'Older OPs' off supplying their information - the occupation 'Retired' can be just as useful, providing of course we know what field it is that you have worked in!

All information supplied is treated with the confidentiality you would expect. Many thanks in anticipation of your help; the following link will take you straight there: <http://theopa.org/contact-us/wayn>

War Memorial Appeal Update

by Shaun Hullis, Contingent Commander CCF

On November 11th, 2018, one hundred years to the day since the Armistice, we will unveil our new School War Memorial. For four years we have been raising money towards a better tribute to those members of our community who made the ultimate sacrifice.

The original First World War memorial was destroyed in the bombing of the Abbey in WWII; shortly after the Second World War a new one was constructed by the school handyman and lettered beautifully by an art teacher. This memorial now hangs outside the Chapel, facing a statue of Our Lady erected in memory of Dom Gervase Hobson Matthews, who died at Dunkirk in 1940. The two memorials were always intended to form a pair.

However, the existing memorial contains errors in the names of those killed in the First World War. Sadly, it also omits Peter Hand, a member of the games staff who died in the Second World War. We decided to commission a new memorial, which will not only rectify all the errors but also add Hand, Clement Bruning (who died in German captivity in Poland in 1942) and Andre Mannheim, who died flying for the RAF in peace-time. We are leaving some blank space in case it is needed in future.

We have commissioned a solid oak memorial with incised letters, which is being produced by Mr Luke Chapman. His design picks up that of the current memorial, but larger and with every element carved instead of painted. There are added details such as a poppy field below, a mouse (to reflect the school's heritage in the form of the valuable Robert 'Mousey' Thompson furniture in the Library), and a wren to symbolize the women left behind.

It will be erected in *The Cloisters*, giving it more prominence and allowing sufficient space for it to be the focus of ceremonies in future. Beside it, we shall mount a stone memorial to the war dead of Ealing College, whose former site has been re-developed and who have entrusted their memorial to our care in perpetuity.

The new memorial is costing over £10,000, and although we have reached our target there are many expenses still to come before we

can unveil it. We also hope that the project will have enduring legacy: any surplus will endow annual War Memorial Bursaries, totalling around £200 a year, which will enable our CCF cadets to attend national leadership courses free of charge. We are therefore still seeking donations, and there will be more events to raise funds and awareness: a tour of Brookwood Cemetery on June 30th; laying out the names of the fallen in coins in *The Cloisters* on September 17th; and the Remembrance Concert in November 2018.

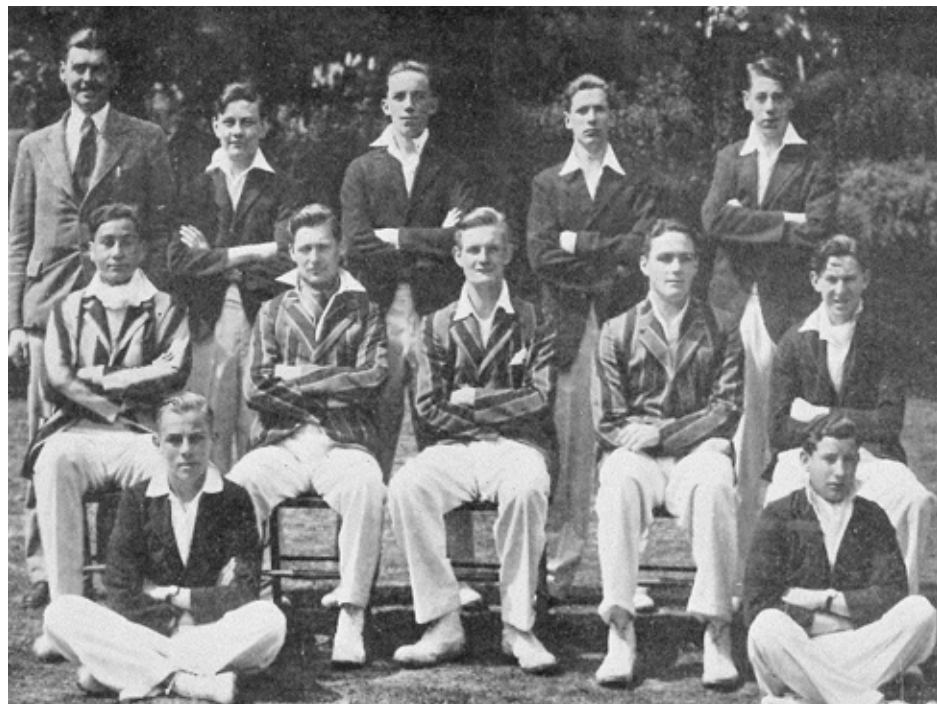
We will be taking a party of staff, pupils, and Old Priorians to visit Mr Chapman's workshop and to take part in the carving. The highest single donation received by the end of term on July 6th, 2018 will win the donor the right to join the group, and to leave a mark on the memorial.

The unveiling at 5pm on November 11th will be a formal invitation-only event, and we are anxious to hear from anyone who has a relative or friend listed on the memorial, so that we can arrange for you to attend. Please contact Tara George (tgeorge@stbenedicts.org.uk) in the Development Office. Donations can be made to the War Memorial Fund by the

usual channels; please contact Mrs George if you would like to contribute.

Thank you to all who have helped to make this project a success since I first proposed it in September 2014. By the time of the unveiling, it will have taken almost exactly the same length of time as lay between our first death in the First World War - Ambrose Teeling (September 24th, 1914) - and our last: his brother, Luke Teeling, who died on November 8th, 1918. We will remember them.

In the accompanying photo (the 1940 Cricket XI) of the twelve, six had lost their lives by the end of the war, casualty rates for junior officers in 1944-1945 making the First World War look tame. In the back row, at left, is Mr Peter Hand, who died in India in 1944; next to him is John 'Jock' Austin (executed as a prisoner by the Germans in 1945); at right stands Patrick Wilding (killed in action in Italy, 1944). In the seated row, the centre figure is the Captain, Trevor McNabb, who was killed in action at Arnhem in the same year. The two players sitting on the ground were both killed in action in Italy in 1944: at left is Francis Creamer, and at right David Moon.



The 1940 Cricket 1st XI
(L to R) - Back Row: Mr JP Hand (Coach), JP Austin, DL Shuldham, PJ Casey, PJ Wilding; Seated: RM Coleman, PJ Gough, TV McNabb (Capt), TJ Field-Hook, JP Pereira; Front: FB Creamer, DW Moon

News of Old Priorians January 2018 to July 2018

Martyn Aldridge (OP 1988): Martyn emails to say that he is now at Queen's College, Taunton where he is teaching Sociology, Politics and History.

Karim Barbir (OP 2000): Now living in Central London; he is a partner in Concord Resources, specialising in Commodity Trading and Mine Finance.

Eric Bazil (OP 1980): Visited the School at the end of June, his first time back in nearly forty years; he was delighted to see what vast changes had occurred in that time and fully appreciated his guided tour with Tara George (Development Officer) without whose guidance he says he would have been almost completely 'lost'. Eric is now living in New Hampshire, USA where he is a self-employed investor in Private Equity Investments.

David Connoles (OP 2015): Emails - I am enquiring about the recent OP Instagram post concerning AIB Banking career opportunities. I have recently obtained a 2.1 from the University of Manchester in Geography and I am now assessing job opportunities available in several industries for my eventual career. I am extremely interested in this opportunity due to the lucrative industry banking is known to be.

Pat Cox (OP 1958): Died 15th January 2018, Aged 76. R.I.P.

Michael Davis (OP 1964): Emails in response to the information about the OPA Summer Party: Thank you for your invitation but we have a very busy weekend here in Cheshire, so we will not be able to be with you; I hope that the Party goes well and many OPs turn out to enjoy the festivities and the sunshine. I am long overdue for visiting the school and am disappointed that circumstances have precluded me getting there since Andrew took over as Headmaster; however I hope to get there soon.

Harry Graepel (OP 1969): Emails concerning the 67-68 Rugby Reunion (see full article

elsewhere in this Newsletter): I would be most grateful if you would be able to put me in touch with the following members of the St Benedict's 1st XV from 1967-68 - John Dodd, the captain who on leaving school went to St Luke's Exeter and played for two seasons with Newport; Andrew Gladwin; Stephen Dempsey, who then became Head-Boy in 1969 before going to Oxford University. I make this enquiry from my home here in Cairns, Australia having just booked an airline ticket to attend the 50-year reunion in Ealing on the 7th April 2018.

Tomek Herbich (OP 1970): Our apologies for getting Tom's year of leaving wrong in the last Newsletter; this was because of a 'typo' from the person responsible for correlating OPA news - blame the OPA Administrator!

Julian Hopper (OP 1954): From Australia, Julian emails to say that he would not be in the UK at the time of the OPA dinner but wishes all attending an excellent evening and sends good wishes to any lads from our time. A little later he emails again: In response to the OPA's suggestion of an organised visit to the School with its so many changes, next time I am in the UK, that is a very kind thought but it will be a while yet till we are in London again and when we do return, we move to many spots and usually keep away from the London area because of the congestion. Anyway, time will tell! However, do keep in touch and thanks for providing the email information about forthcoming events.

Sebastain Jenkins (OP 2003): Now living in Hertfordshire and working in the Charity Sector for Bowel Cancer, UK as Head of Community and Events.

Tim Kaufmann (OP 2008): In 2015 Tim obtained a PhD in Neuroscience from Warwick University.

Alexander Levy (OP 2016): Is now reading Philosophy and Theology at Jesus College, Oxford. During my second year I have become involved with the Oxford RAG (Raise and Give) Society

which raises money for various charities. This year Oxford RAG has partnered up with Childreach International, a charity that aims to restore child rights worldwide. To raise money for this worthwhile charity, which provides help for children in 6 different countries across the globe, a group of students are embarking on a sponsored expedition to climb to the summit of Kilimanjaro. Prior to this we will also have the opportunity to visit a school in Tanzania that Childreach has supported over the past few years to raise education standards in the area and thus lift families out of poverty. While I was at St Benedict's I was given the opportunity to hear from former students about their experience of applying to Oxford, which was of great help in both my decision to apply and the application process itself. I would love to do something similar and am also very open to talking to individual students about their applications.

John Luckie-Downe (OP 1982): On receiving the information about the visit to Brookwood, emailed saying: I'm sad to miss this event. I do visit Brookwood from time to time as we have a family plot there but a tour would have been very interesting.

Peter Miles-Johnson (OP 1947): Died 26th February 2018, Aged 89. R.I.P.

Brian Morgan (Bursar: 1988-1993): Died 25th May 2018, R.I.P. Brian came to St Benedict's from the Royal Navy where he had served as a meteorologist, much of the time closeted in the bowels of the earth under Northwood. On retirement he returned to Yeovil, where his wife and two daughters had continued to live whilst he was at St Benedict's.

Kevin McCormack (OP 1965): Emails - On a general point I receive all the one-off emails regarding special events such as this one about the OPA dinner, but I no longer receive the regular email updates. I liked receiving these because

they gave information on items such as teachers and OPs who had recently died and OPs who had recently been in touch. I am pleased to say that my contemporaries (OPs 1965 or earlier) that regularly meet (some of us last met for lunch on 13 December in Wimbledon) are still going strong: attendees were Andre Confavreux, Richard and Adrian Rapazzzini, Robin McNair, Michael James, Gilbert Munnich, Jacek Szajdzicki (the latter having just recently been discovered!) and myself, with apologies for absence from Graeme Frall, David Curtis, Tim Durkin, Chris Hopper and Brian Callaghan.

From OPA Administrator: I explained in one of the 'old style' regular emails, the OPA was moving to more dedicated event and major news emails rather than the 'regular' update. I do assure all OPs on email distribution that you will still receive the 'Email News' as and when it is issued, but to keep more up to date with things,

especially 'News of OPs', please do use our Website: <http://theopa.org/> which has much information.

Adrian Nockles (OP 1970): Is now retired and living in North Yorkshire.

Ian Potts (OP 1982, Staff 67-82): The London Borough of Ealing has done Ian the honour of making him a Freeman of The Borough, for Service to Ealing - only the 26th Freeman in the Borough's 54 year history. Among his many contributions were 36 years as a councillor, serving as Mayor of Ealing 2004-05.

Jamie Reid (OP 2000): Now lives in the Middle East; he is trying to trace Mr John McCumisky, one of his teachers. The OPA was unable to help, so if anyone has any details that might help Jamie in his quest, please email the OPA and we will pass on your details.

Alexander Stafford (OP 2005): Updates his news: In June 2017 in Rutland I married Natalie, Fr

Thomas officiated. In May 2018 I was re-elected as a Councillor for Ealing, representing Ealing Broadway Ward which encapsulates St Benedict's School and Ealing Abbey.

Mark Tymieniecki (OP 1970): Emails following information about the visit to the Brookwood Military Cemetery: Sadly, I cannot attend as have another engagement that day. This is a topic of interest as my grandfather is buried at Corstorphine Military Cemetery in Edinburgh, and my father at the Powazki Military Cemetery in Warsaw. I hope the visit goes well and that there is a good turnout for what is a fascinating if slightly morbid topic. On a general note, I continue to serve as the Hon. Sec. for my former Regimental Association, which was 31 Signal Regiment (TA) and recruited in the West and South West of London.

OP Career Networking Evening

by Katie Wilmot (OP 2002)

On Monday 4th June thirty OPs attended the inaugural OPA Networking Evening, which was held at Wright Bros, Soho. This event brought together OPs who have recently graduated

from university, as well as established professionals from across four decades, representing a range of sectors including Finance, Marketing, Education, Construction, and Law.

This was a unique opportunity to meet potential clients, investors, collaborators and experts in their chosen field and to make connections from within the extensive Old Priorian network. The networking event was free to attend, and OPs were welcomed with drinks and canapés, which were funded by the OPA. Several OPs stayed on for a wonderful seafood dinner in the restaurant. This will hopefully be the first of many OP networking events. If you are interested in attending in the future, please contact Tara George at: tgeorge@stbenedicts.org.uk



A Networking Gathering of OPs



The work is done - let's eat!

Old Priorian Rugby Football Club

by Edd Conway (OP 2005)

Season's Update

The Old Priorian Rugby Club managed to attain their highest ever points total in London 1N (their highest ever league) in the 2017-18 season. This achievement was dampened slightly by a couple of games with poor availability meant for unexpected losses and an 8th place finish in the league, a great achievement but still with a sense of 'what could have been'. None-the-less, the club made big strides

on and off the pitch, providing a home for rugby players young and old, OP or not. The late season highlights included a fantastic 52-43 win against high-flying Colchester which saw an outstanding OP performance, particularly a dominant second half, stun the visitors. The final day of the season also brought great excitement for the future as the OPs fielded a very young side against already-promoted Chingford. The OPs fought

bravely, only losing 32-10 with outstanding performances from Will Taylor (OP 2017), Jake Casali and Jack Davies (both OP 2018). Despite other clubs in the league spending 'obscene' money to attract players from far and wide, the OPs remain a dangerous and competitive side in London's top division thanks to the excellent rugby environment and friendships enjoyed at the school.



The Last Game of the Season

Montpellier Tour

In May 2018, the club undertook its first ever overseas tour, expertly organised by Andrew Wilkie (OP 2008). Thirty OPRFC players, coaches and supporters ventured to Montpellier for a Friday Night Lights fixture against Pic St Loup. In a tough, physical encounter the OP flair and speed proved the difference in a 32-23 victory as the sun set. Aristide Goualin (OP 2008) scored an outrageous try



Alex Ozegovic (OP 2012) leads the team out

from inside his own half to put the OPs into a lead that they wouldn't surrender, with Rowan Halsall (OP 2008) and Phelim Kavanagh (OP 2015) picking up the Forward and Back of the Match Awards respectively. The opposition hosted us superbly, taking us down to the Festa which was taking place in their town to share drinks, food and communicate in broken French-English our stories and experiences.

End of Season Dinner

The End of Season Dinner took place again this Summer at *The Drayton Court* in West Ealing, with the annual awards always eagerly anticipated. It was a fantastic evening with OPs of various vintages coming together to celebrate the season and the first decade of the club.

The Awards were as follows:

Players' Player of the Season - Joe Wellings (OP 2010)

Player of the Season - Rowan Halsall (OP 2008)

Man of Steel - Guy Djedje

Saints Player of the Season - Cian McBride (OP 2014)

Most Improved Player - Sam Vale (OP 2009)



(L to R): Director of OP Rugby, Edd Conway, PPOTS Joe Wellings and Captain, Jack Dever (OP 2008)

Summer Social

OPRFC entered two sides into the huge Summer Social sports event in June 2018. The day is hosted at Richmond RFC and on Old Deer Park with Rugby 7s, Touch Rugby, Hockey, Netball and Lacrosse tournaments all taking place before culminating in an evening festival for all involved. Ross McIntosh (OP 2010) was involved in the running of the event and the club had a successful day on and off the pitch. Our 1st XII managed to reach the Open Quarter-Final, an excellent achievement against seasoned 7s sides, whilst our 2nd XII won their tournament in the Ultra-Social. It was a fantastic club day out in the sun and our first silverware for a few years since winning promotion

from London 2NW! Conor Dolan (OP 2013), Matt Ilube, Brendan Rice and Pierre Goualin (all OP 2016) shone with outstanding performances against excellent opposition.



The 1st XII Squad

Annual Rugby Presentation School Dinner

by Edd Conway (OP 2005)

The Annual Rugby Presentation Dinner is an occasion to showcase the highs and lows of the School 1st XV rugby season for 2017/18. It is always a bittersweet evening as we prepare to wish our Upper Sixth boys goodbye as they move on to life after St Benedict's. The dinner also provides the opportunity to welcome back many of the OPRFC players to remind and encourage the boys to keep playing rugby and to encourage leavers to join the OPRFC.

We were especially delighted this year to welcome back Dr Phil Hopley (OP 1984) as Guest of Honour. Phil, a former 1st XV player himself spoke about the importance of continuing in sport after leaving St Benedict's as it helps forge friendships for years to come.

Director of Rugby, OPRFC, Edd Conway presented the OPRFC Clubman of the Year award to Teddy Loxton.



Edd Conway presents the Trophy to Teddy Loxton



St Benedict's School 1st XV Squad 2017-2018

The Old Priorian Association Dinner 2018

by Tara George, Development Director St Benedict's School

The annual Old Priorian Dinner was held in the Lansdowne Club on a very sunny Thursday evening in late April. Over 70 Old Priorians came together to enjoy the annual dinner and take the opportunity to catch up with friends.

Guest of Honour this year was Angela McHale (OP 1987) Actor and Facilitator. Angela regaled her audience with hilarious stories from her experience in the acting world and her co-curricular career. Drawing her speech to a close Angela also stressed the importance of following your dreams and sticking to your guns when following your chosen career path.

Andrew Johnson, Headmaster, also addressed the gathering and highlighted the great things happening at St Benedict's including the recent Careers Fair, the Cricket tour to Sri Lanka and the recent school production.

Angela commented afterwards: *'The OP dinner was a very special evening for me. It was an honour to be asked to speak and a treat to have my father (Peter, OP 1960) there with me. We both enjoyed going down memory lane with other fellow OPs, seeing some current and ex-teachers we hadn't seen in a long time and meeting recent leavers - all of whom were delightful. The atmosphere was warm and the food was excellent. A thoroughly enjoyable time!'*

The 2019 Dinner will be on Friday 26th April and will be held in St Benedict's School.



(L to R): Peter McHale, Andrew Johnson, Angela McHale and Richard Baker



The table of 2017 Old Priorians and the current School Officials

Organising a Reunion

Reunions are now more popular than ever and remain a great way to get together with old friends and rekindle school memories.

If you are curious about what your fellow alumni are doing, then we are here to help in many ways - do please contact us.

Much useful information about reunions, including guidelines for claiming a possible subsidy, is available at: <http://theopa.org/events/reunions>

A Memory of Gil Harrison (Staff 1946-1975)

By Stephen Novy (OP 1961)

This is a very personal memory of a most affable School character, by one of his pupils of the late fifties and early sixties

Gilbert Harrison taught us Latin, though to others I think he taught Greek. Whether he was a good teacher I don't know, but he was hugely entertaining. He happily let us know that he considered the Combined Cadet Force unnecessary, a waste of time, and money. He was a funny little man, in his 40's I think - shorter than most of us, possibly even than I. He wore light-coloured cavalry twill trousers that narrowed as they approached his ankles and were a couple of inches too short, so that one was always aware that he never wore socks - which he also considered unnecessary, a waste of money and time, and effete. His shoes were rather like moccasins, his tweedy jacket had elbow patches (which we thought an affectation), and double vents at the back. I seem also to recall a yellow tie. His hair was fair, yellowish - it frequently flopped



Gilbert Harrison in 1970

untidily across his face, which would have been described as long in a taller man. His nose was at any rate quite prominent.

His voice was wonderful and never to be forgotten: a high register, an

upwardly curving Herefordshire burr that we mimicked constantly. I can still hear him calling out to the back of the class 'Err, Novy, err Novy, err Novy be quiet!' It was sometimes my name, but we all had the same high, cheerful call, like a seagull's cry, aimed at us from time to time. He was always challenging and funny, even when having to beat us in his role in our O Level year as 5G's 'Division Master'. He very rarely did, only once to me I think. I can't recall what for - possibly when I cheated in a test, or the occasion a classmate has reminded me of, when we silently shuffled our desks around the classroom while Gil wrote on the blackboard, so that when he turned round to aim his question at the boy who had been sitting third row far left he could now only find him fourth row far right - such tricks had been tried before but he was wise to all schoolboy tricks, was far too clever for us and could never be fooled.

His most entertaining feature was his oft-expressed pride in being a true Englishman, and in hailing from Hereford, which he claimed was the very heart of England. He enjoyed our attempts to rubbish this: we said that Hereford was almost in Wales, and, as diligent researches revealed, the Cathedral tower had a history of falling down. He stuck to his guns, and happily pointed out to many of us our lack of true or sufficient Englishness, or in several cases any at all. Once, having from his window watched me drill HQ on a Friday afternoon, he told me on the Monday that I looked like 'an Italian sergeant'. He knew I was half French, and that would do. I laughed. So did he!

He also 'accused us, in his unfailingly jocular fashion, of seeking out 'the flesh-pots of Ealing', which as far as we knew could only have been, other than the Wimpy Bar, the Caprice Coffee bar - certainly a new and enticing feature of Ealing, if we could have afforded it.

I think Gil very much enjoyed being a teacher: he enjoyed our company, he enjoyed an argument, and he enjoyed life. He certainly enlivened our time at school, which could not be said of all teachers, anywhere.

Forthcoming Events for your Diaries

Full details will be published in our emails and on our website:

**OPA Annual General Meeting,
Memorial Mass and Lunch
Saturday 10th November 2018
St Benedict's School, Ealing
Abbey and Benet Club: 10.30am**

**Unveiling of the New School
War Memorial
Sunday 11th November 2018
St Benedict's School**

**The 2018 Richard Baker
Science Lecture
Wednesday 28th November 2018
The Orchard Hall: 7pm**

*The 2018 Lecture will be
delivered by Professor John
Sloboda, OBE, FBA, (OP 1968).
John is Research Professor at
the Guildhall School of Music
and Drama.*

**OPA Annual Dinner 2019
Friday 26th April 2019
St Benedict's School: 7pm**
*Before Dinner there will be the
opportunity, for those who
wish, to make a tour of the
many developments that have
taken place in recent years.*

**OPA Annual Golf Day 2019
June 2019 - Date and Time tba
Ealing Golf Club**

OPA 2018 Summer Party

by Katie Wilmot (OP 2002)

On Sunday 1st July the OPA held their annual Summer Party at the Perivale playing fields. The event included the OPA Cricket Tournament, which saw the Old Priorian Cricket Club face St Benedict's School 1st XI, the Director's XI, and Ealing Academy, with a special appearance from Brentham Cricket Club, for a great day of 20/20 Cricket. An all-day

BBQ, drinks, face painting, a bouncy castle, and glorious weather, made it a fantastic day of fun for the 100 or so OPs who attended, the competing cricket teams, and all of their families. For more photos of the party and updates on other Old Priorian events, you can follow @oldpriorians on Instagram and Twitter, which is run by OPs, for OPs.



Will Taylor, Charlie Stringer, Alex Pereira-Inacio, James Booth, Jack Dever, Will Clarke and Tom Jewers

The Old Priorian Annual Golf Day

by Tara George, Development Director St Benedict's School

We were delighted to welcome over 40 Old Priorians, current and past parents and friends of St Benedict's to our annual Golf Day at Ealing Golf Club in June 2018. The course was in fantastic shape and the weather was kind, so it boded well for a great day of Golf. The 2018 winner of the much contested Old Priorian Quinnen cup was Tomek Herbich (OP 1970) who left last year's winner Sebastian Obracaj (OP 2008) disappointed but vowing to come back and win again next year! Niamh Grace won the Ladies Prize, and Bryan Light won the Best Individual Stableford.

The golf was followed by an al-fresco BBQ with Pat Murphy-O'Connor (OP 1976), Chair of the Board of Governors, kindly presenting the winners with their prizes. We would like to make a special mention to past parent, Ruaidhre Boyle who helped us to deliver a great Golf Tournament and our sincere thanks to everyone who came along to support the day. The next OPA Golf Day will be held in June 2019 at Ealing Golf Club.



Sebastian Obracaj and Daniel Sulkowski

Email Addresses

Do please remember to keep us informed of any email changes and encourage OPs who may not be on our emailing list to let us have their addresses. With the advent of GDPR there must be formal application from our Website to have your email address included on our distribution lists.



(L to R): Pat Murphy-O'Connor, Simon Jeffries, Mike Ainslie and Phil Hopley

OPCC Update

by Matt Codrington (OP 2012)

OPCC is entering our fourth year since its reformation and it continues to go from strength to strength. With players of all ages and standards welcome, we are proud that we have fielded players from 15-38 years old this year, which certainly

means the club is going in the right direction. We recently played in the Emeriti-Phillips Cup - consisting of Catholic schools Old Boys' teams, where we were fortunate enough to win! We have an open-door policy on players and would love to see more familiar faces.



Ranjan Waas (OP 2008) and Matt Codrington with the Emeriti-Phillips Cup

Your News

If you would like to share with our readers, where life has taken you since you left St Benedict's please get in touch! Simply get in touch with the OPA Office via email, writing an article for us to include in the next edition.

Contact with other OPs

The OPA Office is happy to act as a 'Contact Agency' for email contact - if you wish to contact an OP whose email address you do not have then email us and we will forward your email address to the person concerned (provided we have an email address for them!) saying that you wish to contact them by email; he or she is then free to contact you if they wish.

Please note that we will not forward email messages.



Facebook /theOldPriorianAssociation

Social Media

The Old Priorian Association has a presence on social media. Please like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter and Instagram to stay up to date with events and news. We'd love to build on our ever-growing network and get you connected to fellow Old Priorians.

Twitter @oldpriorians



Instagram @oldpriorians



The Old Priorian Association - Founded 1927

The Old Priorian Association was formed on Friday, 1 July 1927 with the name reflecting its beginnings within Ealing Priory School, which was the name of St Benedict's School at the time.

The Association was established to form a centre of union for former pupils of the School and to hold meetings to renew old bonds which connect its Members and alumni with the School and Ealing Abbey. A vital role of the Association is to forward and promote - in every practical way - the interests of the School, whilst conducting its business according to The Rules of The Association (see OPA Website), which form the structure within which it operates.

The Association is governed and run by a Council consisting of three elected Officers, no fewer than four elected Members and a number of Ex-Officio Members.

Elected Officers

Lewis Hill (OP 1975)

President

Marina Ranger (OP 2009)

Honorary Secretary

Kumaran Perinpanathan (OP 2009)

Honorary Treasurer

Council Members

Frank Casali (OP 1984)

Edward Conway (OP 2005)

Alex Pereira-Inacio (OP 2000)

Christopher Stevenson (OP 1964)

Brian Taylor, CB (OP 1960)

Jessica Taylor-Beirne (OP 2009)

Luca Uberai (OP 2010)

Andrew Wilkie (OP 2008)

Ex-Officio Council Members

Andrew Johnson

Headmaster

Rob Simmons (OP 1987)

Headmaster, Junior School

Catherine Bedwin

Bursar, St Benedict's School

Patrick Murphy-O'Connor (OP 1976)

Chairman, St Benedict's Governing Board

Jean O'Brien

Society of Parents and Friends

Richard Baker (OP 1959)

Administrator, OPA

Tara George

Development Director,
St Benedict's School

Full details about the Association and its activities can be found at:
www.theopa.org

The Association has office facilities within the School and may be contacted by:

Email: opa@stbenedicts.org.uk

Telephone: 020 8862 2249

**Post: The Old Priorian Association,
54 Eaton Rise, Ealing, London
W5 2ES**



Your Newsletter

Please do let us have your news and views for inclusion in the next Newsletter. Full details of the Association can be found at: <http://www.theopa.org>. The School Website and School News can be found at: <http://www.stbenedicts.org.uk>

Please also remember that submitted image files must be of high resolution and as large a file size as possible.