



The Old Priorian Association Newsletter

Autumn 2014

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OPA Annual General Meeting 2014

The AGM was held on Saturday 8th November 2014. At the meeting reports were received from the Secretary and the Treasurer and on Membership and on Sports. The election of Officers and Members of Council was held and the reappointment of ex-officio Members accepted. The four members of Council who had been co-opted during the year were voted onto Council as full Members and a brief biography of each appears below. A full listing of the Council appears at the end of this newsletter.

The OPA Requiem Mass was particularly poignant this year. One hundred years after the start of the Great War, Old Priorians, their partners, and staff gathered to remember not only those who gave their lives in war, but those whom we lost this year. Sadly, this list included young Old Priorians, taken from us all too soon. St Benedict's School Combined Cadet Force was in attendance with WO2 Paul

Radford, the School SSI, to honour the memory of our Old Priorians. The OPA wreath was laid by Richard Baker.

Listening to Basil Nickerson share stories of the CCF and the school in his day with the 4 current NCOs was certainly a highlight of pre-lunch drinks. Comparing venues for the annual CCF Summer Camp, drills and parade space ensured a lively debate between Old Priorians and current students! Over lunch, the discussion centred on St Benedict's today and the daily routine of the school. Old Priorians David Murphy, Peter Bingham-Daly, Chris Stevenson and Tony Havery imparted great memories of their school days and were interested to learn of the breadth of subject available to St Benedict's students today, particularly the vast extra-curricular provision.

By Tamlyn Worrall, OPA Council Member

The Council welcomes New Faces



Sinead Leahy - Sinead left St Benedict's in 2008 and took a year out to gain some work experience and travel the world. Since graduating from Durham

University in 2012 she has been involved in a variety of projects within the creative industries and is presently working in TV production

at the BBC. In her spare time you can catch her in the cheap seats at the theatre or cinema, pretending to be intellectual at the latest cultural 'experience' in London or planning her next 'challenge' and/or escape. Highlights of 2014 include raising over £4000 for CLIC Sargent by (just about!) completing the London Marathon, being super close to Dolly Parton (miming) at Glastonbury Festival and meeting her childhood hero Mel C.

President's Welcome

Dear Old Priorians

So yet again we have a bumper newsletter! As you will see, Old Priorians are a diverse bunch of people and definitely anything but average. It was with great interest that I read the accounts from Joshua and George, who were aided in their adventures by the OPA Award. Sport is something that often brings our members together and this was most evident at our Summer Sports Festival. It was a thoroughly enjoyable day and was great to see so many OPs down at the field, whether playing or spectating.

I am most pleased to welcome our four new Council members, who were officially voted in to office at our recent AGM. I look forward to the fresh ideas and views that they will bring to the Association.

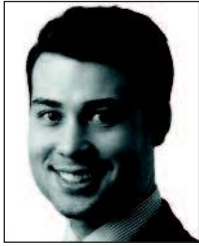
I would like to take this opportunity to wish all Old Priorians, and their nearest and dearest, a wonderful Christmas and a great New Year. I look forward to seeing you at The President's Dinner in March.



**Best wishes
Mary Keal (OP 1983)
President, The Old Priorian Association**

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The Council welcomes New Faces continued



Matt Goldsworthy

- After leaving St Benedict's in 2007, Matt went on to UCL for an undergraduate degree in Geography. He later completed a Masters in Real

Estate in order to help gain membership to the RICS. Matt has recently qualified as a Chartered Surveyor with Knight Frank and is dealing with residential investments in Central London. He continues to play for OPRFC when he is fit.

Marina Ranger - Since leaving



St Benedict's in 2009, Marina spent three years at the University of Manchester studying Geography, playing hockey and making the most of university

life! After graduating in 2012 she was offered an internship, which after 2 months turned into a permanent job in the Events Industry, as an Event's Coordinator at BrandFuel. She has now been working there for over 2 years, working with clients such as Google and Twitter for both large and small scale events such as exhibitions, roadshows, parties, and conferences. Alongside work, Marina is also a very keen runner, having completed one marathon and many ultra-marathons over the last two years.

Ayelsha Patel - After leaving



St Benedict's in 2004, Ayelsha studied in Griffith College, Dublin and achieved a BA(Hons) in Accounting and Finance. Upon completion she gained a place on

a Grad Scheme within a London trading house and studied for her professional exams within Accountancy. She moved to an investment bank and spent a year working in New York in 2011. Since returning to London, Ayelsha currently works in Front Office Risk with an investment bank. She has taken over from Mike Ainslie as the Treasurer of the OPA.

School News

Upper Sixth students celebrated some excellent A Level results in August. There were just over 38% A*/A grades and a 100% pass rate. Joe Curran and Karina Walker, Heads of School, achieved their grades for Cambridge and Oxford entry respectively, Joe with five A*s and Karina with an A* and three As. Sebastian Strug also gained five A* grades. At GCSE the percentage of A* grades was 21.2% and the percentage of A*/A grades was 49.5%. There were some outstanding individual performances headed by Leila Kirby and Natalie Maalouf both with 11A*, closely followed by Oliver Buchanan, David Hope and Christopher Sweeney with 10A*s.

Senior School Prize Giving took place in the Abbey Church on Wednesday 10th September. It was a wonderful celebration of the past year for students, parents and staff. The Chair of Governors, Patrick Murphy-O'Connor, welcomed everyone and then Headmaster, Chris Cleugh, gave his address, detailing the many successes of 2013/14 and outlining plans for the future. The School was delighted to welcome back Mr Basil Nickerson as the Principal Guest. Mr Nickerson gave the final address, reminiscing about his many years at St Benedict's and exhorting pupils and staff to 'keep the essence': 'A minimis incipe. Ad

majorem Dei gloriam.' Following The Blessing, the school hymn 'Reigning in Glory' was thundered out by over one thousand voices.

Our main contractors, Jerram Falkus, started building work in early August on the new ADT and Sixth Form Centre. The existing ADT building was demolished and the remaining foundations removed. Piling was completed and the ground worker joined up the tops of the piles with reinforcement and concrete. Work has also finished on the attenuation tank in the main playground. On 7th November the ground floor slab was finished, the tower crane has now arrived and work has begun on building upwards. Chief Operations Manager Richard Ferrett is pleased that the building work is on schedule for completion by September 2015.

From September the Development Office at St Benedict's has been up and running. Working alongside Richard Baker of the OPA, our newly appointed Development Director, Tamlyn Worrall, has already organised some events and met a number of Old Priorians. Her initial major task has been to set up and organise the database with the help of Mrs Tara George, the school's Development Officer. Mrs Worrall is keen to develop further the good links between the Old Priorian



View of the new Sixth Form and ADT building prepared by architects van Heyningen & Haward

Association and the School. She is a member of the Old Priorian Council and hopes to meet many more Old Priorians in the coming months.

St Benedict's welcomed pupils from the Benedictine school in Meschede, Germany in March on the annual exchange visit and our students had a super week in Germany in October. Spanish pupils enjoyed a sun-drenched exchange visit to Benicarlo, near Barcelona while a number of our Sixth Formers took part in the Easter HCPT pilgrimage to Lourdes. The Lower Fourth holiday to Molveno was a great success, capped by winning the 'international' football match 4-0. Form 2 children got very wet and muddy but hugely enjoyed their Adventure Week in the Lake District. Form 1 pupils visited World War 2 sites in Normandy during their week away and also learnt how to correctly eat toffee.

St Benedict's Day was celebrated with fun and fundraising in the morning and a concelebrated Whole School Mass in the Abbey Church in the afternoon. A total of £5,544 was raised for charity. Science Week included the Third Form Science Fair and a Big Bang assembly for younger pupils. Junior and Middle School pupils combined to put on a stunning Art Exhibition in the Cloisters. The Dance Show, involving a cast of 140+, played to an enthusiastic and vociferous audience of parents and friends. Two days later the Concert Choir presented a fabulous concert at St John's Smith Square in London. The highlight of the evening was Carl Orff's exciting 'Carmina Burana' sung with gusto and skill in both Latin and old German. Fairtrade Fortnight was a great success in the Junior School and Forms 1 and 2 presented a moving Lenten Reflection in the Abbey Church.

The Summer Concert was an amazing and emotional farewell for our Upper Sixth musicians. Niko Mirosevic-Sorgo's painting 'Creator and Creation', chosen by the Royal Academy for their online exhibition of A Level Art starred in the Senior School Art Show. Middle School pupils raised £2,600 for charity by participating in 'Readathon' and Professor Barbara Shollock enthused our senior girls about the opportunities for women in science. Labour held St Benedict's in the mock election and, later in the year, also said 'No' to Scottish Independence.



Lord Patten with the Lower Sixth Patten Scholars



Form 2 pupils performing in 'Once upon a Crime'

The Combined Cadet Force (CCF) flew the flag for St Benedict's at City Hall, London during the celebration of Armed Forces Week. The annual CCF camp at Wathgill allowed our cadets to show their excellent skills and drills, as well as their positive attitude, which impressed many of the instructors. Cadet Sgt Kamil Cesarz was chosen to stand the first watch at the Cenotaph in Whitehall on Thursday 23rd October – a great honour for him and for the School. Kamil featured on various news programmes that evening and was interviewed by the BBC. On Remembrance Day the whole school gathered in Ealing Abbey for a moving service.

A new music group to emerge were 'Folk Fusion', four U6 students who won a feature spot at Redbourn Folk Club, near St Albans, after performing in the final of the New Roots national folk competition. Etaoin Rowe (U6) achieved a remarkable success at the All Ireland Fleadh in Sligo, winning the 'Newly Composed Ballads' section of the competition. Our Big Band and Krupa Percussion Ensemble scored a notable triumph at the time of the World Cup during their German tour, playing to packed audiences and receiving standing ovations. An amazing 'Bling your Bike' event ended our yearly Biking

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School News continued

Project and Form 2 rounded off the school year with a spectacular production of 'Once upon a Crime!'

Modern Languages Week took over the school in the last week of September, while Junior School pupils and staff celebrated Book Week in October, with the 'Dressing Up' Assembly on Friday providing the highlight. Over £1,000 was raised for Macmillan Cancer Support during the 'World's Biggest Coffee Morning.' Thirteen U6 students completed their Gold Duke of Edinburgh's Award qualifying expedition in the Brecon Beacons - described by one of the participants as "the four most exhausting days of my life!" Drama teacher Richard Gee staged an accomplished adaptation of 'Agatha Rex' with his Middle School pupils.

The U12s rugby sevens team won our St Benedict's tournament, beating Donhead 21-0 in the final and playing some sparkling rugby. The U13s were the stand-out senior sevens side, winning the Durston House Sevens. First XV captain Michael Ledger won a well-deserved England U18 cap in April, playing against Ireland and France. Six fencers from St Benedict's formed the backbone of the Ealing team that won the London Youth Games fencing title for the first time in over a quarter of a century. The combined U14/U15 pre-season cricket tour to Sri Lanka was a great success. Louie Millman achieved that rarity of feats, a 1st XI century and Ned Leonard, U12 captain, hit a superb 133 not out against Teddington. Netball goes from strength to strength with Molly Bish and Mfon Bassey representing Middlesex at U14 level and Hannah Vaughan at U18 level. Roberts House won the Senior

School Athletics Championships for the third consecutive year while More House triumphed in the Junior School event. Duncan Ashby won a Bronze medal in the prestigious IAPS Fencing Championships held at Millfield Prep School, Somerset.

The 1st XV's pre-season tour to Australia was a very positive experience and the team has made a great start to the new season winning nine out of ten so far and qualifying for the Middlesex Cup final. Our new Director of Rugby, James Coles, has made an immediate impact, and all rugby teams are buying into the St Benedict's Rugby Core Values of Work Rate, Energy and Courage. Many girls are part of the newly

reformed Ealing Hockey Club who use St Benedict's playing fields as their base. County hockey trials are now taking place with a number of our girls and boys involved. Alex Curtis (L5) has reached regional level in hockey selection, the highest so far for any of our students. The U13 girls were runners-up in the inaugural St Augustine's Hockey Tournament. Dimitri Coutya, our U23 Wheelchair fencing Epee World Champion, has continued to win Gold medals at various events, home and abroad, while Duggie Ashby (L5) is competing at U17 fencing national selection tournaments.

By Marek Nalewajko, Marketing Director, St Benedict's School



A performance of Carl Orff's 'Carmina Burana' in St John's Smith Square

Old Priorian to represent Ealing Broadway Ward

Alexander Stafford (OP 2005) was elected this May to Ealing Council, topping the ballot to represent Ealing Broadway ward. As a local councillor, Alex will represent his constituents on all local matters such as transport, planning, policing and health provision. St Benedict's sits within Ealing Broadway ward so we are lucky to have an Old Boy as the

area representative.

Commenting on his election Cllr Stafford said "My interest in politics was piqued whilst at Benedict's. I was lucky to have Mr Allott (current Deputy Headmaster and a former councillor himself) teaching me politics in the sixth form. Without his help and encouragement I would not be pursuing this path. I hope

that throughout my term in office I will carry out my duties to the best of my ability always keeping close to me the principle of *A Minimis Incipe*.

If you want to know about the role of a councillor, or have any questions about how to get involved in politics please do get in contact with him.

Marina excels in Kalahari Augrabies Extreme Marathon 2014

In January 2013 I had only ever been on a 5k run. Today, I run anything up to 75 miles a week when I am training for ultra-marathons. I started running to compete in a competition within the company I work for, to join my boss running 250km in the Kalahari Desert for 7 days. The competition was a free trip and place in the race, which was won by proving you are fit enough and by raising £2,000 for a charity called Hope and Homes for Children. I won the competition and therefore the opportunity to challenge myself.

Since then, it has become my new hobby and has changed my life. I did my first marathon in April and since have completed the following:

- 100km London to Brighton in May 2013
- 250km in October 2013. A self-sufficient multistage race in the Kalahari Desert called the Kalahari Augrabies Extreme Marathon
- 66miles over 2 days in January

2014 in the North Downs

- 60miles over 2 days in June 2014 in the New Forest
- 21miles Man vs Mountain up Snowdonia
- 55km in August in the North York Moors
- 250km in November 2014. A self-sufficient multistage race in the Kalahari Desert called the Kalahari Augrabies Extreme Marathon

It has become my way of seeing new places, meeting new people, discovering how hard I can push myself, trying new things and having such a great time. I have also entered the blogging world through my running and the races I do. My biggest achievement so far has been being placed 5th lady and 18th overall as the youngest competitor in the Kalahari Augrabies Extreme Marathon 2014. I have a lot of plans for my 'running future' with many more races to try and places to see through doing new races. One day I also hope to combine my hobby with my career.



Marina on her Kalahari Marathon

By Marina Ranger (OP 2009), OPA Council Member

OPA Award - Easter Seals Special Needs Summer Camp



Easter Seals Camp 2014



George with new friends

This summer I worked for eight weeks at an Easter Seals special needs summer camp in Iowa, United States. Easter Seals Camps aim to provide help and support to children and adults with disabilities and special needs of both a mental and physical nature. The camp gives the campers a fun week away from home and also gives their carers or parents a bit of a rest. The campers come to camp for one week at a time; arriving on a Sunday afternoon and leaving on a Friday afternoon.

It might be a cliché but working at a special needs summer camp is both the hardest and most rewarding and fun thing I have ever done. Surviving on two hours of sleep after a difficult night duty, fifteen hour days and camp food might all be a little tricky to handle at times but you learn to love these things by the end of camp; as the end approached I even began to look forward to my night duties!

Of course the best thing about camp is the people; both the other counsellors and the campers. You end up spending so much of your time with the other counsellors, working and living, that by the end of the first week at camp I had made about ten new friends for life. You also end up forming very close bonds with the campers that Fridays are always the worse days at camp because that's when they all go home. Playing games such as water fights, paint the counsellor and nature walks all add to the fun, excitement and joy of camp.

I would like to sincerely thank the Old Priorian Association, who by granting an Award to me, helped to give me the opportunity of a lifetime in working at this summer camp. It is an experience that I would recommend to anyone and I hope that I can return next summer!

By George de Cintra (OP 2012)

OPA Award - My Month in Mwandi, Zambia

For four weeks during August and September 2014 I volunteered for a charity called Mission Zambia, in only its second year of running the scheme. We were out there to help, among other things, with the building of houses in a town called Mwandi, in western Zambia.

The building process had several stages; the first of these was the foundations which involved digging about 30 half-metre deep holes for the vertical posts that formed the walls. Then, after nailing on the wooden roofing structure we tied thinner sticks vertically along each side of the vertical posts - these were to hold the mud balls for the next step. Managing to work at a good pace, we completed the foundations within a day and began the mudding. The next stage involved mixing the dry 'mud' (actually a product of the multiple termite mounds in the area) with water to produce the wet mud which was shaped into balls and placed in between the sticks set up in the foundation step. This was a longer stage and took about 3 days of work to complete. The next stage was the throwing where we slapped the mud on both the inside and outside walls in order to cover the wooden structure. This again was a longer stage and took another 3 or 4 days. Finally one final thin layer was added to smooth the surface and then the inside floor was added and finally a step around the outside of the building. The smoothing, like the foundations,

could be completed within a day of hard work. All that remained was to add the corrugated sheets of metal for a roof and add the window and door into their frames. We saw through the construction of one house from scratch to completion as well as finishing off a couple of other houses and starting foundations for another. The handing over of the keys to the new owner was a wonderful feeling of satisfaction in completing the house and managing to house the family we'd gotten to know well during the building process.

As medical students we were given the opportunity to observe ward rounds and help out in the Mother and Baby Centre and the pharmacy at the local mission hospital in Mwandi. As I'm still in the earlier phase of my medical education I found the opportunity and experience massively informative and yet I could still appreciate the gulf in medical treatment dictated both by cultural influences and lack of resources. The news that the hospital could not afford to run their generator for the duration of a short power cut was horrifying and a perfect example of their need for money. There are, however, positives to take from these experiences such as my opportunity to help out at the eye clinic which was a project run by an American doctor and some volunteers. Over the four days they were in Mwandi they tested hundreds of the population's eyes and prescribed glasses and sunglasses for those



Is that deep enough yet?

who needed them. Watching the reaction of one woman after having her eyesight corrected was something I'll remember for a very long time and reminded me of the impact of basic medical provisions and why I chose medicine as a career.

I spent a morning in the old people's home in the village where we helped clean the facilities during the morning. Having spent time in old peoples' homes in the UK the contrast was, as expected, shocking and despite the sensational efforts of those running the home, the lack of resources available was disturbing. In an area riddled with infectious disease the cleaning methods used were disappointing and made me fear for those being looked after. That being said the reality of the situation hit me when I considered what would happen if this establishment didn't exist and that those involved considered this and were doing an exceptional job in the circumstances.

That same day I spent the afternoon at the orphan feeding centre or orphan and vulnerable children (OVC) which was, in contrast to the morning, an example of how much good a well organised and well-funded scheme can do. We first helped to serve the 250 dishes for the local children dependent on this source of food. The kids were also given relevant vitamins and nutrition they needed and after they'd eaten and we'd cleaned up the hall, I played football with the children and I realised how many I recognised from the building sites and although I found it upsetting to get an insight into how many children that we knew were dependent on the feeding centre, it



I'm for ever blowing bubbles ...

was reassuring to think that schemes such as this existed to support them.

I found it fascinating to observe and learn about the culture in Zambia as it was such a contrast to anywhere I'd visited previously. With a highly religious community, where the church and the chief were at the heart of the village and how it functions, Mwandi was a small village with extremely kind and welcoming people who, although not unused to westerners, made the most of the company of us so-called 'Makuas' (white people). We played football with the local children of the town and, in fairly alien conditions of 30+ degree heat and a sandy pitch, didn't fare well against the eleven year olds who more than embarrassed us. Discussions with some of those who'd been involved with the charity for several years out there, revealed more about the local culture to us that was otherwise hidden. Some of this was arguably the ugly side of their lives such as female genital mutilation (FGM), still a massive problem in the region and something that was shocking to hear about when learning of the scale of the situation and in the context of a village which we felt we had come to know quite well.

We spent our last few days in Livingstone, Zambia, the second

largest city after the capital Lusaka and also home to the Victoria Falls. It was a site to marvel at and we were fortunate enough to view it from the top of the falls at the very edge, from the national park in Zambia overlooking most of the near 2km width of the falls and from the bottom of the 108m sheet of water where you truly understood the meaning of its local name 'the smoke that thunders' (Mosioatunya). Looking around the museum there was an insight into the colonial impact, something I'd been fairly ignorant of before going. It was therefore interesting, having spoken to locals to hear of the influence of western culture in more recent years. Livingstone, renowned as the party town of Zambia had apparently begun to develop the nightclub culture that we knew from back home and has been a part of life for many



The Team and a completed house

European and westerners for several generations.

The overall experience was amazing and hugely significant for me, as both the longest trip abroad and the furthest from home I'd ever been. Since coming back I've felt the impact it's had on me and having spoken to others on the trip, was unsurprised to hear that they are missing it as much as I was. The landscapes we saw and the people we met will be hard to forget and the efforts of those who help the charity on a permanent basis will continue to be a genuine inspiration.

By Joshua Somerville (OP 2013)



Joshua and a new pal for life

Association of Representatives of Old Pupils' Societies (AROPS) Conference 2014

The 2014 AROPS Conference was held at Bristol Grammar School on 10th May 2014. It was very much with a first day of school anxiety that I climbed the steep hill to the ancient and venerable School that Saturday morning. Settling down after registration and coffee the morning's events soon put us all at our ease as we were made welcome by the conference Chairman, Bill Gillies. In turn Dina Stovell, AROPS Administrator, explained a recent two fold change to the brand image of the Association: firstly that a new logo had been commissioned and secondly that there had been an updated AROPS website (www.arops.org.uk). Both reflected a more modern, "user friendly"

approach to alumni societies.

Roderick Mackinnon Headmaster BGS, provided a brief but fascinating thumb sketch of the history of the Grammar School, from its inception by Royal Charter of King Henry VIII, to its modern day challenges he provided a perfect backdrop to the first session, which began in the JCR where we had convened.

The first session by Head of Development at the Dragon School, Oxford, Jane Pendry, asked the conference **How can you ensure the long term future of your alumni society?** With reference not only to the Dragon School but also to the alumni associations of Wellington,

Harrow and Rugby with which she was conversant through special studies, her answer was summed up in her presentational title, **Adapt Or Perish** or in other words *flexibility*.

The second talk, after respite for coffee, was presented by Emily Roffe-Silvester from Blundell's School in Devon: **Secret Tips and Practical Solutions for Using Free Social Media**. With particular reference to the more well-known social platforms such as LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter she expounded on the vital nature of these media to enable an alumnus association to thrive. Emily suggested that focussing on between one to three such school

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Association of Representatives of Old Pupils' Societies (AROPS) Conference 2014 continued

centred hosts at most was the ideal in order to concentrate on the life of the school. A further useful idea gleaned from her talk was that with Twitter there should be a 75%/25% division of twitter-traffic with at least 75% centring on school activities and this would justify its sponsoring by the school.

After a brief lunch in the Great Hall the afternoon sessions began with variously dispersed smaller meetings based on pre chosen themes. Though tempted by the talk being organised about "branding" of alumni associations, I became part of the **Exchange of Ideas, Regarding Sports and Musical Events** seminar, chaired by Jan Butler, from Henry VIII School Coventry. Though not much of a sportsman myself I felt obliged to represent the Old Priorians by attending this discussion for alumni associations wishing to develop

their Sporting and Musical Activities. I was able to contribute to the best of my limited knowledge in this discussion with reference to the Annual Family Sports days, Golfing Days, Rugby Tournaments and strong Cricket, Tennis and Netball and Hockey base that the Old Priorians enjoy. Additionally, Musical Productions are well represented as I explained at St Benedict's, including an excellent recent production of *Carmina Burana* at St John's, Smith Square, London. At this discussion I also met Tim Cunis, from the alumni of Barnes' St Paul's, *Old Pauline Club*; his name is probably better known in reference to the *Cronk-Cunis* Championship cup which is a rugby sporting fixture for alumni associations and which we discussed in the seminar and which he was promoting at the meeting. After a brief question and answer session back in the JCR conference dispersed at 4.30pm. I could not stay for the evening

Dinner as I had arranged to visit my son in the nearby cathedral city of Exeter.

Bristol relies for its early existence on its dock, trading in sugar amongst other things and which today has allowed a thriving modern city to develop. As I reflected on the day's events I recalled ideas from the well-known **SWOT Analysis** of situations and of entrenched positions in particular, giving them **Strengths**, but also with inherent **Weaknesses** to be addressed, and which in turn gave **Opportunities** for change or improvement but also **Threats**, as not all change is good for its own sake, but has to be assessed somehow. On reflection, I think I learned a lot from my day with AROPS in that great school in the city of Bristol.

**By Lewis Hill (OP 1975), Secretary
OPA, Council Rep for AROPS**

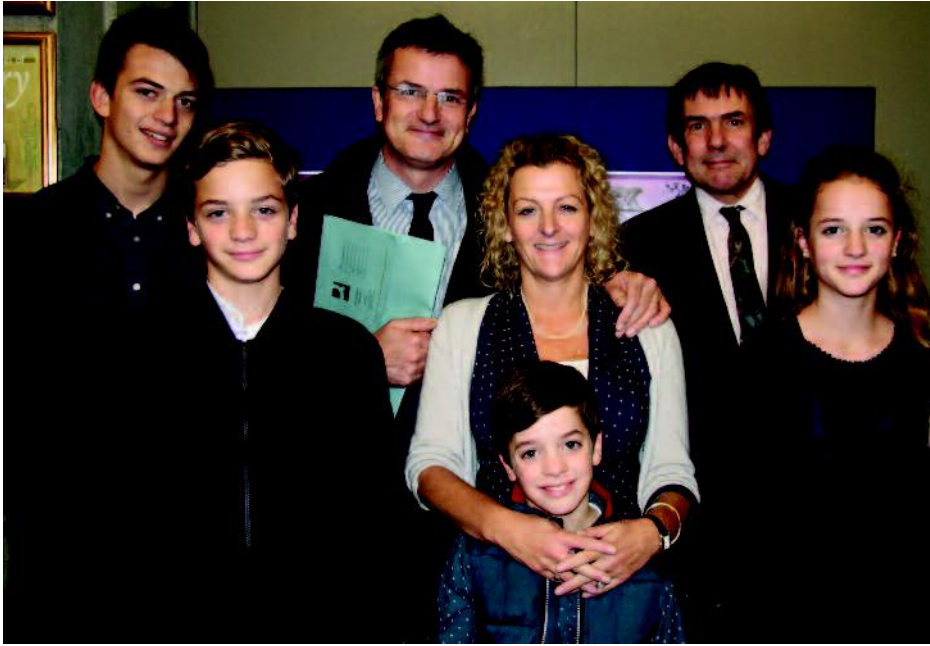
Steve Walker Memorial Celebration



Steve and Marion July 1970

Steve Walker served on St Benedict's Senior School staff from 1946 to 1974 - he died on 3rd November 1974. During his career at St Benedict's he had been an inspirational teacher of History for 28 years at St Benedict's, infusing countless Old Priorians with his love of the subject and awed respect for his encyclopaedic range and depth of knowledge. He coached cricket and rugby and was the First Eleven's cricket coach for many years. As Careers Master he was a fund of information, insight and wisdom, guiding many into their future careers. Those of us who had the good fortune to be members of Pickering House will remember him as an unfailingly supportive Housemaster. Underlying all was a good man, wise, humane and warm, who seemed to epitomise all that was good in St Benedict's School. Marriage to Marion changed the quintessential bachelor teacher into the loving father of four children - Sarah, Simon, Tom and Joe. The three boys are Old Priorians.

This November saw the 40th anniversary of Steve's death and his son Tom was wanting to have some reminiscence of his father from someone who had been taught by him. A casual meeting of Chris Patten (OP 1962, Lord Patten



Some of "The Walkers", November 2014

of Barnes) and others in Oxford, serendipitously began a chain of events which led to Patrick Tobin (OP 1960) organising a memorial event at the School which would celebrate Steve's time at St Benedict's and give his children and many of his grandchildren an opportunity to "see for themselves" what so many generations of Old Priorians already knew - how much Steve meant to those who had the privilege to know him and be taught by him at St Benedict's.

On Sunday 2nd November, it was a delight to welcome Sarah, Simon and Tom and some of the grandchildren, who joined nearly seventy Old Priorians and other guests to celebrate Steve's life. Steve's youngest son, Joe, could not be with us as he was on a filming project in Canada.

The day started with Mass for Steve in the Abbey Church, celebrated by Abbot Martin Shipperlee, OSB. After Mass all adjourned to the Cloisters in the School where after a welcome by Chris Cleugh, the Headmaster and Patrick Tobin, over pre-lunch drinks we were regaled with reminiscences of Steve - Chris Patten told of his debt to St Benedict's history department under Steve, Basil Nickerson (Staff 1956 - 1994) spoke of Steve as a colleague and a staunch member of the common room and from John Lindley (OP 1959) we heard something about Steve, the cricket lover and mentor

of the 1st XI for many years. Interspersed with these three tributes were the emails we had received from a wide variety of OPs who could not be present, but wished to remember Steve; of these perhaps the most striking was from Paul Olsen (Staff 1955-1963), now over 90 but still going strong!

Peter Biller (OP 1963) was invited to read the tribute to Steve Walker in his Introduction to *'The Measure of Multitude'*, in which he recalled "... his study, a converted sitting-room in a Victorian house which was part of the school buildings. There we would sit on a motley array of tatty old chairs as Steve ripped open his mail, often the latest medieval history book from Blackwells and throw the odd quip or query in our direction. He radiated. There was a quizzical manner, humour, steady warmth, questions, and great good sense. But where was the teaching? Where was the strenuous transmission to us of historical stuff? Something extraordinary was happening, but it was intangible. David D'Avray (OP 1969) suggested osmosis. Whatever it was, it helped to produce such medievalists and politicians as Peter Linehan (OP 1960), Edmund King (OP 1960), Chris Patten (OP 1962), Denis MacShane (OP 1965), David D'Avray and me." Of the six luminaries mentioned by Peter in 2000, five were present at our celebration.

A "School Lunch" followed, not that

school lunches have copious supplies of wine! This lunch was kindly provided by the Headmaster and The Old Priorian Association in memory of Steve and as a tribute to his contribution to School life. Over lunch there was much nostalgic recollection of the CSW era at St Benedict's and catching up on news as many OPs present had not seen each other for many years. At the end of lunch a toast was drunk to "Steve and Marion".

After lunch Marek Nalewajko, the School's Marketing Director led an extended tour of the School; one could still remember "bits from the 60s", but much has changed including the "large hole in the ground" where the new ADT and Sixth Form Centre is now under construction. There was a rather extended pause in Steve's old room (now occupied by the Deputy Headmistress) whilst family and OPs recalled what Steve had meant to St Benedict's.

Perhaps I can finish by quoting a little from the email we received from Steve's son, Joe Walker which was read to us by his brother Tom: Dear Paddy, I'm so sorry I'm not able to attend the events on 2nd November. As you know, I'm up to my eyeballs cutting a movie in Montreal. I wanted to reach out and thank you for organising everything, such a lovely thing to do.

I was eleven when Dad died, so I have only a child's perspective of him... Incredibly, for a Historian, he used to shake with laughter over Frankie Howerd and 'Up Pompeii' - though being after my bedtime I'd only be aware of this mirth circulating up the staircase... I remember how he would smoke his pipe upside down when it rained. I can easily imagine the scent of Three Nuns tobacco and the sound of the coffee percolator bubbling late into the night.

Tom then added memories of his own - of being taken into school during holidays - a visit to the pigeon-holes, a 'forbidden' walk up 'The Headmaster's Staircase', the journey through to Dad's room with its large rectangular table covered in stacks of paper and a spare Lambretta wheel on the top of a cupboard. All the while Dad trying to manage us when his mind was somewhere else!

By Patrick Tobin (OP 1960)

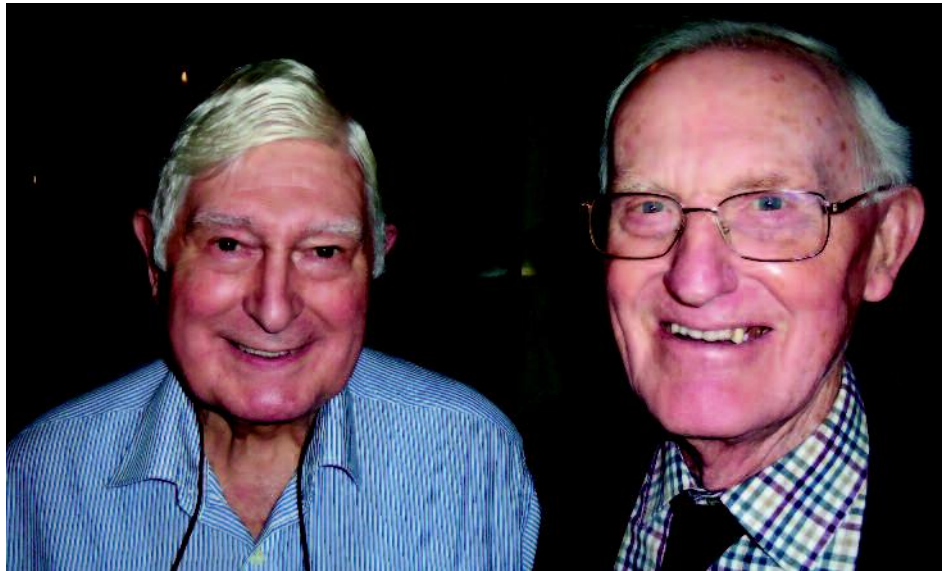
Another Vintage Lunch

Once again, thanks to the organising energies of Ian Blackaller (OP 1957) Shampers Wine Bar in London played host on 11th November 2014 to what has become a regular gathering of Old Priorians all of whom are now over seventy and two of this occasion's company, over eighty!

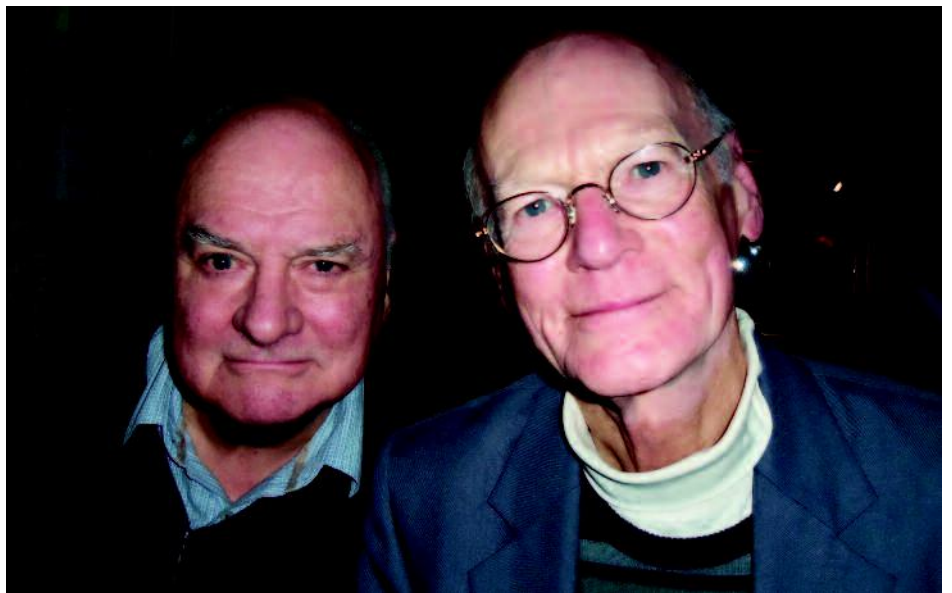
As we get older these opportunities to gather together seem to become more important and the "regulars" present this time were certainly there in force. However it was very good to see again two or three who have only just recently joined us for our "leisurely lunch appointment" and great to welcome one new face on this occasion. A "lunch hour" which extends to just about four hours allows plenty of time for chat, food and drink; on making our way out into the late afternoon November murk of Central London seems only to harden our resolve to return in April for our next gathering.

For the record the roll-call of twenty three OPs, ranging in vintages from 1949 to 1963 was:

James Anscomb (58), Anthony Baker (58), Desmond Baker (58) Richard Baker (59), Tony Brunning (57), Ian Blackaller (57), Brendan Caulfield (63), Brian Clancy (59), Jim Dapre (59), Rob Davies (59), Patrick Gardner (57), Kevin Hannigan (57), Mike Henderson (56), John Lindley (59), John Moloney (57), Basil Nickerson (Staff 56-94), David Randell (57), Eugene Ring (58), Bernard Stutt (55), Patrick Tobin (60), Tony Trigg (59), Gordon Wilson (60) and Bob Wykes (49)



The Over 80s – Bob Wykes (82) and Basil Nickerson (83)



Eugene Ring and Tony Brunning

Old Priorians Go International

The previous newsletter featured an article on some of our illustrious OPs who had recently attained international honours within Rugby and Rugby 7s. We carry on with the international theme this time around, though some might argue with less training and dedication attached. Luke Engmann (OP 2000) writes about a recent reunion of Old Priorians:

"On 8th November 2014, 16 old boys from a crack commando unit were sent to prison by a military court for crimes they probably did commit. These men promptly

escaped from the maximum security stockade, The Haven in Ealing Broadway, to the Barcelona underground for 16 hours, armed only with a boarding pass for the first flight home the next day, passport, money and the clothes they went out in...15 returned... Today, still wanted by the government they survive as soldiers of fortune. If you have a problem, if no one else can help, and if you can find them....maybe you can hire The Old Porian 'A' Team."

By Luke Engmann (OP 2000)



Barcelona

Cricket Over 70s England Mini Test Series v. Wales

John Lindley (OP 1959), selected to represent England, writes of the matches:

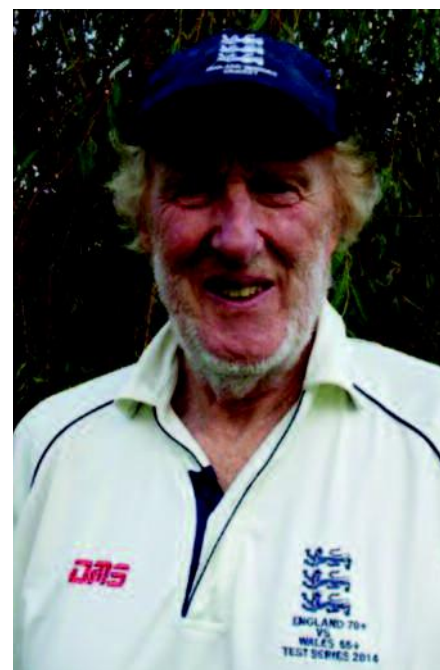
The 1st Test was played at Sudbrook CC in Caldicot on Sunday 6th September. England won the toss & batted, struggling to 157 for 7 in 45 Overs. In the Welsh Innings, I opened the bowling: 9 overs, 1 maiden and 23 runs. (A tight & accurate spell). Wales only lost 2 wickets in making 158 to win by the 41st over. Spectators at the match included some of my family, and Basil & Clare Nickerson who had travelled down from Hereford.

The 2nd Test at Usk CC (a superb ground) was on Tuesday 8th September. Wales won the toss & decided to bat first. This time I was not asked to open the bowling, but in the 14th over I moved forward at Mid-Off to take a low down grass top catch to dismiss Welsh opener Gwyn Price. ("Premier League" standard according to my England colleagues!). Wales played freely throughout and I became the 5th Bowler in the 32nd over, as we tried to stem the run flow. The Wales Captain Gordon Voke made 101 not out in their total of 245 for 5. The England start was poor with 4 wickets being lost by the 10th over for 25 runs, the final score being 127 for 6. We lost by 121 runs and

also The Test Series, but we hoped to record a victory in the 3rd and final game.

This was played at Croesyceiliog CC, a ground with a severe slope on one side, but a lovely view across the valley to the hills opposite, on Thursday 10th September. England won the toss and decided to ask Wales to bat. I was selected as 12th Man for this match, so I was on as Substitute Fielder when required!. The England bowlers performed very well and Wales were dismissed for 144. England soon set about the bowling and gained a well-earned victory by 7 wickets in the 41st over. Our Scorer was unwell for this match so I took over these duties during the England Innings - an interesting experience as I haven't scored for ages. England played below par at times in the first 2 Tests, but the victory in this 3rd one was well deserved. The Series Trophy was presented to Gordon Voke by England Captain and Manager, Hugh Milner. Man of Match Awards were also made in all three Tests.

The series was blest with great weather, a good hotel, good company (on both sides!) and excellent hospitality; eight wives (including mine, Jean) accompanied the England side which was



John Lindley represents England Over 70s

selected from ten counties. Before the start the players were presented with England shirts and ties, identifying the Test Series and with England Cricket Caps. It was a great honour to be selected in the Squad of 14 Players and a wonderful finale to my 60th Playing Season.

By John Lindley (OP 1959)

Old Priorian Rugby Club Report

At the time of writing, the Old Priorians have made a solid start to life in London 1 North winning five of their first nine games against tough opposition spread between London, Hertfordshire, Essex and Norfolk. Preseason was suitably tough to get the boys in shape, led by coaches Ant Andrews, John Bordiss (OP 2007) and Myles Stringer (OP 2006). Good outings against Guildford and Harrow provided the opportunity to get rid of some of the cobwebs going into the first league game against Thurrock. With pre-match lunches now expected in London 1, Alex Pereira-Inacio (OP 2000) has been heading these up with the assistance of food and drink from John Campbell's (OP 2002) The Haven pub in Ealing.

The first game was a physical, cagey affair with the OPs swiftly realising that this was going to be a big step up from last season. An Adam McCulloch (OP 2008) try and five points from the boot of Ross McIntosh (OP 2010) weren't quite enough as the OPs succumbed to their first home defeat in three years with a 14-10 scoreline at the final whistle. The following weekend saw a bizarre encounter against local rivals Ruislip where the grounds were firm enough to see plenty of running rugby. Having established a sizeable lead early on, the OPs buckled in the final 15 minutes to lose 53-27 following a further 17 points by Ross McIntosh and tries by Seb Oddi and Redha Guedroudj.



Ross McIntosh kicks for touch

The following weekend proved to be a classic, nail-biting encounter with the OPs desperate to record their first win of the new season. 14 points from Ross McIntosh as well as tries by Barney Wellings (OP 2010), James Booth (OP 2008) and

Continued on page 12

Old Priorian Rugby Club Report continued

Myles Stringer just about got the job done to resist a late Chingford comeback as the OPs held on for a 31-28 victory. The win gave the squad a big confidence boost and the knowledge that they were capable of competing at this high standard. Indeed, two more victories followed. First up was the long journey over to Ipswich where the OPs found themselves trailing 21-13 with just 4 minutes remaining. Michael Simpson (OP 2008), in his first game since injury in December 2013, came off the bench to inspire the comeback as both he and James Booth scored late on to rescue a 25-21 win from the jaws of defeat. A third consecutive win was registered on the 18th October with a 41-22 result against Luton who admitted in their own match report that they had fully underestimated the threat that the OPs would provide. Andrew Wilkie (OP 2008) and Adam McCulloch (OP 2008) added to a Seb Oddi hat-trick whilst Ross McIntosh added to his points tally with a further 16 from the boot.

His impending loss to shoulder surgery is a big shame as the OPs adjust to life in London 1.

Letchworth Garden City mounted a comeback of their own in the following league game, scoring a number of tries in the final quarter to condemn the OPs to a 34-23 loss despite tries from Tim Boorman, Ross McIntosh and Jack Dever (OP 2008). However the OPs managed to get back on the horse immediately, bouncing back with a win at home to North Walsham the following weekend. The game proved to be a very tight affair with tries from Conor Clancy and Jack Dever leaving the game in the balance before the injured captain Andrew Wilkie came on as a substitute to huge effect with a try to secure the win. The OPs have always been able to rise to the occasion over the years however London 1 provides a very different test with long journeys to big, established clubs meaning they have to back up big performances every Saturday - not an easy task!



Ross McIntosh, James Booth, Joe Codrington (OP 2002) and Simon Jukes (Staff) celebrate an OP try

However it is clear that the boys can hold their own at this level and hopefully some luck with injuries in the coming months will see the OPs continue to improve.

If you would like to follow the OPs progress you can do so at <http://www.rugby-in-ealing.co.uk> or if you'd like to play or enquire about sponsorship please contact oldpriorianrfc@googlemail.com.



Old Priorian Cricket

The Old Priorian Cricket day has been an increasingly large event in recent years, linking superbly with the Junior School Cricket Festival. This year however it was taken a step further with the Junior tournament moved to the Saturday to clear up time and space for an extended Old Priorian 20/20 Cricket tournament made up of four teams. Battling it out for supremacy was an Old Priorian team led by Matt Codrington (OP 2012), an Old Priorian Rugby Club team led by

James Booth (OP 2008), a school Staff team organised by Mr Stringer (OP 2006) and the current school 1st XI. As it was, the talented school side won in the final against the OPRFC Cricket side despite the best efforts of Booth, the Simpson brothers (Joe, OP 2006 & Michael, OP 2008) and more. The event continues to grow in popularity and size, now termed the Old Priorian Sports Festival, and we look forward to next year.

Old Priorian Netball

Old Priorian Netball took a step further at the Old Priorian Sports Festival, engaging a number of OPs, parents and the school 1st team. The OP side was led by Marina Ranger (OP 2008) and finished the day victorious, ensuring that the school didn't attain a clean sweep across both cricket and netball. The side consisted of OPs

Marina Ranger, Natalie Davis, Sinead Leahy (all OPs 2008), Emma Murphy O'Connor (OP 2009), Kathryn Grahame and Hannah Ellis (OPs 2012) with assistance from Chevaz Clarke, Cat Graham and Caitlin Fawkes.

The OPA Netball Team



News of Old Priorians

May 2014 to November 2014

Graham Balfour (OP 1970):

Brother of Ian (OP 1973), died 2nd May 2014, aged 62. R.I.P.

Simon Barry (OP 1973):

Now living in Cape Town, South Africa.

Gavin Bissett (OP 1988):

Died 15th June 2014, aged 44. R.I.P.

Edmond (OP 1992) and Louise (OP1993, née McGill) Brooks:

Have a son, Antony Xavier, born on 26th July 2014; a brother for Joseph (10), Lucy (8) and Daniel (5).

Rev Tony Brunning (OP 1958):

On 24th May 2014, Fr Tony celebrated the Golden Jubilee of his Ordination with a celebratory Mass at Westminster Cathedral where since 2008 he has been a Cathedral Chaplain. A full report appears on the OPA Website.

Graham Bushell (OP 1958):

Now living in Buckinghamshire and retired from the legal profession.

Tom Clark (OP 2009):

Brother of Alex (OP 2006), died 15th October 2014, aged 23. R.I.P.

Brian Codd (OP 1963):

Brother of Raymond (OP 1966), died 9th August 2014, aged 69. R.I.P.

Dorothy Cullinane (OP 1972):

President of the OPA 1996 to 1998, died 23rd May 2014, aged 59. Dorothy was the first Lady President of the Association. R.I.P.

Stephen Fernando (OP 1994):

Now living in Hertfordshire and is an economic advisor for the Government Department for Business, Innovation & Skills.

Paul Gibbs (OP 1971):

brother of Jonathan (OP 1977) and Peter (OP 1983) and uncle of Harry Sumpter (OP 2011), died 10th August 2014, aged 61. R.I.P.

Robert Gilvary (OP 1954):

Died 30th September 2014, aged 77. R.I.P.

Tony Kenney, MVO (Senior School Staff 1956-1959):

Died October 2014. R.I.P.

John Lindley (OP 1959):

John, now aged 73, living in Somerset and still playing club cricket, was selected to represent England Over 70s in a three match Mini Test Series against Wales played in Wales in September 2014. A full report appears elsewhere in this newsletter.

Cheryl Ridout (OP 2001):

Having completed a PhD at Oxford, Cheryl is now a doctor specialising in Genetics at Guy's Hospital, London.

Alex Stafford (OP 2005):

In the recent local elections Alex was elected to represent the Ealing Broadway Ward - thus becoming the local Council representative for the School and Abbey.

Gregory Stafford (OP 2001):

Married Caroline Green on 12th April 2014.

Matthew Wilkinson (OP 2007):

Married Jan-Hendrik Grobbellar on 20th July 2014



1956 - Form Master Mr Paul Olsen

Future dates for your diary

Full details will be published in our email news and on our website:

OPA President's Dinner
Thursday 19th March 2015
Royal Over-Seas League, London

Your News

If you would like to share where life has taken you since you left St Benedict's with our readers, please get in touch! Simply complete the **"Where Are You Now?"** form on our website theopa.org or get in touch with our Development & Alumni Relations Office.

WAYN - Where are you now?

It would help us to maintain our database records accurately and it would help the 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 Button 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>

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. If you need any further information or would like our assistance with locating fellow alumni please contact us.

Who to Invite

Decide on the group that you would like to invite - former classmates, members of a sports club or society or a mixture of all of these and more.

There are no fixed rules and you can make the criteria as wide or as narrow as you choose. Remember, you should also consider if the invitation is open to friends, partners and children.

Style of Reunion

You will need to consider the timing for the reunion; if you are inviting people from overseas the date should be set early (perhaps up to a year in advance) to allow people to arrange holidays around the reunion.

You should have an idea of a budget for the event and remember to consider all costs such as transport, car parking and accommodation and so on. Moreover, it is useful to find out how much people are prepared to pay before any final arrangements are made.

Another factor to consider is the format of the reunion; for example

an informal meal and a chat in a pub, a tour of 'old haunts', both in Ealing and throughout West London, or a weekend full of activities - the only limitations are the budget and your imagination...

Making Contact

Let us know whom you would like to contact and - with the help of your Year Marshal - we can forward invitations, letters or emails to your former classmates on your behalf. Naturally, replies can be sent directly to the organiser, but the Association will be more than happy to offer administration support to help you coordinate your event.

It is useful to send out an initial letter or email to the group to gauge the level of interest for the reunion and what preferences there are towards location and the type of event. Also, an old photo from your school days enclosed with this letter may prompt fond memories to be relived and encourage attendance. When you have made the final arrangements a second letter should be sent out informing the group of the date, location and so on - again, we will undertake this mailing for you if you wish. And remember to include an RSVP date to ensure that everyone replies in sufficient time.

Follow up

To encourage and inspire other reunions we would be delighted if you would write a brief summary about the reunion to be published on the website. Photos would also be very welcome.

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. Please DO NOT send us listings from your own

address books - Data Protection prevents us from using them; addition of an email address to our database requires an email from the person concerned!

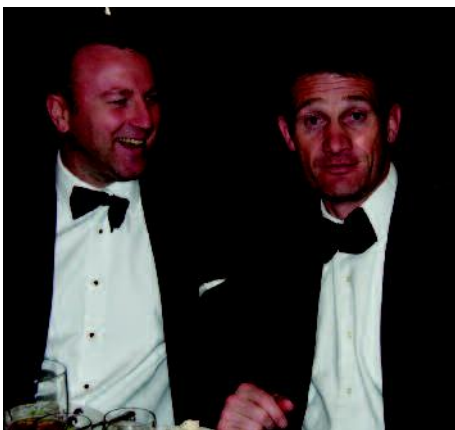
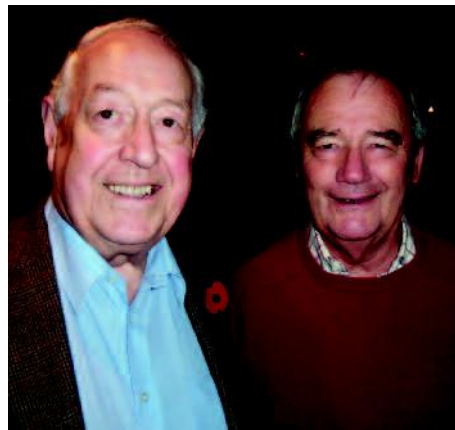
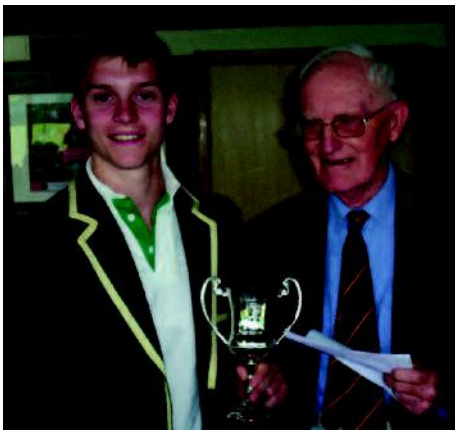
Contact with other OPs

The OPA Office is happy to act as a "Forwarding 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 - we will not act as a third party email source!

2014's life from the OPA in pictures





The Old Priorian Association

Founded 1927

The Old Priorian Association

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, 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

Mary Keal (OP 1983)
President
Lewis Hill (OP 1975)
Honorary Secretary
Ayelsha Patel (OP 2004)
Honorary Treasurer

Council Members

Frank Casali (OP 1984)
Edward Conway (OP 2005)
Matthew Goldsworthy (OP 2007)
Sinead Leahy (OP 2008)
Marina Ranger (OP 2009)
Brian Taylor, CB (OP 1960)
Peter Watson (OP 1952)

Ex-Officio Council Members

Chris Cleugh
Headmaster, Senior School
Rob Simmons (OP 1987)
Headmaster, Junior School
Catherine de Cintra
Finance Director, St Benedict's
Patrick Murphy-O'Connor (OP 1976)
Chairman, St Benedict's Governing Board

Giles Codrington (OP 1980)

Society of Parents and Friends

Tsungayi Mhizha

Administrator

Richard Baker (OP 1959)

Assistant Administrator

Marek Nalewajko

Marketing Director,
St Benedict's School

Tamlyn Worrall

Director of Development,
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 let us have your views on the style and contents of this Newsletter. Please remember that in submitting photo images for inclusion in the Newsletter with maximum effectiveness, they should be of high resolution and as large a file size as possible.