



# The Old Priorian Association Newsletter

Autumn 2015

THE OLD PRIORIAN ASSOCIATION, ST BENEDICT'S SCHOOL,  
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## A Letter from The Association President

Dear Old Priorian,

As newly-elected President of the Association, I welcome all Old Priorians, past, present and future to the conviviality of the Association. I hope to be able to encourage the networking of new and old friendships formed on the basis of a shared experience of our Benedictine 'alma mater' in Ealing. It is in the understanding and bridging of differences that connections may be built and sustained.

It is our role as an association to provide the opportunities for such conviviality. So may I strongly recommend that you attend at least one of the events of the Old Priorians' Diary, whether it be the Summer Sports Festival, the Golf Day, or one of the many year-related gatherings that allow our OP members to gather and reconnect.

If you would like to organise a year-related cohort of Priorians (approximately 5 years either side of a leaving year) then a subsidy may well be possible. Please contact the OPA admin office if interested for more details.

Of course the main event of the year as always is the Annual Dinner. So I would exhort you to advantage yourself of the opportunity to dine at the Lansdowne Club on Thursday 21st April 2016. As Easter is early again in 2016 hopefully it will allow students at college and university to participate while on their holiday break.

May I also take the opportunity to welcome the forthcoming Headmaster, Andrew Johnson and his wife Dawn to the Old Priorian Family; I expect we will have occasion to meet them both at any



Lewis Hill (OP 1975)

or all of the annual OPA events and we all hope they will soon become central to a thriving community spirit.

I trust you will continue to remember the Association and if you feel so moved to volunteer to contribute to its future.

**Yours sincerely,  
Lewis Hill**

## 2015 Annual General Meeting



Cpl Sam Lythgoe, Sgt David Cuss, S/Sgt Kyle Maroo, Cdt WO Jem Walker-Browning, Cpl Tom Ziprin

On Saturday 7th November The Association held its AGM, followed by the annual Memorial Mass and lunch. At the AGM annual reports were received from the Secretary and Treasurer and from the Assistant Administrator on Membership. Elections were held for the Officers and Members of Council who would hold office for the year 2015-2016 - our new Council is shown on the back page of this newsletter and "names can be put to faces" at: <http://theopa.org/about-us/meet-the-team/>

Following the AGM our Memorial

*Continued on page 2*

## 2015 Annual General Meeting continued

Mass was celebrated in the Newman Chapel in the Abbey; as has become practice over many years we were delighted to welcome Cherry-Willow Pauls as our organist and five cadets from St Benedict's School CCF who formed a Guard of Honour as the President laid a wreath *In Remembrance*. These cadets certainly gave of the very highest standards which was appreciated by all present, especially the two former Contingent Commanders of the School CCF who delighted in seeing the younger generation giving such a good showing in representing the CCF and the School. Especially remembered at Mass were all OPs who have given their lives in the service of their Country and all OPs who have died in the last year - where known, their names appear in the OP News Sections of this and the Spring 2015 Newsletter.

After Mass members and their guests adjourned back to the Benet Club for drinks and lunch. Our thanks also go to Concetta Vager who once again provided a really tasty lunch and to Giovanni Persano, the Benet Club manager, who always provides such excellent facilities for us each year on the occasion of the AGM and Lunch.

**By Richard Baker (OP 1959),  
Administrator, OPA**

## An Important Message from The Treasurer

**W**ould all members who pay an Annual Subscription by Standing Order please take a couple of minutes to check with their bank that their subscription is being paid to: **Barclays Bank: £10; for The Old Priorian Association; Sort Code 20-72-17; Account No 80305030**

There are still some subscriptions being paid to old non-active accounts; these payments are now ignored!  
Thank you

**Ayelsha Patel (OP 2004,  
Treasurer, OPA)**

# St Benedict's School News



*Junior School Prize Giving*

**S**t Benedict's School celebrated a wonderful academic year 2014/15 at the Senior School Prize Giving on Wednesday 9th September where Lord Patten of Barnes (OP 1962), the school's most eminent alumnus, was the Guest of Honour. The National Anthem was sung with perhaps more emotion on this particular day, when HM The Queen became the longest-reigning monarch in British history.

The Chair of Governors, Patrick Murphy-O'Connor (OP 1976), welcomed the assembled parents, staff, students and guests and then Chris Cleugh, Headmaster, gave his address, detailing the many successes of the past academic year and outlining plans for the future.

One of the priorities this year will be ensuring a smooth transition to the new Headmaster, Andrew Johnson, who will take over the reins when Chris Cleugh retires in August 2016. Mr Johnson has been the Headmaster of Stonyhurst College in Lancashire since September 2006 and, in the words of Pat Murphy-O'Connor, "To recruit him as our new Head is

a major coup for St Benedict's."

Lord Patten gave the final address which included not only his memories of his "blissfully happy" childhood at St Benedict's but also how his time at St Benedict's, more so even than his studies at Balliol, formed him for life. Considering his career, this was quite an endorsement of the Benedictine way of living. He gave advice to the assembled students: "Seize the opportunity to do good in small things as well as great." Lastly he paid tribute to Mr Cleugh, whose last prize-giving it was, for his successful stewardship of the School since his appointment in 2002.

Following Father Abbot's Blessing, the school hymn 'Reigning in glory, Benedict our Father' was thundered out by over one thousand voices. It was a fitting finale to a wonderful evening.

At the end of the Trinity term in July, Phil Hopley (OP 1984) was the Guest of Honour at the Junior School Prize Giving.

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

# The Headmaster, Chris Cleugh's Address at Prize Giving

Mr Chairman, Rev Fathers, Governors, colleagues, ladies, gentlemen, and students this is an historic day for our country as Her Majesty The Queen is now the longest British reigning monarch - God bless her! It is also a particularly poignant evening for me - my twenty third and last Prize Day address as a Headmaster so please forgive me if am more nostalgic than normal. At my first Prize Giving here in September 2002 I began my address by saying:

*In just nine months Tina and I have been enthralled, challenged and fulfilled by the charisma of the Benedictine Community and the monumental influence their presence has on the ethos of St Benedict's School.*

Abbot Martin, leading a prayerful reflection at Inset last week reminded us all that we have a duty to be inspirational leaders irrespective of our role. Fr Abbot, you personally and the whole Monastic Community, have offered me such leadership and inspiration for fourteen years. I cannot thank you enough for your witness, encouragement, prayers and friendship.

Much has happened since my arrival in 2002. We have had to endure some dark times but the school has come through and is thriving. It is the monastic presence that truly makes this, as our Holy Father St Benedict envisaged, a School of the Lord's service. Long may this continue!

The most significant change has been the establishment of the new Governance Structure and this has been tremendously beneficial. Each member of the Board is fully committed to the success of St Benedict's and corporately they bring a wealth of expertise to our school. I thank you all for your generosity of time and spirit - a special thank you to you Mr Chairman. When you agreed to take on the role you could not have envisaged the time and energy it would take. You are doing a wonderful job Pat and we are blessed to have you! I so enjoy airing issues (mostly school but some sport!) with you over a quiet pint or a glass of wine. I extend my thanks to your wife Bernie who has been so tolerant of the times I have

delayed your homecoming!

I am delighted to welcome back Lord Patten. He is the most eminent of Old Priorians: a former MP, Cabinet member and Chairman of the Conservative Party, a European Commissioner and Governor of Hong Kong. He was made a life peer in 2005 and was Chairman of the BBC from 2011 to 2014. He oversaw Pope Benedict's highly successful visit to the UK in 2010 and presently serves as head of a Committee advising Pope Francis on how to revamp and modernise the Holy See's media strategy. He has since 2003 been Chancellor of Oxford University. Despite a hugely busy schedule he has always found time for his alma mater visiting every year during my office as Headmaster. He served on the Abbot's Advisory Board for many years, graciously agreeing to become our patron after the change in Governance. I am so honoured that you have agreed to be with us tonight and that Lady Patten has been able to accompany you. The many messages of encouragement you have offered me as Head have meant so much. You are the perfect role model for our current students. We all look forward to hearing from you later. I also extend a warm welcome this evening to other Old Priorians and benefactors - your continuing interest and support for St Benedict's is most valued.

The largest cohort of Old Priorians here is our 2015 Upper Sixth leavers. You were the first full co-educational year and your impact on the school has been phenomenal. Not only have you achieved a high level of academic success, 38% A/A\* grades and 67% B+ grades, but equally have "learnt a way of living" by fully embracing our Mission. As you move off to new pastures be assured I will always remember you with great affection. I have even forgiven those of you who made this die hard Evertonian sit through a rendering of *You will never walk alone* at the Summer Concert.

A thought for you from the Holy Father: Reflecting on the words of St Paul: Never disappoint yourself - hope never lets you down, Pope Francis said "because it is a gift of the Holy Spirit." May the Holy Spirit guide you throughout your lives and bless you with hope and joy.

It is a pleasure to see so many of our parents here this evening. I would like to remind all our pupils of the debt you owe your parents. The sacrifices (out of their love for you) they alone have made so you can attend here are considerable - please never stop thanking them! My own parents (both now 91) are here tonight and I would like to say a public thank you to them. The decision they made fifty-five years ago to raise the money to send me to a Catholic Prep school when I was struggling academically in my then primary school is the reason that I am, where I am today.

Results at AS were the best ever with some outstanding individual performances and we can look forward to over 40% A+ and 75% B+ grades at A2 next summer - what a perfect send off this would give me.

At GCSE nearly a quarter of the grades were A\* and 53% were A/A\* - excellent results. The top sixteen students amassed a staggering 141 A\* grades and nearly half the cohort achieved six A grades or better. We value every pupil and student irrespective of his or her ability and congratulate them all on their success. All played their part in securing our recent inclusion in the Daily Telegraph - as one of ten best-value for money independent schools in the UK. In fact, the only Catholic school in their list!

As our new Lower Sixth begin their A Level courses they must be prepared to work hard from the outset. There is no longer the safety net of AS examinations so they must keep focussed on where they want to be in two years' time. My Maths class will remember my catch line *I can, I will, I am able!* We were privileged to receive a visit from Sister Mary John Mananzan OSB voted in 2010 one of the most influential women in the world. Addressing our Sixth Form girls in June she urged them to "Dream the Dream". She went on to describe how she had been challenged after the typhoon of 2011 to build a hospital in a devastated part of her native Philippines - she wanted to but had neither land nor money. She put her trust in prayer and the Holy Spirit and, through stoic determination and sheer hard work, there now is a hospital built and ready to be equipped. Her message

*Continued on page 4*



## The Headmaster, Chris Cleugh's Address at Prize Giving continued

is a simple one - nothing is impossible but you have to really want it!

Sister's final goal in this project is to resource the hospital with medical teams, equipment and medicines. We plan to contribute to this as one of our major charities for this year. We also plan to fundraise for HCPT, the Children's Pilgrimage Trust, as it celebrates its sixtieth anniversary next Easter. On the first pilgrimage the founder, Brother Michael Strode, had just a handful of helpers. One of these was an Old Priorian, Maurice Sauven, the Priorian medal winner in 1940. We have for thirteen years sent Lower Sixth students as a Regional Youth Group to assist and without exception every student has come back energised by their experience. Some are now regular helper pilgrims, for example in 2016 there will be a new family HCPT group led by two Old Priorians Jess and Sean (OPs 2009), who married this summer here in the Abbey. They met in the Lower Sixth and travelled first with us in 2008. I know that our pupils and teachers will be as generous as ever in supporting these two and other worthwhile causes beginning with immediate action to ease the plight of the Syrian and Iraqi refugees across Europe.

There have been, as always, many achievements outside the classroom. The good news is I do not need to highlight everything tonight. The new student edited Priorian is on its way and will be with you in November. The Editorial Team led by Sam Lythgoe, guided by Miss Jones and Mrs Worrall, has really taken on the challenge and I know the magazine will do full justice to the many sporting, musical, dramatic and other activities and trips that have been enjoyed in the past twelve months. It will be an enjoyable read focussing on A Learning School, An Active School, A Vibrant School and A Holy School - make sure you do not miss it!

We have welcomed over the past twelve months some outstanding speakers from a diverse range of backgrounds covering a wide range of topics, for example Theology, History and Science; there have been several excellent career breakfast talks led by parents and Old Priorians. The most memorable event for me was the General Election Hustings in May - The Conservative, Labour and Liberal

Democrat candidates were all there in person and both UKIP and Green party were also represented. The whole event was led and co-ordinated by our students. All the party representatives, irrespective of their political bias, were most impressed not only by the superb organisation but also by the questions posed to them. More young people should participate and be prepared to lead such events. The skills they will develop through such experiences will benefit them throughout their futures.

The success of our extensive co-curriculum programme is a testimony to the hard work and commitment of all my colleagues. I extend my heartfelt thanks to you, one and all. I am so fortunate to work with such a dedicated team of professionals and I will surely miss the banter and the cake in future years!

A special thank you to my colleagues on the Leadership Team for their unwavering support and especially to members of the Senior Executive Team - my two outstanding deputies and friends Peter Allott and Pauline Lightfoot, to Father Alexander, Senior Chaplain and Head of RE, to Rob Simmons and Monica McCarthy for their leadership of the Junior School and to Finance Director Catherine de Cintra. Catherine leaves the school this month after seventeen years of dedicated service. We wish her and husband Paul every blessing in Dubai.

I am often told by my family (and believe me they know me!) that I have a stubborn streak. I am well aware that this causes considerable angst for some colleagues. I am afraid this is the nature of the beast and it is unlikely to change. Before I make any crucial decision I always pray for guidance that it will be in the best interest of the school but being human, I recognise that I can and do get it wrong sometimes!

There are five major priorities, all of equal importance, for my final year. The first is a successful outcome to the impending ISI Inspection. This will be our fifth ISI Inspection in six years (an unenviable record?) and will come within three months of the publication of the report from the November 2014 visit. I need to be somewhat guarded in what I say tonight because five years ago some of my comments were taken out of context and printed in the

national press causing great yet unfounded controversy. We remain under close scrutiny because of historical matters. Whilst this is understandable - in any inspection the process must be fair and balanced and apply equally to all schools. Everyone associated with this school takes all matters of safeguarding with the upmost seriousness. The Governors and all employees of the school take our responsibilities seriously and follow them to the letter. The regulations continually change and so we constantly review and update all our policies and procedures, and provide appropriate relevant training. As a Catholic Benedictine School the health and safety and welfare of the pupils is of paramount importance. This includes a duty to educate them in awareness of the dangers of the modern world. Two of the highest profile threats to our children are the lack of e-safety and of radicalisation. Our Director of ICT Christian Smith has been at the forefront of developing e-safety policies across the London Grid for learning. He is running sessions for staff, pupils and parents. If we come across incidents of bullying of any kind, we always act to protect the victim. In St John 10:10 *I have come that they may have life and live it to the full*, Jesus reminds us that we are all called to treat every fellow human being with respect, dignity and tolerance. This is an expectation at St Benedict's. The Year of Mercy declared by Pope Francis, to begin on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, calls on us all to show compassion and care for our neighbour near and far. The Government call this teaching British values - we call it teaching a way of living and this is exactly what we have always done and will continue to do! I expect that this extra close scrutiny from ISI will stop when I leave but, for the Governors and all my colleagues' sake, we must impress the Inspectors this time. Parents can help - please complete the parental questionnaire which will just precede the Inspection visit and let the inspectors know what you think about our school!

The second priority is to achieve our academic targets by continuing to deliver high quality teaching and learning across the Junior and Senior Schools, balanced by the continuation of our extensive co-curriculum programme so as to ensure an excellent educational experience for all our pupils.

The third priority is to further strengthen our links with other EBC Schools through the Centre of Benedictine Education and to fully implement our Chaplaincy development plan, so that the spiritual, academic and pastoral welfare of all is fully supported in accordance with our mission.

The first part of the fourth priority is nearly realised. The new ADT and Sixth Form Centre will be handed over before the end of the month and it is intended that the Sixth Form will benefit from this excellent facility no later than half term (no excuses then for poor work ethic!) and the ADT team will move in at the start of January. We look forward to the official opening and blessing by His Eminence Cardinal Nichols who will also celebrate a whole school Mass on the Feast of St Thomas Aquinas. The second part, the extension to the Junior School and Nursery, is set to commence next April with a completion date of August 2017.

The final priority is the smooth transition to the new Headmaster. The Governors have made a brilliant appointment. Andrew Johnson is a man of vision, integrity and with a burning desire to see this school

continue to develop and improve. Andrew and I are already in regular contact and he will have considerable influence on key decisions and appointments this year. He will make his first visit here since his appointment at the Open Morning on Saturday 3rd October. Do be assured though, I have no intention of taking my eye off the ball and right to the end will give my 100% commitment to the school.

I am not yet sure what I will do when I retire, except that my Grandson Joseph and I plan to enjoy our Everton season tickets. It has been suggested I write a book based on my forty-one years in teaching. If I do, I will likely entitle it "How did I ever manage to get there?" Probably not a good idea - some of my story will likely not be publishable for fear of litigation. However, if it ever goes to print I promise it will include chapters articulating on my privilege of leading this school (with lots of amusing anecdotes of Bennies boys and girls) and inside the front cover there will be a dedication to my wonderful family, (three of our four are here tonight). It is not easy being the son or daughter of a Deputy Head or Head and I had often to miss family occasions for

school commitments. They never (well not often!) complained but I knew I always had their love and support. I am so proud of them and also my sons and daughters-in-law (present and soon to be) and our four and hopefully future grandchildren. I look forward to making up for lost time with you (when your Mum and I are not on a cruise!) I save my final thanks for my wife Tina. She will be embarrassed but no one deserves it more! We have been soul mates for over 40 years and my career has flourished because of her support and good counsel. A piece of embroidery given to us by a dear friend says it all for me: *Happiness is being married to your best friend.*

I leave you all tonight with a thought from the writings of St Augustine:

*Trust the past to the mercy of God, the present to His love and the future to His providence.*

I certainly do, am and will. God bless and thank you

**Chris Cleugh (Headmaster, St Benedict's)**



Senior School Prize Giving

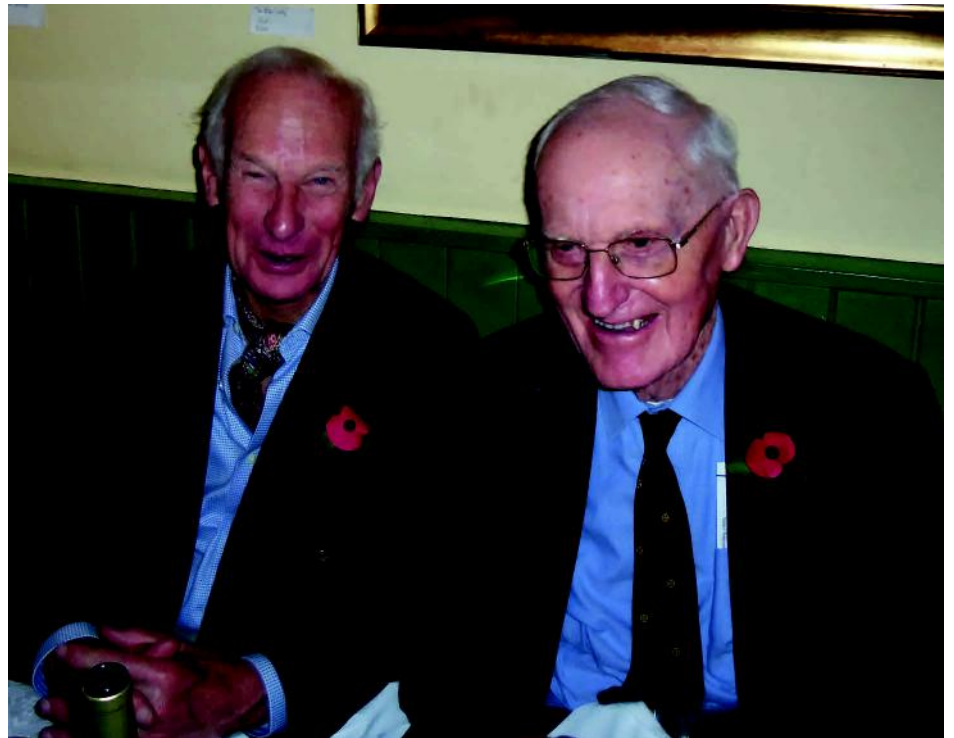


# Sir's Report on...

On the 10th November, along with their guest, the newly elected OPA President, twenty three Old Priorians all past 70 years met, as they do twice a year at Shampers Restaurant in Central London. We are grateful to Ian Blackaller, whom I met as a pupil at the Oratory School in 1956 when doing my teaching practice, for organising these events. We are also grateful to the OPA. for helping out with the cost of this reunion.

The table at which I was sitting had on it our first England Rugby International along with our only International Referee, both still helping actively with today's performers. Also there, was one of the outstanding sportsmen of the early 1950s and an ex first XV Captain, both of these very active still with Catholic Schools plus probably our fittest and most travelled Old Priorian. You can imagine what the biggest topic of conversation was so soon after the Rugby World Cup!

Amongst others present were two, now retired priests of the Westminster diocese, plus one of a pair of twins and the Baker twins. Of the twenty four present I think I taught or coached ten, but that has never seemed to make me less welcome at these lunch occasions! Two came back to School to become colleagues and very good friends, one of whom was HMC Chairman before he retired. I have kept in regular contact with another



Gordon Wilson and Basil Nickerson

since first playing cricket with him at Ealing CC in 1957 while he was still a boy at School. He still plays and has been capped as an England over 70 player. Another ex-cricketer present had me out twice LBW while I was still playing cricket as regularly as I could while coaching the U15 XI. No animosity! Yet another whom I have come to know more at OPA functions recently is one who has done much in scouting and is a "high-powered" Catenian.

As ever, however, with whomsoever you happen to be sitting, you find plenty to talk about amiably for well over three hours! Everyone enjoys the occasion very much.

*A minimis incipe.*

For the record the following attended:

**James Anscomb (58)**  
**John Appi (57)**  
**Anthony Baker (58)**  
**Desmond Baker (58)**  
**Richard Baker (59)**  
**Tony Brunning (57)**  
**Ian Blackaller (57)**  
**Brendan Caulfield (63)**  
**Rob Davies (59)**  
**Patrick Gardner (57)**  
**Kevin Hannigan (57)**  
**Edwin Heath (60)\***  
**Mike Henderson (56)**  
**John Lindley (59)**  
**Basil Nickerson (Staff 56-94)**  
**Stephen Novy (61)\***  
**Anthony Phillips (58)**  
**David Randell (57)**  
**Bernard Stutt (55)**  
**Patrick Tobin (60)**  
**Bill Treadwell (57)\***  
**Tony Trigg (59)**  
**Gordon Wilson (60)**  
**Lewis Hill (75, OPA President)**  
**our Guest**

\*Attending for the first time.

**By Basil Nickerson (Staff 1956 to 1994), "Sir" to nearly every one of them!**



Anthony Baker, Ian Blackaller, Brian Taylor and David Randell

# The Peter Halsall Rugby Scholarship

A letter from Dr Philip Hopley,  
(OP 1984)

In July 2015 Peter Halsall retired after 39 years as an inspirational teacher at St Benedict's School. After graduating from university, Peter joined the Geography Department in 1976 and he has continued to teach at St Benedict's ever since. Joe Foley's tribute to Peter's time at St Benedict's captures his influence on so many levels perfectly. Please do take a moment to read it online.

In tribute to his dedication to the school and his sport, Old Priorians and fellow staff members aim to endow the Peter Halsall Rugby Scholarship at St Benedict's. The Scholarship would enable a talented student to benefit from the rich academic and co-curricular environment of St Benedict's whilst representing the school on the rugby field. The Peter Halsall Rugby Scholarship will enhance the first

class reputation in rugby of St Benedict's School.

Please consider making a gift to the Scholarship. By endowing this Scholarship, we will ensure that a rugby scholarship may be awarded every year for a talented young man, or perhaps one day a talented young woman, ensuring the continuing excellence of St Benedict's rugby. It will be a wonderful way to keep Peter's name alive at St Benedict's School for future generations.

The names of all supporters will be recorded in a book to be presented to Peter, together with a collection of tributes, messages and reminiscences from his former students. If you have any questions please contact Mrs Tara George, in the Development Office:  
tgeorge@stbenedicts.org.uk.

**With best wishes,  
Phil Hopley (OP 1984)**

## Peter Halsall retirement BBQ: Perivale 25th June 2015

Peter wrote after his farewell event:

"Dearest Boys and Girls  
Mere words are not enough to thank you for attending The Last Waltz at my beloved Perivale. I am blessed to have been in your company and humbled by the founding of a rugby scholarship in my honour. I would like to give an enormous and loud thank you to

those who have generously contributed to this.

Most of all I was so pleased to bring you lot of rascals together again and see the delight on your faces when you recognised each other. There were some truly cathartic moments. Here is the link to the photographs of the evening (the early part!): <http://www.stbenedicts.org.uk/Peter-Halsall-Retirement-BBQ-Photo-Gallery>

This must not be wasted. We need to get together again soon and ensure we can draw others into the fold again. Please tell other OPs with whom you are in touch about this occasion and ask them to let Tara George (tgeorge@stbenedicts.org.uk) know so that they are invited to our next get together.

I truly love you all to bits"

**Peter**



Peter Halsall and Chris Cleugh

## Work Experience through the OPA

Towards the end of L6, I was struggling to decide about what to study at university and a likely career path, as Law was a strong possibility. Everyone said I should get some work experience in a law firm to see whether it was a field of study I would enjoy, but in spite of writing to a few companies, I had not been able to get anything. I then spoke to the Development Office who suggested the Old Priorian Association.

Through the help of Paul Toolan (OP 1991), I was able to do work experience at a top solicitor's firm in London. Gordon Dadds is a high prolife law firm and during my week there over the summer, I was able to gain a first-hand insight into law as a career. I shadowed Old Priorian, Paul, who told me about his experiences and gave me tips on how to make it into a solicitor's firm. I learnt a huge amount and thoroughly enjoyed my week. Whilst the time I spent there has helped me with my personal statement for UCAS, it also supported my decisions about what to study at university. I can't thank Paul enough for giving me that opportunity.

**By James Porter (Upper Sixth)**



James Porter



# AROPS 2015 AGM

**A**t this year's AROPS (Association of Representatives of Old Pupils Societies) AGM the day's themes were set out: continuity and maintenance of harmonious relationships between former pupils and development offices and the school itself. The role of current parent body and past pupils speaking to the school pupils of University and professional experiences is important to cement the relationship between the School and the Past Pupils Association.

No past pupil records should be lost or mislaid in the archives. Fellowship features strongly in the school philosophy, with first loyalties to the school (and its Development Office), then to the alumnae association.

Finding pupils who apparently had left without trace was very important and with the help of volunteers and professional approach, this has been a major achievement in schools, utilising the open nature of the webpage to welcome people back. The

professions can act as a calling card for various London meetings while other alumnae might give advice to current pupils in years 9 to 11 on occasional careers afternoons.

The afternoon session was on the role of engaging young people since this was the future of any organisation. Three young local undergraduates present at this meeting indicated that recent leavers would engage more if there was sufficient motivation to do so and if the alumnus association was of sufficient prestige, while other factors discussed included considerations for social and sporting fixtures and university related career support.

A major determinant for recent leavers is organising events around weekends and preferably university holidays. Applying as this does to "drinks meetings" and annual dinners this could be a major consideration for ourselves.

The important role of the media and the school web as a conduit

for involvement in later years was emphasised. All age activities for families e.g. sporting events, were also a valuable input into the life of school associations. Music and drama events were also discussed and investment in rugby, cricket and hockey were deemed long lasting.

The role of Mentoring by past pupils for particular professions was a subject of interest when utilising 'LinkedIn'. This form of association within alumni groups also has the advantage of allowing past pupils to discover the normal expectations of industry and the professions and what is required of prospective employees. Facebook was suggested as a means of achieving this.

Reference was also made to the newly instigated AROPS Old Girls Hockey Competition Cup. I approached Jan Butler in her capacity as AROPS Regional Meetings Co-ordinator asking about offering St Benedict's School as a potential venue for a future conference or regional meeting.

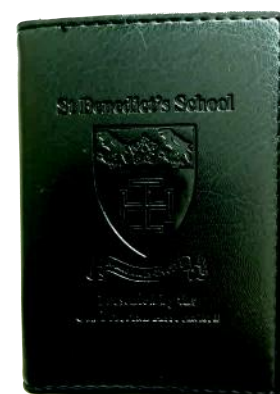
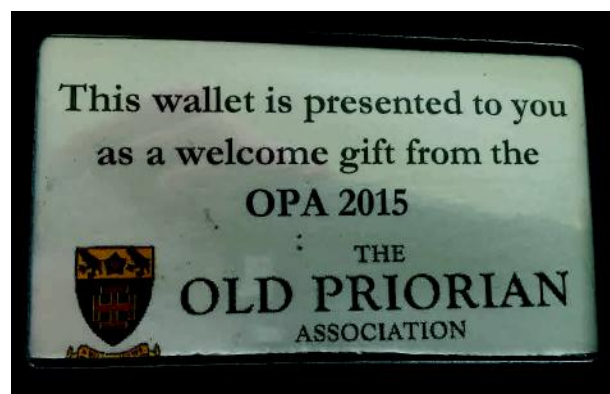
**Lewis Hill (OP 1975, Council Rep for AROPS)**

## A Gift for New Arrivals

**A**t the start of the Michaelmas Term 2015 our new Form 3 students (Year 7) were presented with a special gift from The Old Priorian Association during an assembly, welcoming them all to St Benedict's Senior School.

These simple Oyster Card Travel wallets represent the strong and growing links between the Old Priorian Association and current students and also reflect this exciting new stage in our students' school lives. Marina Ranger (OP 2009, Head Girl 2008-2009 and Secretary of the OPA) returned to the school to tell the Form 3s about the OPA and present them all with their new gift.

**By Tamlyn Worrall (OPA Council)**



Marina Ranger and some of the Year 7 students



# Beasty Transvulcania

**T**ransvulcania is quite simply a beast of a race, an absolute monster. There are many moments during the race when you feel like you've conquered a section, then the next arrives and bites you straight back in the arse. I've never been so overwhelmed by so many feelings. Terrified, excited, stunned, and exhausted are just a few of the feelings I experienced over the 14 hours and 54 minutes I was running. There aren't many situations that you can put yourself in that evoke such a mixture of feelings. That's probably why I keep coming back for more.

Transvulcania is a mountain race on the beautiful island of La Palma in the Canary Islands. A total of 1,497 hard-nuts take part in the 73.3km ultra marathon, including a handful of elites that are aiming to claim the skyrunning series title. With 8,525 metres of climbing - and to put that in perspective, that equates to climbing the height of Everest - it is certainly not a race for the faint hearted. With climbing, comes altitude. The summit of the island at Los Muchachos lies at 2,426 metres above sea level making the air thinner so it's harder to breathe in oxygen. In May, the Canary Islands experience temperatures of up to 30 degrees. As an old volcanic island, the trails are harsh underfoot with loose, sharp and jagged rocks that can easily cut you open if you fall over. If you're not running on harsh rock, then you'll be wasting your energy away on volcanic ash that pushes you back one step every time you take two. That might be enough to put most people off, but if you're anything like me that should be plenty of reasons to tempt you to sign up.

After 6 weeks of running with no race agenda, I started a solid training plan in January, which was brilliantly written again by Lucja. My weekly mileage would range from 35 to 60 miles. I signed up to The Pilgrim Challenge, Sussex Endurancelife Ultra, Imber Ultra and the Paris Marathon. I was pleased with my performance in all of the races so I was feeling positive that my training was working.

Race day was on a Saturday so Lucja and I planned to be out 3 days either side of the race. It's not an easy island to get to, with a full day of travelling needed as I had to catch three separate flights (London-Madrid-Tenerife-La Palma.



"Ready for the Off!"

On Thursday, we registered and picked up our race numbers at the expo only 10 minutes walk from our apartment.

We planned for Friday to be as relaxing as possible to conserve our energy for the race, moving only for food and water or to jump in and out of the pool and prepare our race kit for the morning.

By 05:00 we were at the start line with an hour to visit the toilet, keep warm and push our way into the front third of runners. It was windy and chilly by the lighthouse so I was glad I brought my new Salomon wind proof jacket with me. The atmosphere at the start line was awesome. There was a sea of over a thousand runners with head torches on, jumping about and fidgeting to the blaring music, a countdown clock, non-stop Spanish commentary that I couldn't understand a word of, but exciting none the less and all the supporters cheering us on. If that doesn't get your blood pumped then I don't know what will!

When the clock struck six we were off on our journey round the island. I kept safely behind Lucja, trying my best to scramble up the narrow path that everyone was fighting to get on. The pushing and shoving wasn't as bad as I had expected but I still came across the odd wide armed pole joker and a few thoughtless over takers with no warning or manners. Coming into the first checkpoint gave us a good taste for how great the locals were at supporting the runners throughout the race. They formed a line along the edge of our route cheering and shouting "animo", "venga" and "vamos". You could hear the music playing in town a while before even reaching the

checkpoint. After the checkpoint, there was more climbing. It was relentless. It just wouldn't end. I luckily bought myself a pair of mountain trail blaze poles which were great at giving me a rhythm to follow when hiking up small quick steps and even better at helping me push my short legs up the bigger steps. My favourite section of the race was a nice runnable downhill section coming into El Pilar amongst the beautiful pine tree forest. This felt like the first chance to stretch the legs and pick up the pace. The half marathon finished here and was the first checkpoint with food so a lot busier, with people fighting for watermelon. I don't usually like melon but my god did it taste like heaven then.

I planned to take a gel every hour and I also took a salt tablet which was essential for me in the heat. From Los Roques to Los Muchachos I ran out of water, partly because I was only carrying the minimum of 1litre and partly because the checkpoint was 3kms later than it should have been (the race organisers have apologised for this and will correct this for next year). Not sure how I would have coped if it wasn't for the lovely Spanish man in front of me who simply placed his hand behind him with his bottle in, like a relay baton, to share with me his water. Nevertheless, we made it to the top; I was hurting and my legs were definitely feeling the climb, especially my bum and calves, but not once was I not enjoying myself. I can't quite describe how beautiful the route was. It really made up for all of the pain I was feeling and sometimes even numbed it. Running above the clouds and around the crater of an extinct volcano was completely mesmerising and the memories of it will stay with me forever!



"Hard Going"

## Beasty Transvulcania continued

The descent starts at Los Muchachos. I thought that reaching the top meant I had conquered the race but I hadn't quite realised how tough the last 22kms was going to be. Mentally I didn't have the confidence to be quicker and lighter on my feet and the rock underfoot was so loose and jagged that I had to concentrate too hard on where I was placing my foot and trying to maintaining balance between my wobbly legs and poles.

There were a few locals along the route handing out water, cut apple (which was the best thing I had eaten all day) and local homemade wine! The final part of the descent and for me the worst part of the race was the VK. I was, and still am so pleased that we spent an hour on the VK to recce the route before the race to prepare me for the vertigo (from which I suffer mildly). This was the first point during the race where my emotions got too much for me and I had a little cry to myself! What a baby. I took it very slowly and put my brave face back on before reaching Tazacorte at the bottom where I knew there would

be hundreds of people cheering me past. The support soon cheered me up and gave me that final push for the last 5kms.

Just when you think it's all over, you have another 340m to climb to reach Los Llanos. You begin on a river bed, which I actually enjoyed as it was soft on my feet and I could run a few sections of it. In the final 2kms you have the whole town of Los Llanos supporting you. The last thing I want to do is keep running but I can't stop in front of all these people! I high five all the kids with their arms out, turn the final corner to step on the red carpet, see the finish line beyond the rows of screaming supporters making you feel like a celebrity and at last soak up the final bit of attention from the crowd with the whole carpet to myself. With a beaming smile, I cross the finish line and run to Lucja for an emosh hug. What a day. And what a way to finish.

After the race I collected my medal \*bling\* and got in line for a free massage. This race might not be



Marina's Finish

for everyone, but I thought it wasn't for me last year and now I would recommend this race 100% to anyone. I'm not yet a mountain runner but I love the mountains and my first taste of mountain running has certainly got me itching for more! If it's not yet on your race calendar or bucket list, maybe you should think again!

**By Marina Ranger (OP 2009)**

# News of Old Priorians April 2015 to October 2015

**Rosemarie Alexander** (OP 1983): Was called to the Bar in 1993 and admitted as a solicitor in 1997; she completed a Teacher Training programme in Yoga in 2013 at the Yoga Institute of Great New York. Rosemarie now works as a self-employed Legal Adviser to UK Publishers and as a Yoga Teacher.

**Michael Barley** (OP 1958): Now retired as a GP after 40-odd years in practice; living in Hove. In retirement Michael is developing a keen interest in heraldry.

**Sean Beirne** (OP 2009): was commissioned from the RMA Sandhurst into the Royal Army Medical Corps. See also under *Jess Taylor*.

**Sophie Bell (née Conway)** (OP 2000): Sophie and her husband David are delighted to announce the birth of their daughter Dakota on 3rd July 2015; a sister for Savannah (2<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>)

**Tony Burns** (OP 1970): Now living in Angus, Scotland

**Peter Burwood** (OP 1942): Died 2013, aged 88. R.I.P

**James Carty** (OP 1958): After 10 years living in Spain, is returning permanently to Ireland to live in West Cork.

**Neil Cavender** (OP 1957): Now living in Essex; he remembers his days at St Benedict's with great affection.

**Nicholas Chapman** (OP 1993): Died 23rd March 2015, aged 40; brother of Christopher (OP) and son of Baska Chapman (JS Staff 79-01). R.I.P.

**Joseph Curran** (OP 2014): Just completing the exams at the end of his first year studying Biological Natural Sciences at Pembroke College, Cambridge.

**Toby English** (OP 1975): Died 25th July 2015 in Oxford, Aged 58. R.I.P.

**Jeremy Harvey** (OP 1971): Is now living on the Isle of Skye and running his own vehicle hire business there.

**James Hines** (OP 1978): James was appointed a QC in February

2015; he practises from Gray's Inn, London.

**Robert Hines** (OP 1977): Died 23rd October 2015, Aged 57; brother of James (OP 1978). R.I.P.

**Thomas Hole** (OP 2009): Thomas graduated from the University of York with a degree in Sociology and is now working for the Ministry of Justice.

**Robin Hooper** (OP 1972): Living in East Sussex and seeking contact with his past teachers.

**Michael Howells** (OP 1983): Now living in Hertfordshire and is a lecturer at BPP University.

**Paul Humphrey** (OP 1981): Died 2015. R.I.P.

**Rhianna Ilube** (OP 2012): Achieved a Double First from Pembroke College, Cambridge in Human Social and Political Science; she has also won the "Idle Scholarship" which allows her to move to New York in August 2015 where she will study politics and complete an internship at the UN. Rhianna has been allocated to UNICEF until Christmas 2015.

**Eric Keetch** (OP 1968): Died 28th September 2015, aged 65. R.I.P.

**Michael King** (OP 1971): Died 8th September 2015, aged 52. R.I.P.

**Michael Knowles** (OP 1961): Died 22nd September 2015, aged 71. R.I.P.

**John Lindley** (OP 1959): Was again selected this summer to play for the England Over 70s International Cricket Team; he played in matches against *The Victorians* (Australia) and *Somerset*.

**William Lloyd** (OP 2012): Has just graduated from Bristol University in History; he is now working for *The Tab* an online student news network dedicated to training tomorrow's journalists. Aspiring writers, especially those just leaving School, and others can contact Will (will@thetab.com) for further details.

**John Luckie-Downe** (OP 1982): John and his wife Jody announce the birth of their daughter Scarlett on 28th March 2015.

**Robert Malengreau** (OP 2007): Whilst at Oxford University Robert set up a charity which, in partnership with the Oxford University Rugby Football Club, promotes peace, inclusion, leadership and solidarity between children living in and around the favelas (shanty towns) of Rio de Janeiro, through rugby and education. More recently, the charity has launched its educational and professional development programme *#IWantToBe*, to create an inspiring environment, help participants identify their academic and professional ambitions, raise self-belief and provide support for the young people to develop strategies to achieve those goals. Robert feels that many OPs will be interested to know that this NGO (Non-Governmental Organisation) was nominated and won the RFU President Award - *Beyond Rugby*, for people and organizations using the game to promote social change and development. The award was presented at Twickenham Stadium during the England v Barbarians game in May 2015. There is further information at: <http://www.ourfc.org/NewsItem.aspx?ID=2725>.

**Peter Miles** (OP): Peter Miles, is a professional London Jazz singer and Bandleader having previously been a successful actor.

**Antony Morwood-Leyland** (OP 1966): Died 5th October 2015, aged 67. R.I.P.

**Kevin McCann** (OP 1957): Emails from the Cayman Islands: he hears regularly from Kevin Hannigan (OP 1957) and Bernard Stutt (OP 1955). Kevin would very much like to attend another of Ian Blackaller's (OP 1958) Reunion Lunches - he had been to one a couple of years ago, but as he says "*they always seem to be in the winter or late autumn, too cold for me now!*" His daughter Caroline and her husband Richie are both Attorneys-at-Law and granddaughter Monroe is a delight.

**Catherine (Cathy) Nathan** (Deputy HM Junior School 98-09): Died 17th April 2015, aged 58; mother of Peter (OP 2005), Mark and David. R.I.P.

**Francis O'Toole** (OP 1991): Is now living in California and is CEO of the film & television Studios, *Phantom Studios Inc.*

**Edward Peasley** (OP 1944): Died 2012, aged 86. R.I.P.

**George Prall** (OP 1971): Died 28th July 2015 in Brighton, aged 62. R.I.P.

**Alexander Racicot** (OP 2002): Alex is now living in New York, USA and working in healthcare as a Physician's Assistant with the Plattsburgh Health Group.

**Peter Sheehan** (OP 1962): reminisces of his Fencing at the School in the early 60s when he was Captain of Fencing.

**John Sloboda** (OP 1968): I am still in regular contact with two friends from the "class of 68", John Penty, and Peter Burke. We three shared the privilege of being the first people to ever take A-level music at the School, after Colin Atkinson arrived as Head of Music. It's great that we have stayed friends ever since! It's somewhat sad that so few contemporaries from this time seem to wish to stay in contact with the school or each other. I often wonder what happened to the 50 or so people that I was so close to (whether through mutual sympathy or mutual antagonism) for so many years. Maybe a 65-75 reunion is due.

**Peter Stutt** (OP 1955): Having worked for ICI, while it was still a large company, in business academia, and then 23 years with Unilever, as a consulting social and organizational scientist and also working with the NHS on change and later going freelance, is now living in Devon. Just 'retired' from 12 year of local politics, still engaged with community activities and a young musicians charity; finding much more time for a love of painting engendered in the art room at St Benedict's and seeing the first of his seven grandchildren in the final year of her degree. How time flies. He has never managed to track down two of his contemporaries in Classics - John Collis and Peter Bicknell.

*Continued on page 15*



# OPRFC Season Review

The 2014-15 season brought with it uncharted territory as the 1st XV (Twisters) would be competing at an all-time high in the league of London 1. Ant Andrews had been retained as Head Coach but had brought in former 1st XV Captain John Bordiss to assist as a backs coach. As the season begun it was clear that there was a step up in the ability of the league, even with the Twisters winning both of their preseason games, they came back to ground crashing with two defeats to open the season at the hands of Thurrock and Ruislip. It wasn't until the third game where they got a vital win at home to Chingford, an entertaining affair which finished at 31-28 with tries coming from Ross McIntosh (OP 2010), Barney Wellings (OP 2010), James Booth (OP 2008) and Myles Stringer (OP 2006).

The following week the Twisters faced top of the table Eton Manor and pushed them all the way until a few late scores gave Eton Manor a 14-27 victory. This improved performance albeit with a loss, seemed to propel the OPs confidence and this caused a three game run of victories over Brentwood, Ipswich and Luton. Next up was a tricky game away at Letchworth Garden City, a big sloppy pitch and a hostile crowd rallied for a late comeback to deny the OPs their fourth consecutive

win. This game also came at a cost as influential captain Andrew Wilkie (OP 2008) damaged his shoulder which would need further attention and effectively rule him out for the rest of the season.

For the following few games the OPs scrapped for points but were hit with another blow that by accidently fielding an illegible player and confessing to the mistake that we would be deducted 5 points. The task of staying up had become increasingly difficult, especially with wins becoming a rarity, especially around the festive period, where four loses were recorded in a row.

With the turn of the year the Twisters gained some vital wins against lowly opposition just to keep them out of the relegation zone. In a cruel twist our stand in captain Adam McCulloch (OP 2008) also broke his leg ending his season prematurely, another setback for the team. To their credit the Twisters were never lacking effort and ran teams close, however it wasn't until the last four games of the season that they found their form again. Coach Ant Andrews put it simple, last four games of the season, we needed four wins to stay up. Considering the mounting injury list the squad had, survival would be an achievement in itself. The squad rallied together and a miracle run occurred, not only



Jack Dever (with ball)

securing four wins but also gaining four bonus points along the way. Survival was guaranteed but also created momentum going into the next season. This was the first time in a number of years that a team has gone up from North West 2 to London 1 and managed to stay up.

Highlights of the season included the first international tour to Barcelona. Many Stringmann socials and an interesting bus home from Ipswich. The end of Season Meal was held at the Red Lion in Ealing and the following awards were given out:

**1st XV Player of the year:**  
**Sam Mahoney**

**1st XV Players Player of the year:**  
**Jack Dever**

**Most Improved:**  
**Daniel Porter**

## OPRFC Season 2015-2016

With four wins to mark the end of last season and a number of key personal returning from Injury there was a real buzz to the beginning of this season. Ant Andrews had been appointed to the new director of rugby role, and brought in Dan Brown to overview all coaching matters, and would be assisted by Myles Stringer as an S&C coach, in charge of rehab would be Dai Langdon.

Myles Stringer had the boys out in pre-season early to enable us to hit the ground running come the start of the season. There were also a few new people to add into the mix, notably former 1st XV captain Rowan Halsall (OP 2008) and Jamie Harries (OP 2011). These two later on forming a formidable back row either side of Captain Andrew Wilkie at no 8.

The first pre-season game brought us to Chiswick RFC. With the sun beaming down, both teams looked to play with intent from the word go. OPs controlled the tempo and managed to score early on via Matthew Dever (OP 2010). The game was largely dominated and a final result of 42-31 was diminished as Chiswick started a late comeback. The second and last pre-season game was a mid-week game under lights at Staines. The Twisters managed to get a victory in a bruising encounter. Two wins from two in pre-season led the OPs into the league with not only confidence but also expectation to do better than last year.

After a long pre-season starting back in June, the squad entered the season with high hopes. Despite starting brightly and enjoying much

of the possession and territory in the opening phases of the game, it was Brentwood who struck first against the run of play with an interception score. OPs hit back shortly after with a catch and drive from the forwards, before James Booth took the team to a 14-10 lead, finishing a well executed move. From there, it was all green and black as the Old Priorians continued to pile on the pressure.

Brentwood relented until captain Andrew Wilkie powered his way over from short range. It was all downhill from there however, as the Brentwood backline sliced through the heart of the OP's defence before going over in the corner. A somewhat dubious yellow card to Rowan Halsall at the start of a series of penalties that bordered on farcical. The away

side took a narrow 19-20 lead into the half time break, but the second 40 was very much one way traffic as Brentwood extended their lead to 34-19. A well taken Jack Wheeler try in the right hand corner gave the Old Priorians a glimmer of hope, but it was short lived with a well taken penalty extending the gap.

The following week the Old Priorians picked up a bonus point, 43-27 win against the garden city side. From the whistle the team from Perivale looked sharp and their passing was clinical. While the first half was tight, it was in the second half that the Old Boys class came through and Letchworth struggled to live with them and they were able to pull away. The old boys handed a debut to Jamie Harris who marked the occasion with a try as well as contributing in the back-row to a pack that dominated the break-down all afternoon. Hooker Charlie Allum and lock Simon Jukes were ferocious and relentless in defence slowing the ball down making building an attack very difficult for the home side. While playing on a pitch with a slope can cause problems the half-back pairing of Michael Simpson and Jack Dever managed the game well both finding themselves in the points on the day. Conceding 27 points flattered the opposition and will give the OPs much to consider and work-on before entertaining Barking at home on Saturday.

Next to come to Perivale were Barking RFC. The game started in seesaw fashion with the OPs defence shunting out an attack Barking threw at us. Eventually the breakthrough came and the Twisters never looked like throwing away a lead built on tries from Charlie Allum, James Marshall, Maynard Ahukanna, Michael Simpson and Daniel Porter.

Going into last week the Twisters were sitting 6th in the league and knew a win at Chingford would see them progress closer to the top. With the kicking boot of Ross McIntosh and a well worked try that saw David Wilkie go under the post saw the Twisters lead by a couple of points leading into the half, after a late driving maul try from Chingford. The second half was a sorry affair for the Twisters with a number of penalties conceded meant that Chingford had most of the possession and subsequently scored two tries again from their powerful driving maul game which the Twisters failed to repel. A try with less than 15 minutes to play saw the team go 14 points down, but after a poor

kick from the Chingford 10 was gathered by Michael Simpson an open run in to score a converted try saw the Twisters bag a losing bonus point. This was a hard fought game from both sides and for the Twisters to gain a losing bonus point despite a few notable absentees, it was very much regarded as a positive performance.

A six try haul saw the Old Priorians move up to 4th in the league with a 43-3 win against strugglers Luton RFC at Perivale on Saturday. The OPs came into the match off the back of a disappointing defeat to Chingford the previous Saturday. However, with the school 1st XV squad looking on and a decent crowd basking in the October sunshine, the Old Priorians were confident of getting the W.

It was the visitors who enjoyed the better of the opening 10 minutes, putting sustained pressure on the Old Priorians line. Resolute defence, including a number of outstanding turnovers restricted Luton to just a three point lead, before the OPs struck. Mikey Mullins slotted the extras to give the OPs a 7-3 lead. Wilkie was involved again minutes later after he linked with Michael Simpson who tore his way through the Luton defence before feeding Wilkie who then put away the bulldozing Dan Porter for the score. Arguably the best move of the match set up the OPs third try as George Majstorovic coasted through a gap in the centre of the pitch, floated an offload over a defender to centre Jack Wheeler who then fed Porter for his brace. It took the Old Priorians until the latter stages of the second half to secure the try bonus point following a lull after half time that saw Simon Jukes sent to the bin. Liam Dolan making his first appearance of the season for the Twisters picked up where he left off for the Saints the weekend before, showing the pace of a cheetah and power of a rhino to get over for the score after some great work from Simpson and Porter. Michael Simpson set about seeing off the match in fine fashion, sniping from rucks, he picked out tired forwards and showed what a dangerous runner he is in adding two tries either side of a James Booth effort to seal the win.

The weekend promised to be one of the tougher encounters for the Old Priorians in front of a hostile Thurrock crowd. The conditions were perfect and the spectacle of rugby that took centre stage did not disappoint. Old Priorians opened their account with 10 minutes on the clock, Ross McIntosh breaking

the line to go under the posts. Thurrock were quick to respond with long periods of pressure in the OP's half, resulting in a try and three penalties. At 20-7 it looked like a long day at the office for the men from Ealing. It isn't in this team's nature to roll over and on stroke of half time captain Andrew Wilkie made his presence felt busting through a brace of tackles before getting a decisive offload to Maynard Ahukanna who went under the posts unopposed bringing the score to 20-14 at half-time. The second half got underway with the Thurrock forwards, scoring from a lineout early in the second half. What happened in the ten minute period that followed was some of the best rugby the Perivale team have played at this level, demonstrating the expansive game that is becoming a trademark of the club. Back rower Jamie Harries made a decisive 40m break finished off by Aristide Goualin in the corner. The winger added to his tally two minutes later with another dazzling run and going over for another score. At this point it was raining tries in Essex and time for the front row to get in on the act as Charlie Allum bundled over after another well worked team try. The Old Priorians were going into the final twenty minutes with the scores at 35-27 up and with Ross McIntosh's boot reliably picking up the 2 points every time they were on offer. Daniel Porter added another with a busting run, shrugging off three defenders before going under the sticks. The OPs were set for a memorable win away from home. Thurrock pulled one back but it was not enough and another decisive tackle from Porter denied the hosts a losing bonus point. Head coach Anthony Andrews described this as a decisive weekend in the club's season and with the second team the 'Saints' winning a high scoring encounter against Rosslyn Park IVth to maintain an unbeaten start to the season it may well prove to be.

Saturday 24th saw Old Priorians take on CS Rugby at home in one of the few local derbys the league has to offer. The opposition having spent the last five years in the national leagues were to prove tough competition. The opening exchanges were equal with both sides playing well in front of the large home crowd at Perivale. However it was CS Rugby who broke the deadlock with their first try being walked over the line from a huge scrum, shortly after an opportunistic and well timed interception saw the visitors go ahead by 14 points with the home

*Continued on page 14*

## OPRFC Season 2015-2016 continued

team yet to reply. The reply didn't take long and a well executed try from Old Priorians allowed Jamie Harries to carve open the CS defence and score. With the deficit now reduced the game continued 5-14 with excitement building. Old Priorians capitalised on the momentum and Jack Wheeler completed some excellent work from the back line to chalk up another score for the Old Priorians.

The half time whistle went and the sides went in with the hosts trailing 12-14. A quick try from CS Rugby in the opening minutes of the second half indicated what they were capable of at this level. Not long after a converted try was added to this tally. Old Priorian heads didn't go down yet despite being down to 13 men due to some moments of poor discipline. With the score now 27-12 to the visitors Jack Wheeler yet again showed his pedigree by crossing the line as the result of some great work from almost the entire side, with ten minutes to go the score was 27-17 but it transpired it was too little too late. CS Rugby added another score and with the final score being 34-17 they cemented their well deserved victory.

**By Jack Dever (OP 2008)**

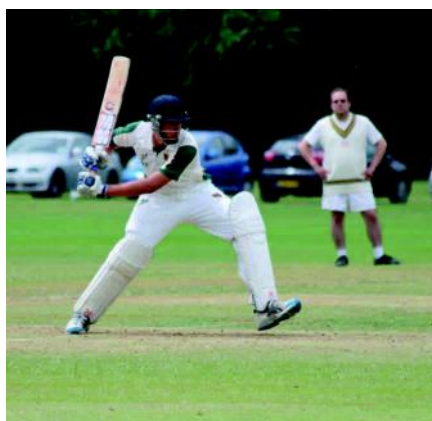
## Old Priorians Cricket v. School 1st XI

Sunday 26th April saw the traditional fixture of the 1st XI vs Old Priorians in which five former St Benedict's 1st XI captains returned to the school to play against the current 1st XI. In a truly joyous occasion, which also saw the return of Mr Ian Stephen, Master i/c Cricket for eighteen years at St Benedict's, the Old Priorians were eventual winners. A truly outstanding performance was seen, however, by young Thomas Knight who claimed 2 wickets for 26 runs. Alex Amadasun also became the youngest player to ever play for the St Benedict's 1st XI.

**By Johan Thisanayagam, Master i/c Cricket, St Benedict's School**



"Feeding Time"



"Working Time"



Other sport plays a part too!

## Old Priorian Cricket Club



OPCC Back in Action

2015 was a year of rejuvenation for the OP cricket club. Having gathered a significant amount of interest in playing cricket for the club, we decided to expand upon our current one match fixture list. Contacting various local clubs, and with help from the school, the club were able to play in seven fixtures this year aside from some cancellations. 33 different people represented the club this year, from various age groups including a few guest appearances from pupils and teachers of the school.

Some notable performances include James Booth (OP 2008) scoring 89\* against Northfields, Gabriel Tupper (OP 2011) 5 for 21 against Brentham and finally Ranjan Waas' (OP 2008) wicket-keeping display against Brentham, which will live

long in the memory for different reasons. Winning five, drawing one and losing one was a fine return for an occasional side, which finished as runners up in the Basil Nickerson Trophy to the St Benedict's Staff.

Due to the success of this year, we are looking to expand our fixture list even further and would very much like to welcome anyone, whether that be OP, teacher, pupil, friend or parent to get in contact and come and get involved. Please contact either:

**Matthew Codrington -**  
[matthew.codrington26@gmail.com](mailto:matthew.codrington26@gmail.com)

**Ranjan Waas -**  
[ranjan.waas@live.com](mailto:ranjan.waas@live.com)

**By Matthew Codrington (OP 2012)**



## News of Old Priorians April 2015 to October 2015 continued

**Jess Taylor** (OP 2009): Jess was married to Sean Beirne (OP 2009) on 15th August 2015 at Ealing Abbey; many peer OPs, Chris and Tina Cleugh (Headmaster) were among those attending. The *Pafties* (under Mr Dicky Thomas) added a wonderful touch to the occasion. Mr & Mrs Taylor-Beirne will make their permanent home in London.

**Luke Weston** (OP 1991): Fondly remembers his old Chemistry Classes and teacher. He is now a Doctor of Theoretical Physics and hopes to attend next year's Dinner.

**Alice Williams** (OP 1999): Now working as an Adult Services Manager with The Third Sector.

**Gordon Wilson** (OP 1960): After 23 years as a widower, Gordon was married to Mrs Jennifer

Vaughan-Griffith (née Young) in the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Liphook, Hampshire on 19th June 2015. His brother, Nigel (OP 1963), was best man. It was a joyous family occasion, which included his 4 children and 10 grandchildren, gathered from across the Globe.

**Lawrence Youtlen** (OP 1954): Writes: I was sorry to see the news of Pierre Ricard's death. We were close friends at school in the early 1950s but subsequently lost touch. On pages 77 and 85 of "From the Smallest Beginnings" (The School's History) are group photographs which include both of us. In the p85 picture, with Fr Denis Agius, Pierre is looking over Louis Lambert's shoulder and I am looking over Pierre's. My father Bernard (OP 1917, RIP) was also an OP from Ealing Priory School as it was then known.

## Future dates for your diary

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

**Old Priorian Oxbridge Dinner**  
**Friday 5th February 2016**  
**Oxford & Cambridge Club, London**

**Old Priorian Association Dinner**  
**Thursday 21st April 2016**  
**Lansdowne Club, London**  
**7:00pm for 7:30pm**

**Celebrating 60 years of Girls at St Benedict's School**  
**Thursday 23rd June 2016**  
**St Benedict's Games Field, Perivale**

**OPA Summer Sports Festival**  
**Cricket, Tennis & Netball**  
**Sunday 3rd July 2016**  
**St Benedict's Games Field, Perivale**



The 6th Form Area in the new Sixth Form and Art & Design Building

## STOP PRESS!

### Sixth Form and Art & Design Building

This new £6m development at St Benedict's was handed over by the builders in September 2015; the Sixth Form moved in at the beginning of November and the ADT Department will move into their new facilities in January 2016.

The official opening and blessing by His Eminence Cardinal Vincent Nichols will take place at the end of January.

## Organising a Reunion of Old Priorians

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. Much useful information about reunions is available at:

<http://theopa.org/events/reunions>

## 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](http://theopa.org) or get in touch with our Development & Alumni Relations Office.



## 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

**Lewis Hill (OP 1975)**

President

**Marina Ranger (OP 2009)**

Honorary Secretary

**Ayelsha Patel (OP 2004)**

Honorary Treasurer

### Council Members

**Frank Casali (OP 1984)**

**Edward Conway (OP 2005)**

**Sinead Leahy (OP 2008)**

**Kumaran Perinpanathan (OP 2009)**

**Brian Taylor, CB (OP 1960)**

**Luca Uberai (OP 2010)**

**Peter Watson (OP 1952)**

**Andrew Wilkie (OP 2008)**

### Ex-Officio Council Members

**Chris Cleugh**

Headmaster

**Rob Simmons (OP 1987)**

Headmaster, Junior School

**Patrick Murphy-O'Connor**

(OP 1976)

Chairman, St Benedict's

Governing Board

### Mary Boyle

Society of Parents and Friends

**Richard Baker (OP 1959)**

Administrator

**Tamlyn Worrall**

Director of Development,

St Benedict's School

Full details about the Association and its activities can be found at:  
[www.theopa.org](http://www.theopa.org)

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

**Email:** [opa@stbenedicts.org.uk](mailto: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>. Current School news can be found at: <http://www.stbenedicts.org.uk/Latest-News>.

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