



Susceptum perice
munus

The Old Roan Magazine



A.J. Slaney (1947 - 2013)

ORA Secretary (1981 - 2013) President (1983-1984, 2011-2012)

March 2015

Issue 8



Mr Andy Daniels - Old Roan Association President 2013-2014

The Old Roan Association

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Mr J Leach Mrs L Nelson Mr M Smith

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(Cricket) (Football) (Theatre)

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External examiners for the Association and Old Roan Club Accounts

Mr D Calnan & Mr S Perry

From the Editor

Welcome to the Old Roan magazine! It has taken longer than expected to bring this edition to you, and there are no good excuses, except to say that being retired seems to take up more time than anticipated!

First of all— there are many thanks to our previous editor David Horsburgh - who has tirelessly edited the magazine for almost twenty years. His attention to detail, immense knowledge of the Roan school and magazine, means that we have an impressive archive of Old Roan news and historical records, for the Metropolitan Museum where the Roan archives are kept.

In future editions we plan to look forward to using the website more and bringing shorter news items and other interesting Old Roan information through a slimmer and more contemporary magazine format. This edition follows the normal production of the magazine, but in the future I hope to produce an A4 format edition with shorter articles and more photos please! Larger articles will be printed in their entirety on the Old Roan website. I would be interested in your views on this matter.

Many of you will have heard the very sad news of the death of Tony Slaney, former president and secretary of the Old Roan Association. We are at a loss to fill his important and key role as a keeper of all things to do with the ORA., and this

magazine and many future editions will pay tribute to his enormous contributions to Roan life.

Jan Farmer – Editor

Former President (2010-11) and retired Deputy Head of The John Roan School (1987 - 2010)

Founder's Day Service

Ten members of the committee joined Des Malone, Headteacher, staff and pupils in being truly entertained to celebrate the life of our founder, benefactors and all those connected with the School at St. Alfege Church, Greenwich. This year (2014) the school commemorated the fallen of the First World War. The VC citation was read for Cecil Harold Sewell (lieutenant) 3rd Battalion Tanks Corps and former pupil of The Roan School for Boys. The modern Founder's Day is a lively programme of words, music and song. The School Orchestra, string ensemble, choirs, groups and bands joined in presenting an eclectic mix to support the more traditional elements usually associated with this annual event.

After the service everyone was invited to visit the school to enjoy lunch, mingle with staff and governors.

Presidential Address

Presidential Address March 2014

By the time of reading my Presidents note for this magazine we will all be aware of Tony Slaney's sad passing in October 2013. Any new President will have welcomed Tony guiding them through those first committee meetings and he will of course be greatly missed. Tributes to Tony have come through in great numbers and his funeral service proved worthy testament to the man and his unrivalled service to the Association. If Tony now observes us all from afar then I for one can confirm that I am and will continue to be a fully paid up member of this fine Association.

Presidential Address June 2013

At some point last year I was asked if I would be prepared to have my name put forward in consideration for the position of President for 2013/14. It was an honour to be considered of course, though I didn't really expect it to go any further at the time. While my time as an Old Roan stretches back 30 years, there remain a number of candidates with lifetime associations with the Old Roan that would make most worthy Presidents.

It does take someone to say yes though and that's what I did. So, at the March 2013 AGM I was indeed accepted by the committee as President with my brother Ian coming forward to nominate me and I wrongly assumed that it would be an opportunity for him to say good things about me before Bernie Turner handed

over the chain.

So it was now official the first brothers to have become President since the Berry brothers in the 1920s. There is a third Daniels so who knows there might be three Presidential brothers at some point in the future! For now though and to follow in the immediate footsteps of Bernie, Tony Slaney and Jan Farmer, who between them have clocked up a century of dedication to the school and association, is an immense privilege. As I look back at the board and its long list of names I see former Presidents of course but also my former teachers, friends and sporting colleagues.

Well, given the history of the association it all started to feel rather special though I will probably still continue to look behind me when someone calls out 'Mr President'.

Like many that have gone before I have trawled through old magazines that I have stored in the loft (no, not that kind of magazines) along with any Roan and John Roan School memorabilia to help make this piece as interesting as possible, though finally decided to save some more personal memories at the reunion Dinner in October.

Thinking about the magazine we all should take our hats off to and thank Dave Horsburgh who has been our Editor for many years – judging by all of the previous Presidential notes the magazines continue to be an enjoyable read (even,

sadly, with the growing obituary notes) and source of reminiscence for many. The mantle has been handed over to Jan Farmer and if we are to continue to have consistency in standard and the level of contributions, Jan will need ongoing support.

At the time of writing this piece a Presidents cricket match is being arranged with a Presidents and Sons XI vs a Presidents Select XI twenty twenty format including a mini beer festival and live band alongside the Veterans 5 a side football end of season event. For this annual event I have invested £16 in new cricket whites, Presidential cricket box and bespoke Slazenger cricket underpants.

The Presidential opportunity has prompted me to re-engage properly with the club. I stopped playing football regularly at the age of 43 (young by most Vets standards) so visits to the club since have been sporadic but not infrequent. I'm considering a return to playing with the super-vets but not surprisingly given the wealth of talent on offer the phone hasn't rung yet.

In my time as one of the Old Roans greatest ever goalkeepers, second only to Steve Nelson, I played for all six elevens. I even managed all six in one season alone but not as you might imagine a sign of the football club nurturing young talent but being dropped from the first team right through to the sixths because of the competition for places.

I did get along to watch the current Old Roan Football Club 1st XI in the Queen Mary Cup Final at Beckenham Town's ground vs Johnson & Phillips in April. It was well supported though like most finals that I've watched or been a substitute goalkeeper in (yes, never played in an Old Roan Cup Final but did get to warm up twice!), we came second. The standard remains good with all three Saturday teams continuing to be well run.

I also got along to see the Roan Theatre Company, a thriving part of our club, present a dark comedy called 'Communicating Doors'.

It was the first production I had seen for quite some time and certainly the first sober. My 'other brother' Richard likes a bit of drama and he used to perform with the (as was) Old Roan Dramatic Society. One play took place during the 1990 World Cup with some mates and I watching from the back after an all-day drinking session.

In one scene I recall Steve Nelson holding up a sign that said 'Boo' and we took the B for an 8 so every time the villain appeared we shouted out '800!', much to our own amusement of course. Since then I've kept a respectful distance though was very impressed with the company's performance, with both acting and behind the scenes support most professional especially given the space that the club allows.

The Association of course has celebrated its centenary and has gone through a transitional period with the formation of the John Roan Club but does continue to be a strong, solid and well supported association.

The committee represents the association across many fronts and as is often the case it's the same old faces and names that continue to do so – they also all deserve our thanks and support. I'm sure he won't appreciate it but I will single out Tony Slaney and his commitment to the cause over the years. Tony has attended at least 46 AGMs with 35 as Secretary.

Encouraging school leavers to be part of the John Roan Club and Old Roan Association continues to present challenges but in doing my little bit. I attended the School Leavers do at the club that Trevor Talbot organised in June.

We also had the Old Roan Golf Society's summer and winter events as well as what was the 93rd Old Roan Reunion Dinner in October plus one or two other things in the pipeline.

I look forward with pleasure to the remainder of my term as President and for now wish you and your families all the very best.

Mr Andy Daniels
Old Roan Association President

It was with great pleasure that I was able to nominate my little brother for the position of President. At the time I did point out that he was the first President of the Association from the non-selective era of the school. He assures me he did pass the eleven plus but did also benefit from the older sibling rule as I was starting the 4th year (old style grading) in September 1977, when he and his twin, Richard, were new boys.

Their joining continued the long association we have had with the school as Dad, a pupil at Lee Manor School, attended Roan post war, when Alfie Knott was head boy. Mum was a Greenwich Central School girl and their meeting at a dance in Chiesmans, Lewisham led to their marriage in 1956 and to the son they always wanted a few years later. The daughter they longed for was sure to follow and in 1966 the family unit seemed complete. With ante natal medicine still an inexact science, twins were discovered late in the pregnancy. The names June and Julie were decided on but the anticipated little girls were replaced by Richard Alan (Dick) and 6 minutes later Andrew Paul (Drew).

Despite this disappointment the boys were brought home to Sparrows Lane, New Eltham and spent many happy years being dressed the same, bought the same, treated the same and having completely different interests. Their primary school was Wyborne Infants in New Eltham, a school that has nurtured such sporting

Ian Daniels: Sponsor Cont.

Roan boys as the Campbells, Peter Burton and the Ditchfields (well, Simon).

I have little recollection of them in the early years at Roan. Andy, by now a goalkeeper, was regularly picked in the school team, as was Rich, not on ability but by association. This also applied to the cricket team, Andy as a premier bowler, Rich as a limited fielder. Their pairing also ensured Andy had small parts in school productions such as Snow White and the Seven Deadly Scenes, The Threepenny Opera and Oh What a Lovely War as Rich, the family thespian, took on more demanding roles.

Apart from lunchtime football sessions at the park, our paths rarely crossed at school but we did get the 108 bus home together from the Standard. Dad, who worked at Sykes Pumps in Charlton, would time a bank run with the end of school and drop us off at the bus stop, sometimes even allowing Ditch a lift as well.

The twins carried on into the 6th form and with some of their contemporaries, Mick Weaver, Lee Margerie and Graham Kebble, they formed a band, performing a one off in the common room, with Andy on vocals. It was all for a good cause though sadly the charity collection bucket remained empty and the band disbanded after just two songs.

On leaving school he became his own man at last as the twins were separated

for the first time. Rich stayed on for the third year of his 6th form to retake his A levels and Andy started work at Lloyds Bank in Oxford Street. This was the start of his employment history in the financial sector and all it had to offer someone who liked a drink.

After a couple of years in the West End, Andy's next job was with the Woolwich, in Woolwich. Rich also worked in Woolwich at the time as a store detective for M&S. Here Andy discovered another downside of being a twin and a case of mistaken identity. One day waiting outside M&S to drive his brother home, the besuited Andy was accosted and chased up and down Powis Street by accomplices of one of Richard's recent shoplifting collars. The innocent Richard had left early that day and was tucking into his tea when the dishevelled Andy finally returned home.

Andy has recently received a 15 year service award at Visa Europe where he holds a senior management position and has travelled extensively.

The joys of travel have extended to Old Roan Football Club tours to Holland and Luxembourg, scoring once, losing his passport once and being arrested and held at gun point once (although Fraser Lochtie still remains a friend no blame can be attached in this particular episode). His interest in golf was also aroused around this time and despite his lack of ability and still with a handicap of 28, he has been a regular on Old Roan

Ian Daniels: Sponsor Cont.

Golf Society days for 30 years. Further golf trips away followed, most notably one of Richard Thomas' stag weekends in Northampton with other footballing golfers such as Mills, Sproul, Fish, Witchalls, Hawney, Pepper and Os.

Andy's football career has all but ended, spending many years in goal for various elevens, until realising he prefers playing on pitch when reaching veteran age. Back in the day the introduction to the football club involved Thursday night training, sometimes at the school field and many winters in the gym at Westcombe Park followed by warming down sessions in the Princess of Wales. Here the banter, or rather the constant abuse from Tim Fish and Os, repeated but louder by Ray Mills, was no doubt intended to make a man of you. The quieter ones amongst us would accept the ridicule but Andy would always attempt a comeback and his personality would shine. He has shown great character over the years and enjoys his married life to Louise with their daughters Zoe and Grace residing in Meopham.

Ian Daniels

Treasurer's Report

"Nothing?" Well, almost! After a couple of years of unprecedented activity in the planning; contracts to stage the event; payments to complete it; the Centenary Dinner papers are now in the archives. There is something of a space to be filled, but accounting matters can be rather a 'dry' subject at the best of times and are swiftly dealt with at an AGM.

What would stalwart Old Roans like Geoff Sawyer or Frank Barnes have advised? Probably along the lines of 'keep calm and carry on!' We certainly carry on – indeed, there are members who have paid their subscription in advance up to 2022. A Foundation trustee recently told me that he thought the cost of being an Old Roan was 'remarkable' given the current financial climate.

Junior members seem to elude us at any cost – even 3 years free after pupils leave school has not led to a single new membership. Older members have joined, or re-joined, with interest in life subscription also being shown.

Neal Haslam
July 2014

Message from the Headteacher

Another hugely successful year at John Roan, with the opening of our new building at Westcombe Park and a total refurbishment at Maze Hill. Besides the £29million from the Building Schools for the Future programme we are also immensely grateful for £500,000 grant from the John Roan Foundation which will enable us to refurbish the clock tower, landscape the front memorial garden and refurbish the Hall at Maze Hill, none of which were included in the scope of the main contract. Pupils, staff and visitors alike are amazed at the architects' success with light and space in the Westcombe Park building. They have also successfully retained the best of the old and complementing it with the best of the new at Maze Hill.

Our 6th form produced yet another set of stunning results at A level, which enabled every student who wished to go to University to get in, and this included 8 students who went to Russell Group universities and one successful Oxford entrant who is now studying English at Somerville College.

Like many schools with a comprehensive intake, the GCSE rule changes meant our headline figures took a dip, although on many of the other indicators we were either in line with or exceeded national data eg. total number of A* and A grades, EBacc and students getting A*-C in 5 or more GCSEs. So even with the goal posts moved midway through the game, our students yet again demonstrated they can compete with the best. We were

over-subscribed in every Band in Year 7 and our 6th form continues to grow, and is currently at 250.

Our grand opening on Monday 3 November 2014 will be an amazing event, and many Old Roans will be there to celebrate with us. The new uniform has been a tremendous hit with students, parents and neighbours, and was modelled on the 1960s jacket of that well-known Old Roan, Viv Lawrence. With our new sport, musical and drama facilities, our strength in these areas cannot but continue to grow, and all in all, The John Roan is as strong as it has ever been.

It is with great sadness that I have decided to take early retirement in July of next year. I believe the school has been transformed in the 8 years I have been at the helm, and although at times exhausting, it has also been extremely rewarding. I have enjoyed working with the Old Roans, the Foundation and the Hope Memorial Trust just as much as with the Governors, staff, students and parents at the school. I cannot end without saying a huge thank you to the executors of Tony Slaney's estate for their generous donation to the camp at Braithwaite. This has secured its operation for generations of students to come, and Tony's memory and legacy will always be remembered there.

Des Malone
September 2014

New John Roan School Rises Like a Phoenix from the Ashes

September 2014 saw the doors swing open to both the brand new Westcombe Park site and the refurbished Maze Hill site. The Maze Hill site has been sympathetically refurbished keeping the listed outside facade while making the inside a modern, light working environment for students. Two quadrangles have been created, one has a glass dome that is used as a refectory and the other a quiet outdoor seating area. The site also boasts a new modern library area, drama room and computer suites.

The Westcombe Park site is a modern, light new build with plenty of space and light.

Both building had their official opening in November 2014.



Tony Slaney ('59 – '66) – some thoughts!

It is with a great deal of personal sadness that I find myself writing about my great friend Tony Slaney so soon after what now seems to be a eulogy in the March 2011 issue of this magazine. I have revisited this article many times in recent months and realised just how apposite it remains.

Tony's death on 2nd October 2013 was a massive blow to the Association as in one fell swoop we lost our secretary of nearly forty years, fountain of knowledge, archivist and general go to man. The task of picking up the pieces fell to his close friends of whom I and Ian Clatworthy found ourselves co-executors of the estate. Whilst going through his effects we were astounded by the sheer volume of Association related material that we found which reflected his monumental efforts on all our behalves. We also realised that it would be impossible to find an individual who would be either willing or able to dedicate time or effort on this scale. As a result a 'Secretariat' has been set up - details of which are given elsewhere.

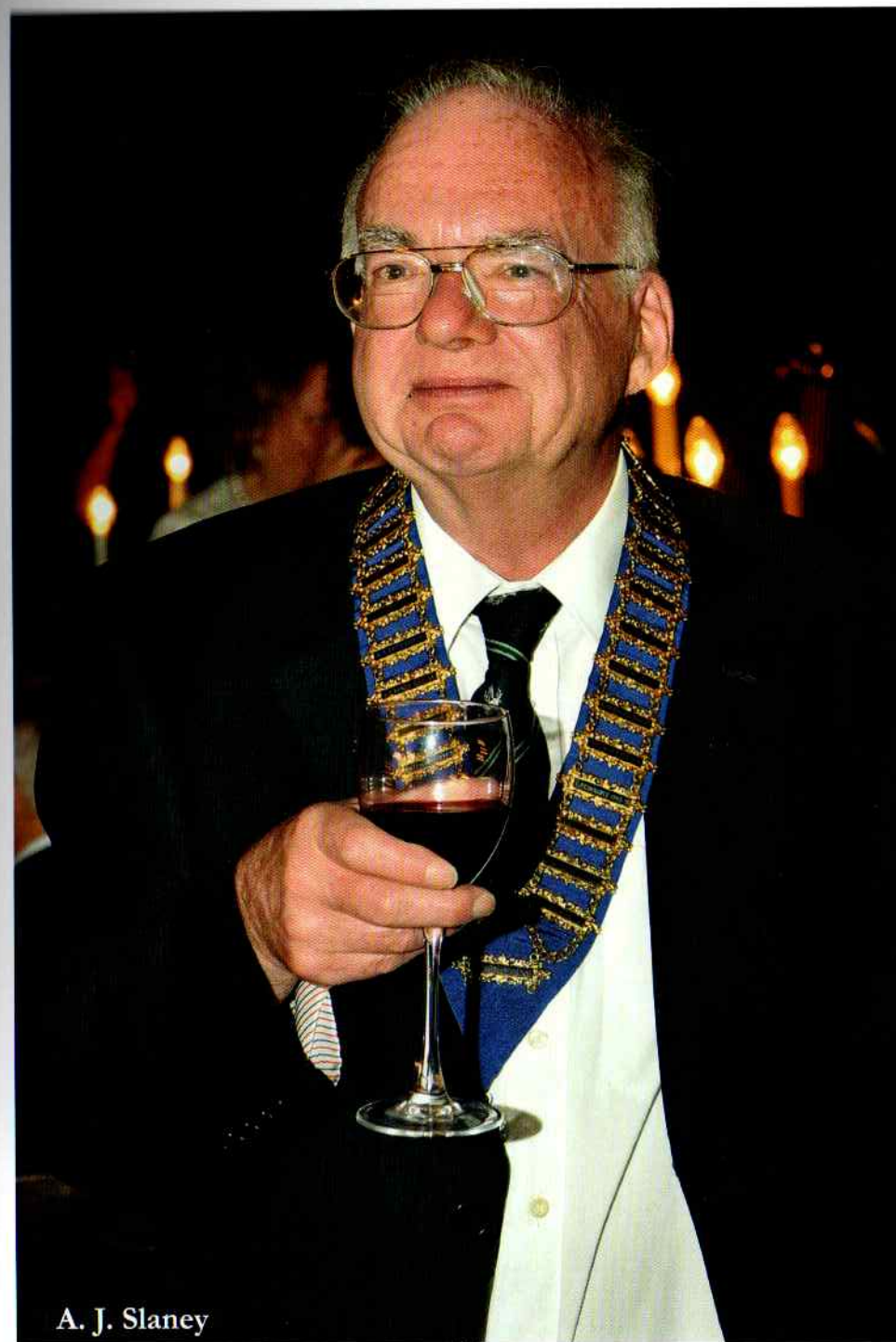
In May of this year a group of twenty of Tony's closest friends travelled to the Lake District to spread his ashes on the How above the Hope Memorial Camp close to where he had spread his father's ashes such a short time ago. We were blessed with wonderfully dry and sunny weather and found a beautiful spot overlooking

Bassenthwaite and back towards Derwent Water. A visit to the camp had been included in our arrangements followed by lunch in the Coledale Inn in Braithwaite village itself.

Surprisingly Tony had never been to Braithwaite when at school but made up for it in later years by visiting on numerous occasions often to help with school parties and it was undoubtedly one of the loves of his life. I am pleased to say that last September Ian and I were able to present a sizeable legacy from Tony's estate to the Hope Memorial Trustees.

Tony left other generous legacies and surplus funds and as a result of this the financial future of both the Old Roan Association and the Roan Theatre Company have been assured. In his later years at the school Tony took on the role of librarian, a job which was ideally suited to his patience, thoroughness and attention to detail. To reflect this aspect of his life funds will also be made available to the library in the new school buildings.

As many of you will know Tony's other great interest in life was public transport in all its many forms. He had a large underground hobby room built in his garden in which he was in the process of setting up a substantial model railway system. This has been up and running using some of the six hundred plus engines, tenders and coaches that Tony



A. J. Slaney



A.J.Slaney

had amassed over the years. It was a sight to behold and visited by many Old Roans and other close friends. It is a measure of the man that in his will he wrote 'Sad that I could not complete the layout, but it has given me nearly twenty five years of pleasure dreaming about it. So don't be too sorry'.

Tony's school years and earlier days in the Old Roan Club are brilliantly covered by Ray Stone in his piece on which the Humanist Minister based the farewell at Tony's funeral. After the group of early friends Ray mentions went their separate ways he was taken under the wing of the 1965 leavers, a year his seniors. Prior to this our main thoughts about Tony were of the inordinately loud noise made by his shoes on the wooden floors as he progressed towards the toilets. I still recall with wry amusement the Captain Mainwaring like reaction to this cacophony from some of the older club members.

Tony settled quickly into this group which had a very full programme of day to day activities, weekends away and longer holidays. It was during this period that the quirky and off the wall side of his character emerged something that came as a bit of a surprise to everybody. The piece by Trevor Talbot and Graham Johnson on other pages gives you a flavour of this.

As well as his massive contribution to

the Association Tony was a stalwart of the Old Roan Club whose glory years ran until the late eighties. He was the voluntary bar steward on many occasions, the Friday and Sunday rota steward for many years, a voluntary barman on other rotas and a long serving member on the bar management committees. We spent many late evenings and early mornings overseeing functions at the Club making sure that the facility was available and in good order for the next opening and it is fair to say that I knew him as well as anyone. Latterly our group had again spread its wings to local hostelrys and beyond and at times I can still picture him walking towards the bus stop, fag in hand, dreaming of the next model railway set up.

It is impossible to put into words the scale of Tony's contribution to all things Old Roan so I will not try any further. Many of us will remember him as much as a good and true friend who you could always turn to for help and advice. A true gentleman, gracious, good natured, good hearted and one of the most generous men I have ever met. I am proud and honoured to have been his friend.

In years to come the toast to 'Absent Friends' at the annual reunion dinner of the Association will be just that little bit more meaningful and poignant.

As well as his massive contribution to *Monty Smith*

An Appreciation for Tony

Tony and I both joined Roan as eager eleven year olds in September 1959 and Tony left in 1966 after two years in the sixth form. We didn't know each other from primary school as I lived in Hither Green and Tony lived just off Shrewsbury Lane near the top of Shooters Hill. I believe he went to Plum Lane Primary School where his mother was the Secretary. Though, I didn't count him in my close circle of friends in the first year at Roan everybody knew Tony. He may not have cut the most striking figure or have been the most charismatic person but anyone from that year's intake will remember Tony purposefully striding the lower corridors before morning registration a notebook and pen in his hands and his trouser pockets full of loose change. For it was Tony you went to for a loan when you'd spent your bus fare on a lemon ice from the van at the school gate or you fancied chips at Gamberdella's Café at the Royal Standard. And it was Tony who found you the next day at pay-back time with his little account book, always up to date and always accurate. Even then he showed an attention to detail and painstaking method - it's no coincidence that on leaving school he went into Banking and stayed there until taking early retirement.

One of Tony's passions in those early days at school which stayed with him to the end of his life gives us another example of his methodical, careful nature. He collected bus numbers - lots of boys noted down the serial numbers of buses

as they drove in and out of depots or along busy High Roads and when you got home you checked the numbers on lists in your little Observer's book and crossed off the ones you'd seen. Other boys did the same with locomotive numbers, Tony, being Tony, took this hobby a stage further. He became fascinated by the logistics of timetabling and routing and made studies of timetables from up and down the country. He had quite a collection of timetables for buses and trains dating back many years and, at one stage, he was compiling a book of comparisons of timetables for Public Transport for Christmas periods down the years. As narrow and unappealing as that might seem it would have provided a unique insight into both social and religious changes over a long period and from region to region.

I was never into bus- or train-spotting myself but I shared one thing in common with those, like Tony, who were not "good at games". Consequently, on afternoons spent down at the school field while other lads were being picked for this team or that a few of us - the un-picked ones - were sent jogging round the roads that encircled the field. This was where, in long breathless conversations, Tony and I had become firm friends and this was where I realised that along with his methodical, logical and painstaking nature Tony was driven by a determinism to achieve the goals he had set for himself. In this case, running round the field, it might have been the number of circuits he set himself

to do - or the time he was to do them in. Whatever he engaged in Tony set himself targets - often kept to himself, not shared with anybody else - and he would not be happy until he had first reached those targets and then surpassed them.

Sometimes this determination would seem like obstinacy. I remember, before he passed his driving test, he would always cycle to and from school (about four miles each way) and even in the depths of winter I don't think I ever saw him wear a coat, or even a pullover, and certainly never gloves. Sometimes his hands would be mauve with the cold and almost welded to the handlebars. I can remember asking him why he didn't at least wear gloves and his reply was that he wanted to see what he could withstand.

When we were in the fifth year (if my memory serves me correct) some sixth formers came up with the idea of an overnight walk from London to Brighton - I think just for the sake of it, sponsored walks hadn't then been invented. They were to set off at 10pm from Westminster Bridge and walk through the night to Brighton Pier - just over 50 miles away. Tony put his name down and set himself the target of getting there by 1pm the next day, requiring an average speed of just under three and a half miles an hour non-stop. When the members of staff involved with this adventure realised that Tony was not yet a sixth-former he was told that he was too young to join the walk. This was something of a red rag

An appreciation for Tony Slaney - Cont.

to a bull for Tony so he went anyway - unofficially. What's more he very nearly achieved his exacting target missing it by about ten minutes.

As I say, some might regard this as obstinacy or even lunacy but I saw in it the same determination and drive and willingness to endure suffering and hardship in order to excel that drove the men whom we sang about every term in our school song and whose names were given to our Houses.

About the time of our fifth year in school (or maybe lower sixth) a new English teacher joined the school and took over the running of the Library from Alf Knott - he was Nigel Ballantyne and he was looking for lads to be his school librarians. Tony's methodical nature and my love of books (not necessarily reading them but seeing them on shelves) made us ideal candidates and we spent many hours - not just at lunchtimes and after school but also in the holidays - cataloguing, classifying and card indexing all the new books Nigel was bringing into the Library. Tony's early days as a "book-keeping moneylender" came in useful when it came to keeping tabs on who had taken which book out and when it was due back and who needed chasing. I'm sure it was a source of great disappointment to him that he couldn't impose fines for overdue books!

It was Nigel, too, who introduced Tony and I to Braithwaite and giving us both

An appreciation for Tony Slaney - Cont.

a love for the Lakes and for fell-walking which lasted us a lifetime. Long after we had left school we, and a handful of other friends, would pitch our tents in some farmer's field and just climb or fell-walk. Here Tony's toughness of spirit and determination came into its own again setting himself targets of numbers of peaks to be conquered, or times to climb them in, or degrees of difficulty to overcome – and he was never left wanting. When I myself started teaching and taking groups of boys from my Dagenham school to the huts at Braithwaite I had no hesitation in asking Tony to accompany me. I knew he would be thoroughly reliable, totally conscientious, constantly hardworking and that he would set a fine example to the lads both on the hills and off them.

At the first opportunity Tony took, and passed, his driving test giving up his bicycle in favour of his Dad's old Austin A40. One day, during a half-term when we had been working in the school library, we took a break for Pie, Chips and Beans at Gamberdella's. After lunch we got back into the car and Tony drove off – in the wrong direction! He hadn't said anything to me but he had set himself another target and I was to be his witness. A few weeks earlier the M1 Motorway had been extended further south from Watford to Elstree and Tony wanted to drive on it while it was still new – not only that, but he was determined to push the old A40 over the 100 hundred mile per hour mark (which you could in those days). In next

to no time we had reached Watford Gap, found a pub, had a pre-breathalyser pint, and set off on the return journey at equal speed, Tony happy that another ambition had been fulfilled.

I remember that A40 with mixed emotions for it was in that car that Tony gave me my first driving lesson – though this was another of Tony's plans that he hadn't actually told me about. It was on a day trip to Brighton when he pulled off the road up a private lane through a copse of trees. He brought the car to a halt, jumped out, and told me to move over into the driver's seat. With Tony now the passenger he talked me through the manoeuvres and gradually we inched forward – at least thirty yards. Then he showed me how to find reverse gear and we inched slowly backwards. However, keeping the car going straight in reverse was different from going forwards and just as I asked him which way to turn the steering wheel when going backwards there was a crunch and a bump and a tree embedded itself in the rear bumper. Teaching me to drive was an ambition too far – this was one target Tony wouldn't achieve! I don't think Vic (Tony's dad) ever realised that the car returned from its day out with a brand new bumper. (It's sad to think that Tony only outlived his Dad by four years)

On a Thursday evening, whilst we were still in the sixth form, a crowd of us – along with the faithful A40 – were to be found down at the Old Roan Club

An appreciation for Tony Slaney - Cont.

surrounded by pint mugs and giant enamel jugs full of Whitbread Tankard (we hadn't heard of real ale in those days!). Those of us that were still there at closing time (which strangely seemed to vary from week to week!) would pile into the A40 and Tony would drive everyone home – wherever they lived – and more often than not the ride would include a detour to the all-night pie stall at Waterloo Station. It wasn't long before those Thursday evenings in the Club bar turned into Thursday evenings behind the bar where, under Len Groves's tuition, Tony and I became regular little bar stewards.

And this was the start of a lifelong love affair for Tony with the Old Roan Club and Association. I often wonder where Tony would have been or what he would have done without his work for the Old Roans but surely it must be equally valid to ask where the Old Roans would have been without Tony's sterling work over so long a period. Others will be better qualified to write of this than I, but I am sure he brought that same determination, dedication and desire to achieve goals to the Old Roans that he did with everything else in his life.

Ray Stone

Delivered at Tony's funeral by the Humanist Minister.

Tribute to Tony Slaney

Of course Tony never really liked beer – or so he told Dan Calnan. But from some of the stories we've got to tell you, you may beg to differ.

For example, once, on a Hare & Hounds (a sort of pub crawl quiz) evening in London, Tony, although Marshall of a team, managed to lose them after 10 pints around the London Bridge area. In the early hours of the morning in those days trains to this area stopped running before midnight, so Jacques (as he was always known) decided he'd walk home – along the railway line. With rolled city umbrella he walked the line via Deptford, Greenwich & Woolwich, only pausing occasionally to climb a signal gantry to enjoy a better view of London. It was only when he reached the Woolwich area, and had to negotiate a very long tunnel, that doubts started to creep in. Tapping the line in the gloom with his rolled-up City umbrella (his knowledge of the railway network assuring him that the power had been switched off), Jacques turned round and saw the dim pinpoint of light at the other end, and decided to turn back.

On a similar theme Tony and his drinking partners, who shall remain nameless, were at London Bridge Station waiting to come home one evening, but the station announcer kept changing the platform from which their train would depart. In the end it was changed from platform 4 to 5 and an exasperated Tony decided to take the direct route and jumped down

onto the line to cross to the opposite platform!

Jacques was familiar with many forms of transport, even mini-cabs (or so he thought). On holiday with the usual suspects, all but Jacques had decided to go for a Chinese meal (after 10 pints of beer). Jacques expressed a desire for a curry, and set off on his own. A car had stopped on Jacques' route. A young man was letting out his girlfriend and saying "goodnight". Before he could give her a goodnight kiss, Jacques jumped into the front passenger seat and instructed the driver to take him to the restaurant. "But I'm not a cabbie," exclaimed the young man. "Yes you are," said Jacques, you've got an aerial!" After more discussions during which Jacques offered £5 for the fare (a generous amount in those days), the girlfriend thought it was probably best, and quicker, if the boyfriend assumed the role of cabbie. Thus, Jacques got his lift to the Indian.

After another 10 pints, during a Grand Union Canal holiday with the usual suspects, they returned to their canal boat to continue their journey, with Monty releasing the bow end rope and Jacques, the official photographer on the trip with his camera round his neck, on the stern rope. Wondering why the boat wasn't going anywhere, Monty turned to see Jacques with the stern rope wrapped round his ankle, and his body at a critical angle. Eventually the forward thrust of the boat propelled Jacques into the Grand Union Canal. Unlike the famous

underwater photographer of the time, Jacques Cousteau (after whom he was nicknamed), our Jacques failed to get a photograph. Floundering in the murky water of the Grand Union Canal, Jacques had resigned himself to drowning, until Monty assured him the depth was only about 3 feet.

But of course Tony never really liked beer.

There was of course a more serious side to the man we pay tribute to today and messages to the ORA have a common theme – Tony's devotion to the Old Roan Association and his kindness and professionalism in fulfilling his duties as secretary and president.

This gathering today is very unusual, simply because there are no immediate blood relatives. And yet, Tony was actually a member of a very big family, the Old Roan Association, and we too were certainly proud to have him as part of that family.

The last word can be from Tony, mentioning his model railway in his Will:

"Sad I could not complete the layout, but it has given me nearly 25 years of pleasure dreaming about it. So don't feel too sorry!"

Graham Johnson & Trevor Talbot

Email Tributes to Tony Slaney

The following is a selection of the messages and it is hoped they encompass the thoughts of us all. Apologies if your particular message is not included. There were obviously many in a similar vein.

Shocking and tragic news - he was such a stalwart of the Old Roans and will be sadly missed.

Duncan Thomson ('74-'81)

I'm sorry to hear about this. We were contemporaries at our respective schools.

Christine Logan ('59-'66)

I cannot adequately express my sorrow at hearing of Tony's passing. Although I had never met him personally, nevertheless through all the various magazine items and our infrequent exchange of e-mails I felt that he was a friend. He will be sorely missed indeed.

Barrie Atkinson ('47 - '52)

Tony was supportive and good to me when I lost my husband David Lee who had been at Roan from '61-'70. He had been an active member of Old Roan playing football and cricket so we met Tony regularly. Where have the years gone?

Sandie Lee

I am sorry I could not manage to attend Tony's funeral but was very glad to hear that a large number managed to show their respect and appreciation of all Tony's efforts.

I could not, because I am working a 40 hour week in Switzerland for Johnson and Johnson who have major problems with the records of a Swiss company they have purchased. I am shocked by the laxity in this area, which has greatly change my opinion of the efficient Swiss.

I took this opportunity because I had never been to Switzerland before. Also the family, as always need extra money - my daughter especially as belatedly she is doing an Open University degree in Psychology[Fees have gone up in the middle of the course by 300%].

My son, if you are interested, is on the Internet in Linkedin, or more easily seen under his name Mark Gasson, Blue Rock Foundation, Australia. A charity he founded for helping youngsters who have no ideas in life, and have often left home- he was invited by the Governor General to attend a meeting at her State house to discuss this. It is very close to an Item on Australian Antarctic Stations which is quite interesting to check out and view the videos about all 4/5 as my son is the youngest and on last. He is doing something I always wanted to do, and finishes his first year next March.

I am hoping for lots of photos so when I come to next year's re-union I can bore you all to tears.

All the best for now.

Ant Gasson

Email Tributes to Tony Slaney - Cont.

I was so sorry to hear the news about Tony Slaney. I had a lot of contact with him over the years and he was very good to my father as were all the Old Roans. I met him several times of course and he has kept me in touch with the school by sending the magazine. I should very much appreciate it if I could still receive the Magazine - there are still mentions occasionally of "Basher Berry"! - and even names I remember myself from my 3 years as a Roan girl in Ammanford.

Wendy Berry (Daughter of Lionel Berry)

I was shocked and distressed to receive your message about Tony Slaney this morning. I didn't know him well, but went once with him and other Old Roans on a visit to the old Braithwaite camp for a week in the mid-eighties. He was certainly a stalwart of the Old Roan Society - his name being almost synonymous with the organisation, and he will be sorely missed.

Terry Shepherd ('64 - '71)

What a splendid record of service to the school and the association. I will say a prayer for him at the time of the service on 28 October.

Keith Pound ('43 - '51)

I am sure he will be a hard act to follow.

Richard Lancaster ('55 - '61)

His commitment, dedication and support are legendary and the Association has lost a great stalwart.

Neil Harvey ('65 - '72)

Tony had recently helped me source some old school photographs which was very kind of him. He seemed like a very nice chap.

Patrick Goodall

I had not seen Tony for some years but I have fond memories of him propping up the bar with Dave Andrews on a Friday night. He was a stick of rock when it came to ORA.

Pat Coyle ('79 - '86)

He was the ORA. Good to hear Old Roans were at his side.

Angela Langley ('64 - '71)

The news about poor Tony is a shock. He was my only contact with the ORA in mother England as I now live and work in Wellington, New Zealand.

George Allan ('57 - '63)

Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand

My sincere condolences to his family and friends.

Albert Lee

Email Tributes to Tony Slaney - Cont.

Tony was a lovely fellow and a joy to correspond with.

Maddison Pilcher ('03 - '11)

Tony was a good friend to me in the 70's and 80's when I played football and I really appreciate the huge amount of work he did to keep the OR family together.

Keith Banks ('66 - '73)

It is now 34 years since I left Roan girls to take up another headship in Tunbridge Wells but he always kept me in touch with events at Roan and I was very grateful.

Ann Scott ('75 - '79)

Ex Head and Vice President

He was a stalwart. My glass shall be raised accordingly on the 28th, I'll need to do some O-level maths to correct for US Eastern Standard Time allowing for the daylight saving time differences between the two countries.

David Porter ('64 - '71)

For many years I have been tracing old Roan girls and Tony has sent me the relevant Roan school record which he had in his possession. He collected them from the Roan school when the school closed many years ago.

Beryl Chipchase ('52 - '57)

A fine gentleman all round.

Mike Smith ('71 - '78)

Tony was such a gentleman. He worked tirelessly for the Old Roans and I am so pleased to hear that he was surrounded by all his friends at the end. He will be missed.

Ann Chambers

Tony's great work for the Old Roans has, for many years, kept us distant, off-shore folk, in touch, and still part of the Roan family.

Dave Sbea - Wellington, New Zealand.

I had been communicating with Tony earlier in the year as he asked me for an article for the O.R. Magazine, which I duly produced.

He has been an outstanding servant.

Terry (Nobby) Blanchard ('48 - '55)

Tony was dedicated to the Old Roan and will be sadly missed. Not many like him that's for sure and a pleasure to have known him and be associated with the organisation he worked so hard for.

Phil Coleman ('72 - '77)

A lovely and dedicated man who will be missed by many.

Peter Cox ('66 - '73)

Email Tributes to Tony Slaney - Cont.

A really lovely guy, clearly devoted to his work with The Club.

Cliff Benford ('71 - '77)

I shall treasure the 'photo of him with my classmates taken at the ORA dinner.

Derek Carter ('45 - '52)

A great man for the club over the years. We shall raise a glass to Tony and remember him with great affection.

Keith Bradbrook ('66 - '73) & Daryle Bradbrook (nee Hayes) ('65 - '72)

I had contact when my father (Ken Graf) died. When I was clearing Dad's house I found several silver cups and trophies inscribed with the Old Roan Association which I eventually passed on to Tony.

Angela Ruffle

I admired him for his cheerful dedication. How very appropriate that he was our President so recently.

Alan Collins ('43 - '50)

We were work colleagues at Barclay's for more than twenty years.

Bernard Hunt

I would certainly endorse his massive contribution to the ORA having been assistant secretary to Elsie Allen when she was secretary of the Old Roan Girls Association. Since my move to Manchester in 1961 with my family I have only managed to get to a few meetings --- and one was the last ORG at Devonshire Drive.

Betty Williams ('34 - '41)

Poor old Jacques! He and the ORA were so closely interlinked, particularly for the many of us who live away from SE London. It is due to his lengthy dedication to the Association and its members that I feel as though I've lost so much more than a much respected old friend. He was a shining example of what being a John Roan boy really meant.

Brian Goddard ('61 - '67)

Tony was a very sweet man and ALWAYS remembered to make sure I was involved in the life of the Old Roans.

Jenny Ashmore

I will retain many fond memories of him formed during my active years at the club. Please extend my regards should any club members ask after me.

Keith Weaver ('61 - '65)

This is truly a time of great sadness and the deepest pride and love.

The Association has lost a great advocate and stalwart servant. We have all lost a dear friend. I last saw Tony when he was standing on Baker Street tube station as the Underground Steam train I was on pulled through - we waved, both a little unsure that it could really be the other. It will be a fond memory.

For me Tony was an ever present part of Old Roan affairs and functions, both formal and informal, for our generation as Frank Barnes must have been for a previous one. He was, in the modern parlance, a true legend. I am proud to have known him and will be forever grateful for the sterling service he has given the Association. His death will I hope remind us all of the shared experiences, shared expectations and shared hopes of "the Roan Boys" that makes the school we attended and the friendships we made there such an important part of our lives.

John Dennis ('64 - '71)

My name is Shujaul Azam, I have lived next door to Tony at 141 Lyme Farm Road since 1991. He showed us the room he had built to house his railway collection and told us of the pleasure the project had given him. I could see he was extremely proud of what he had achieved and also of the fantastic collection of

Email Tributes to Tony Slaney - Cont.

railway models and artefacts he had acquired. It's so sad that he was unable to spend more time during his retirement years deriving more pleasure from his great hobby. Tony was a meticulous and kind man and I was extremely sad to hear the news of his death. We got on very well and am so sorry that he has now left this world.

Shujaul Azam

Tony and I started work at Barclays Bank on the same day in 1966, and both moved to Trowbridge with the job in 1990, and kept in touch via Christmas Card notes after his retirement from the bank. He was such a nice man, and we often laughed about his dedication to the Old Roan Association, and the fact that he was first attracted to his flat in Lyme Farm Road because it backed on to the school playing fields and provided an easy walk home from the Club on a Thursday night! He sent a copy of the Old Roan magazine with my Christmas Card last year and I was pleased to see the photographs of the centenary dinner and that he had fulfilled the role of president for that year. The Association formed a large part of his life and it was good to see that they thought highly of him too. I am sure that Tony would have appreciated the friendship of his fellow Old Roans, especially towards the end of his life.

Unknown Contributor

Email Tributes to Tony Slaney - Cont.

The following messages were received by Monty Smith soon after Tony's funeral and reflect much of what was said by other attendees. Bob Burton, Ray Stone and Phil Wilson were in the same School Year as Tony.

David Buckley has over a long period organised reunions for those of the immediate post war years and remains in touch with many of them.

I battled my way through the bad weather and traffic yesterday to get to Tony's funeral and I am glad that I was able to attend. Although a sad occasion for many of us the event really did feel like a celebration of Tony's life and, I felt, hit just the right note. Tony would certainly have enjoyed it, and the little touches like the decorated coffin and the running "Tony didn't really like beer" tag line of the stories fitted perfectly with the occasion. I for one had a lump in my throat singing the School Song and I am sure many others felt the same.

One good outcome of my attendance was that I am back in touch with a number of people that I have not seen for years and we can hopefully meet up again in less sober circumstances. I am not sure who made the arrangements for the funeral but I know that several people must have been involved, including yourself. Can you please pass on my thanks for the way in which the funeral was arranged. Tony could not have wished for a better send off.

Bob Burton.

First of all I want to thank you for everything you did for Tony yesterday. It was an absolutely fitting tribute to the man and I am sure that – had he been able to have witnessed it – Tony would have been very happy and, justifiably, proud.

I know, too, that in the last months, weeks and hours of his life you were a good friend to him and, I'm sure, made his passing easier.

Some people I spoke to yesterday were wondering how Tony could ever be replaced in the ORA and it is true he is going to be a very hard act to follow – but someone always comes along to fill the vacuum left by others. Whilst, in the short term, a heavier burden will fall on a few shoulders in time new people will emerge, perhaps inspired by Tony's influence.

I have always regretted not being able to play a more active role in the Association (especially the Theatre Club) than I do – partly through distance and partly through the busy life I've led since retiring but, after yesterday, I am determined to stay more in touch with people. Yesterday re-united me with three old friends whom I had not seen or heard of for at least forty years (and I'd been Best Man for two of them!) and two more have been in touch via e-mail after I left my address on the website guest book. Tony's legacy to me will be always to value the enduring friendships made at Roan.

Email Tributes to Tony Slaney - Cont.

If you are able at some time to arrange for some of us to see his railway layout I would be very interested in coming along.

I carried a cheque with me yesterday for Cancer Research and this morning found it still in my coat pocket! I've contacted the people at Co-op Funeralcare (their address and phone number was on the Order of Service) and spoke to Lisa and she said they'd be happy to process the donation so I will post it to them. I also took the opportunity to thank them for their role yesterday and especially for that wonderful coffin.

Once again – thank you.

Ray Stone

Many thanks for the email and I look forward to seeing Tony's dungeon etc. Having seen him when he was collecting some of this stuff at transport rallies and model railway shows, it's very sad that he didn't have long enough to wallow in it.

I first met Tony (and Ray) almost as soon as I started at Roan aged 11 in 1962 when I volunteered to work in the library where they were already running things. I well remember taking delivery of loads of new books in the later, more dynamic era of Nigel Ballantyne, as described by Ray, but I remember enjoying the process of wrapping the dust covers in protective sleeves, getting them ready for putting on the shelves. My main memory of

cataloguing, that Tony liked so much, was trying to puzzle out the Dewey codes for the non-fiction tomes, which wasn't always straightforward.

Later I worked in the City (just a couple of years for Ron Harmer) and met up with Tony once or twice for lunch. After that it was at rallies (as mentioned above) that we sometimes met and I occasionally gave him a lift home in my group's Routemaster bus.

A small coincidence – last week my son came over (to borrow something, as usual!) and he saw the order of service. I mentioned about the railway room in the garden and it turns out that some of his friends live in the flat above Tony's and had told him all about the garden feature and how sad it was that the owner had died. It's quite a small world.

Thanks for all you are doing and I look forward to getting the dates. If there is anything I can do to help regarding Tony's collections then I will do my best.

Phil Wilson



Don Boon, Steve Nelson, Tony Slaney and Paul Watts. 1983

Dear All,

I attended Tony's funeral yesterday at Eltham Crematorium – it was a cold windy day and, due to delays with previous cremations, we were waiting some 20 minutes for the service to commence.

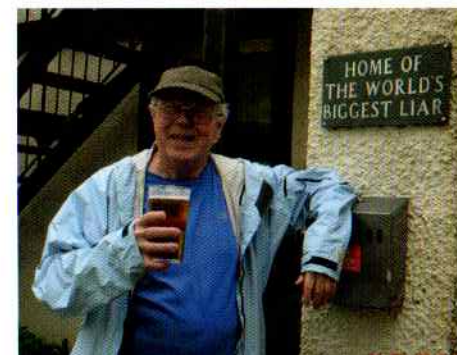
There were, I estimate, over 100 Old Roans present and it was standing room only in the Chapel. Tony's coffin was decorated with pictures of Steam Trains and Red London Buses which gave a colourful contrast to a sombre day.

The tributes were read by Trevor Talbot and Grahame Johnson.

On a lighter note, I was told that, at last Friday night's Annual Dinner, the current Headmaster, Des Malone, announced that following extensive building works currently being undertaken at our Maze Hill School, there will be some Open Days next September/October so it may be possible for us to combine this with a reunion of our Group. I will let you know when I hear any further news on this subject.

Best wishes to you all,

David Buckley



School Leavers' 2013

Every year, after they have finished their exams, we are delighted to offer John Roan School leavers the facility of the John Roan Club for their Leavers' "Do". This year marked the seventh occasion of so doing, and we were delighted by a record turnout of nearly forty students, who all enjoyed the event, on Friday 28th June. They were joined by the school's Head of Post 16, Sharan Sanghera (herself a former John Roan pupil!), who organises this annual event with me, along with other members of staff including Joan O'Donoghue. On the hosting side of the event I was delighted that our President, Andy Daniels, could join me, along with Neal Haslam, Linda Nelson, Viv Lawrence and Steve Nelson.

Each school leaver receives a voucher for a free alcoholic drink (if their age satisfies the licensing laws of course) and soft drinks are free throughout the event, all of which were ably provided at the bar by Malcolm and Victor. We always provide a barbecue, and I was grateful to Graham Lawrance for having organised this and Dan Sales for working so hard as our chef. The usual blazing sunshine wasn't evident this year, and apart from dodging the

showers to produce a group photograph, this year's leavers seemed perfectly happy to celebrate inside the Club, playing darts and pool, and some were content to be playing card games over a drink.

The students who attended were fine young people and excellent ambassadors of the school, and the atmosphere was relaxed and convivial. At these events they are all given three years free membership of the JR Club and invited to use the facility to socialise with their school friends in the future. They all left the Club with a copy of the Roan Magazine.

Organising this event is a legacy from my term as President, with the aim of welcoming each year's leavers to the Club and the Association. It remains a pleasure for me to do so for as long as the committee continues to ask me, and it is always a delight to make the necessary arrangements each year with Sharan Sanghera.

Here's to next year!

Trevor Talbot



School Leavers' 2012



John Roan Club – Friday 22 June, 2012

The 2012 John Roan School Leavers' Do, our sixth to date to be held at the Club, fell victim to industrial action on Friday 22nd June. All arrangements had been made as in previous years, but the late confirmation of the London Bus Drivers' strike over an Olympic bonus on that same day resulted in a reduced number of leavers being able to travel to the playing fields for arrival by 12.30pm, after which a welcome speech would be made, the bar would be opened, and the festivities would begin. At 12.30 only five leavers had arrived, and only nine by 1.30, at which point there were twice the number of Old Roans and school staff (including the Head, Des Malone) present as there were leavers. More arrived in small

groups until the final number of eighteen had arrived at around 2.30, with the event finishing at 4pm! As usual we had been expecting around thirty-five leavers to be joining us. Sharan Sanghera, Head of the Sixth Form, was in text contact with them all throughout, and apparently they had all been expressing disappointment at either having to arrive late, or indeed not at all.

With their exams being finished, they were all travelling independently from their homes to the Club, and in some cases there were no buses running all. The concern of those who weren't able to get there, they would then have the problem of getting home again! Had

there been more notice of the strike, both Sharan and the Head said that arrangements would have been made to collect them from their homes in school minibuses and return them afterwards. Still, these events can't be expected to occur with the same level of success every year, and in any event the eighteen leavers we did see seemed to thoroughly enjoy themselves, and all the necessary details were collected from them by Tony Slaney and Deb Wallis, Membership Secretary of the Club, so we can give them their free three years membership of the Club and Association, which hopefully they will continue with afterwards. Even the fine weather we have come to expect for this event (known now amongst the organisers as "Leavers' Weather"!) deserted us this time, so Graham Lawrance dutifully cooked the barbecue in the kitchen at the Club and served it up in the hall.

It was good to see those who had made it though, and we wish them all every success with their exam results and of course for the future. We look forward to organising next year's event!

Trevor Talbot



Daniel Morris has a life changing experience with help from The Old Roans

The 16th August 2012 saw the commencement of the London International Youth Science Forum (LIYSF) - a gathering of over 300 students from almost 60 different countries around the world, united in their passion for science. LIYSF, held this year at Imperial College London at South Kensington, is a two week residential programme of lectures and social activities. As a result of the generous contribution of the Old Roan Association I was one of the 300 participants.

When going through the registration process, I must admit I was slightly sceptical about the testimonies and claims made on the website. I have attended a number of university courses in the past that have branded their courses as 'life changing' and talked of their participants being 'the future leaders in their field', and whilst they were interesting and useful, they were arguably guilty of exaggeration. LIYSF, on the other hand, would have me eating my words just a day or two after my arrival.

Exciting Programme

The Programme of Events I received on arrival to the Forum revealed just how much fun was to be had over the coming two weeks. Nearly every day was jam packed morning-to-evening with lectures, scientific visits, debates, optional excursions and celebratory events. The opening ceremony in the Royal College of Music's Britten Theatre, where participants waved the flags of the countries they represented before an

introductory lecture, set the scene for the wonderful two weeks ahead.

The lectures varied greatly in both their subject matter and presentation. Many were led by scientists at the top of their field, involved in ground-breaking research. As a student interested in Biology and Medicine, the lectures that were particularly appealing to me included one concerning developments in exploiting antibodies for treatment of a variety of diseases, as well as a lecture on our expanding understanding of pain.

Graphene and Higgs Boson

However, what was truly inspiring was the ability of the Forum to spark my interest in subjects that I'd never broached before - lectures on the future uses of the fascinating material that is graphene were intriguing, as was the lecture on the use of fusion power and a lecture on the much talked of Higgs Boson particle, led by eminent physicist Professor John Ellis. Other lectures were more light-hearted - our inner child was certainly entertained as we watched one lecturer dress up in multicoloured fluorescent outfits and another make a bubble large enough to contain a participant.

UCL, Norwich and Purple Tomatoes

Our learning was supported through visits to various institutions both in and outside London. The institutions that I visited were: University College London, during which we tested our pain thresholds by submerging our hands in ice cold water; The John Innes Centre in

Norwich, where we heard talks about the latest advances in plant science (in 2008 they genetically modified a tomato plant to produce purple tomatoes containing an antioxidant helpful in preventing cancer and cardiovascular disease!); and the University of Oxford's neuroscience department, where we looked at how exercise affects intelligence, how we can map brain activity with MRI scanners and advancements in the treatment of Parkinson's disease.

Social Life, One Direction and Spice Girls

Aside from being an intellectually stimulating course, LIYSF was just as committed to providing us with a social programme which allowed friendships to be formed that will hopefully last a lifetime. On campus, on top of two terrific parties, we had a 'Songs of Home' night where a number of participants presented traditional songs and dances. Inspired by this, we decided to present our own performance on behalf of England at the 'International Cabaret' night - a very traditional act in which we performed as One Direction and the Spice Girls, much to the amusement of the audience. On top of this we had the opportunity to go on tours of London, trips to Hampton Court and Windsor, a number of theatre trips (I chose the Phantom of the Opera which was fantastic) and a visit to the London Eye. Being one of the only Londoners there meant I could show off all we have to offer during the rest of our free time, so trips to our Royal Parks, Trafalgar Square, the South Bank and Oxford Street were all squeezed in to our busy schedules.

Travels Ahead

It is hard to put into words just how brilliant LIYSF was. Even more than two weeks later, I still get frequent pangs of desire to be back with the wonderful friends I met. Many of us remarked that it was intriguing how in two weeks we'd developed friendships that rivalled those that we'd made in our entire time at school or elsewhere. The forum has been without a doubt life changing: I have since reconsidered my whole career plan - LIYSF has shown me that there are so many possibilities in science that I've yet to consider being a part of. Not only has it affected my long-term plans, but also the plans for my gap year. A few Australians have been kind enough to offer me to visit them next year (hopefully their parents will be just as obliging!) which has opened up the prospect of me visiting a continent that I'd barely considered visiting before. I cannot thank those who have allowed me to be a part of LIYSF enough, in particular David Horsburgh, Viv Lawrence and Phil Kinch. Without their assistance, and the help of the ORA and the JR Foundation as a whole, I wouldn't have known about the Forum, let alone participated! I still carry the feeling of inspiration that both the lecturers and fellow participants stimulated in me, and hope that other John Roan students can be fortunate enough to feel the same way in the future.

Oxford and Travels

Dear Viv and Old Roans

I just thought I'd send you a message to update you on how things are going.

Two quite important things have occurred since we last saw each other.

The first you may have heard about via someone at JR. In December I went for an interview at New College, Oxford. It seemed to go so appallingly that I was certain I wouldn't get a place, but surprisingly enough in January I was proved wrong, and I'll be starting at Oxford in October!

The second is that I'm currently in Brisbane on a journey up Australia's east coast before flying to Southeast Asia. What you may find particularly interesting about this is that I stayed for a month at a friends house in Sydney (with another friend visiting from New Zealand for a week), will be staying with another friend tomorrow night in Brisbane, and will be staying with another when I reached Townsville. All four of these friends were made at LIYSF! You certainly weren't wrong when you said I'd make friends that would last a lifetime!

The main reason why I'm writing is to tell you about these two things is to thank you. Yesterday I spent a long time considering what brought about these two things and acknowledged that a large part is down to your efforts, not only to get me a place on LIYSF, but also for

your ongoing altruistic concern for me. LIYSF formed a significant part of my personal statement whilst also convincing me to visit a part of the world that I would have otherwise overlooked in my plans. I hope I can convey just how grateful I am for your part in these two achievements - I won't forget your kindness soon!

It was also pointed out to me by one of my LIYSF friends that the report I sent you has been used on their website.

If you'd like to keep up to date with my travels, I have a blog:
www.danielgoestravelling.tumblr.com

Best wishes,
Daniel

March 2013

Daniel started his studies at New College, Oxford in September 2013.

Wing Kwan Chow at LIYSF 2013

On 24th July to 7th August, I went to the Imperial College London for the London International Youth Science Forum (LIYSF). This year LIYSF invited about 350s top young scientists from across 60 countries around the world. I was luckily enough to involve in this amazing event. As the modern world problems (e.g. global warming and energy resource) become more complicate and challenging, the topic for this year LIYSF was decided to be "Crossing science boundaries". There are lots of "boundaries" among most of the science subjects and they put a limit to modern scientific development. For example, when biologists want to understand the theory of photosynthesis, they cannot do this alone; they will need to work with physicists who have the knowledge on photons, as well as chemists who have the knowledge on the chemical molecule. LIYSF believe that by crossing these boundaries, it will make the world problems become easier to solve. During this period of time, I went to lots of different types of lectures which expanded my knowledge in the scientific area. The most interesting lecture to me was about bubbles. Everyone has played bubbles during their childhood; however, Dr Cyril Isenberg used the bubbles to make a 4D cube. He then made use of it to find out the shortest distance between 4 points without any calculation. This lecture made me have an idea that an object which is ordinary to us, with the hand of scientist, it will become a great tool to our world.

In here, I want to thank for people in The John Roan Foundation and the ORA who sponsored me to take part in this wonderful event. In particular, I want to thank Mr David Horsburgh (the main sponsor), Mr Vivian Lawrence (who helped me a lot during the application process) and Mr Kinch.



Wing Chow at the LIYSF. Wing is with Professor Richard O'Kennedy – the President of the LIYSF and the Director & Professor of Biological Sciences at the Biomedical Diagnostics Institute, National Centre for Sensor Research, Dublin City University.

Zach Delf at LIYSF 2014

My experience at LIYSF was a truly unforgettable one. The LIYSF is a two week long residential event held at Imperial College to give like minded students from around the world the opportunity to broaden their scientific understanding and make long lasting friendships. As I read the testimonies made by previous participants, I was expecting a lot from what I was about to experience in the two weeks. However, the forum really surpassed my expectations. I was extremely impressed by the organisation of the whole programme. I also felt that the forum was very well-planned and from the first day, I knew that I was going to have an amazing time. As I looked through the event programme, I was excited to find that every day would be filled with lectures, visits, debates and cultural events.

The lectures which were presented by researchers and scientists with years of experience encompassed a wide range of interesting fields. The lectures varied in their subject but were all about current breakthroughs and developments in science. They gave me a glimpse of the endless possibilities in science and technology which increased my passion to study science in the future. I have learnt so much more about the applications of science in the real world and how the different aspects of science like medicine, technology and engineering can all work hand-in-hand to solve many of the problems we face today. The lecture

I found most enjoyable was by Roma Agrawal about the construction of the Shard. I learnt about the many purposes it serves and the reason behind its unusual structure and design. This lecture also revealed to me the amount of planning and analysis alongside the application of maths and mechanics that goes into major projects like this.

At the forum I was able to discuss my interest in science with many other people from around the world. I learnt about the influence of science and technology in their respective countries. It was encouraging to know that there are so many other students like me with a similar passion for science. I enjoyed the events planned like the opening and closing parties as well as the cabaret night where I learnt a lot about different cultures. I went on visits to the London Eye and Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford. I was very impressed at how the programme was made to be as social as possible. There were so many opportunities to talk to new people and make new friends. I am so grateful to have been able to make so many new friends and I know that these friendships will surely last a long time. We're already planning a reunion in 2015! I am extremely grateful for the experience I had which will always be remembered.

*Zach Delf
October 2014*

News of Old Roans

Christmas Reunion 2012

Once again the lucky generation of Old Roans—the fifties and sixties students—met for their annual lunch for the 22nd time,



focusing once again on remembering Sir Alf Knott who had been guest of honour at so many of the previous Christmas lunches. In his stead were both Paul and Chris Knott who we were delighted to see. Again the venue was Cafe Rouge in Greenwich but first, a few hardy souls undertook a mini 'beating the bounds', using details supplied by Neal Haslem and with a Victorian map dug out by

Mike Wilkins. It was nearly 13.30h by the time the group had finished welcoming each other and then it was party hats



on, crackers and full turkey dinner. John Bruce organised the whole event with smooth efficiency, later leading the group to a local hostelry for a further few hours of reminiscing and talking over the good old days. Most of us are now fully retired and are spread throughout the world but continue to celebrate the education the Roan Grammar School provided. There will be a 23rd reunion next Christmas. Check the Old Roan guest book page for details.



The attendees (from left to right) were: Reg Hodge, Mike Hansford, Mike Callaghan, Des Grimble, Dave Bryden, Terry Whitton. Simon Perry, John Hester. Bill White, Mike Wilkins, (at rear John Dennis) Alan Hamer, Ray Bliss, Adrian Buckle, Pete Motton, John Bruce.

Alastair Mitchell 64-71 celebrates 60th birthday at the club

Mitch's 60th birthday celebration at the Club on Saturday 7th September. Alastair Mitchell was at Roan from '64-'71.

The photo includes contemporaries ('64-'71).



Neil Harvey, Martin Mills, Alan Wilson, "Mitch", Laurence Hughes, Trevor Talbot, Steve Gillman.

Old Roans Reunion

A year reunion ('67-'74) took place when Alan Buhl, Chris Combes, Stavros Demetriades, Neal Haslam, David Jeffries and John Pexton accompanied by their respective wives attended the wedding of their contemporary Owen Davis in October 2012 (see 'Marriages'). Most of this group with other friends and family were at the Centenary Dinner the previous year.

Neal Haslam ('67-'74) has been elected Master of the John Roan School Lodge,

No. 5085, the first member to achieve this role for a fourth time since the lodge was formed in 1929. The lodge was the first Roan group to include the full name of our founder in its title, a practice now more commonplace. Any masons who may wish to visit a lodge meeting are invited to contact Neal direct.

Marriage

DAVIS – MOORE on 13th October 2012 in Crayford, Kent, Owen Davis ('67-'74) to Margaret Moore.

Roan Theatre Company Nicholas Nickleby

WED. 28th NOVEMBER to SATURDAY 1st DECEMBER 2012



New blood rejuvenates and inspires a great performance from the Roan Theatre Company

RTC delighted us once again at the Tyler Theatre with their rendition of Mr Dickens's Nicholas Nickleby. You might generally expect a long haul with this play, but they made good use of a clever adaptation by Nick Warburton, which ran for no more than two and a half hours! All the basics of the story were covered, and an appreciative audience were happy with the running time I felt. The director was RTC regular, Graham Johnson, who also managed to play Newman Noggs. I am told that he has harboured an ambition to present Nickleby for many years - and he did a very good job. My only comment would be that it may have benefitted from

greater use of suitable music throughout the action.

New youngsters in a large cast

It was a good ensemble performance, involving a large cast, with some playing more than one part - and in some cases four! It was good to see some youngsters getting involved, with Lewis Wilkinson, Oliver Hassan and Steven Bushell all looking and sounding suitably downtrodden as the wicked Wackford Squeers's schoolboys, and Charlotte Armitage, Charlotte French, Amelia Moore and Freya Moore delighting us as

Roan Theatre Company - Nicholas Nickleby Cont.

Kenwig's girls. And then there were the principal players, starting with the RTC stalwarts: Trevor Talbot played two very different characters, looking suitably dark and sinister, yet occasionally humorous, as Wackford Squeers, a wonderful Dickensian character; and then at the start of the second act, just when we needed it, giving us his famous comic timing as the effeminate and affected theatrical impresario, Vincent Crummles. After this he managed extremely quickly to transform himself back to Squeers again - how did he do that?



Isabel Trafford played Mrs Nickleby and later the ten year old (?) Ninetta Crummles with some gusto. Stuart Mitchell-Smith played John Browdie and Ned Cheeryble to good effect. Richard Rickson amused us, as always, as Mr Kenwigs and Arthur Gride. Glynis Watson was suitably grand as Madame Mantalini and the magnificent Mrs Crummles, and enjoyed herself as rough diamond Peg Sliderskew, giving us a very funny short scene with Arthur Gride. Vince Bennett played the wordy role of Charles Cheeryble, announced amusingly as the "twin" of Stuart Mitchell-Smith as Ned. The company's

Musical Director, David Horsburgh, played the morose and demanding Walter Bray while also providing some live piano music from the wings and producing an excellent programme for the production. And last, but by no means least, Leonard Quaife was excellent as the predatory Sir Mulberry Hawk.



And then we had an array of young newcomers to the RTC, who gave some memorable performances: First I must mention Kyle Young, who looked and sounded just right and didn't put a foot wrong in the title role as Nicholas. His delivery was crisp and enthusiastic, maintaining an optimistic outlook throughout. Oliver Wills displayed fine acting talent in his portrayal of the difficult role of Smike. I'm no actor myself, but I could see how he had cast aside all inhibitions, to display the twitches and facial distortions which are essential in conveying this pitiful character. The theme of Dickens's story is the triumph of the human spirit, and in this Nicholas and Smike are pivotal. The high quality of their performances carried us with them all the way.

Versatile and spirited

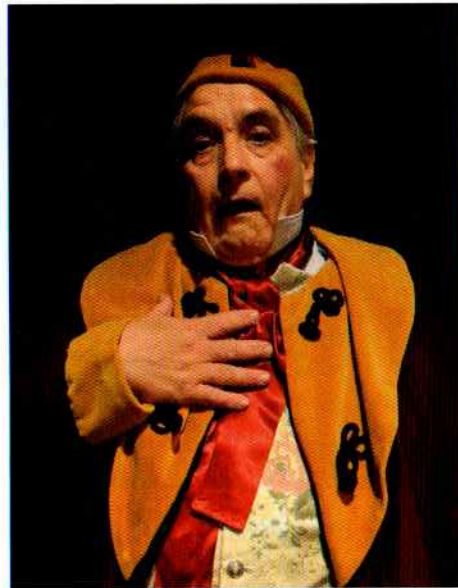
I was impressed with the versatility of Alan Walter's acting in the varied roles of Nicholas's father, Mr Mantalini, Brooker and a Footman. This actor had good stage presence and captured each of his characters very well I thought. Susannah Best was delightful as Kate Nickleby, as was Francine Gardner as Matilda Price, Miss Petowker and Madeline Bray. These are two impressive actresses, giving us clear delivery of their lines and convincing us in the parts they played. Louise Hawkins amused us with her spirited portrayals of Fanny Squeers and Juliet. And Christopher Murray did well in the very different roles of the gorging Young Wackford and the foppish Lord Verisopht, an actor with good stage appearance and presence.

Hopefully we will be seeing much more of these talented newcomers at future RTC productions!

Andrea Gambell, RTC's resident costumier, took to the stage in this production – it really was a case of "all hands on deck" I think – and was memorable as wicked Mrs Squeers, administering the brimstone and treacle to the schoolboys with great satisfaction. She did this in addition to supplying all the costumes for the production -- how hard they work for our enjoyment!

We saw Kath Lynch, an experienced actress, for the first time at the Tyler as Mrs Kenwigs and Miss Knag in this production. Kath came to RTC by

courtesy of the Priory Players in Eltham, as did Val Youngman, who first appeared with RTC as Chief Warden Hodges in Dad's Army a few years ago. Val played the important role of Ralph Nickleby, Nicholas's scheming uncle, who comes to a sticky end and hangs himself! This was quite an effective, if gruesome, scene at the end of the play, and Val's performance was to a very professional standard.



And finally I must mention The Chorus: This was a group of seven actors, who took on the difficult task of narrating the storyline and action of the play, sometimes having to slot in just the odd line here and there. This process I think assisted Mr Warburton in condensing the running time, with the chorus at times covering in a few lines what would usually have taken up a considerable amount of running time. Our members

of The Chorus did this very well I must say. The names of these heroes are: Stuart Mitchell-Smith, Richard Rickson, Louise Hawkins, Isabel Trafford, Leonard Quaife, David Horsburgh and Cigdem Kemal.

Behind the scenes

This was a very big production, and the essential contributions behind the scenes were provided by: Production Manager Don Boon; Stage Manager Jenny Pearson; Make-up provided by Tara Baker & Glynis Watson; Props supplied by Joan O'Donoghue & Ashley George ; Photography by Kerri Walter; Box Office Freda Goldberg, and Front-of -House services provided by Annette Talbot, Freda Goldberg, Claire Talbot, Joan Stanbridge, Teresa Wilkins and Don Boon.

Effective lighting for the production was designed by Edward Armitage and provided competently by lighting engineer, Rod Stanbridge. Sound operators were Joan O'Donoghue and Math Morrison. The RTC's artistic set designer, Dave Townsend, who never disappoints us, came up with a very suitable and adaptable set for this big production on such a small stage!

There was little to criticise, although, as I said at the beginning, greater use of music throughout scene changes etc. would have assisted the pace and enjoyment of the production in my opinion. For example, when Vincent Crummles's company

head off to take Portsmouth by storm, after such a big build-up from the larger than life impresario, they could have been assisted with a resounding fanfare rather than leaving to the sound of their own footsteps. Also the pace of the show lost its way slightly towards the end, but recovered well. But I am being picky here I think, and the overall impression was a very good one.



Congratulations

Congratulations to everyone who contributed to this bold undertaking, and thanks RTC for another enjoyable evening at the Tyler Theatre. I am reliably informed that this may have been the last one to be presented there, and that the company is seeking alternative premises. Hopefully they will find somewhere with better audience facilities...

*Dave Measures
March 2013*

Roan Theatre Company Communicating Doors



A contrasting play with a quirky twist



Roan Theatre Company "Billy Liar" and the Future

On Saturday 29th November 2014 the Roan Theatre Company performed at the Tyler Theatre for the last time. The theatre is part of the Eltham Green complex, has been our home since 1994, and staged 35 RTC productions. The theatre will be demolished and will be fondly remembered. The RTC is fortunate to have received a significant legacy from the estate of Tony Slaney, a long time supporter and occasional participant, and from April 2015 we plan to stage our productions at the Bob Hope Theatre, also in Eltham. Our opening production will be "Dad's Army" from April 29th – May 2.

"Billy Liar" was adapted as a play by Keith Waterhouse in 1960 in collaboration with his school friend, Willis Hall, from his 1959 novel. It was later made into an iconic film of the 1960s. Set in a provincial Northern town it perfectly represents its time with the austere post war years of social and class repression developing into the 1960s and everything that decade promised.

Oliver Wills played Billy with a modern intensity on his relentless journey to inevitable failure and disappointment. Gemma Dand sensitively underplayed the hapless Barbara who epitomises everything he needs to escape from and Francine Gardner provided a lovely and energetic cameo as Rita, his alternative nightmare. Gabriella Asleban provided the necessary balance as the free-spirited Liz who offers the escape route he is doomed to reject. Ben Wilkins plays his

mate Arthur with an easy and relaxed manner and impressive northern accent.

Billy's domestic situation offered wonderful character opportunities for three RTC veterans. Trevor Talbot put in his usual excellent performance as his dad and had the best lines. Isabel Trafford provided very good support as the long-suffering and confused mother. Glynis Watkins enjoyed her time on stage as Billy's gran and the audience were sad to see her depart before the interval.



Graham Johnson's direction provided good pace and attention to period detail and Dave Townsend's set was again a triumph.

The RTC has enjoyed a successful run of productions over our 20 years at the Tyler Theatre and we look forward to our future at the Bob Hope Theatre. We hope to see our loyal supporters at "Dad's Army" in April.

David Horsburgh

Roan Theatre Company presents
By special arrangement with Samuel French

Dad's Army

By Jimmy Perry & David Croft

29th April - 2nd May 2015

Bob Hope Theatre, Wythfield Rd, Eltham, SE9 5TG
7:45pm (Bar opens 7:15pm), Sat Matinee 2:30pm
Tickets £9 (concessions £8)
Box Office: 020 8850 3702
or book on-line at www.bobhopetheatre.co.uk

Don't tell him, Pike!

Memories from the Roan Girls school

Sheila Thormcroft recently contacted us with some photos and a memory of Roan girls who were Sea Rangers in the early 50's. The girls used to meet in the Royal Naval College and the skipper was Margaret Garland -they made a trip in a converted Brixham trawler to Holland! If anyone can add details or memories of this exciting trip please contact the editor.

It only goes to prove that the Roan girls have great stories to tell as well. Sheila apologises for not recalling all the names in the photos - I think she can be forgiven after 60 years !

Jan Farmer
Editor

Back Row - Left to right:

Diana Wiffen; Morag Stewart; ?; Veronica Watts; ?; Rosemary?; Barbara Swift; Pamela Oswald

Next Row

?; Sheila Bishop; Pamela Golding; Pamela Denby; ?; ?; ?; Josephine Munday?; ?



Next Row

Pat?; Valerie Piper; ?; Pat Skinner; Joan?; ?; June Thorne; ?

Front Row

Frances Howe; Barbara?; Ann Batchelor; Beverley?; Pat?; ?

The Roan Memorial Stone

It all began when we were on a short holiday to Bruges, and went on a "Quasimodo" Battlefield guided day trip. It was very emotional, but fascinating. I bought a short booklet about the Ypres battlefield area, written with school parties in mind. At the end, there was a suggestion that it would be interesting to pick a name from a local War Memorial, and research the owner.

I was teaching at The John Roan School, in Greenwich, and at about this time, I moved from the Westcombe Park building of the school, to the Maze Hill site, and discovered the impressive War Memorial plaque in the entrance lobby. I noticed the second and third names – Ayling – were the same. I also noticed the two Grummitt boys – I recognised Grummitt as being the name of an Eltham family who ran a local shop. I wondered if they were brothers/the same Grummitts. Remembering the suggestion at the end of the booklet I had recently read, I began my quest! This was in April 2009.

My first task was to write down all the names. I did this over a period of weeks – every time I passed the Memorial, I memorised a few names and slowly compiled my list.

As soon as I had a reasonable number, I began my research. This was in April 2009. First of all, I used the Commonwealth War Graves Commission website. Some were easy to identify, because there was only one of the same name, or an address which made them highly likely. Some

were a lot harder because the name was more common. The War Memorial only gives initials for the forenames, so if there was more than one with the same initial and surname, and no further clues as to family/address I could not be sure that I had found the right man.

My next step was to contact the Old Roan Society. Tony Slaney was very helpful, sending me a list with more information – some forenames, and dates some of them were at the school, plus limited information of some war experiences. This helped positively (or not!) identify a few more.

I had enquired of the librarian at the school if there were any old records. She referred me to the Metropolitan Archives in London, and so began a fascinating number of visits to go through copies of the Old Roan magazines covering the War years, Admission books and anything else which I thought might offer clues. These were very useful – especially the Admission books because they gave forenames, ages and names of fathers.

It was also very moving to find a few photographs in the Old Roan magazines. Suddenly these men were very real.

A few still eluded me – Croxford, McConarchy and Francis Barnes were not on the CWGC records. I couldn't positively identify a few more. My next line of enquiry was the local newspapers of the time at the Greenwich Heritage Centre. These were very helpful, as when they reported a man's death, they gave his forenames, his family details, address,

and his school – this clarified a number of details. It was here that I discovered Francis Barnes, among others.

I eventually found Croxford in the Admission books, and once I had his first names, I could look him up on the “Ancestry” web-site, where I found he did not die in the war, but his brother (who did not attend Roan, had). I also discovered McConarchy survived the War. Why were these two on the Memorial when they survived? Maybe they were missing for a while, and when the appeal for information about casualties went out, in order to compile the names for the Memorial, mistakes were made. Croxford could have been confused with his brother. Who knows! However I had solved the mystery!

My final two who were not positively identified were Alfred Frederick Gray and Frank Edward Heasman.

Finally, in April 2014, at the Metropolitan Archives, with the help of yet another delve into the Admission books and “Ancestry”, I got them both, and was at last able to get their details from the CWGC website.

I sat there, at the computer in the hush of the room, not quite sure how to feel. Part of me wanted to jump up and down with pleasure, but part of me felt sad. I had done it! But I had enjoyed doing it so much, what would I do now?

I am glad to say the journey continues! I come across little snippets of information that need looking into. For example, when we visited the Somme in July of

this year (2014), we visited Cecil Sewell, as we do every time we go, and there were pebbles on top of his headstone – usually denoting the man was a Jew. This needed sorting out! He wasn't Jewish – there were only 5 recipients of the VC in WW1 who were Jewish, and Cecil is not one of them. I can only surmise that he had a number of Jewish visitors. Cecil Walter Cooney had also had visitors – they had left a photograph of workers outside a shop, one of whom must have been Cecil Walter. His father was indeed a bookseller – so now I need to find out where it was etc. It is always pleasing to discover there have been other visitors to “my boys”. I think of them as “my boys” – I have spent the last five years finding out about them, and there have been so many touching and fascinating stories. I think I have a right to some ownership!! I hope more possibilities crop up, as it is so interesting and so rewarding when a piece of the jigsaw fits in.

I hope my research will be useful in the future. I am leaving copies of the Summary at the school – Des Malone, head teacher has been very complimentary and grateful. I also left a copy with the Metropolitan Archives and Greenwich Heritage Centre. I intend to leave one in the Imperial War Museum Archive as well, if they want it.

Marian Darragh.

August 2014.

Cecil Sewell attended Roan School for Boys and was awarded the Victoria Cross for his bravery in the Battle of the Somme 1918. He was in the tank corps and if you are ever in Dorset please try to visit the Tank Museum which is the keeper of his VC medal.

SEWELL Cecil Harold, (Lieutenant)

3rd Battalion Tank Corps

Victoria Cross citation

When in command of a section of Whippet (Light) tanks in action in front of Fremicourt on the afternoon of August 29th 1918, this officer displayed the greatest gallantry and initiative in getting out of his own tank and crossing open ground under heavy shell and machine gun fire to rescue the crew of another Whippet of his Section, which had side-slipped into a large shell-hole, overturned and taken fire. The door of the tank having become jammed against the side of the shell-hole, Lieutenant Sewell, by his own unaided efforts, dug away the entrance to the door and released the crew. In doing so he undoubtedly saved the lives of the officers and men inside the tank, as they could not have got out without his assistance.

After having extricated this crew, seeing one of his own crew lying wounded behind his tank, he again dashed across the open ground to his assistance. He was hit

while doing so, but succeeded in reaching the tank, when a few minutes later he was again hit fatally, in the action of dressing his wounded driver.

During the whole of this period he was in full view and short range of enemy machine guns and rifle pits, and throughout, by his prompt and heroic action, showed an utter disregard for his personal safety.

Brian Thomas's Evacuation Log 1939

We have recieved a fascinating log of the second world war evacuation of Roan Boys. The log is full of interesting detail and will appear on the Old Roan website

Birth

On May 1st 2013 to Tamara and Dr Malcolm Weir ('69-'77) two sons Leonard (5lbs) and Maxim (4lbs) grandsons to Alan Weir.

Whilst researching authors of school stories I recently came across the name, Walter William Sayer, who attended Roan between the ages of fourteen and sixteen during the first decade of the twentieth century. My source, Brian Doyle's "Who's Who of Boys' Writers and Illustrators", lists him in the august company of Thomas Hughes ("Tom Brown's Schooldays"), Frank Richards ("Billy Bunter") and Talbot Baines Reed ("The Fifth Form at St. Dominic's"), though not under his real name but under his pen-name, Pierre Quiroule – which translates from the original French as 'the rolling stone'. Sayer apparently said that in his younger days he was like a rolling stone and this, along with his links to France – he served there during the First and his wife was French – probably influenced his choice of pen-name.

Tony Slaney kindly looked back into the school archives to discover that Walter Sayer was born on the 24th of January 1892 and was a pupil at Roan from 1906 to 1908. Author Brian Doyle reports, "he was born in Forest Hill and educated at the Roan School, Greenwich, where he edited the school magazine." As Tony pointed out this would have presented some difficulty because the first Roan Boys' School magazine was introduced by Headmaster, T. R. N. Crofts in March 1912, four years after Sayer left the school. Maybe he edited a magazine for his classmates or perhaps this is an apocryphal story – one which we, or he,

would like to believe is true? Can anyone shed more light on the matter? One of the frustrating things about delving into recent history is the recurring thought that "if only I had thought to ask this question thirty-odd years ago!" Sayer died in 1982.

Records show that Walter Sayer was a founder member of the old boys' Association, having joined in 1911 when it was started by the Headmaster, Mr Crofts, and that he became a life member in 1917. Archive addresses for this "rolling stone" place him variously at 122 Shardeloes Road, Brockley; 38 Harefield Road – also in Brockley; 135 Poplar Road, Wimbledon, and 5 River Walk, Uxbridge.

When Sayer left Roan he went to work for the Fleet Street branch of the Midland Bank. His first published stories were printed in the magazine "Pluck" in about 1912 and featured the character, Detective Inspector Will Spearing of Scotland Yard. Like many children's writers, including Frank Richards (a.k.a 'Hilda Richards' for the "Bessie Bunter" stories), he adopted a female pseudonym when writing for girls and became 'Bessie Ducane' when contributing to the "Girls' Realm".

In 1919, when he was demobbed after the war, Sayer began to concentrate on freelance writing and in that year was invited to write his first "Sexton Blake" story for the Sexton Blake Library series.

Its title was "The Case of the King's Spy" and it featured one of his famous characters, 'Granite Grant'. He went on to write many more stories for the "Sexton Blake Library" as well as for the magazines "Union Jack" and "Detective Weekly"; even writing a Sexton Blake short story, "Sexton Blake Solves it", which was printed in the Evening Standard on the 23rd November 1936. Although a variety of authors contributed to the canon of Sexton Blake stories, Brian Doyle, upon whose research I have drawn for this article, reports that "many readers place him high in the Blakian saga" – a saga to which he added in excess of forty titles.

Sayer wrote stories for the Thompson group of Boys' papers ("Wizard", "Rover", "Adventure" "Dixon Hawke Library" etc.) but left his juvenile writings behind in about 1930 when he joined the London General Press Agency and later the London International Press. He resigned from this in 1936 to join the British Lion Film Company as a scriptwriter where he adapted one of his own stories, for the screen. "The Mystery of No. 13 Caversham Square" was released in 1938 under the title "Sexton Blake and the Hooded Terror" starring George Curzon as Sexton Blake.

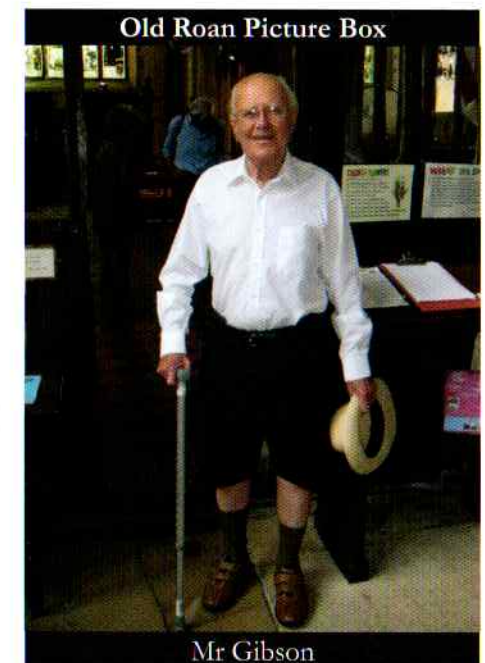
Following the outbreak of World War Two Sayer took over as proprietor of an hotel near Epping Forest where he continued as 'Mine Host' for the next fourteen years up until his retirement

in the early fifties. During this time he published a number of thrillers including "Mine Sinister Host" which perhaps drew on his own personal experience? Walter William Sayer died in 1982 aged 89 years.

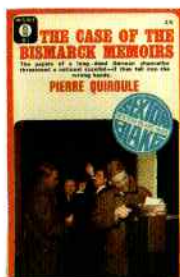
Terry Hall

[Roan School staff 1968-74]

(With acknowledgements to Brian Doyle's self published work, "Who's Who of Boys' Writers and Illustrators 1964")



Mr Gibson



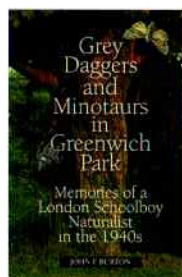
Walter William Sayer
(Roan School 1906-1908)

AKA Pierre Quiroule

Walter Sayer was a pupil at the Roan and a founder member and of the old boys' Association when it was started by the Headmaster, Mr Crofts. He became a lifelong member in 1917, he died in 1982, aged 89.

He began publishing stories in 1912, featuring a Scotland Yard character, Detective Inspector Will Spearing. In those times it was common for writers to adopt pseudonyms to suit the genre they worked in and Walter became Bessie Ducane when writing in 'Girls' Realm' He then chose the name Pierre Quiroule when he was invited to write for the Sexton Blake Library.

For more information on this 'rolling stone' see the fascinating article by Terry Hall (Roan School Staff 1968-74) in full on the web site.



John F. Burton, was born in 1931 and he was a pupil at The Roan School until 1948. He developed his interest in bird-watching in 1940 at the age of 9. At school he became active in the Junior

Branch of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and also the London Natural History Society and as a result he was appointed as an official bird observer for Roan School in Greenwich at the age of 16.

He is a highly regarded expert, broadcaster and writer on natural history and his career included work at the Natural History Museum and the BBC.

'Grey Daggers and Minotaurs' is based on John's illustrated Natural History diaries which he started in 1942 while still a schoolboy. It is the story of how one young south east London boy developed his nascent interest and fascination with birds, butterflies and other natural history species in the midst of war time Britain and the onslaught of the Blitz.

Many of his drawings and photographs are reproduced in the book and recall the immediacy and freshness of his memories of those now distant days and field trips.

Further information can be found at Clio Publishing.

Although I am not a member of the Association, I am an Old Roan (literally, aged 82)

I have just re-discovered the following "poem" which I wrote when in Remove A, c.1947.

How Green are our Blazers

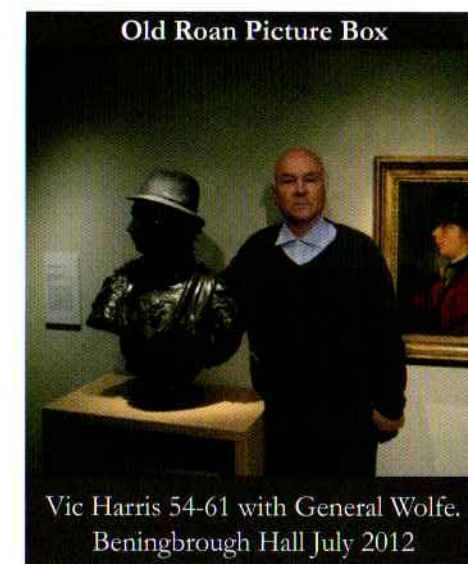
Our blazers should be Lincoln Green
But that is very rarely seen;
The blazers of the boys who pass
Are anything from sage to grass.
Apparently the chaps who made
Our blazers can't tell moss from jade,
For the colours of the coats we see
Are sometimes emerald, sometimes pea.
The colour of the Roan School cap'll
Be correct, but the blazer's apple;
Or else it's sea-green, light or dark,
Perhaps like the leaves in Greenwich Park.
It may be cabbage green or olive,
Or the nice bright green of a full-grown cauliflower-
Lower, or the green of a bottle.
And now the school is asking what'll
Happen when the greens run out-
I'll end the poem, without doubt.

Eric Monohon
Remove A
c.1947

I remember that my English teacher suggested some amendments, and did not like my modernistic separation of syllables Retaining the confidence of youth, I have given the original version.

Perhaps not surprisingly, I went on to have a very undistinguished career in banking.

I did 2 years National Service in the RAF, then went back into The National Bank. This was absorbed into Williams and Glyn's Bank, which eventually became part of The Royal Bank of Scotland. I worked in a dozen branches in London, ending in a managerial position in Maidstone, from where I retired in 1990. I now live in Torbay, where my main interests are the local Probus Club, genealogy and dog walking



Vic Harris 54-61 with General Wolfe.
Beningbrough Hall July 2012

Doug Castle In Retirement Rejuvenates a Classic Austin 7

Having taken early retirement in 1994, aged 51, from the Ministry of Agriculture, I was pleased to be able to move on and find other interests. My first project was to trace my family history, before the days of easy online facilities, as my paternal family was from East Greenwich. Eventually I decided to restore the 1938 Austin Big Seven which my maternal grandfather bought in 1947 and had been in the family ever since. By 2003 it was on the road after an engine rebuild and much bodywork repair, re-spray and new upholstery. By then we had moved to Cornwall and joined the Cornwall Austin Seven Club to gain the benefits of driving the car with fellow enthusiasts and to have the backing of experienced technical help. We now enjoy monthly Club runs throughout the year, attend a few local shows during the summer

with our grandchildren who delight in riding in what was once their great-great-grandfather's car; not many children in the world can say that!

At shows we are always chatting with older people who had an Austin Seven in the family, who worked on them in a garage, but best of all is the interest on the youngest generation who are delighted to touch, and sit in, a car which is so old; as one lad said 'Its older than granddad!'

To repay for that help I became the Publicity Officer and a few years later absorbed the Club's website, www.austin7.org, into my input. If any other Old Roan is a pre-war Austin Seven enthusiast do have a look at our website and make contact.



In Praise of Old School Education

Here's to old John Roan - he certainly put me on the road that I have gone! My family came down from the wilds of Yorkshire's North Riding in the late 1940s to the wilds of East London, the Isle of Dogs to be precise, and what a culture shock that turned out to be. My older brother and I were probably the first non-English speakers (we spoke pure Tyke) to be educated in Tower Hamlets.

Not long after our arrival, in 1949, my brother sat the notorious 11 Plus and passed with flying colours. The Headmaster of our Primary School Harbinger had the initiative to recommend that my brother apply to the Roan rather than any of the more local grammars, which he thought weren't really up to the mark. So he did, and he was interviewed and accepted by Gus Gilbert. I believe he was the only boy from north of the River at that time. Three years later it was my turn to be interviewed by Gus, and I went armed with two of my pictures that had been exhibited at the Festival of Britain. Gus had a good look at them, told my mum how pleased the school was with my brother, and then offered me a place. So I owed my acceptance to my brother's performance and a couple of drawings. Oh - and he asked me to add a half plus a third, and to my mum's total amazement somehow I managed.

One Giant Leap from Dogs to Roan

Three of us set out from the Island that autumn (still good friends with one of them), and what an experience that turned out to be. Not only did we have to cross hemispheres but we moved several

notches up the social scale. I can't tell you how staggered I was to discover that half a dozen of my class were learning the violin. Boys learning the violin? Come on! My scholastic career was mixed. I started quite well but then lost it, entirely, in the middle years. I found I was hopeless at sciences. In my last Physics exam I accumulated six marks - two for getting Boyle's Law right, two for getting Charles' Law right and two for getting my name and form right. I was passable at languages and shone only in History and Art. So I finished up in the Vth Modern, by which time I'd had to give up Art. At this point my academic and sporting careers ceased to be washouts. I got into the Second Eleven, then the First, and at the same time my love for History and English blossomed. This I owed in large part to 'Shag' Witten and Kenneth Binnie. Shag's huge enthusiasm was contagious. His trousers came up almost his chest and then there was an inch of long johns threaded through his braces. When he came charging through the door he always managed to trap his gown as it slammed behind him. No wonder it was in tatters. "If there's one thing you lads do, it's you don't make a noise!" How could you not love English?

University, Me Sir?

But I owed even more to Kenneth Binnie. He actually took it upon himself to write to my parents, at length, explaining the advantages of my going on to university. Now I had never even considered this as an option - Well, in those days you needed Latin to get into a university to read an

Arts and Humanities degree and I hadn't taken Latin...chiefly because I had not the least intention to go the university. Gus Gilbert wanted me to come back for a third year in the VIth to do 'O' level Latin if my 'A' grades were decent. Well they were, but I had discovered that I could read Politics and History at Sheffield without Latin, and Sheffield was in Yorkshire...and I really wanted to go back 'home'. So that's where I went, in 1959, though understandably Gus wasn't impressed. I had a terrific time at Sheffield. I met my future wife there, made friends that I still have, took up rugby and managed to get a decent degree. But let me tell you: nobody at Sheffield taught me as well as my Roan teachers. The enthusiasm for knowledge that I experienced in the VIth form at the Roan has never been equalled since, though in fairness the discussions on politics, religion and philosophy (and women and football) that went on into the small hours at my Hall in Sheffield were pretty darned enlightening too.

Tea, Politics and Lady Violet

Towards the end of my undergraduate days my Politics tutor asked would I like to stay on to do research. Well I had no idea what 'research' meant and was amazed you could actually get a grant from the government just to read about and study something that interested you, as long as you wrote it up afterwards. I jumped at the chance! In 1962 after graduating I began work on an MA (Econ) thesis on the Liberal Party, which was undergoing a revival at the time, and got

to meet a number of the party's luminaries including the Leader Jo Grimond. Lady Violet Bonham Carter (daughter of the Liberal PM Asquith) invited me for tea at her flat up near Hyde Park and then floored me completely by asking did I take my tea black or green?. Green tea? How long have you had it, love? However by now I was fed up with having no money and decided to go out and work, and finish my research off part-time. So I taught History and coached football at a secondary modern school in Peterborough, a town close to my fiancée's Lincolnshire home. I really enjoyed it, but in the meantime I had applied for and was lucky enough to get a Commonwealth Scholarship to go to do research for a Ph.D. in New Zealand.

New Zealand

In August 1964 we got married and two days later started our honeymoon sailing to Wellington at the expense of the New Zealand government. It took over five weeks during which time we visited the Dutch West Indies, Panama City and Tahiti, and were introduced to good food: quite a lot of it actually. Wonderful trip! Mick Jagger is reputed to have said that on flying into New Zealand you were advised by the cabin crew to put your watches back 50 years. Believe me: in 1964 that was no exaggeration. Wellington was quiet. We lived up in the hills – right on the earthquake fault line – by the Botanical Gardens, and it was from there that I made my only previous contribution to the OR magazine – a letter from Wellington. A week or so after

the relevant edition reached us I got a letter out of the blue from – believe it or not – an Old Boy living in the next street! The letter was written in a rather spidery hand and the writer expressed pleasure at finding an Old Roan as a close neighbour. Would we like to go round for tea? Mind, he went on, we wouldn't have too much in common by way of teachers or friends because he had been at the school between, as I recall 1885–92. No, there's no mistake: that's when he was there. He was in his early 90s and lived with his daughter, who was 70. What a lovely man! He had worked as a research chemist with Rutherford before the latter had gone to the UK to split atoms.

Return to UK and Yorkshire

So, we had three years in Wellington and managed to get to see much more of the country than your average Kiwi. A beautiful, beautiful country, charming people, but we had no thoughts of settling. So in 1967, after I was doctored (nothing to do with hot bricks: I got my PhD!) we headed back to the UK, by plane this time, via Australia, Hong Kong, Bangkok, Delhi, Beirut and Istanbul. What to do now? Where to live? Well, I was offered a job at Bournemouth College of Technology teaching to the London degree programme and starting at £2,300 per annum. The chairman of the appointing committee said he had no idea how a young man could spend so much! I had to refuse the offer because I was also interviewed at the University of Hull where the Vice Chancellor told me how much they wanted me to come.

Forget an Assistant Lectureship', he said generously, 'we're willing to appoint you straight on to the full lecturers' scale – and what's more, two – steps up. You'll be starting at...£1,700! Only 40% less than Bournemouth – who could refuse? I have to tell you that the prospect of living in Yorkshire at a time when we might be hoping to have a family was a big pull. After all, in those days to play cricket for God's Own County you had to be a Yorkshireman born and bred. Well, as it turned out we had two sons and a daughter born in Beverley, in the East Riding – and not a cricketer amongst them.

Twenty Six Years On

We thought we'd be in Hull for two or three years but it turned out to be twenty-six! By that time I had had the honour to be Head of the Politics Department and published my first two books. I wanted to call the first *The View from the Left* but Macmillan's, the publishers, insisted on *Socialist Thought in Imaginative Literature*. Kind of trips off the tongue, doesn't it?

Anyway, my parents got the first copy (wisely they never actually read it; for years it used to prop up the clothes horse in front of the fire) and the second went to Kenneth Binnie, with a long letter of heartfelt thanks. I don't really think Kenneth would have had too much sympathy with the politics, but I got a charming letter back from Mrs Binnie, telling me that Kenneth's eyesight was going and that she had had to read it to him, but that he'd enjoyed it hugely.

Well I do hope he recognised his own part in that little achievement, if not in the politics.

Scotland

That was back in 1979, twenty years after I had left the Roan. I stayed at Hull till 1991 when I started to look for Chairs elsewhere, since our two boys had flown the nest and our daughter was no longer a nipper. My wife was a teacher, so moving elsewhere was feasible. These were the days when university arts and social sciences were generally in the doldrums so I was happy to apply to the University of Stirling who planned to establish a new Politics department. I was offered the Chair and went up in September of 1991, but had to commute down to Hull for two years before my wife and daughter were able to move up to join me. So in 1993 we set up house here in Dunblane, a 'city' (well, it has what was once a cathedral) of about 8,000 and, putting the rotten weather to one side, it's a super place to live. Everybody has heard of Dunblane for the worst of reasons, the shooting of sixteen pupils and a teacher at the local primary in 1996. I can't even try to describe how bad a time that was; we all knew someone who had lost a child. But slowly life resumed its shape, though not, of course, for those who were bereaved. Later, when people found we came from Dunblane, they were more inclined to say 'Ah, where Andy Murray comes from!' as they were to mumble apologetically about those tragic events. More recently though they've started to mumble apologetically about Andy Murray.....'Come on Andy!'

Early Retirement

So, to come finally up to date, in 2006 I took an early retirement package from Stirling. I've been teaching part-time since, though I think the Department's money has run out. I still write and we love to travel: adventure holidays are our big thing. When I look back over my career, whilst acknowledging some bad times during the Thatcher 'squeeze' when I wanted to get out, my overwhelming feeling is that I've been like a professional footballer: paid for what I loved doing – though probably not quite as much as they get paid. I have devoted most of my academic career to studying and writing about creative writers and their influence on politics, people like George Orwell, Bernard Shaw and HG Wells.

It's been great, and I'll tell you something: 'Shag' Witten and Kenneth Binnie did such a lot to shape my love of literature and history and so had a profound and continuing effect on my whole career – and my life. And I should add that studying French and German literature with Messrs Milne and Fowler gave me a lifetime's pleasure too. John Roan wanted to help the poor of Greenwich, didn't he? But I doubt he'd have turned away a boy from north of the River. I owe him a hell of a lot...and Kenneth and 'Shag'... and other excellent teachers who set me on my road. So, as

I said at the start, here's to Old John Roan!

Stephen Ingle,
Dunblane,
Perthshire, May 2012.

John Burton's Photos and Sketches

The Roan School cap & badge, etc, No.48 in a set of 50 cigarette cards produced by Carreras Ltd., in 1929 under the title School Emblems. The wording on the reverse of the card is:- ROAN SCHOOL FOR BOYS, EASTNEY STREET, GREENWICH, LONDON, SE10. Founded in 1677 and named after John Roan, a Greenwich man who was an official in the Royal Court. He died without issue, leaving his fortune to be used, after the death of his wife, to found a school for poor Greenwich children, each to receive education and forty shillings per annum until he reached 15 years of age.



My ticket for a production of the Old Roan Dramatic Society in 1955.



My sketches on the reverse of the above ticket of our former French master, Mr Bill Peddie, and an unknown lady who were sitting in the seats in front of me.



A drawing I made in art class in 1947 of Glen Carr, one of my class-mate in the then Form VB.



A scene from a school production of Stevenson's Treasure Island in 1948 in the school hall, produced by Mr Berry. I'm afraid I no longer remember the names of the other boys, but I'm the one in the middle of the group of three pirates in the middle of the photo. Perhaps others will remember the names or recognise themselves.



A photo taken at the Roan School harvest camp at Trunch, Norfolk, in 1948. Again, I no longer remember the names of the other boys, but I'm the one the right with the butterfly net and a tree growing out of his head! The lady with the young children was the camp cook.



A drawing I made in art class in 1947 of Doyle (First names not known), one of the younger boys of the Roan.



Memories of Eric Geddes

I was a pupil at the Roan Grammar School from 1949 to 1953 where art was my all time favourite subject and where the teacher was Eric Geddes.

I found Eric Geddes an inspirational teacher who encouraged whatever latent talent one had for art but who was rather shy about his own talent. I can still recall the occasion when someone in the class retrieved an impressive drawing of a male head and, upon asking who was the artist, Eric positively blushed when admitting that it was he!

Apparently Eric left the Roan in 1972 and many years later I learned that he was living in Richmond close to Kew Gardens. Somehow I came across his phone number and without much hesitation I rang him to see if he would perhaps welcome visit and conversation with one of his pupils of years past. He was very gracious and said that he thought he recalled my name and suggested I come to see him at his home.

On arrival I was greeted by an elderly man who was, by expressions and body language, undoubtedly the younger Eric Geddes I remembered from my time at the Roan. He explained that his partner was out for the day and that perhaps we could chat over a light lunch he had prepared.

As I was then in my sixties and Eric in his eighties, I hoped I could ask him some questions that, as a youngster, I would never have possessed the confidence to explore. He was very open to this and I asked him how he came to teach at the Roan and whether he had enjoyed his time there.

I learnt that Eric had studied at the Royal College of Art before the war and had developed an interest in theatre and in stage design rather than fine art. He recalled a friendship with a fellow student, Lucienne Conradi who later became a leading fabric designer of the 60s/70s period with her then husband Robin Day. Eric's time at the Royal College was interrupted by the war in which he served in the RAF. At the end of the war the RAF apparently funded Eric's completion of his art studies which led in 1947 to his appointment as art teacher at the Roan school.

I got the impression that he would have liked to have made a career in theatre design, but this was not to be. His passion for stage set design was clearly in evidence in his home where he had made and displayed the most outstanding models of classical theatre sets portraying scenes from well known plays.

Eric and his partner were very involved in the design of their formal garden which I felt quite privileged to be shown.

He was interested to learn that, after retiring from my career in the photographic industry, and with the support of my wife, I had gone to art college. I showed Eric some images of my paintings and he was very encouraging, as in the Roan days!

Altogether a very rewarding time with a man who still displayed modesty in his own artistic endeavours.

Eric Geddes died at the age of 94 in 2011

Brian Tutt

Inspired by the very interesting article (Memories of the Roan School for Boys) by Mr John F Burton ('46-'48), I have decided to write a few reminiscences of my own of that period.

I was longer at the School than Mr Burton, for I entered the first form in 1940. I had failed the entrance exam to Eltham College and shortly afterwards failed the 11+ Junior County Exam. Fortunately I was evacuated to Wales in 1940 and there was able to join Roan in Ammanford, albeit as a fee-paying dunce.

Memory can play tricks. Mine certainly does. My short-term memory is so poor that when in the middle of what passes for a game of tennis I sometimes not only have to ask my opponent for the score but also, when there is no guidance from the distribution of the balls on the ground, have to ask an embarrassing supplementary question: "Yes, and who's serving?". My medium-term memory is erratic and my long-term memory decidedly patchy. Consequently, I cannot remember some of Mr Burton's friends that he mentions, though I do remember Budd, a fellow member of a successful Roan athletics team.

I think there are occasional lapses in Mr Burton's long-term memory as well. His memory can play tricks, too. For example, he writes about an athletics match between Roan and Blackheath Harriers when there was, he believes, "a close finish" in the mile between Alfie Knott and the great Sydney Wooderson, Britain's principal runner. But as I recall it, Alfie was not even in the race (he

preferred shorter distances) and there was certainly not a close finish.

What may have happened is that Burton saw Wooderson breast the winning-tape with me (not Alfie) a little way behind. Perhaps Burton, who may have been in a distant part of the field, then concentrated on watching his friend Budd in a throwing event and did not realise that, whereas Wooderson had completed his 4 laps I was about to begin more.

No, it probably did not happen quite like that, but I can boast (and frequently do) that I once finished second to Wooderson in the mile. Less frequently, I mention that the finish was far from being a close one. (In my diary I recorded that I came second but not the number of hundreds of yards that I was behind).

Mr Burton mentions Wooderson's considerable feats in rather more important mile races but neglects to mention that for many years Wooderson held the world record for the half-mile (880 yards). I was myself once a half-mile record holder – holding the Roan record for that distance for a few days. But then groundsman Tom Carter, struck by the fact that all the runners had recorded unexpectedly fast times, decided to re-measure the track. It then transpired that none of us had run quite far enough. Anyway, I am probably still the Roan record-holder for any race run over a distance of 863 yards, 2 feet and 3½ inches – or something like that.

When it comes to his prowess as a footballer, however, Mr Burton's long-

term memory is superior to mine. Thus I regret to have to admit that I cannot remember his heading a winning goal for Drake, the result of which was that he was knocked all but unconscious. I ought to remember, for I was certainly playing for Drake in the same match. Indeed in my pathetic dotage, it is not only some of Burton's friends that I cannot remember. It is Burton himself.

He mentions his "grouse" that it was left to the captain to select the School's 1st X1 at football, with the result that "up and coming and improving players were not looked at", the implication being that a member of the teaching staff would have done better. He may have been right in once instance, but I do not think that Alfie Knott deserves his censure. The team he captained in '46-'47 was very strong (winning every match and scoring 119 goals against only 24) and the only changes in its composition were those necessitated by illness or injury.

The '47-'48 1st X1 was less strong, for only 3 of us survived from Alfie's team. We managed to score only 73 goals while conceding as many as 41. There were, perhaps because of poor selection, several changes in the composition of the team during the course of the season. Also here I have to confess that I was the guilty captain who did not select Burton. I know that as a non-batting, non-bowling all-rounder of the School cricket 2nd X1 I was too slow in promoting players from the 3rds so it is possible that I erred similarly when selecting footballers. I just cannot remember or possibly I could have been influenced by the fact that Burton

was, by his own account, a very reluctant header of the ball and was liable to fall semi-conscious whenever he did head it. Anyway, I am grateful to Mr Burton for tactfully not mentioning me by name. It could be that he cannot remember me many more than I can remember him. Like me, he is well over 80 and some of our faculties are not what they were.

Mr Burton recalls correctly that his form-master, Mr Mitchell (for whom he and I have very fond memories) was nicknamed "Drip". Several of the other masters, despite the respect in which they were held and the affection we felt for them, had somewhat unflattering monosyllabic nicknames. I can remember "Spike" Poyser, "Scruff" Milne, "Nark" Parker and "Shag" Witten. The "Buzz" for Peddie was more descriptive than unflattering. One with a bi-syllabic nickname was "Basil" Cameron, which was quite appropriate for he looked very like the film actor of the same name. He was a very poor disciplinarian so he took the easy way out and became a Headmaster.

I owed a great deal to Mitchell for he gave me a lot of help when I was working for the Cambridge entrance exam. I met him by chance a few years later, when he was Head of English at a school in Hertfordshire or thereabouts. Presumably desperate for staff, he offered me a job on the spot. Regrettably, I declined. Regrettably, too perhaps, for I may have made one of my several bad career decisions.

Another English master I owed a lot to was Witten. I remember that he kindly

wrote a speech for me to deliver, as School Captain, during the Prize-giving ceremony in December '47. As it turned out, I was not required to deliver it after all, for it was thought that I would not be back in time after taking the entrance exam at Cambridge. It was not, being a eulogy of grammar schools, the sort of speech that would go down well with the School Governors today.

One of the boys' nicknames I can remember was that of "Basher" Bates. It was just as appropriate as "Basil" had been for Mr Cameron. On the football field he was not exactly subtle but he was a fearsome tackler. Mr Milne was aware of his lack of subtlety, for I can well remember him saying to Bates, "It's no use trying to kick the ball through your opponents." But here I think Milne may have been mistaken. A ball delivered to the solar plexus at short range from one of Bates's powerful boots meant that the opponents had to play with 10 men while breath was being restored, gasp by painful gasp.

I envy Mr Burton's evidently very successful and rewarding career and I cannot but be impressed by the list of eminent people his work brought him into contact with. I cannot begin to rival it, but I can say that I once played against a future captain of Sussex County Cricket Club (Robin Marlar), a future captain of Middlesex and England player (J.J. Warr), a future captain of the West Indies Cricket Test Team (Gerry Alexander) and that I tossed a coin with the captain of England (Peter May). Not in cricket matches, of course, but on football pitches at

Cambridge. And subsequently I played in the same team as the renowned Welsh rugby captain and British Lion, Mervyn Davies. And that was at cricket.

I don't know if anyone has observed that distinguished Old Roan cricketer, Peter Williams, spent his last days where another distinguished cricketer, W.G. Grace, also spent his last days. It so happens that I am distantly related to W.G. Grace. Only related by marriage, however. If I were a blood relative my top score in cricket could probably have been higher than a rather modest 8! Which was my contribution to a partnership of 40 with Dick Cody when playing for Drake.

Cody is one of the only two Old Roans I am still in touch with. The other is Dennis Merrett. Unfortunately, they both live on the wrong side of the Atlantic. Merrett tries to come over twice a year. Until he was too ill to leave his house we usually had lunch with Alfie Knott.

Shakespeare had it that there were Seven Ages of Man. A more recent theory, however, is that there are only three: youth, middle-age and "you're looking well". I hope that many of my Roan contemporaries ('40-'48) are not only alive, but are looking well and perhaps even feeling well.

I feel old today but I can't quite remember how I felt yesterday.

John Basing (March 2013)

I was surprised to see a picture of myself in the latest issue of the magazine (p 86); that would have been my first trip to Braithwaite. It was interesting to read Terry Hall's article since his time at the school covered almost all of my time there. I'm sure that he would be pleased to know that I've retained my interest in the sciences.

When I left the school I became an Engineer Officer in the Merchant Navy for a few years. Then, following redundancy, in the mid-eighties I had a major career change, firstly going to King's College London to study Mechanical Engineering and then on to Cranfield for a master's degree in Astronautics and Space Engineering.

Since then I've worked in Portsmouth at Astrium (originally Marconi Space Systems) where we design and build satellites. In my role as a systems engineer I've been fortunate to work on a variety of missions. Most recently I've been working on the European Galileo navigation programme during which we launched the Giove-B demonstrator in 2008 and the first two satellites of the main system late last year. The second pair are due to be launched in late September.

Regards,

Tony Forward

Thank you Tony for the Roan Magazine received several days ago. I have thoroughly enjoyed reading it; so many memories of people, times and places. I remember Alf Knott, school captain when I was in the first year 6th. I was particularly interested in the photo on pg 51 as it was taken from a larger team photo, a copy of which I have as member of that winning team. That same photo was displayed, among others, in 'My Life' display at my 80th birthday party three years ago.

Thank You and Best Regards.

Dennis Willshire (1942-48).

Dear Dave, (Horsburgh)

You might remember that I had some old pictures of rehearsals in "1066 and All That", but couldn't find them. Well, here they are. I've sent them in .jpg, but could also send them in .pdf or .tif formats.

I think they were taken in 1969, but it could have been 1970.

In the Crusader picture we have, from left to right: sitting, Brian "Arfur" Smith, Trevor Talbot (the Common Man), an unknown maiden, played by a younger member of the school, and myself as the crusader, just returned from the Holy City. Brian Smith played my stay-at-home wife, no doubt complete with chastity belt.



Crusader Sketch 1066

The Four Georges was a singing sketch, where Georges I to IV (the German Hanoverians) sang the Lorelei. From the left again: DAP Andrews, myself, J D Moine, and conducted by George "Gog" Freundlich on the right. The back of the head of the onlooker belongs to Neal Haslam, wearing an Alpine hat and Lederhosen.



Four Georges Sketch 1066

The musical, was, of course, a George C de Witten production.

Apologies for the quality of the snaps - I think they might have been taken by Terry Hall, to whom I shall send them in a separate e-mail. His colour photos in the last Roan Chronicle were far superior to these!

It might be that other members of the cast possess other snaps taken of their own sketches (e.g. I met up with Phil Snaith recently, who took part in the "Beards" sketch).

Terry Shepherd



Beards Sketch 1966



Phil Snaith as Henry V

Madeline Barber (1924-2011)

I first met Madeline nearly 30 years ago. I already knew her husband, and when I heard that he had retired and come to live in Oxford, I invited William and his wife round to tea. Meeting Madeline for the first time, I confess I found her slightly intimidating. I asked her casually if there was anything I could do to help while she was settling in, and she said, "Well actually yes... Where is the best place in Oxford to learn Russian?" I arranged for her to enroll at the University's Language Teaching Centre. A few weeks later I was invited round to their new house in Dale Close - the first of many happy visits - and I noticed a pile of Russian books on a table - Madeline had already enrolled and got down to work.

So my first impression of Madeline was of a lady of slightly formidable energy. My other early impression was of her unfailingly generous hospitality. In the years that followed, I almost always used to see William and Madeline together and so naturally I thought of them very much as a couple. Their marriage of 57 years was remarkable, a source of stability and of deep happiness to each of them. The best way I can characterise their marriage is to recall the party they gave at Weston Manor in 1998 to celebrate their golden wedding. William stood up and spoke amiably to the effect that he really couldn't think where all the time had gone... It was a charming speech, and memorable because he completely failed

to mention Madeline. Then Madeline stood up, as ever smiling, practical, efficient, and she proceeded to do all the things which William had omitted to do: she thanked the guests for coming, she complimented the catering staff, she even mentioned her husband. It's quite wrong of course to think of Madeline only as William's partner, but that is how she often preferred to present herself, and I suspect it was how she felt most comfortable. It was only after William's death seven years ago that she began to talk to me about herself and that I came to know her better. So I will try to recall briefly the shape of her life, in the way that she herself shaped it in talking to me. Madeline was an only child, born in Croydon to parents of modest means. If you ever wondered why there was a large brush on a table in her hallway, it's because it was made by her grandfather, a brushmaker by trade. There was no false sentiment about Madeline, and she said simply that her home life was not happy. Education was her means of escape, and from a state school in Croydon, she won a place at Oxford to read history. "My life began at Oxford" she said. She arrived in wartime at what was then called St Anne's Society. Her tutor was Marjorie Reeves, later to become eminent as a medieval historian. Marjorie Reeves was a strong personality and a charismatic teacher, and she instilled in Madeline a life-long interest in medieval history. Madeline had amusing memories of wartime Oxford: my favourite one concerned the nights she spent "fire-watching" on the roof of

the Bodleian. In the end, of course, the Luftwaffe never did bomb Oxford. The thought of Madeline in a tin hat standing on the roof of the Bod may well have put Goering off.

Madeline loved the Bodleian library. It was there that she acquired the habit of learning as a student. And when she came back to Oxford in 1983, she quickly reacquired her habit of going there to read. Madeline was there only a few weeks back, trying to find out more about a nineteenth-century clergyman interested in the slave-trade. Madeline was steeped in the history of the library, and she worked for many years as a guide of the Bodleian, getting great pleasure from showing visitors the secret underground passages while recounting the library's history.

There was another reason of course why she felt so attached to the Bodleian, it was – Madeline would never have used this word – a romantic reason. One day just after the war, while she was still an undergraduate, she met William sitting in the seat next to hers in Duke Humfrey. William invited her to the Summer Ball at St John's—Madeline liked things to be done properly—, and they married in 1948. When they went to Paris for their honeymoon, it was the first time she had ever travelled abroad. Over the next fifty years she would travel widely with William, and she especially enjoyed their visits to Paris.

After Oxford, Madeline began a distinguished career as a teacher. William got his first university job at Aberystwyth, and Madeline taught history at a prim girl's school in north Wales where she found herself the only married woman on the staff. In the early 1960s, William was appointed to Birkbeck College, and they moved to Blackheath in south-east London. All manner of new professional opportunities now opened up for Madeline. The early 60s were an exciting time for secondary education: comprehensive schools were being introduced, and in those early days they were well funded. Madeline joined the history department at Kidbrooke, one of the pioneering comprehensive schools in the country. Later she taught for a time at Whitelands, the leading womens' teacher training college, but in the end Madeline preferred teaching pupils to teaching teachers, and she left to become a headmistress. And Madeline was a headmistress, not a headteacher. She was head first at a girls' grammar school in Greenwich, Roan, and later at a large comprehensive in Bermondsey. This was a challenge she relished. Madeline believed firmly in the ethos of comprehensive education, but did not see why it should be incompatible with high academic achievement. In Bermondsey, she set up an exchange scheme with the top public school in the area, Dulwich College, so that teachers from Bermondsey spent a term in the classrooms at Dulwich, and vice versa. I don't somehow think that happens now.

Madeline never forgot how much she owed to her own teachers. She knew from her own experience that great teachers change lives. Madeline's parents had sent her, before she went to grammar school, to a tiny private school in Croydon entirely staffed by German Jewish refugees. These women who had come to London in the 1930s were evidently in need of work and were probably over-qualified for the teaching they took on. Be that as it may, Madeline remembered them with enormous affection and gratitude, and she often talked to me about what inspiring teachers they had been.

Madeline in her turn became a teacher who touched many other lives. I'd like to give you two examples of Madeline as a teacher. First, the intellectual quality of her teaching. Madeline wrote a textbook for sixth-formers published by Macmillan in 1969. The A-Level syllabuses had recently changed, and pupils were to be asked for the first time to talk about the modern world and about the historical events underpinning current affairs. Madeline's book is remarkably wide-ranging and probably ahead of its time, with chapters on 'The decline of European colonialism' and on 'China and the international balance of power'. In the last chapter, she asks her sixth-form pupils to think about the two most important issues facing the modern world: in her view these are racism and the threat of nuclear war. Both these problems, she writes, are 'moral rather than narrowly political, economic

or social'. This is, I think, an interesting insight into Madeline's teaching and the moral principles that underlay it. Madeline, like William, worshipped for many years as a Quaker, and her moral views were held discreetly but firmly. I recall a dinner party at Dale Close when a hapless guest, who had no inkling of Madeline's pacifism, made a foolish remark about the bombing of Dresden: Madeline's response was trenchant.

My second example of Madeline as a teacher is about her human qualities. The son of a close friend in Oxford had reached the age of 7 and still not learned to read. His school said he was an intelligent boy who would learn in his own time, when he was ready... Madeline thought this was bunkum, and undertook to teach him. Three days a week after school the 7-year-old went to Madeline on his own for an hour-long lesson; he was reading fluently in less than a year. It's a telling story for several reasons: it shows Madeline's robust no-nonsense approach to solving a problem. And it also reminds us of the loving interest she took in other people. She followed the progress of that young man over the years with intense interest, and when he recently graduated from St Andrew's with a degree in Russian, no-one was prouder than she of his achievement.

Madeline was wise and she was shrewd. No surprise that in London she served as a magistrate. No surprise either that friends turned easily to her for advice. She spoke

as she found, and could at times be blunt, though never hurtfully so. But she was always thoughtful and sincere. She was also profoundly liberal; confident in her own principles, she was never shocked by unfamiliar or unorthodox opinions. And if all this sounds rather serious, we should remember too Madeline's many talents, talents she shared with her friends. She was a good cook, she drew, she painted, she played the piano.

Madeline moved easily in many different worlds. Present here today are friends of widely diverse ages, friends who knew Madeline in school or at the Bodleian, many friends and neighbours from Dale Close. Also here today are just about the entire staff of the Voltaire Foundation where I work. I'd like to say something about what Madeline meant to us and to the life of our department. Madeline was the heart and soul of our family, she came to all our parties, and sometimes she hosted them, as she did last Christmas. At every office gathering she was always smiling, always asking questions, always the first to arrive. She could and did talk to everyone, enjoying equally the company of senior academics and young students. That sort of open-mindedness and keen interest in others is uncommon in someone of any age, and Madeline possessed those qualities still in her eighties. I suppose that's why we didn't think of her as old.

Madeline wasn't exactly a soft person, she was something rarer, she was a good

person. She lived her life with purpose, right to the end. Her gift of friendship and her engagement with the world meant that her life touched many others, many more than she knew. We are mourning today the loss of a beloved friend. And more importantly we are also celebrating a good life that was well lived.

NEC

St Edmund Hall, 11 April 2011

Alan Ashley

Alan Ashley, aged 81, died recently. He was with Roan from 1943 to 1948, when he joined the staff of the London office of an American firm of Accountants, who offered a junior post to a Roan boy each year from 1945 to 1951. In those early post war years the London staff would receive at Christmas from the American head office a generous food parcel, with tinned foods not seen in Britain. After National Service in the RAF, and correspondence school studies, Alan qualified as a Chartered Accountant and spent many years with a leading firm in the electronics world named Muirhead Ltd, of Elmers End, where he was a successful Finance director. He finished his years working with Age Concern. In his younger days he was a speedy outside right and was always a die-hard Charlton F.C. supporter. At his memorial service his wife, Maureen, son Michael and daughter Ruth and grand children were supported by many friends.

Jim Hardy

Sadly Jim Hardy has passed away from cancer of the oesophagus.

Jim, older brother of John Hardy, was born in Greenwich on the 1st October 1951, one of two children born to his parents Anne and Harry. Jim attended Roan, leaving at the age of sixteen to work for Natwest Bank. Jim moved on from there and entered the world of Stockbroking in the City with Laurence Prust. He then repped for Charringtons Brewery for 10 years before returning to the city with National Investment Group which merged in to Teather & Greenwood then into Landsbanki and the rest is history.

Jim married Jill in 1974, following a first date at Bradwell Nuclear Power Station of all places.

Alongside playing for the school team and Old Roan, Jim was on the books of both Crystal Palace and Charlton and later was engaged in promoting football across the Greenwich borough.

Once described (possibly by himself), as the best left back never to have played for England, Jim went on to work with Bobby Charlton and even ended up coaching children during a cup final at Wembley.

Jim was a popular figure at the Old Roan Club and remembered by many as someone that always looked after others on the field and remained always a gentleman on and off the pitch (and known for being the ideal penalty taker).

Jim's funeral was held at Kemnal Park Cemetery in April 2014 and was attended by around 25 Old Roans and unsurprisingly a standing room only event.

During the service we heard how Jim, on his own Fathers passing, decided to move his Fathers mobility scooter back from Eltham to Petts Wood.

True to form Jim decided that the best way to achieve this would be to drive it himself, a journey that eventually took 3 hours.

Jim stopped at a sweet shop to load provisions, which he duly dished out at just about every bus stop that he passed, which was applauded by the waiting commuters who were asking him if he was on a charity fund raising exercise.

Jim will always be remembered by Old Roans as a gentleman and excellent footballer, though first and foremost, Jim was a family man, devoted to his wife Jill and twin boys Paul and Stephen.

Obituaries

Graham Chambers 1937-2013

The death of Graham Chambers has, arguably, extinguished the brightest light in the Old Roan firmament of the last 60 years. His unique contribution to all aspects of the Club and Association is almost beyond comparison.

He was the most engaging personality



with a sparkling sense of humour which was always close to the surface of his persona, and his company in any social environment; be it dressing room, sports ground, formal dinners, parties and especially the post match analysis in the bar was a guarantee of a lively, scintillating occasion. Conversely, he could, on occasions, display a fairly histrionic temper if the bar service was a trifle tardy or one of his elderly cars or motor bikes failed to respond to his efforts to encourage them to start.

His school years are best remembered for his high skill level on the cricket field (slightly less so during the muddled oaf season and for his academic achievements). However, his fame amongst his peers as class jester was unsurpassed. His ability to render the class helpless with laughter whilst remaining

beyond blame was a priceless asset. One maths master, Bill Brooks, himself a fine cricketer and O.Roan first team football captain observed on Graham's report that, "His inability to grasp the basics of this subject defy comment" This may not be the exact wording but in those pre-politically correct and saner times conveys the same brutal sentiment. Graham's scholastic career came to an abrupt end, by mutual consent, I believe, towards the end of the summer term in 1954. Graham could never allow such an auspicious date to pass without some grand gesture. On the day following Graham's departure staff and boys arrived to find the school clock atop the magnificent pseudo stately home portico classically draped in his school uniform. The blazer rotated hourly whilst his famous faded green corduroy trousers (not prescribed uniform but undoubtedly Graham's) made stately progress between 9am and 3.30pm when we all left still cackling with amusement. No master or maintenance staff was able to retrieve them and how idiot boy had got up there in the dark remains a mystery.

By the late 1950's Graham had become the Poster Boy of the Old Roan first eleven and the Cricket Club generally. His performances both on and off the field became renowned around the local circuit and on our tours to the then distant Kent coast.

Graham's batting was more visually pleasing than any player I have ever seen or played with or against at an level. His trademark cover drive was as sublime; as his calling and running between the wickets was as bizarre. His

vertical backswing, rapid bat speed and long flowing follow through and perfect balance sent the ball screaming to the extra cover boundary with regularity and often to the first ball of his innings.

As his knock progressed, which it nearly always did, the impeccable technique sometimes faltered. But with his high bat speed the ball would still reach the boundary off the outside edge, anywhere between backward of cover and where first slip would have been; such fripperies having been long dispensed with. The inside edge would be retrieved from the fine leg boundary having magically missed the leg stump. The chagrin of young quick tearaways was very vocal on the pitch and in the bar as to how this lucky swine had got away with it for so long.

To counter this criticism Graham created a banal slogan which became an almost religious mantra on his philosophy of batting. He repeated this over and over again, in the dressing room, in the bar, in the shower; anywhere with an audience. Seven short alliterative words :- "SWING SWING AND THE SNICKS WILL COME"

At school and during early Old Boys seasons Graham was a capable lively seamer but as his batting became predominant in his repertoire he bowled less. Later in his career he became a very effective "dibbly dobbly" slow medium with a nagging length and a vestige of inswing. Looking innocuous he took many scalps from rash shots including an all 10 against a strong Midland Bank side in the 60's.

In the late 1950's the Old Roan and a few

other invitees from other clubs toured East Kent for a week in August staying in Broadstairs. One evening close to midnight in our Broadstairs B&B bar Graham, as Pack Leader, suggested a midnight swim. This was after a full cricket match, a meal and a good skinful but any suggestion from Graham seemed a good idea at the time. It was a warm balmy night and we meandered to the nearby beach and splashed about noisily for a while. Suddenly, an anguished cry from Graham rang out. "OK you blokes. Have a good laugh. I've lost my front teeth. He stormed off up the beach to seek refuge in his room in the B&B distraught that the cavernous gap between his molars would ruin his matinee idol good looks which he certainly had at that time. We had no idea that, probably as the result of some schoolboy prank, Graham had a set of NHS gnashers behind his top lip.

Sharing Graham's grievous loss, we started a search of the beach, but apart from stringing a few cockle shells together as possible substitutes, we accomplished little and repaired to the ever-open bar at our accommodation in shocked silence, and settled ourselves with some more Red Barrel which was in vogue then.

After a while, one of our number (Colin Trew) started us sniggering with a few remarks and as we all introduced our own two pennyworth it degenerated into noisy guffaws which in our small B&B could be heard in all the bedrooms. The remark started innocently enough observing that Graham was not incapacitated and would be able to play. However, without his front teeth his famous oft-repeated mantra would transmute into "SHWING

Obituaries

SHWING AND THE SHNICKS WILL COME. We amplified things by noting that our next few fixtures were WHITSHTABLE, BROADSHTAIRS, and SHIBTON PARK. With our ale consumption we envisaged we could easily be SHIXTY SIX FOR SHIX or even worse SHEVENTY SHEVEN FOR SHEVEN. The raucous merriment had obviously been heard by Graham judging by his lack of conviviality at breakfast.

At Christmas time that year we were all enjoying the hospitality of Harry Townsend at his large house in Blackheath. The inebriated revelry had extended to a silly game which involved passing an orange, held between one's chin and neck, to the next person in the large circle. It was alternate boy girl and on Graham's left was an attractive young lady.. After some fumbling Graham successfully negotiated the orange onto the lady's neck but upon withdrawing noticed that his now replacement top set was settled decorously on her bare shoulder. The resultant undignified four-handed attempt at recovery caused the offending denture to disappear down the cleavage at which, Graham, ever the gentlemen, made vigorous efforts at retrieval.

Graham was among the last of his generation to do National Service. His cultured modulated Reithian tones made him obvious RAF material. Unfortunately, apart from cricket they found his competence in other areas did not quite match his perceived public school accent so he flew a typewriter for two years. This meant he was allowed home outside of office

hours at weekends and graced the Old Boys' First eleven throughout his two years.

Graham's playing contribution to the O. R. Football Club lower sides over many seasons was based more on activity than ability. He was fit, fast and agile, so he was very effective at harrying opposition forwards from his usual fullback position. When in possession with some space he was at his most dangerous. The danger was entirely focussed on our own defence as he would either make a "Garrincha-like" jinking run down whichever wing he was on. He would lose the ball midway in the opposition half leaving us totally exposed on that wing. Alternatively, having heard the term "switching the attack" he would attempt a long pass to the opposite wing usually across the face of our goal. Forced by injuries and availabilities he occasionally played in the first team where Bill Brooks, skipper and the author of his famous school mathematics report would loudly vocalise that his football ability fell slightly short of his maths. knowledge.

Graham struggled with great fortitude with his long illness but visits to see him soon reactivated his famous sense of humour and certainly enlivened the occasions. Sad though his passing is every memory of him evokes laughter and pleasure.

John Huntley

Graham Chambers

I of course knew Graham from my primary school days and when he joined Roan in about 1948/9 a little after me. In those first few years we used to practise cricket in his back garden in Shooters Hill Road.

Unfortunately, I could not keep it up because of my failing health at that time -- I did not know then that I had contracted TB of the right lung when I was 9 years old and found at Roan that I had continuous tiredness and lack of gaining weight that made any attempt at games laughable so Graham of course continued to excel at cricket as we all know !! So it is with great sadness that I read your letter. I am afraid that being a survivor of everything has put me in a position of receiving this type of news very frequently of recent years.

Sad news about Tony -- He will be hard to replace in terms of work load in his position in the association.

Brian Pickrell

Graham Chambers

Very sad to learn the news re Graham Chambers. I'd been aware for some time that he was rather-more-than poorly but had hopes that being the irrepressible character he was, he'd somehow manage to duo-digit the medicos and pull through. To me, Graham was one of

those unforgettable beings who come our way so seldom -- especially in these drab, drear, PC-riddled days. He'd light-up a room on entry and within seeming nanoseconds he'd be holding court on any manner of obtuse subjects, often reducing his audience to tears of delight with his chuckle-strewn delivery. A very talented cricketer whose effervescence on the field brought out the best from both himself and his own side and even lightened the day for his opponents. The Lord certainly broke the mould when he made Graham and the world's going to be a poorer place without him.

Colin Brown

Agnes Jones

I am getting in touch to let you know that my mother, Agnes (Nan) Jones, née Mercer passed away peacefully on 26 August 2014, at the age of 90 years. Mum was a pupil at the girl's school, during the war years, and was part of the evacuation to Bexhill-on-Sea and to Ammanford. She always spoke very fondly of her time at the school.

Gwyneth Lamont

Joe Broadfoot ('51 – '55) – Old Roan Legend

Joe felt moved to write to the editor following the last edition of the magazine – stung by the word “inglorious” unkindly applied to his school career. We are pleased to hear from Joe directly.

I would like you to consider mentioning my time at the School and the Old Boys. My football career may not interest your readers as much as my memories about teachers, pupils and Old Boys.

One of your correspondents, Ian Brown ('51-'59) called my time at the School “inglorious”. I do not agree with this! Undistinguished yes – education-wise – but I was not the biggest dope! I finished higher in the 5th Form than M.C. Callaghan with Mr Hankinson in charge. In my early days, in 3 Alpha, I was in awe of the “clever clogs” like Watson, Winter & Rich, but it's fair to say that my mother's death during my 1st term at the Roan didn't help my academic development or ability to compete as I rarely did any homework as nobody was at home to make me or showed any interest.

I represented the School at chess, football, cricket & cross country. I helped Wolfe to become the House Champions through my efforts in the 5th form. These were “glorious” times for me! I hope Ian Brown hears this!!! As to my leaving the School in disgrace – not so! After a couple of minor offences Mr Gilbert said I could leave immediately if I wanted to. My form master, Mr Hall, advised me against this but with 3 weeks to go to the end of term, Christmas 1955, I couldn't leave quick enough. Looking back it was

a huge error – most of all because I would have carried on playing football for the School 1st X1 at inside forward scoring lots of goals (not as many as Del Dreher) and maybe becoming a poor man's Jimmy Greaves instead of Stanley Matthews.

On leaving school the men's teams I played for put me on the wing because I was so small! I did play inside forward for Old Roan 2nd X1 and in my one and only game for the 1st team they put me on the left wing as John Williams was injured. I did score with my first touch – a left footer just inside the box. At the start of the following season I received a bill for the games played the previous season. This amounted to nearly a week's wages so that was the end of the Old Boys for me!!!

As to the School promoting me at Open Days – I would have been very pleased to have been invited to one of those occasions! I was very proud of being an Old Roan, as I showed by playing cricket & football for the Old Boys later in life. Why no one ever invited me I do not know!!!!

I enclose a photo taken after our promotion as Division 4 champions the end of the 1961-62 season. We had just beaten Charlton 3-0 at the Den in the Kent Cup. I am kneeling next to Reg Davies, our goalkeeper. The cup is held by Peter Burridge. Old Roans might be interested to know that Brian Kinsey was born on the same day as me – March 4th – two years earlier in 1938. Brian played 371 games for Charlton and played against

me at Portman Road (Ipswich) during the 1963-64 season in Division 2 – final score 1-1. I do not remember causing him any problems during the game in which he played left back – marking me and keeping me relatively quiet. I was at the pinnacle of my career that season as well!! I recall vividly playing once before against Brian while still at school – Nelson v Wolfe senior house match on the Quaggy pitch at the School Field. Brian scored 4 or 5 goals for Nelson, all from outside the box, with his deadly left foot! He smashed the ball past our startled goalkeeper from 25-30 yards and Wolfe were beaten easily. Wolfe were no mugs because I remember the 3 goals I scored against Drake, all with my left foot, just as clearly. Watson refereed that day and the School Captain, Alan Dawe, played, as well as Del Dreher, on the pitch next to the tennis courts. Del Dreher, of Drake House, could have easily become a pro footballer. I remember him scoring 10 goals – yes! – 10 goals – against Morley College based at New Cross. In later years he told everybody at the bar after cricket that I scored the goals during that game at the School Field but I assure you I definitely did not!!!

Another story about Del! He came back to the Old Roan Club to play in his mid-30s! I was still playing for the Club 1st X1 and we played together at Faversham F.C. against their reserves in a cup competition. We arrived late for the match and I don't think the 100 or so supporters were best pleased to have

been kept waiting after paying their gate money to watch their team thrash these upstarts from London called Old Roan. They were well pleased to score in the first few minutes and expected a rout but I started getting hold of the ball in the centre circle (I was centre forward) and passing long balls to the corner flag behind the left back for Del to run onto. He left the left back for dead and scored 2 or 3 goals and we won the game easily. Remember! – we were past our best, but I didn't tell our Faversham friends. We hopped into our cars, raced back to the Club down the M2 and celebrated at the Roan Field.

Lastly, I want to covey to my fellow Old Roans just how good we were! For an Old Boys football team to have two teams playing in the Spartan League against teams like Welling Utd and East Thurrock at senior level, doing well, getting promotion and winning the league cup from a lower division in our 1st season was unbelievable! Our 3rd X1 meanwhile won the A.F.A. Cup against teams from the banks, civil service etc who sometimes had 10 & 12 X1s playing at once. That was how strong our Club was. Those were unforgettable times and I never will forget.

The ex-editor can confirm that you will never meet a prouder Old Roan than Joe and wishes to add that when his own very modest football days overlapped briefly with Joe he recalls how encouraging and supportive Joe was – elevating him to the 3rd team on one occasion. Joe encouraged

Joe Broadfoot Cont.



Photo - Millwall 1962 Joe Broadfoot

many younger Old Roans who remember fondly his generous nature and how much his praise meant to them.

Joe would like to end by appealing to Old Roans in South London to make use of the Club in Kidbrooke.

Joe's biography – "A Tale of Two Football Towns & Millwall F.C." is available in paperback from Amazon. It is written by Joe Broadfoot Jnr. (73-77).

Joe Junior has just completed a Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) and starts teaching in Buckinghamshire in September while continuing with an NQT. He reports on his career to date:before the PGCE I was working in music TV as the channel manager of Starz TV. Prior to that I was managing and editing a football website. I

still do some freelance football journalism for JSoccerMagazine, which focuses on Japanese football. I spent a bit of time DJing in Japan back in the 90s and more recently featured in a CBBC reality TV show out there, called 'Hai Karate'. DJing and music production took me all over the world for 11 years between 1986 and 1997, giving me the chance to live in far-flung places like Jakarta, Beijing, Hong Kong, Dubai, Cairo, Cannes, Oslo, Bodo, Bergen, Kobe and Tokyo. After all that fun and travel, I thought I'd better knuckle down and do some studying, so I got a 1st in Literature when I came back to the UK and then got an MA in Victorian Studies in 2010. In a sense, it was like another English degree, as all but one of my dissertations were about Charles Dickens!



back row left to right

Tony Sproul, Graham Lawrance, Sam Morgan, Pete Manners, Joe Daniels, Pat Gregg, Charlie Williams, Connal de Hoog, Len Sales, Dave Nash, Frasier Lochtie, Lucien Howlett, Viv Lawrence, Tony Nuttal,
Seated middle row left to right

Dan Sales, Eve Sales, Ian Daniels, Matt Podger, Andy Daniels, Nick Riley, Les De Hoog, John Stickings

Seated front row left to right

Jack Sproul, Grace Daniels, Zoe Daniels, Patrick Daniels

A busy day at the playing fields on Sunday 7th July saw a Presidents cricket match take place, alongside a veterans 5 a side football tournament, BBQ, mini beer festival and live band.

I won't take credit for arranging all of these things of course as the events were largely on their way to being sorted without me. So thanks to Jimmy, Graham Lawrance, Malcolm Calder and team for making my day seem so grand.

There was a significant Old Roan spectating presence with all visitors being treated to the excitement of 20 20 cricket with a Presidents and their offspring XI taking on a Presidents select XI, largely made up of other Old Roan cricket club

contributors.

With Nick Riley's son Adam choosing to play for Kent against Middlesex and Brian Hamer regrettably withdrawing through injury and with umpires in Viv Lawrence and John Stickings inexplicably choosing to be impartial, a heavy defeat for the Presidents team was anticipated by some.

With opposition batting lining up initially with Morgan, Lochtie, Sproul and Nuttal, early runs were expected. Your President also dropped an early chance to relieve Morgan from the heat and things did indeed start to look gloomy for the 'home' side.

How quickly things can change though

President's Cricket Match Cont.

and with an excellent catch by Graham Lawrance and the bowling of; the Sales family, all Daniels present and Lawrance, along with Nick Riley's Graeme Swann impressions, the wickets soon began to fall with few runs being added to an early rush.

Your President even bowled (well, 'chucked' for two over's) with a respectable 2 wickets for 12 runs - with both scalps being the senior and junior Sproul.

Tony Sproul caught high at the boundary and so nonchalantly by Joe Daniels when attempting a six. Some people never learn. Byes were also kept to a minimum, thanks to the athleticism of De Hoogs wicket keeping, a good team effort all round.

So the favourites finishing their 20 over's on 107 for 7.

In response, the De Hoogs (Les and son Connall) opened the batting and they with those to follow all made worthy contributions. Nick Riley's unbeaten 27 and forced retirement along with a certain reluctance to leave the field of play worthy of note.

Mindful that the spectators were hopeful of an early finish so that the Men's tennis final could be enjoyed, your President went into bat. Not before a very serious stare from older brother Ian and final motivating words along the lines of 'don't make a fool of yourself, try not to fall over more than once, no mucking about, we do need some runs here'.

Against the increasingly aggressive bowling and sledging from Podger and Sproul, the President batting at 6,

responded with matching aggression and a series of boundaries followed.

In addition to the newly installed wi-fi at the club, a request will be put in for technology to support a Decision Review System. Having reached 24 in a little over 6 and a half minutes and starting to tire the President went for a 'big one' and was stumped by Charlie Williams whose lightning quick reactions belied his lazy approach to life in general.

At least I could sit down to watch Ian's innings, though no sooner had I done so I had to do a double take as Ian joined me for a cold beer, out for a golden duck. Well done Ian, it didn't affect the result and you only let yourself down.

With overs to spare the winning runs soon came with both teams and spectators rushing into see Andy Murray win the tennis. A great day for British sport all round.

Thanks to Viv and Sticko for umpiring and of course to both teams for turning out and generally putting up with me.

Thanks also to Old Roan Phil Snaith and his band for being completely self sufficient and playing so well to keep all entertained into the evening.



End of Presidential Year Football Celebration



Back Row: Jimmy Podger, Paul Dexter, Paul Witchalls, Ian Daniels, Robin Faithorn, Tony Nuttall, Doug Weaver. Front Row: Andy Daniels, Mark Weaver, Gary Watson, Graham Lawrance, Richard Thomas, Tony Sproul.

Sunday March 16 saw a celebration to mark my end of term as President.

A Presidents Select XI took on the Supervets, managed by the ever popular Graham Lawrance in a fixture widely publicised as footballs answer to T20 cricket.

The idea for this days T30 football match follows on the back of the T20 cricket last summer alongside an inability and reluctance to organise a more formal dinner and dance to mark the end of my Presidential year. The event though brings things back full circle for me - I started playing football for the Old Roan 30 years ago as a 17 year old, followed a year later with my first team debut.

That debut does not hold great memories for me as I let in 5 goals with 3 being my

fault directly. Though the goalkeepers union would like to point out that Dave Hutley missed a penalty with the score at 0-0. (Sorry Dave but you did kindly remind me!).

The John Roan School has a history of 340 years which coincidentally is the combined age of the Supervets back four. In an attempt to get under the skin of the opposition the Supervets resorted to early desperate measures. The largely Charlton supporting President team were forced to wear a Millwall kit for the occasion, though I did put this behind me before the game, quite literally when considering the lack of toilet paper in the changing room.

A thank you to everyone for turning out and the Supervets for hosting the fixture.

Special mentions first to Doug Weaver, who reminded us what a great player he is. Described as the 'ancient Doug Weaver' 30 years ago for one 1st XI fixture, he is surely a National treasure today. Great stuff Doug, chuffed that you could make it along with Anne and the boys (please hold on to your grandsons' boots, you never know when you'll need them next). At the Reunion dinner in October Ian drew attention to my lack of school friends present. True that there were none that night but there had been much interest from my old school team in turning out today and at one point it seemed that we were about to get the whole of the 1982 London Cup winning school team out – regrettably only one of them turned up on the day! A thanks and well done to Paul Dexter and good to see you after so many years.

As a thank you for turning out Paul was

presented with an Old Roan Association application form. This season also marks 25 years that Richard Thomas' Old Roan 5th the South London Alliance 4th disposal with Richard, Witchalls and Sproul representing that team today.

The game ended 1-1 with the Presidents XI claiming a moral victory and the Supervets claiming that their tactics were undone having been forced to field 12 players.

2014 brought together the oldest gathering of Old Roan Footballers in a Division. A remarkable achievement given the players at his

Final mention to Richard Thomas who scored after 5 minutes with a fine lob from 25 yards. He completed his celebration at the touchline dug out where he promptly substituted himself in the knowledge that his contribution was over.



We have our 25 year celebrations well and truly behind us as we report on the 2012 Old Roan golfing calendar.

Again the picture for the society is a most positive one with both summer and winter events fully subscribed. With one notable exception the standard of golf remains high.



Members now pay annual subscriptions to cover the costs of prizes and we even have online banking facilities. Unfortunately, as Treasurer, I set up the account over the phone following a trip to the dentist with payments now being made to the Old Roan Golf Society account (although poor, this is a joke and not a typo).

In June 2012 the ORGS headed to Woldingham Golf Club, a course set in the picturesque Halliloo Valley near Caterham.

Woldingham has a stately clubhouse with views of the course offering a superb panoramic snapshot of the golf to come.

In ORGS speak this translates to a wealth of opportunity to mock and jeer each fourball as they play out the last hole.

As is now common to our events the format for the day saw play in fourballs - 27 hole individual Stableford Full Handicap alongside 27 Hole team play. It was a most civilised day (Ray Mills was absent through injury) and though interrupted by one play stopping downpour the course allowed all to get round with reasonable scores.

We were also joined by our first celebrity golfer in Gethin Jones, the TV presenter. Gethin, formerly Wales most eligible bachelor, has yomped with the Royal Marines, flown with the Red Arrows, is the Golf Ambassador for the Celtic Manor, plays off of 15 and is a very nice bloke. We have a lot in common. Gethin had recently warmed up for his first ORGS appearance with a celebrity golf tournament including Old Roan, Steve Rider.



Old Roan Golf Society 2012 Cont.

There was of course a winner but unfortunately I cannot name him here until the inquiry has fully concluded and delivered its verdict.

My own round was unsurprisingly average though far from wooden spoon territory which was 'won' by some margin by Nick Riley with 14 points - Nick will be happy to talk through each of these points in some detail. Never has so much been said about so few.

In the car park after the event Richard Thomas was talking about a golfer that had played for nearly 30 years, had some natural ability but hadn't shown any improvement and had become a target for ridicule and abuse. I realised he was talking about me but before I could argue Richard presented me with a new Calloway driver.

On to Princes in Sandwich for the 27th annual ORGS Championship, 55 golfers and Nick Riley attended, with the event being won by Mark Matthews with a score of 56 over 27 holes. Yours truly came in '27th' with a score of 43 (off of a 28 handicap) - a best ever finish and finally a 'decent round' after so many attempts - thanks to Richard's gift - great to get passed the Ladies tee with one shot.

As the scorecards were being signed and analysed, Nick Riley presented me with a scorecard putting him amongst the leaders - of course it wasn't his own, just



one that he had proudly signed and was taking credit for in assisting his playing partner at the expense of his own game.

Nicks playing partner being our 2nd celebrity of the year in Min Patel, the former Kent and England cricketer. We look forward to welcoming Min back as long as he returns the prizes that he got.

My fourball, led by Les De Hoog and including Mike Baxter also got a prize in the team event. Les would also have won an individual prize if there was one for most used buggies - finishing the day on buggy number three.

Bernie Turner won nearest the pin.

With speeches and the school song to close off the event, Matt Podger was welcomed as our Captain for 2013 - well done Matt, a regular attendee over the years and a most elegant looking golfer.

Andy Daniels

Point of Contact

Magazine Editor: janfarmer27@gmail.com

Old Roan Association website: www.johnroan.co.uk

Roan Theatre Company: www.theroantheatrecompany.com

The John Roan: www.thejohnroan.greenwich.sch.uk