

The Douai Society



Newsletter Summer 2010

1930's

Gerry Smith (37-42) wrote: I was delighted to see the report in the last newsletter concerning my Grandson, Thomas Napper, regarding his trip to Spain assisted by an OD Bursary – may I add my thanks for the Society's help. On a more general note I was disappointed to find no reference to those OD's prior to 1950. I think you'll find there are still quite a few of us alive and kicking. (*Editor's note: The inclusion of news in this newsletter depends entirely on people sending in contributions – crystal ball gazing and guessing is not part of our policy!*) Glad to see the article about 'Sticko' (Fr Augustine), somewhat revered by the likes of myself in 1937 from the junior ranks. I was lucky enough to have an overlapping term in the summer of 37 with my Brother Maurice (31-37); not quite as awesome as the other Vth & VIth formers.

I am going on quite well, obviously not as active as I was a few years ago – I am well supported by my wife of 54 years, Pauline and we too have 5 children, pretty scattered and at last count seven grandchildren plus three 'steps' (youngest Son married a Lady with 3 children) – no 'Greats'. Just had a visit from my eldest son and his Wife who live in Dallas. He has MS but I am glad to say gets good treatment probably better than most similar sufferers here. In the past visits to our Children have taken us to Canada, the US and Holland. This year a visit to old friends in Belgium, our first trip on Eurostar.

1940's

Tony de Groot (46-51) I've spent much of my retirement writing novels that nobody wants to publish, but at least I've discovered Self-Publishing which is great once you've got the hang of the computer and found various friends willing to help you out.

My younger brother **Michael (47-51)** who lives in Australia was over last year. Each time he says it's his last. He was a psychiatrist in Tamworth, Australia and finally retired a couple of years ago. He's talking of moving, but he'll probably stay in Tamworth. He's got seven children and endless grandchildren all around there. I occasionally see my cousins, the three brothers Gilsean who were at Douai shortly after me. And there is also a cousin's cousin, **Gerald (alias Fr Stanislas) Hobbs (44-48)** whom I bumped into recently without immediately recognising him, from Ealing Abbey, so we had him round to supper. We're spending a few nights Edinburgh in September with Paul Cheetham who taught at Douai in the 1960's

Carl Watkins (49-52) and his wife Joanna celebrated their Golden Wedding anniversary in April at the basilica of St Paul's-outside-the-Walls, Rome with Abbot Edmund presiding at mass.

1950's

Francis Hind (48-50-54) writes: I am rather out on a limb down here in North Devon. Over the years I have often worn my Old Dowegian tie to church but no one has ever come up to me. I still reckon I was very lucky to go to Douai when I did - a vintage time.

Ian Lyster (51-55) Many of my contemporaries will recall that I had links to Turkey. In fact, my first night in the Open Dorm in Sept. 1951, I was amazed to find that as a "Lyster", I was next to a "Levante" in the adjoining bed, and neither of us could believe that there was a Turkish-speaking non-Turk in an English Catholic Public School in

the bed next to us. I had been at the English High School for Boys in Istanbul for the previous 5 years, as my father had been working in the Embassy/consulate in the city. I thus had reasonably knowledge of the Turkish language. My brother (much older) had been at Stonyhurst, but my parents wanted a school in the South (nearer the airport), and as they knew the Chelley family, Douai was (happily) chosen.

I have thus been working for some time on editing two family dairies; firstly those of my grandmother Marie Lyster and then secondly my father's. The ensuing book is called "Among the Ottomans" and has its own web-page. It will be published in Oct/Nov by I.B. Tauris.

My grandfather Alfred James Lyster was sent by the London office of the Imperial Ottoman Bank to its Constantinople branch as Chief Cashier in about 1885. There he met and married one Marie d'Anino. My father - Henry Newbolt Lyster - was born there in 1888 and was sent back to school in England, later also joining the Ottoman Bank. For reasons too complicated to explain here, my grandmother was stuck in Constantinople, with her elderly disabled widowed mother, for the duration of WW1 and kept a diary of the trials and tribulations of being a belligerent in this city. This diary takes up half the book.

My father joined-up in 1915 and was commissioned into the Coldstream Guards. He was sent to Gallipoli and then onto Salonika in N. Greece when the ANZAC force abandoned the Dardanelles campaign. He then spent the next eight years carrying-out various duties in Thrace (Turkey in Europe) and Asia Minor having been transferred to the Intelligence Corps. He was awarded the MC in 1920 for "gallantry and devotion to duty . . ." Most people feel that WW1 ended in 1918, but for those in the Middle East, it went on until 1923. He wrote-up a diary many years later and this forms the second part of the book. He stayed on in Constantinople/Istanbul, taking on some commercial agencies and was married to my mother in the city by one Bishop Roncalli who was then the Apostolic Delegate to the Greek Orthodox Church, centered in the city - as it still is. This man went on, of course to become Pope John XXIII.

John Ross (1951-56) writes: Thank you so much for providing those of us who live on the other side of the world - in my case Boston, Massachusetts with the ability to learn of the Retreats which the Abbey is providing. It was wonderful to see the abbey church and know that all is well.

Michael Treays (46-47, 48-51, 51-56) My connection with Douai goes back a long way. Together with my brother who died of cancer in August 2006 we were sent to Douai in Sept 1946. I was 9 years old. We had just returned from spending the War in Australia having fled Singapore on the arrival of the Japanese. We arrived at Douai with very few possessions. I had one toy a little silver pistol that used to fire caps before the spring broke but Fr Ignatius Rice with a rare lack of humanity suggested to my parents that I would not be needing that at Douai. I witnessed snow for the first time on the playing fields of Douai in early 1947. I was the youngest boy in the school for a term but then Dick Sullivan arrived and he was a little younger. I then boarded at a school in France for a year, quite an experience! Then when Douai opened a Prep school we became founder students at Ditcham Park (Sept 1948?), these were the happiest days of my life. Initially the school had no rules so Fr Alphonsus Tierney made them on the hoof. If we were caught climbing on the roof; suddenly an edict was issued "The roof is out of bounds". My lasting memory was riding horses at Ditcham. I had learnt to ride in Australia and my father later remarked (incorrectly) "the only prize you ever got at school was for cleaning out stables." In Sept 1951 I moved back to Douai where I spent till Summer 1956 looking at the fixture list, being keen on Rugby, Hockey & Cricket. I recollect I was the most beaten boy in my year, so the following year they made me an assistant prefect! National Service followed, and then I qualified as a Chartered Surveyor and moved from private practice to Development Company, finally becoming a partner in Savills before starting my own property Consultancy Practice in the commercial property field in 1983 which I am currently winding down. Along the way I acquired a wife Kate, and we now have 3 boys, a tax consultant in Dubai, an interior architect, and a musician (pop singer songwriter).

Paul Breen (52-55) writes: I have been a Catenian for some 30 years, & thoroughly recommend it to all Old Dowegians - although I do know there are some OD's who are members of the Association. Anyhow, after 16 years as Circle Secretary, and a 6 year stint as Provincial Treasurer, I have just succumbed to accepting the Office of President of City of Liverpool Circle 74, so, if any old Dowegians are in Liverpool, we meet on the 2nd Thursday of each month (bar August), 7.30pm at the West Lancs Golf Club, and they are very welcome to join us as my guest - 0151 924 5644

Christopher Blackburn (1950-55-60) writes This year in Autumn it is 50 years since I left England to live permanently abroad. I left Douai in Summer 1960 and between 1960 to 1963 I lived in Switzerland and Germany

where I got my Diploma at the Technical Collage in Reutlingen, Germany. I got married in 1963 and from 1963 to 1970 lived in Denmark. In 1970 I joined the Ciba Chemical Company and worked with them until retirement travelling around Germany. Five years ago I retired and now really enjoy family, house and garden, computer and cycling. I do a lot of cycling with a local senior cycling group. We just came back from a five day cycling vacation at Lake Constance. On my computer I spend time editing high definition films taken on my Canon HD camcorder. I also have Skype so I have video telephone contacts with John Hoshimi, Colin Huntley and my brother Pete. I am also on the internet quite frequently. Having left England at a young age and living so long in Germany, I speak better German than I do English! In fact my ways of thinking and reacting are also more German than English. That's what happens when one lives so long in another country.

Adrian Strickland (54-58) writes: Thank you for this other dose of sad news, whereas I remember Pat Davies and Ted Duckney, I never knew Bill and will offer tomorrow's Holy Mass for the repose of his soul. I am getting accustomed to seeing obituaries of people younger than myself, and it is not a good feeling, just a matter of time! This weekend I am to join Gerald in Brussels for a few days, I understand Fr Dermot was there and met up with Gerald. Jacqui and I usually have dinner with **Michael Ingham (55-59)** and his wife Sally Anne, when we are in Brussels. Our daughter Ella also lives in Brussels, also with three children, so we have six grandchildren there, and all of them good reasons for a visit! I will be in Lourdes, first weekend of May for the Order of Malta's Annual Pilgrimage there and then going on the Camino to Compostela from Santander. We are all well, just the glimmer of old age making itself felt here and there, now and then! We are blessed and thankful.

Chris Tye (52-54-59) led a group of Probus members from Stevenage on a trip to Douai in July. One of his party turned out to be a relative of Fr Brendan O'Connor who was in the community and she presented us with some original archive material.

John Rice (1956-61) writes that he is about to retire (finally) from his second career (Corporate Employee Benefits) and is becoming involved with a recently launched charity 'Friends of the Holy Land'. This interest has come about as a result of my experiences during the Catenian Association Pilgrimage to the Holy Land in April 2010. The Christian community is under pressure. For example, the population of Jerusalem is some 750,000 of whom only 10,000 are Christian and the remainder Muslims and Jews in broadly equal measure. The City of Bethlehem is partly encircled by the monstrosity of the 8 metre high 'Separation Wall' and the city area has been reduced from 31 square kilometres to 5 square kilometres by this and by the construction of 22 settlements by the Israelis on the surrounding hills. Inhabitants of the West Bank are subjected to incomprehensible restrictions on travel across the Wall to Israeli territory. Thus, the operation of a business or normal domestic life as we would expect, is extremely difficult. There is no State support in the provision of pensions or healthcare.

If any reader wishes to find out more, there is much information on the Charity's website www.friendsoftheholylan.org.uk

Quentin Hall (57-62) was ordained a Permanent Deacon on 19th June 2010 in Brentwood Cathedral, his home parish, by Bishop Thomas McMahon. Douai was represented by Fr Godric, a classmate of Quentin's who concelebrated the Mass. Quentin will be working at the large Cathedral parish, which has many baptisms, marriages and funerals and will be joining a team of two priests and two other permanent deacons. Prior to his ordination, Quentin, with his wife Valerie, was working full time with the SION Catholic Community for Evangelism, based in Brentwood. SION Community leads parish and school missions up and down the country, and has several youth ministries. SION Community celebrates its 25th Anniversary this year. Quentin will continue to support parish mission activities in the areas of pre-mission, visiting and celebration when he can. Quentin spent 5 days on a pre-ordination retreat at Douai along with 12 of his fellow diaconate students, which for all of them was a great source of grace.

Hedley Duncan (58-62) formerly Yeoman Usher of the Black Rod, was appointed an OBE in the New Year Honours.

Finbar Murphy-O'Connor (1958-62) writes: After leaving school, I tried accountancy, sales training in a major paper company, before becoming a teacher, with my first job at Wimbledon College. I played a lot of rugby for the then successfully-run O.Ds rugby club (eternally grateful to **Frank Aung (57-61)**) and returned to Douai as coach of the WC XV. In 1977 I took up a post at the British School, Colegio Colombo Britanico in Cali, Colombia, a marvellous experience, and got married in Bogota to Martha (ex-Wimbledon College Spanish teacher and assistante) We have 4 children, 2 boys and 2 girls, 3 of whom were born in Spain, where we returned in 1979. I have been a free-lance English language teacher to companies in Madrid, Spain for over 30 years, not yet retired

and still active at sport. I've lost contact with a lot of O.Ds, although Brendan and Kevin, my brothers who live in Reading and Hove keep me up to date. For any OD, living in Spain or passing through Madrid, or anyone else who knew me at Douai, please contact me via email: fmurphyoc@hotmail.com .

Adrian Rance (59-63) has recently taken over responsibility for organising developing a programme of events at St Ethelwold's House in Abingdon. He writes: St Ethelwold's was established by a local woman, Dorothea Pickering, who is now dead, and who was a friend of, and inspired by Father Bede Griffiths. The house has lost its way in recent years as a centre for spiritual enquiry and I have been asked to focus it again as a centre for contemplative Christianity and Interfaith Dialogue. You can see information about St Ethelwold's at www.ethelwoldhouse.org.uk I have spoken to people here in some of the churches and there is, I believe, a real interest in learning more about the monastic tradition and what it can mean for Christians in the modern world

Paul Nicoll (54-58-63) writes: After six very enjoyable years in Northumberland with The National Trust we have now returned to Welburn in Yorkshire. I have actually retired a year early following major re-organisation of the Trust's 40 largest properties so we are sad to have left Northumberland quite so soon. We loved the area and had made many good new friends there but at least we'll be that much closer to London and all the young.

1960's

Mike James (61-65) writes I have my own accountancy practice in Rugeley, Staffordshire and have two children Mick who is 42 and Scarlett who is 30 this year. My wife and I await the ninth grandchild in June so we don't have much spare time!!

Jeremy Santos (62-67) writes: I am generally awful at maintaining contacts with old friends, but have decided to make up for lost time, especially as I do have a reason (detailed further below), and also would like to contact some of the old friends. My brother **Nicholas (66-71)** has a relocation business and lives in Niteroi (a city across the bay from Rio de Janeiro). He is married to Loretta (Brazilian) and they have two children both living and studying here. **Nigel Wynn-Jones (62-67)** now dedicates most of his time to the game of golf in Brazil, and is an active member of the rules committee and tournament organization of the Brazilian and Rio State Golf Federations. He is married to Elizabeth and lives in Rio de Janeiro. I was best-man at his wedding - the small world that we live in was even more proven as his wife Liz (whom I and Nigel knew in our childhood in Rio) we discovered was at the same school in England as my wife Sue!

I qualified as a Chartered Accountant with Price Waterhouse in London and then came here in 1974 to work for them. I've since worked in several very different businesses (insurance/coffee/shipping/biscuit manufacturing, and for the last 10 years in the oil industry for American companies) and am now "consulting" a term used to cover unemployed and looking for something to do- and be kept out of the house and out of my wife's hair! Sue and I have two girls, who both studied here and then at Leeds. The eldest Katie is working for the International Volley Ball Federation in Lausanne Switzerland, and the youngest Joanna is visiting her at the moment. The only other Dowegian I knew of locally was **Paul Delaney (69-73)**. He unfortunately passed away last October after a sudden and quick bout with pneumonia and cancer. I know there must be others somewhere here We have a Benedictine Schools old-boys (plus wives) reunion yearly, so would like to find some Old Dowegians in Brasil or even elsewhere in South America. I would also like to contact Peter Usher-Somers whom I remember well - but have not seen since school days.

Clive Duncan (63-68) I am within a week of retiring after 37 years spent teaching in Catholic comprehensives in the Black Country. It's been an overwhelmingly lucky and good career, free from the darker threats of dangerous kids and damnable colleagues...so far... I appreciate there are still five working days left. Nearly half of it was spent as a Head of History in Walsall, where I still live. Deirdre (whose three brothers went to Belmont) and I married in 1977 and we have two 'children', Leo, who is in a band in London, and Olivia who is finishing off a Politics and History degree at Edinburgh. We were both very active in politics in the eighties and I stood for Parliament for Labour; in 1983 against Ian Gilmour in Chesham and Amersham and in 1987 against Richard Shepherd in Aldridge-Brownhills. I have tried to keep my mind going academically so I have done a further two Masters since leaving college along with something called an NPQH (you can make up the words yourself although I insist the Q does stand for 'qualified'). I am intending to go back to St. John's, Oxford to study for a D Phil. I want to look at the lives of the Irish who came to the West Midlands between 1945 - 1960 and in particular the relationship between their sense of national identity and their sense of religious identity. I have rarely been back to school but I have many happy memories of my time there between 1963-1968 and I am aware of the influence of the staff on choices I made later. I think particularly of OJG Welch and Fr Brian Murphy in History, Billy Bell in English and so many of the community whose company and friendship I kept while and after going back for the Entrance exam. At this stage in my life I earnestly hope the old motto holds true...Ad multos annos!

Jerry Walsh (65-67) writes: From 1997 we were living in Singapore where I was working for Standard Chartered Bank. We remained there until September 2007 when I retired and we returned to the UK to live in East Devon where we had bought a house the year before. I am now fully retired and enjoying a life of leisure. We still do a fair amount of travelling, particularly to Thailand where our youngest son Georgie lives with his wife, Jib, and twin boys, born in June this year. Our other sons are both in the UK – William is a barrister and lives in London and Ben works for an events company in Bournemouth. Our daughter Hatty is currently *au pairing* near Paris before going to university next year. I am still in touch with Derek Simes and with Neil Devitt who is still living in New Jersey. Mary and I met up with Neil and his new wife Genny in September last year when we had a trip to New York.

Gerard Bulger (1964-68) writes: I sold my surgery in Bovingdon Hertfordshire in 2007 before the crunch and then continued to work in prisons. Since 2009 I have been working in Cairns Queensland as a GP.

<http://gerardbulger.com.au> This project started as late paid gap year, somehow 18 months later I am still here. My wife and I have a house in Cairns but we go back and forth to the UK. Easier to do as children grown up and sorted. Out here I have kept up my amateur radio, although my setup is not good because the tropical part of the great dividing range is outside the house, indeed the suburb is called Edge Hill. I was able to choose the call sign, so here in Australia I am VK4BGL in honour of Fr Wilfrid G3BGL. He changed my life before it was too late by getting me interested in amateur radio in 1965. I was able to get into medical school on the back of it. I told all of that to a surprised Wilfrid just a month before he died. He had just contacted me, and I went to see him then as I was suspicious that his call was a goodbye for now.

Tim McClement (60-64-69) writes: I retired from the Royal Navy as a Vice Admiral in late 2006, having been the Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Fleet for my last appointment. Since then I have been doing a number of jobs and charity work to keep me from being under Lynne's feet. Alastair (28), who was at Douai for two terms is now in the Army, serving with the Logistic Corp in Afghanistan and due home at the end of October after a 7 month stint.

David Bromham (67-70) writes: After 20 years in the Army, I am now, after four years running a polo and equestrian centre in Florida, in my 15th year as a safari guide (the blind leading the blind?) working with Abercrombie and Kent in Kenya. Regular safaris to Rwanda, Uganda, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia, India and Bhutan keep life interesting but only possible thanks to a good sport of a Canadian wife and our two Kenyan born children'.

Treffry Thompson (62-67-72) writes: I am afraid there is not much news this end really. I see my brother **Luan (68/73/78)** relatively frequently and he works at ITV in some sort of managerial IT capacity. **Felix (59-64-68)** still lives just north of Derby and teaches Media Studies at a college in Derby. However he is approaching retirement soon which don't think he is very keen on. He has two sons, one who is a journalist on the New Statesman and the other who is now doing Medicine. I am still gainfully employed in the City and Mandy works as a PA at St Albans High School. All the children are around and about, Patrick (28) works as a help desk IT boffin for a media company, Hannah (26) works for VSO in London but has just left for a 2 month stint in South Africa/Mozambique. Sophie (25) is just finishing a Masters at Exeter in some sort of Environmental thing, having just spent three months in Belize researching sting rays! Nicola (23) works as a payroll clerk for a medical supply company. However none are married and no grand children yet!

Vaughan Dennis (67-71) has sent in an account of a reunion of his year group: I can't actually remember whether any of us ever said that we "must keep in touch" when we left school. If we did, however, it took almost 38 years for it to actually happen!

The venue was Mike's house in St James's, London. The date was the 28th May 2009. The following old boys were there: David Bromham, Vaughan Dennis, Michael Geoghegan, Christopher Lloyd, Keith Samengo-Turner, Nicholas Samengo-Turner. Apologies received from Stephen Barder and Robert James

A fine impersonation of Fr Martin saying grace served to crack the ice and, within minutes, it seemed as if all those years weren't such a long time after all. It was a great evening. Great to be able to catch up, great to be able to meet each other's wives, great to learn how we'd all done with families, careers, ups and down's etc and, most importantly, just to realise that, despite grey and balding heads, we all still had so much in common. Perhaps it was a reflection of our years at Douai that we were also all in such good spirits and, as luck would have it, in good health too!

Charles Newman (62-67-71) writes: The last 20 years? I am married with two daughters - Kitty (21) and Matty (18). Kitty works in London and Matty is doing A Levels. My wife Soozie and I are separated but cordially. I

used to be a business journalist, then set up a small publishing company in Brighton. About 15 years ago I got stuck into the internet and now I run a small company specialising in developing specialist intranets for commercial and public sector organisations. And all this without ever really understanding computers! I was thoroughly amused to stumble on the website for 'Avalon' to discover that the massive Jakes where I spent so many happy hours is now a contemporary, style-led living space for today's discerning buyer! Freedom in South Africa, the end of the Berlin Wall, the fall of the Soviet empire - and now this. Surely proof (if it was ever needed) that God exists

Edward Vale (67-72) has announced his engagement to Sarah Davies, and they are planning to get married in April, with a wedding blessing mass in the School Chapel. Sarah has three children of her own and, with Edward's two, his Wimbledon house will be fairly full at certain times of the year. Sarah worked at Elstree School until the end of the summer term.

James Wilding (67-71) is headmaster of Claires Court School in Maidenhead. He writes: The Brister's are old family friends (of our parents generation), so the news of Adrian's tragic death did re-light contact between myself and Anthony. Messrs Newman and Wilding attended the Royal Academy's summer exhibition, encouraged as we were by Mr Arscott who was showing, followed by a lovely meal in Shoreditch and gentle (and relatively sober) journeys home. Running independent schools gets no easier; though priced as we are in the Poundland price range, this does not mean all is well in our customer base! There have been some ghastly tragedies this last 2 years, and regrettably that will continue as families and businesses reorientate to the realities of no bonuses nor capital appreciation of house asset on which to borrow more. The good news is of course that the young are still young and huge fun to work with

Peter Worrall (69-72) writes: I recall with affection those wet and windy days on the monastery pitches but I imagine the current conditions would probably preclude rugby practice.... You mention the various year group reunions that have taken place this year. It is very encouraging that so much activity has flourished in this way and at least the Society's heart keeps beating strongly through the will of those who enjoy each other's company and an excuse to push the boat out ! There is in fact another 'bash this very evening at the Lamb & Flag in town for our 1969 group (The Sandown event). Sadly I cannot make it (as in Rotterdam this week) but I hope to make a mini rendezvous with a few of the chaps on Dec 4th next as I am in town that night.

I was pleased to see Fr Edmund (St Pauls-outside-the-Walls) interviewed for the BBC in the 'History of Christianity' programme which I have been able to follow during my travels. This is what I would describe as good television and more programmes of this ilk would do great amounts of good if they reached a larger audience.

1970's

Scott Hunter (1970-75) has published his first novel *The Trespass*. His writing career was kick-started after he unexpectedly won first prize in the Sunday Express short story competition in 1996. Scott currently combines a career in IT with a parallel career as a semi-professional drummer. He has recorded with internationally renowned rock band *Jethro Tull* and appeared in concert with 70's popsters *Mungo Jerry*. He has recently completed a three year stint with UK blues rock supremo Larry Miller. Where he fits in the writing is anyone's guess but he is currently working on his third novel, an adult thriller entitled 'Silent Order'. Scott lives in Berkshire with his wife, his two youngest children and a Cocker Spaniel pup named Archie.

His website www.scott-hunter.net also gives news of the novel he is working on: "*DCI Brendan Moran faces the biggest challenge of his career as he uncovers an unholy history of multiple murders at a top public school linked to Winfield Abbey. Moran becomes a marked man as he struggles to penetrate the Abbey's vow of secrecy before the murderer strikes again. But something else lies hidden in the Abbey vaults - something that the murderer is determined to protect at all costs. . . .*" .Not all the readers may know that Fr Boniface Moran's baptismal name is Brendan - just a coincidence?

Stephen Thomas (66-71-75) is the CEO of Renaissance Services in Oman. He was awarded the OBE in the Queen's New Year's Honours List 2010 for "Services to British business interests abroad and services to the community in Oman".

Andrew Lavarello (72-77) writes: Last November I took advantage of a company scheme allowing employees to take additional time off work at reduced salaries and set off on a three week trip across Europe and what a great three weeks it was! I should have done this a long time ago but then it's never too late! I set off with my son Alexander for a long week-end down to Gibraltar to see my parents and then set off on my own with my Euro-rail pass from Seville to Madrid, Barcelona, Limoges, Genoa, Padua, Venice, Belgrade, Salonika, Mount Athos and finally Istanbul. I was staying with friends in Limoges and Genoa but the rest was essentially sightseeing and enjoying the experience of Mount Athos.

I arrived in Mount Athos in glorious sunshine. However nothing could compare to the beauty of the night sky where every conceivable star could be seen. My first monastery was Karacalou and my first church service lasted from 2.00 am to 7.00am! Pretty exhausting! First impressions.....the monks are rather distant and not very friendly to foreigners (you are either Orthodox or heretic in their eyes!!) but that is soon made up by the sheer beauty of the place. The natural setting, the majesty of the buildings and the deep mystery of their liturgy makes it an absolutely unique place. They seem to have a much higher regard for the sacred than we are used to in the West! From Karaclou it was on to Iveron and San Panteleimon. San Panteleimon is the only Russian monastery where the chant is old Slavonic. Perhaps this was the highlight of the trip as the music was quite different to the Greek tradition with much more harmony and the traditional "basso profundo".

After leaving Mount Athos I had to readjust my sleeping habits especially after the three hour long night service. After going to bed at 7.00pm and being woken by bells or by the semantron (hammering on a wooden board) at 1.30am it took a little bit of time to settle into a normal routine again.

All in all it was a wonderful trip. Lots of Byzantine art and history but equally impressive was the natural beauty of the various places visited and would certainly love to return there one day!

William Picard (1973-78) visited Douai recently with his wife Beth and his children Tom, Caroline and Clare. He met up with Fr Oliver and Fr Bernard and toured the whole site. Fr Bernard produced his photographic album of the scout trip to Eastern Europe in 1979 and William was able to produce a commentary on every picture. He was going on to attend the silver wedding celebrations for **Michael Franklin (1973-78)** and his wife Fiona which took place on a boat on the Thames, starting at Tower Bridge. William works as a sugar broker in New Canaan, Connecticut and is now an American citizen.

James Brown (73-78) organised a select reunion with others in his year: Kevin Tomlinson, Mike Segrue, Daryl Schofield and Ed Wheeler and is hoping to track down others in 2010. He would like to get in touch with anyone from the year, just a question of finding the time! If interested please contact Jim on Brownjim@kpo.kz. James is Reservoir Development Manager for KPO in Kazakhstan, although he now has a UK base in Saffron Walden.

Chris Lloyd (74-79) writes: A group of us from 78/79 leavers got together for the England v Argentina game at Twickenham - Richard Dunbar, John Joyce, Simon Brockman, Chris Mauduit, Mike Segrue, Neil Murphy and me. It was a good day despite the awful rugby and nice to see Neil making progress.

I'm still in the North-West, living in Wilmslow (famous for its population of Premiership WAGs!) and working as a paediatric ophthalmic surgeon at Manchester Royal Eye Hospital. Fiona and I have 4 kids - 2 boys and 2 girls. The eldest Matthew, is at Cambridge studying to be a vet and his sister Sophie is also at Cambridge doing Theology and Religious studies! The other 2 (Timothy and Rachel) are in the 6th form. Tim wants to follow in the family tradition and be a medic, Rachel is considering her options! My brother **Mike(78-81)** lives in Edinburgh and works in Marketing in the food industry. My Dad **Ian (48-53)** is well after a heart op last year and enjoying retirement with my Mum in County Durham. He spends a couple of months a year in Spain. I know he keeps in touch with his contemporaries from the successful 53 rugby team. I see a lot of **Richard Dunbar (74-77)** who lives in nearby Cheadle Hulme and also bump into **Andy Camilleri (68/73/78)** who is a local ENT surgeon and lives in Stockport.

Aidan Kelly (69-74-79) and **Neil Murphy (68-74-79)** organised a reunion of their year at the London Irish stadium in December. Neil is continuing to make extraordinary progress since his brain haemorrhage in 2007, as reported in last year's Newsletter. He is now planning to walk a half-marathon in Bristol in aid of Brace, a charity which does research into Alzheimer's. Readers can support Neil by going to the following site:
<http://www.justgiving.com/neil-murphy1>

Stephen Blinman (1975-80) writes: After sixteen years as a Commercial Manager in the aerospace, datacomms and IT sector, I have recently qualified as a McTimoney chiropractor and now practice in the Pangbourne and Wokingham areas. In parallel I am also training to be an osteopath, with the intention of uniting both professions within one practice.

Stewart Maxwell (75-78) writes: I am living in Surrey with Oksana and our 4 children, 3 of them in early teenage years so getting back what I gave when I was a teenager. I have worked in Healthcare IT for the past 20 years and spend much of my time travelling across the globe so looking forward to a rest in years to come.

Marco Norman (1976-79) writes: Yasmin and I tied the knot in 2009 and celebrated in a very small way our first anniversary on May 29th this year. 1 year married and 17 years together!

Patrick Hall (1974-77-82) writes: At the beginning of last year I escaped the impending doom of my contract work for the DVLA, and took a job with the French company, Alstom, as Site Finance Manager for the Shoaiba project. Shoaiba is a power station construction project 100km South of Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. So I now live in a portacabin in the desert, but there is a (Red Sea) coral reef at the bottom of the garden, and I manage a couple of weeks at home in the Brecon Beacons every 3 months or so. I am using what spare time I have developing new skills both musical, learning to play the piano, and chemical, making vodka.

Mike McClement (77-82) writes: We did an endurance challenge event (me and a buddy from University) - 140 miles over two days from the north to the south coast of Devon - running 35 miles, canoeing 8 miles, cycling 97 miles. We raised £1,500 for a Multiple Sclerosis Charity. My first book is being released by Pearson Education on September 1st. It's called 'Brilliant Confidence', - it's the next in the 'Brilliant series' of personal development books by Pearson Education.

Damian Hoskins (78-83) writes: my wife Sasha and I had a baby daughter, Isabella, in 2008, to join Alexander (born 2004). I left the Army 3 years ago after 19 years, and went into the City, first to Lehman Brothers (yikes - biggest bankruptcy in history - not all my fault), and now at RBS. I occasionally see Mick Chesterman and Charlie Stockwell, and recently caught up with Mark Nolan for the first time in several years. And I bumped into Jim Willis at the England vs Ireland match at Twickenham in March

Paul Dryden (1979-84) writes: following my marriage to Melissa on the 29th of December 2007 we had Daisy May Harriet on 1 March 2009. I am a Fellow and Director of Development at Hertford College Oxford (from September 2008) and now run the recruiting team at W (Westminster Dragoons) Squadron, Royal Yeomanry in London.

1980's

Matthew Arlidge (80-85) writes: I'd like to contact our year to suggest a 30th anniversary (!) get together, or more likely a few informal dates that people could use to meet up. If there's no success in getting together at least a few of us will reconnect on Facebook etc. I've mentioned it to Dermot Moloney and I'm happy to set a date in a pub and if it's just me and him it'll be fun; if all 60 turn up, it'll be fun. Those interested, please contact matt.arlidge@ntlworld.com

Mike Strong (80-85) writes: I am doing retained business consultancy work within an Equestrian Wholesaler business and other self employed business consultancy work. My brother **Simon (86-91)** has re-launched his Human Zoo and Problem Child consultancy businesses. All of us are healthy and have young families growing up way too fast. My oldest goes to secondary school in September this year!!

Seán Brickell (80-83) writes: The big life-changing news for me was getting married last November to Sally. She's an awesome find and was well worth the wait! We both work and live in London. She is an investment banker and I'm now an entrepreneur. After years as a TV news correspondent and newsreader for networks like Sky News, the BBC and ITV, as well as several years working as a reporter and undercover investigative journalist for national newspapers and a writer for various magazines, I had some entrepreneurial urges I couldn't suppress. I now run two businesses: one is a communications agency called Broad Grin Communications and the other involves my working with organisations around the world helping their staff and directors with their communications and confidence skills.

Personally, there has been lots of adventure. I climbed to the peak of one of the Seven Summits mountains – and almost died during a serious rock fall while clinging to a sheer face on the ascent – even though I wasn't a mountaineer. I had been asked to go on an expedition to New Guinea where we spent time with the penis-gourd-wearing tribesmen deep in the jungle where cannibalism is still practised. I motor-biked through parts of western Europe on my own on my super-sports motorbike, went on an expedition across the glacial wastes of Greenland and have been held at gunpoint a few times in less savoury parts of the world. And, from my TV days, I have also appeared on various out-take shows in the UK and USA!

Francis Davis (83-85) was appointed a senior civil servant advising the Secretary of State For Communities and Local Government on faith policy, faith communities and social cohesion in November 2009. It's three days per week and he will continue for two days at Blackfriars in Oxford. After the election he was re-appointed to the same job by the new government.

Chris Flanagan (81-86) writes: I married Sue in 1992 and we have three children - Amy (16), Joseph (13) and Rosie (5). We've lived in Ash Vale on the Surrey/Hants border for 17 years now. I initially trained as a careers

adviser (perhaps slightly ironically as I never had any idea what I wanted to do), but latterly have moved into information management and website design - I now work just up the M4 at Reading University, as well doing a tiny amount of freelance web design. Virtually all of our spare time is dedicated to the children - Amy is an exceptionally talented netball player and last weekend represented England at U17 level in the European Championships in Belfast. Joe is often told he is a 'mini-me' version of me, though he (somewhat too) smartly counters, 'yes, but I'm better looking!' He plays in defence for his local football club and is very popular with his peers. He's just discovered girls... The joys of parenthood! Rosie is a sweetie, very outgoing/big personality - I think due to having older siblings.

I haven't kept in contact with any of my peers from 81-86 - I guess we all move on - but I enjoy reading about what others have done. I was very sad when I heard that the school had closed, perhaps more so as my previous school, Buckfast Abbey, had also closed a few years before.

Anyway, It would be lovely to pay a short visit with my elder two, if possible, to show them where their Dad spent his formative years. I am extremely grateful for the spiritual guidance and teaching provided by Douai which has helped shape me into the person I am today

Piers Hoskins (82-87) writes: I am delighted to let you know that we have a new arrival in the shape of Kitty who was born 24/01/2010. We now have three under the age of four, help! Unlike her two brothers, she is a dream child and sleeps through the night, (so far anyway) and been the third is used to waiting for attention, food, nappy change, removal from car etc. We recently took a family holiday to Brittany and whilst shopping in the local supermarche accompanied by the three youngsters in the shopping trolley, I spotted an interesting looking french beer and proceeded to purchase a dozen bottles, as you do. Only when I was unloading the shopping at the checkout did I notice the beer label, "La Biere du Demon" "The World's Strongest Blond Beer, Brewed in Douai". It's good to see some traditions never change!

The class of 1982-87 held a reunion this past weekend in Penzance, organized by our Cornish host Giles Dugdale. Attending this re-union were the following: Matt Glover, Jim Pearce, James Joyce, Dom Wallis, Pete Lowe, Mark Williams, James Watson, Dom Heath, Richard Hungerford, John Duckney, John Spence, Tom Reynolds. A number of people dropped out in the final weeks, but for the rest we had a fantastic couple of days of catching up and recounting old days at Douai. I don't think I am wrong in saying that we were all surprised at what a strong bond we still had, and how we regretted not keeping in touch. Dom Heath, Jim Pearce and Tom Reynolds travelled over from France where they now live.

Ros Little (85-87) is a partner with William Fry, lawyers in Dublin.

Nick Devaux (83-88) writes: I just received the latest Douai magazine and directory, and found myself looking up lots of old names from the past. It has been so long but yet the memories still seem like yesterday.

Caught up with Charlie Foden this summer on a few occasions and saw Pete Whitton in Hong Kong about a year ago. Still speak to Jonny Hasting every few weeks but it is always me doing the calling as he is useless at staying in touch. Currently have two boys Max (9) and Oliver (7) – they are extremely active, naughty and very good at sport. They are without question the joy of my life and we spend most weekends doing numerous outdoor pursuits. My life has changed a lot in the past year as we decided to sell the majority share of our family business – after 146 years. I have agreed to stay on for three years, after which I will decide if to stay or pursue other things. I am very fortunate that I get to travel a lot for work, set my own hours, see the kids during a normal day and probably take about 10 weeks holiday a year. Every time that I come over to the UK I keep meaning to pass by, but time seems to never allow this. Will make every effort on my next trip. Have started looking at schools for the boys as it will only be a few years before Max starts. Really hoping to find somewhere that he will enjoy.

Charles Antelme (84-89) is colonel of the Welsh Guards. Since his appointment he has had a high profile in the media, appearing on the British Legion TV programme on the night before Remembrance Sunday and also speaking on the day itself on Radio 4. The following appeared in the South Wales Evening Post on 25 September. "Lt Col Antelme was handed the top post following the death of the Lieutenant Colonel Rupert Thorneloe, who was killed in Afghanistan on July 1. The regiment were in the thick of Operation Panther's Claw, which saw British troops in one of the biggest offences pushing back the Taliban. Lieutenant Colonel Antelme said: "Mosques have been renovated, roads rebuilt and water brought to arid villages. These gains have been bought with the sweat and blood of Welsh Guardsmen, their brothers-in-arms from across the British Army, our American cousins, Estonians attached to the Guards and Afghans of great spirit and courage. The commitment of these men, their bravery in the face of horrifying danger and the humility and humour with which they conduct themselves has been inspiring to

witness."

Ben Knollys (84-89) sent in a report of a reunion of his year group: 12 Old Dowegians from the class of 1984-1989 gathered on 23 October 2009 to celebrate 25 years since the Open and Blue Dorms and 20 years since that heady summer post A-Levels. In attendance were: Ben Knollys, Chris Glover, Edward Caldwell, Gerald Strickland, James Searle, Julian Adcock, Justin Kent, Marcus Saw, Paul Spragg, Peter Groom, Robert Tierney, Stuart Newman. We were delighted that Fr Godric and Fr Oliver were able to join us for part of the evening.

Gerald Strickland (84-89) continues with his energy consulting business in Brussels ; he has had two good years, despite the recession and spends half his time working for UNEP in Paris. He succeeded in his planned pilgrimage to Compostela with his father, **Adrian (54-58)**.

Stuart German (85-90) and his family have moved from Zimbabwe at long last to Sydney, Wife Bernadine, Samuel (6) and Jason (2), and if there are any Old Dowegians here, particularly from my era, it would be good to make contact. I am part of an Australian vehicle and asset tracking business called Ezy2c.

Ben Goor (86-91) has spent 13 years in media/marketing. He sold one of his companies and still has an interest in a media planning and buying agency. Most recently he has launched ANYVAN.com – The delivery auction website, a new concept where couriers compete for your delivery job.

Anyvan helps people with large items to transport find someone with a van of suitable size already travelling to or near their destination. The idea is to save on van hire costs. Anyvan claims it can save users up to 85% of the normal price of delivery and on the CO2 emissions of an extra vehicle on the road. If you're moving house or need anything moved – speak to Ben! Married to Victoria with son Freddie (9mths). **Dom (82-85-90)** is well with two 'young men' Max and Zac. He is still in the rag trade designing and manufacturing high end 'ladies wear' he has distributors all over the country and has a range in Selfridges. **Joff (88-93)** is MD of a Pearson Group owned company (FT) called Merger ID which is a financial services website that matches fund managers / investors with companies looking for investment or looking to sell. Joff is married to Hannah and has two daughters Emily and Lola.

Peter Lang (85-87-93) writes: I am now back in the USA, in Williamsburg, VA and working for a company that targets kids who have or are at risk of dropping out of High School. By partnering with the School District we provide programs that will allow the kids to catch up and do better than they would do in main stream education and get them to graduate on time, with a full high school diploma. It is very rewarding, and very challenging at the same time, but never dull! **Stephen (79/81/86)** is in senior management in a secondary school in Nottinghamshire. He has two lovely children, and is about to return to Africa: Kenya this time.

David (82/84/89) is living in Perth, but working in Europe for a financial institution. I am not totally clear what he does, but he is always on the road and is doing very well for himself. He is married and has three wonderful children. **Christopher (83/85/90)** is living in London and running his own accountancy firm. It is a young company and is doing very well despite all the challenges the present economy has to offer. His firm is called Flash Accounts (www.flashaccounts.com) and they provide in-sourced finance solutions to small to medium firms who can not afford dedicated accounts and finance departments.

Pat Andrews (88-91) writes: I am living in Winchester with my wife Lou and our one year old son Oliver. We have been living here for three years now having moved down from Kirkbymoorside in Yorkshire. Before that we were in London where we met. I started working for the London Ambulance Service in 1997 where I worked as a paramedic in Brixton and as a cycle paramedic in the West End. We moved up to Yorkshire to get married and to start a family but were not up there long as a position on the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Air Ambulance brought us back south. I have flown over Douai on a number of occasions and look down with fond memories. I did pop in once but there was no one around to say hello to.

Peter Wilkinson (89-94) writes: I'm still at the Fraud Squad of the Metropolitan Police but am thinking that I might want to change careers only I don't know what else I'd like to do.

1990's

Ben Briggs (88-90-95) writes: I got married in May last year to Susan and we are in the process of moving down to Burgess Hill in West Sussex; we are currently living in Beckenham where we have lived for 4 years. I work in the travel industry as a Marketing Manager, specialising in trips to Australia and New Zealand, having made many amazing trips down-under over the last 9 years. I am glad to see that the Douai Society seems to be going strong and it was fun to read about John Shaw starting at Douai all those years ago. I won't forget all those early morning

runs he made us do!

Rory O’Keeffe (90-95) writes: I am working as QHSE manager for a chemical importer called Norkem in Knutsford and live in Chester with Robb, my partner of 14 years. Previously I worked in brewing and beverage packaging. I have also gained a MSc through the Open University.

Simon Pickering (89-91-96) writes: I’m working at the University of Bath doing research into Thermographic NDE (Non-Destructive Evaluation) of various things such as turbine blades, carbon-fibre wing components, and various other odds and sods from the aircraft and power industry as well as teaching various programming courses to Engineering Doctorate students. I got my PhD a few years ago, 2006 I think (I can’t remember and as our flat is packed up I can’t even read the spine on my thesis to see what year it says!). My wife, Holly, and I were married on the 30th of May last year (2009) in Pebworth (her C of E church, and we had a Catholic blessing from my local priest in Bath) and we’re living in Bath, looking for a larger house here and thinking about having kids.

Mike Hawthorn (92-97) Mike and his wife, Becky, are expecting their first baby, due on Christmas Day! Becky teaches at Aldermaston Primary School. Mike works for Scottish & Southern Electric, but also very involved with building up his guitar teaching sessions.

Laura Harper (1993-94-99) writes: My brother **Matt (90/93)** got married last year in October in Malawi, and came over here for a blessing and reception party. His wife Frances is expecting their first child next month, they have decided to have the baby in England so they will be returning from Africa. Dave and I got engaged in February, and our first baby is due in December...I’m afraid we haven’t been very traditional and decided to start a family before getting married...but we do plan on getting married next year.

Will Melia (92-95-98) has returned from serving six months as a platoon commander in Afghanistan with 3 Rifles. During a visit to Douai he discovered that his commanding officer **Michael Lynch (86/87/90)** was also an Old Dowegian. A report in The Times just before Christmas 2009 included the following:

The riflemen manning mountainside observation posts around the Kajaki hydroelectric dam in Helmand have grown so proud of their own home-made pizzas this winter that there is little doubt what dish will top their bill of fare on Christmas Day.

Yet, when 9 Platoon, C Company, 3 Rifles, deployed in October to Kajaki, the British Army’s most isolated Forward Operating Base (FOB) in Afghanistan, not one of them had had any catering experience or training. In less than three months they have not only come to terms with their remote location and the difficulties of food supply, but have perfected from scratch the art of pizza-making as enthusiastic participants in their commanding officer Lieutenant Will Melia’s “Kajaki Come Dine With Me” campaign.

“Anything we want up here on the peaks we have to carry over the mountains ourselves. It means a daily trek to collect water and rations from the FOB,” says Lieutenant Melia, whose scheme, designed to offer nourishment and light entertainment to men who spend long hours standing sentry atop a windswept mountain range, has been successful beyond his dreams.

“Cooking at the apex of a mountain presents its own difficulties,” he says. “When we arrived in the dying days of an Afghan summer, we could cook on small gas stoves, but once winter set in, these tended to blow out at the slightest gust. So, from whatever materials we could scavenge — empty ammo tins, bits of corrugated iron, sandbags and large rocks — we built an all-weather, wood-fire oven up on Sparrowhawk West.”

“The blokes’ response has been amazing. There’s such enthusiasm for our little cooking project that discussing recipes takes up most of our free time,” he says. “I’ve just been listening to two snipers in heated debate about the perfect Yorkshire pudding.”

Whatever the meal on Christmas Day, there won’t of course be any period when the whole platoon can eat together, since the men at FOB Kajaki will still have the usual sentry and patrol duties. Lieutenant Melia will hold a short service for as many of the men as possible, and then there will be carols around the fire. Then, in traditional army fashion for Christmas Day, he, as their officer, will serve the meal to the junior ranks.

Tom Rossiter (91-95-99) has been commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Royal Logistics Corps and is currently serving in Germany, but will be going to Afghanistan next year.

Clemens Eckes (98-99) has at last finished many years of studying and is now working as assistant to the Director of the Knights of Malta in Germany.

Abigail Morbi (97-99) is studying Medicine at Imperial College. She writes I have just completed my BSc and gained 1st class honours. I did a research project as part of my BSc and submitted my abstract and data to a few

conferences. It got accepted at MEET, the big European endovascular conference, so I have just been to Marseilles to give a presentation. I found out on Friday that my other abstract has been accepted by RSNA, which is the biggest medical conference in the world apparently! So I will be going to Chicago in November to give another presentation. It has also been accepted by a national clinical audit conference in London, so I will be presenting again next February! I am also in the process of planning my elective for next year. I want to go to the major Plastics, Maxillofacial and Burns Unit in New Zealand. I have contacted them and they have accepted my application - however, I need to get Imperial to agree to it and sign lots of forms etc. in order to go ahead with it.

Patrick Brown (98-99) is working for his uncle **Aidan Brown (80-82-87)**, dividing his time between England and Ghana and living in Cheltenham.

Kieran Brown (98-99) is serving in the Royal Logistics Corps as a second lieutenant, currently in Kabul, Afghanistan.

1999 - 2009

Tosin Igbon (95-99) and **Robin Denton (94-95-99)** were the main organisers of a reunion held at Douai on 25 July to mark the tenth anniversary of the closing of the school. The day began with a Thanksgiving Service in the Abbey Church and was followed by a group photograph for which everyone had brought some item of memorabilia which said something about their time in the school, a football match between the year of 1997 and the year of 2000 (won by 1997 on a penalty shoot-out) and a barbecue in the cottages. In all 55 Old Dowegians of different year groups who had been in the school at the time of closure attended.

1969/70 Year Group Reunion 13th June 2009 Sandown Park by David de Freitas (edited version)

In January 2009 I received a letter from Simon Clark out of the blue. Simon pointed out that 2009 marked the 40th anniversary of our intake entering the portals of Douai School. Simon opined that this event was worth marking in some way, and I immediately warmed to the idea, and, as Simon pointed out, a number of challenges presented themselves. Firstly, after a gap of circa 40 years, how do we get hold of everybody? Whilst the Abbey and Fr Oliver are the repository of some contact information, they can only rely on what is provided to them. Part of Simon's letter highlighted this problem and asked us all to report any contact details, and particularly email addresses, that we may have concerning our contemporaries to him. The letter also asked us to give some thought as to what form the reunion event should take and when. To assist with the latter, and because it was a generally good idea anyway, Simon proposed two informal drinks meetings in February at the Lamb and Flag in Covent Garden. The first drink went very well and we started off with the game of 'let's see if we can guess who we are!' We mostly got it wrong; but when put right, we could still detect something of the fresh faced boy of 40 years ago.

The consensus of merry opinion was that I be co-opted to help Simon organise matters. It soon became clear that the format was somewhat dictated by the numbers we could gather on a given day. We should also choose a venue that would be generally accessible to most. Unsurprisingly, as was the case when we were at Douai, we were all dispersed throughout the country as well as throughout the world (which did not help with tracking everyone down!) It was generally agreed that an event in summer was the best idea and preferably before we all disappeared on summer holidays. June thus presented itself as the most suitable month and Simon, through numerous exchanges of emails, established that 13th June (not a Friday!) was the best day for most of us.

This date seemed to offer the possibility of circa 30/35 attendees (24/25 ODs), a good response given the recession we are all experiencing. This response helped with deciding what might be possible for an event. We also decided that whilst the event was chiefly to mark our 40th anniversary of arrival at Douai, we would also be happy to include any ODs that were at Douai four years either side of our year of 1969/70. This was because we would all have been concurrent at Douai to some degree. Obviously, we also included wives/partners. In considering the format, we decided that we wanted to be somewhere nice but not too formal. We wanted to do something that involved a meal but also where we could mingle freely in a convivial atmosphere in a place that was set aside for us.

Given the time of year selected and the other criteria noted above, it seemed a good idea to hold our reunion at a race meeting somewhere in the Home Counties. This narrowed our options to Sandown Park. Simon put forward various cost options e.g. entrance only, reserved seating at the restaurant and a box. In the end, we were able to accept the cost for a double-box., which was brilliantly negotiated and organised by Simon.

Sandown Park proved to be a particularly convenient choice for access. You can get there fairly easily by road (M25 & good parking) and rail (station is a short walk). On the day itself, we were blessed with glorious weather.

Whilst a number of us had met earlier in the year at the Lamb and Flag, the majority of us had not clapped eyes on each other since we left Douai in the summer of 1974; I was particularly awed by this leap of faith, and more so as regards the wives/partners of those ODs.

The interest and time consumed by meeting up with fellow ODs was a far greater attraction than the racing. Having said that, having a race meeting as a back drop provided an attractive diversion. Racing, in itself, offers a very useful 'ice breaker', which provides a good way to re-establish contact. Regardless of one's level of knowledge, it is always possible to discuss 'form' to some degree or even to make a virtue out of no form! It also provided the opportunity to celebrate and commiserate with winners and losers. It was amusing to see how the wives and partners reacted to what Douai meant to their nearest and dearest. I suppose that you cannot ignore the effect that five years has on your life between the formative ages of 13 to 18. One particular aspect of reunions such as these is that, by and large, you are all at the same stage in life coping with pretty much the same challenges. Acknowledging this and 'swapping notes' is surprisingly reassuring.

Those who attended were Brendan Donnelly, Tom Ryan, Tony Blood, Mano Button, Barry Keating, Hugh Farey, Julian Boulding, Duncan Wilson, Peter Worrall, Paddy Maclennan, Jon Verry, Robert Clifford-Holmes, Chris Adams, Richard Foulkes, Charles Gallagher, Peter Labey, George Jerjian, David de Freitas, Simon Clark, Richard Berenson, Nick Keegan, Andrew Sullivan, Simon Birchenough and Paul Fletcher

In closing, I would like to take the opportunity of this article to make a general appeal to everyone reading this report for any contact details of the following ODs of our year group who we were unable to contact (or had difficulty contacting): Nigel Arscott, Patrick Annesley, Gerrard Butcher, Kevin Chapman, Paul Delaney, Matthew Farley-Wood, James Glenister, Michael Healey, Adrian Johnston, Jeremy Kirwan, Nicholas Kelly, Shaun Langley, Laurence Magor, Simon Moritz, Tim O'Leary, John Price, Tim Reavey, Michael Shanahan, Steven Smyth, Tim Ward, Laurence Wright, Richard Wylie.

Engagements

Jocelyn Marchington (89-94) is marrying Tessa Grobel (sister of Christian (89-94), William (91-96) and Edmund (92-95)) at Franciscan Friary, Chilworth on Saturday 4 September. Fr Dermot will be presiding.

James McGinity (87-89-94) is marrying Áine Dempsey at the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Shanagarry, Co Cork on Friday 10 September. Fr Dermot will be presiding.

Giles Murphy (93-95-99) is marrying Ellie Bishop at Douai on 25 September; Fr Oliver will be presiding.

Benedikt Franke (97-99) is marrying Sophia Gollwitzer on 18 September in the Church of St Sylvester, Munich on 18 September; Fr Oliver will be presiding

Marriages

Christopher Bean (82-87)

Charles Antelme (84-89) to Margaret Grimsley on 10 April 2010 at St Helena's Church, Beaufort, South Carolina. Fr Oliver assisted

Kieran Brown (98/99) to Claire Vinycomb in Hinton, Dorset. Fr Oliver officiated

Births

Andrew Bowyer (88-93) and Natalia: a son Conrad David born 28 December 2009

Damien Byrne (88-91-96) and Malene Liepke: a son Qai

Peter Wilkinson (89-94) and Harriet – a daughter Alice May born 2001

William Grobel (91-96) and Jo: a daughter, Xanthe Elizabeth Ann born 6 June 2010

Sam Hawke (91-96) and Nikki: a daughter Daisy born June 2010 to join their son George

Edward Rossiter (88-91-96) and Nicola: a son Oliver

Andy Fox (91-96) and Hannah: a daughter Tessa, to join their other daughter Leihla.

Deaths

Fr Augustine Stickland OSB 1920 – 2010

John Anthony Stickland was born on June 4, 1920, and was educated at St Augustine's Abbey School, Ramsgate, then at Douai School from 1934 to 38. At that time there were close links between Ramsgate and Douai, many pupils passing from one to the other, and several of the monks at Ramsgate had been educated at Douai School.

On leaving the school in 1938, he passed directly into the monastic community and was clothed by Abbot Sylvester Mooney on September 18, taking the name, Augustine. Simple profession came the following year, and solemn

profession on September 25, 1942. Following ecclesiastical studies at Douai, during the war it was impossible to go to Europe, he was ordained priest on Trinity Sunday, May 25, 1945 by Bishop King in the Abbey Church. Then he went up to Oxford to read modern languages, and received his BA in 1948. He spent some time at the Abbey of St-André near Bruges, Belgium, to perfect his French, which he was to teach in the school. When the house system was introduced in 1951, Fr Augustine was appointed the first house master of Samson. The following year, he was sent to the Junior School at Ditcham Park, near Petersfield, Hampshire, where as well as teaching, he coached cricket, ran the choir, established an annual chess tournament, took charge of the lawns which he greatly improved. Gardening was always one of his interests. He also set up a model railway for the delight of the boys. He remained at Ditcham until 1963, and these were probably his happiest years. He always spoke with affection of Ditcham, and had many anecdotes, which he loved to recount in later years.

In 1963, Fr Augustine was called back to Douai, to become, for a second time, housemaster of Samson, a position he held until 1971. In addition he taught French and was games master and groundsman, as well as looking after the garden in the school quadrangle, with Fr Gregory Freeman. In January 1971, he was sent to do parochial work as curate first at Cheltenham and then in 1973 at Malvern, becoming parish priest there in 1979, before going as parish priest to Coventry, 1980 – 87, and then to Studley where he remained until retiring in 1999. For some years from 1974 he was an abbot's appointee on the Council of Seniors. During the last years of his life he suffered declining health and died on the morning of St George's Day 2010.

Fr Augustine's funeral was held at his request at Studley and was attempted by many people including various Old Dowegians.

Requiescat in pace

Tributes were received from many people including the following:

Kenneth Walsh (48-51) I was sad to read that Fr Augustine has passed away and have vivid memories of him when I was at Douai in the late 40s and early 50s. I remember him as always good natured, and long suffering when it came to my performance on the Rugby Field! Sad that he ended his life in poor health. As with many other Douai Old Boys, he will be remembered with great affection.

Peter Jackson (48-52) I was so sorry to hear of the death of Fr Augustine; thank you for letting us know. Unfortunately I cannot attend his funeral on Tuesday but will certainly remember him in prayer. I believe his departure marks the last of the 'old' Community who taught me in the school, another reminder of the passing years.

John Richardson (49-53) It was with great sadness that I received the news of Fr Augustine's death. May he rest in peace. "Sticko" played a major part in my life as a Douai master in the early fifties, and I recall him with affection. He was also, I believe, my parent's parish priest at Malvern some years later, and they also spoke well of him.

Michael Treays (48-51-56) I was sad to hear of the passing of "Sticko". I remember that during I think an Easter Holiday period my brother Peter and I whilst at Ditcham spent the holiday at school as my parents were abroad in Singapore and only an annual visit at most could be afforded. I think it was in 1949. Sticko took pity on us and took us to the cinema in Southsea where we saw Cecile De Mille's version of Samson & Delilah with Hedy Lamar & Victor Mature. Following the showing of scantily dressed slaves I remember Sticko's verdict "It was not strictly biblically authentic". A lovely guy and a credit to the Community.

Chris John (50-54-58) Very sad to hear that Father Augustine died on St George's day. I remember him with much respect and affection from my days at Ditcham when he taught me French, cricket and rugby in an inspired way. I also remember serving him at daily Mass at the Jesuit church of the Sacred Heart when he paid a short visit to Wimbledon in the early 50s.

Peter Eastwood (50-54-59) So sorry to hear about this as I have such fond memories of Augustine especially at Ditcham where he was a lot of fun teaching us boys about wildlife and taking us off when he went shooting for rabbits with his labrador whose name I forget. He also was a first class dancer showing his skills on more than one occasion at the Douai Ball dancing with his niece. A delightful man who will be sorely missed.

David Albert (54-57-62) I am very sorry to hear of Fr. Augustine's passing. He was my last link with Ditcham Park, where I first met him in 1954, and I have particular memories of him teaching (amongst

other things) old English and Irish songs and ballads to the whole school. I still remember most of them! He used to come and stay with my parents in Wimbledon, and I remember the two of us walking to the Jesuits in Edge Hill (which we still go to on Sundays, as my wife sings in the choir), where he used to celebrate Mass on one of the side altars, with me acting as a rather inefficient server.

Richard Canter (59-64-69) Augustine was a lovely kind man and I have fond memories of him especially with cricket practice.

Fr Leo Arkwright OSB 1924-2010

Father Leo Arkwright, 'Jimmy' to his family was born in Wigan, the only son of James and Annie Arkwright. His three sisters predeceased him. He was educated at Wigan Mining and Technical College. During the latter stages of the Second World War (1943-46), he worked as an electrician in the Royal Navy. After leaving the navy, he began his studies for the Church at Campion House, Osterley (1946-48). He was clothed as a monk of Douai in 1948 and professed the following year. He undertook some of his theological studies at the University of Salzburg (1952-54), still occupied by American forces, and was ordained there in 1954. On returning to Douai, he took over the printery from Father Robert Richardson, and remained as printer until 1986. Throughout his life, Father Leo played the organ and piano and gave occasional recitals. He was awarded his Amateur Radio licence in 1970. Quite late in the day (1983), he attained a BA in Maths from the Open University. Most of his monastic life was spent teaching maths in Douai School (1954-87), where he was well known to generations of boys as a stern disciplinarian, efficient teacher, and remarkable in getting even the slowest wits through their Ordinary Level Elementary Maths exams. Meanwhile, he acted as curate in Thatcham parish (1955-76), celebrating Mass each Sunday at Hermitage military base. For many years, he was confessor at the Carmel in Reading and to the Sisters of Mercy in Woodley. For ten years (1973-83), Father Leo was monastic infirmarian, and acted as Economist of the Mission Fund (1974-92). In 1992, having been sent to surrender the parish of St Cuthbert's, Cowpen, Northumberland, to the diocese, he became parish priest at St Elizabeth's, Scarisbrick, Lancashire in 1996. From Scarisbrick, he retired back to Douai on account of ill health, and died at Douai from pneumonia on the morning of 10th February 2010.

Requiescat in pace

Reactions to Fr Leo's death:

Gabriel Leeming (50-53-57) Fr Leo helped me get Additional Maths and Mechanical Drawing O Levels for which three of us managed to persuade him to put on specially for us. I needed additional O levels for acceptance for student Civil Engineering. I therefore have fond memories of him and his support and assistance to me who was one of the less bright Douai students. I will come to his funeral to pay my last respects. I regret not having made an effort to see him before he died.

Paul Leonard I am very sorry to hear about Leo. I remember as a third year, Leo absolutely terrified me when he taught me maths: "You do two things in my class, Mr Doings" (as he called everybody) "the first is work and the second is breathe: and if you don't do the first, I'll bloody well make sure you don't do the second!"

One night I was in Samson House and told the ever-benevolent Boniface that I was scared of him and I couldn't understand why he was so nasty. Boniface said that Leo actually had the softest heart in the world, and that by the time I left the school I'd know that. He was right.

Mike Wills (now teaching mathematics at an American university) Sorry to hear about Fr Leo. He taught me in my first year at Douai and his last as a teacher. He taught the top group of 3rd formers that year, and I was promoted to that set over the Christmas Holiday. During the remaining two terms, I did not really know what was going on in maths (I was playing catch up due to my weak background in maths) but I guess that I did well enough to stay in the top set for the 4th form.

Mick Chesterman I'm so sorry to hear the sad news of Father Leo. He was a lovely man, whose bark was so much worse than his bite! All of us who were known to him collectively as "Mr Doings" will have many happy memories. He warned each new intake of pupils that "in this classroom, like the Pope, I am infallible" and would proceed to attempt to draw a perfect circle on the blackboard. Woe betide anyone who didn't nod in agreement as he declared the egg-shaped figure before us as a complete success!

Matthew Arlidge (80-85) Sorry to hear of Fr Leo, RIP. The news jogged a memory of a dream of him that I had just about the day of his death. Surprisingly it didn't involve chalk-related violence or even modest swear-words. I have to assume that he was doing the rounds and making peace with former pupils as he

departed.

Sqdn/Ldr Maurice A. Smith DFC & Bar (31/37)

Tribute based on that delivered by his Brother, Gerry Smith, (37/42) at Maurice's Requiem Mass on 4 December 2009.

"A truly good man!" A truly apt description of my Brother, Maurice.

It is difficult to remember a single bad thing about Maurice. Except perhaps some early memories of my being pummelled by him on the back seat - or more likely lying in the foot-well - of our Father's car on long journeys to Switzerland.

What sort of man was he? He was a War Hero; a devoted Husband and Father, Grandfather and Great-Grandfather; a true Christian; a Knight of the Holy Sepulchre and a Knight of the Order of St Gregory; a successful Businessman; an active man within his Community, serving as a Local and County Councillor - and a loving Brother.

We both went to the same Boarding School at Douai where we overlapped briefly - me a lowly junior and he an exalted sixth-former. Whenever we met he always coughed up tuppence for me, for a bar of chocolate - probably simply to get rid of me.

When he left Douai he volunteered for the RAF Volunteer Reserve and was called up when war was declared. By 1940 he had won his Wings as a Bomber Pilot and was posted to Upper Heyford in Oxfordshire, near Douai, flying Handley Page Hampden Bombers. It was in one of these aircraft that he one day "beat up" the School, flying over it, almost through it, at an altitude of fifty feet. One of my classmates was at the time on the roof of the very high Abbey Church which stood next to the School and saw the bomber fly below him through the narrow gap between the Church and another tall building called "The Ark." This did a lot for my street credit in the School, but the staff were not impressed! At the end of 1940 Maurice was commissioned and at the end of his first tour of duty was awarded the DFC.

Whilst Maurice was at Upper Heyford he proposed to his beloved Mary and was accepted. Later on I was Best Man at their Wedding, but, sadly, as a substitute. The Best Man originally chosen, Herb Barber, was Maurice's Second Pilot and went missing on his first ever trip without Maurice as his First Pilot, just before the wedding.

Maurice's crew all felt that he was a "lucky" Pilot, but was this really so - or was it his steadfast faith? He told me that on one of his bombing trips, nearing the target, he felt a tap on his shoulder. He turned his head and looked up to see who was there, but there was nobody. However, through the cockpit perspex over his head he saw, just twenty feet above his aircraft, the bomb doors of a Wellington bomber. Prompt evasive action avoided the possible catastrophe, but Maurice remained convinced that it was his Guardian Angel who had tapped his shoulder.

Maurice was awarded his first DFC after his first tour of duty for his determination in pressing home attacks in his squadron's Hampdens against invasion barges and other German shipping massing on the French Channel Coast for the invasion of Britain; and in raids on Berlin. In 1942, on his second tour, and this time in a Manchester bomber, he took part in the frenzied sorties by the RAF and Fleet Air Arm to halt the "Channel dash" of the heavily defended German Battle Cruisers Scharnhorst and Gneisenau from their base in Brest to the greater safety of the German ports and was awarded an immediate bar to his DFC for pressing home his attacks against vastly superior air cover and for beating off an attack by three fighters, downing one and nursing his heavily damaged craft, with no starboard rudder and a badly damaged wing, safely home to base.

After The War, he co-founded Chapman and Smith, a very successful business producing commercial safety products and became involved in establishing BSI National Standards for such equipment. He still found time to enjoy his family, serve the Local and County community, continue his involvement with the Church, join the Eastbourne Circle of the Catenian Association and serve as Councillor and President, and even organise relief convoys to Poland before the fall of the Iron Curtain, contributing much from his own resources, both in materials and manpower. He also kept in touch with Douai, serving for a number of years on the Council of the School Old Boys Association, the Douai Society, and organising their first ever Ball, which in later years became a major event in the Society's annual Calendar. He was offered the Presidency of the Society but refused on the grounds that to do the job properly might conflict with his duties to his family.

His great sadness in later life was the death, in 2000, of his beloved wife, Mary - his wife for nearly sixty years - and the death of his youngest daughter, Caroline, in 2005. His final days in pain were borne with fortitude and, supported by his family and Church, he died in Eastbourne Hospital on 9 November 2009.

Bill Duckney (43-50) died on 24 February 2010. **Kit Morton (43-53)** wrote after the funeral: I went to Bill's funeral today, and introduced myself to his widow, Anne, and the family, as the representative of the Douai

Society. Ted Duckney was there, obviously, looking a bit older than when I saw him last about 50 years ago. I arrived at the School on the same day as Bill, (Sept 21 1943), played for his Rugby team (1950/1), as Ted later played for mine, so I felt there was a good connection.

There were a lot of local Parishioners in the church and a very nice Mass was said, at which the family read, together with an excellent eulogy by Bill's daughter Ruth. At the reception after there were lots of pictures of Bill and his life, including the two Rugby teams he Captained at the School, plus photos of the Prefects of the day, and a Boxing team. Fr Bernard Swinhoe (Charlie) and I managed to remember all the names.

John Spence (44/51) died on 17th August 2009. His brother Patrick (44-48) wrote the following: When he left school he joined the Army and served for 8 years in the 2nd Royal Tank Regiment. After leaving the Army he worked in Sri Lanka for Aitken Spence & Co. , a company which had been founded by his great grandfather about 150 years ago. After a few years he returned to England and worked for The Industrial Society and then Hill Samuel. He finished his career as Personnel Director of Hill Samuel. After retirement he devoted himself to his family but allowed time for some travelling, fishing and playing golf ! He is survived by his wife, Sheila, 3 children and 6 grandchildren.

Ronald Evans (47/50) died on Christmas Day, 2009.

Tony Rawlingson-Plant (52-59) died on 23 December 2009

Terry Damer (54-59) gave the address at his funeral which was attended by many Old Dowegians: here is an edited version:

“To strive, to seek, to find but not to yield”

This was the title of a talk that Tony gave during his teenage years to his school debating society, and whilst it referred to Antarctic expeditions, and in particular that of his great hero Shackleton, those words somehow sum up for me Tony's quest through life to realise his dreams which came to fruition here in Bruton, at Mill on the Brue Tony received a monastic education, that is to say he was educated by monks, first at St Augustines in Herefordshire, and then at Douai in Berkshire by the Benedictine monks. At least one of his old school friends from St Augustines is here today, and, reflecting the affection and respect in which Tony is held by those who were at school with him more than 50 years ago, there is a strong contingent present from Douai which is where I first met him.

One of the great strengths of a Benedictine education is how it encourages one to be modest about oneself, to use one's talents to the best of one's ability and to respect, encourage and support other people, and these were ideals Tony felt very comfortable with and which surface time and again in his life.

His years at Douai were happy and here he developed some of the interests that were to dominate the future. Expeditions was one of them, and for this he had to thank the scouting movement, in which, of course, he became a Queen's Scout, a level of achievement denied to most of us. In our mid-teens, on our way to the annual scout camp in Scotland he persuaded his brother and me that it would be a good idea to get off the train 50 miles before our destination and hike there over the mountains, on the grounds that it was “only 30 miles by foot” and therefore a shorter journey.

As soon as we recovered from that, he lead a group of us to hike to the top of the four tallest peaks in the Cairngorms, an ordeal that lasted four days. He followed that up in our final year at school by cajoling four of us to join him in a major hike - nowadays I think it's called trekking - from Germany to Italy right across the Tyrolean mountain ranges in Austria. That took us nearly two weeks of sometimes-painful effort.

This love of expeditions was a theme throughout his life, and it took him, and Tricia, to some of the most interesting and challenging places on earth. To Nepal three times, twice with The Scientific Exploration Society led by Colonel John Blashford-Snell the explorer, and once on their own with a charity when they went white-water rafting, and were placed in the lead boat because they ran an activity centre, and not, apparently, because of any rafting prowess. Here they also helped in a field hospital, and renewed friendship with an old comrade from Sandhurst who was number 2 in the Nepali army and who invited them to posh dinners which they attended in their trekking clothes.

In search of more adventure they went tiger tracking on the backs of elephants, they went to Sri Lanka, to Africa including to Namibia, twice, and the last big expedition was to Guyana where they trekked for days to reach the remote Kaieteur Falls, at 741 feet the highest single-drop waterfall in the world and five times the height of Niagara Falls.

Everywhere Tony went he drew skilful sketches of the things he had seen, and especially of elephants, which he found utterly fascinating.

Sport was another major interest for Tony. Although he was a tennis player, playing on one well-remembered

occasion against HMS Dauntless, which I am sure I don't have to remind any military folk present was a women's Royal Navy training establishment (the arrival of Tony and his team was greeted from the windows with loud cheers of "men"), it was rugby that was his sporting passion. At school he played in all the teams, under 15, under 16 and then the 1st fifteen. As one team player recalls, "Tony was an outstanding wing-forward who took great delight in pulverizing the opposition's fly-halves. He had a deceptive way of running which looked a bit cumbersome but was much quicker than it looked; he also had incredible stamina and was probably the fittest of us all".

It was these qualities which saw him become one of a small squad, four of whom are here today, that formed the Seven-A-Side rugby team that, representing a school of only two hundred boys, went to Rosslyn Park in April 1959 to take on, in the largest competition of its kind, the cream of British schools.

They played through six rounds, before beating Royal Belfast Academical Institute 10-3 in the final. It was a tremendous achievement and one that is remembered by everyone who ever went to Douai - these guys were our heroes, and we didn't forget what they had done - they were, I think, somewhat overwhelmed when 50 years later, last April, they were honoured at a lunch of the old school society for that achievement. Looking at a photo of that team 50 years on I am struck by a Tony characteristic; there he is, looking somewhat bemused at all the attention, standing slightly to the side and the back, modest as ever - oh, and the only one not wearing a tie. I am sure Tony would have a wry smile today seeing so many of us in our jackets and ties.

Tony took this love of rugby into the army. I am not sure why he decided to go into the army; possibly because his father had been in the Gunners, the regiment Tony chose, but I like to think that Tony could see that in the army he could follow his love of expeditions, sport and nature.

I hadn't mentioned nature previously, but that was the third strand of interest at school along with his passion for expeditions and sport. He was inspired by a charismatic teacher who allowed his love of nature to flourish whilst studying for A-level Biology and Botany. When you ask those who were with him then, they all talk about him dissecting cockroaches, worms, rabbits, and, on one occasion, matron's cat - by mistake.

But Tony couldn't really see himself serving a lifetime in the army, although he enjoyed the things the army allowed him to do and the places it sent him. It was when he was in Cyprus with the United Nations peace-keeping force that he first met Tricia on a blind date at the Ledra Palace Hotel in Nicosia; I'm not allowed to tell you what Tricia was doing there, it's probably still covered by the Official Secrets Act! Those of you who have been to their home, just across the road from this church, will have noticed a photo in their loo of Tony in the blue UN beret guarding the Ledra Palace Hotel, and next to it there is also a photo of his son, Matt, 30 years later, guarding the same hotel in the same UN uniform.

There was a tour of duty in Malaysia before Tony and Tricia were married. Later in Germany Tricia recalls standing on frozen fields watching numerous rugby matches and wondering why anyone would want to play a game in which the ball had to be recovered every few minutes from a freezing canal with a net on the end of a pole. Finally, and probably most memorably for the family, to the Outer Hebrides where they were based on Benbecula. Here he threw himself into the natural world with enthusiasm, especially when marooned on St Kilda, an isolated archipelago 40 miles into the Atlantic from North Uist, and a total paradise for lovers of bird life. He was on St Kilda ringing birds (as well, I hope, as attending to the defense of the realm) when Matt was due; Tricia announced she wasn't having the baby until Tony came home, so a boat was sent specially by his boss to fetch him. And it was here in the Outer Hebrides that he was seconded for eight weeks to Outward Bound, and that experience first started him thinking about a similar venture for his life after the army.

In 1976 Tony left the army, immediately grew a beard and swore never to wear a tie again, and there on never wore a watch. With a young family to support, he took a job as an assistant manager at a leisure centre in Maidstone, and a bursar at a school near Reading and finally the Blue School in Wells for 5 years. They had come to Bruton in 1978 where Tony did what he always did at a new home; he planted up a garden with vegetables to feed the family. Only this time it was more ambitious, he took an allotment, but what followed next in 1982 was even more ambitious; Tricia and he launched Mill on the Brue, initially with partners but later as a venture on their own. For the first time Tony could bring together all his lifetime interests into one cohesive theme. He had long been an admirer of Kurt Hahn, of Gordonstoun, and of Hahn's philosophy that in developing the potential of young people you have to look at the 'whole' person, and challenge them to do more than they ever thought they were capable of. I dare say those early years at Mill on the Brue could not have been easy, starting a new business never is, but Tony and Tricia persevered, pushing ahead with their multi-track approach, with outdoor activities for children, environmental education, and team building for adults.

Tony was a visionary in all this, and it was he who really pushed through the environmental side of things. Their Eco Code was way ahead of the time; look it up on their website if you are not familiar with it. He passionately wanted to introduce children to nature, aware that so many of today's youngsters are divorced from it in their urban settings. The silly-sounding examples are the true ones; that often these children don't know that milk comes from cows. At Mill on the Brue these young people can touch nature, and it can touch them, often affecting them profoundly, and they come away with a deeper understanding of themselves and a new-found self-confidence.

Tony wanted, as did Kurt Hahn, to challenge people, especially, but not only, children, to do more than they thought they were capable of.

At the centre of Tony's life was his family. His wife of 44 years who shared his dreams and worked with him to bring them to fruition, his three children to whom he was so devoted, and of course his grandchildren who were all a great source of joy to him.

Tony never stopped, never gave up on his interests, whether it was journeying to Hong Kong to watch the international rugby sevens championship over a whole three days, or keeping in touch with everything at Mill on the Brue right to the end. In all the years of his illnesses he displayed great courage and never complained, and was always more interested in other people than his own condition.

And through all that time he cherished his love of his family, of the mountains and the deserts, of the trees and the birds, indeed of all wild life but especially the Asian elephant.

Looking back at the journal of my very first hike with Tony in 1958 I saw that I had written something that seems very apt today:

"Tony Rawlingson Plant was a pillar of strength. He kept us all moving." Well, he was a pillar of strength, and he did always keep us moving, and I know I speak for everyone when I say that we will always be proud, and grateful, to have had him as our friend.

Robert Anthony Holmes-Walker (Hon) joined the school staff in 1965 to teach Chemistry. In 1974 he asked to join the Monastic Community at Douai and was accepted as a postulant. To make a break with the School, the Abbot sent Robert for a year to Germany to the Abbey of Sankt Bonifaz, where he followed courses in Scripture and Theology at the University of Munich. On completion of his Novitiate at Douai he was sent to Heythrop College to study for the post-graduate Diploma in Pastoral Theology. He took first vows at Douai in September of 1976, but in 1977 he asked to be dispensed from these vows and wrote to Cardinal Hume offering himself as a possible candidate for the diocesan priesthood. He was ordained to the Priesthood on 26th April 1980 by Cardinal Hume. He became parish priest of Baldock in 1984. He retired from active ministry in 2004 and lived in retirement in Baldock. In recent years as his health continued to decline he was cared for lovingly by former parishioners who had become almost his 'second family'.

In the last newsletter we included a note from Tara, daughter of **Pat Halligan** who died in 2002. Following that up, **John Kelly (43-48)** wrote to Tara and received the following: "My father talked of Douai often. He had so many interesting stories to tell about his life there...My father moved to Ontario, Canada and became involved in competitive Show Jumping as a hobby. He was a very talented rider and had Olympic potential. He also did some steeplechase/point to point racing while it lasted here in Canada. However, steeple chase was just not as popular here as it was in Europe. He was also very involved in competitive sailing. He really had a gift for all sports it seems. He still watched rugby and cricket on TV even though he no longer played. He would have continued playing cricket but he always said the cricket fields did not compare at all with the English ones, so it was not worth playing. He made his career in the insurance business and did very well, working his way up. We did move back to England for a few years when I was young, but then moved back to Ontario, Canada, where we stayed."

Paul Delaney (69-73) died in October 2009; he had been living in Brazil.

Adrian Brister (92-94-95) (known to many as Spike) died at the age of 28 while on holiday in Greece on 23 August 2009. His funeral was held at Bulford Barracks and was attended by an extraordinary number of people, including many of his contemporaries at school. Fr Boniface who was his godfather concelebrated the mass with the army chaplain.

Adrian's friends were encouraged to donate to a cause which would have been dear to his heart and his father **Tony Brister (60-65-69)** wrote to them subsequently: We have managed to write to some of you to thank you for the great kindness and support you showered on us at the time of Spike's death. Regrettably, we have not written to all of you. Please forgive us. It really does not indicate a lack of gratitude – we are truly grateful for all that you did, and are doing, to help us at a terrible time. It is just that we find the letters difficult to write! Shame on us! I thought that you would like to know that we received a letter from Dr Faith Mwangi-Powell, Executive Director of the African Palliative Care Association. You will see that she thanks us for the donation of £1,892.22 which you all very generously contributed to at or around the time of Spike's funeral. You will also see that the money is being used to establish a resource centre for APCA to be named the Adrian Brister Resource Centre. I think Spike will smile at the thought of the Adrian Brister Resource Centre somewhere in Africa – Kampala, I think! Thank you very much for your great generosity which will alleviate much suffering in Africa, and allows Spike's name to live on in such a wonderful way.

If any of you would like to know more about what you have kindly contributed to, the APCA UK website is at www.apca.org.uk

*Among many other tributes was this from **Christian Majer (89/90/95)**:*

Indeed this is terrible news. Although I only knew him for a few years we both spent our final Douai year together. I learned a lot about him from being his first dorm prefect when he went to the senior school in 3rd form. When you are all entombed in what can only be described as a corridor with beds for 12 weeks (yes, the blue dorm) you get to know everyone very well. I found Adrian to be a kind, intelligent and assertive young man, who was liked by all his classmates and was at the innermost circle of social politics in his year (i.e. he was one of the cool ones). His cheeky smile and general good nature left a lasting impression on my twilight Douai years. I suppose one would describe him as a loveable rogue. Every Dowegian is at some time or another up to no good and every time Adrian was you couldn't help but excuse the behaviour. Adrian would use a combination of wit and honest reason to make his point on why the offence wasn't actually an offence. I always remember him asking me a term later if there was any way I could come back as dorm prefect.

The Power of Google - an interesting exchange of e-mails

Dear Fr Oliver

Last week, a dear friend who works in our library in Brevard, North Carolina, USA., discovered a wonderful letter typed on two long, yellowed pieces of paper, dated September 21, 1948. The writer was a man named Bert and it was written to a man known as Paul. It contained no last names and only one address: 69 Exeter Road, London NW2. Bert mentions Douai School and Abbey, a headmaster called Piggy, a minor headmaster named Alphie and the fact that he (Bert) will be studying history of art at the Courtauld Institute of Art.

This is a beautifully written letter full of expression, feelings, poetry and life in general. I would love to see if anyone who reads your newsletter knew this man and if he is alive or has family to whom I could send or fax the letter. It was so exciting to research Douai on the internet and take a virtual tour of the campus. Everything became very real after that.

Karen Stark

* * * *

Dear Karen

Thank you for your fascinating message. I think that I have identified the people in the letter. Bert is probably Norbert Lynton who ended up as Professor of Art History at the University of Sussex; the dates are about right and he definitely went to the Cortauld. The Paul could be Paul Milner - again about the right date and he ended up as a doctor in USA and in fact I have just discovered that he lives in North Carolina! So the degree of probability is getting higher all the time. Norbert Lynton died in 2007, but I have emailed a lady who is I think his widow and copied your e-mail to her. I have suggested that she gets in touch with you direct. Please let me know if the pieces of the jigsaw all fall into place.

By coincidence I am about to travel to South Carolina next week for a wedding in Beaufort - the world is very small!

Oliver Holt

* * * *

Dear Oliver,

The mystery is solved! My dear library friend came to visit today and I showed her the Douai website and your e-mail. She was fascinated with the whole thing and kept reading the letter and looking at what you wrote. All of a sudden she realized that the letter was from a personal library of a recent widow in College Walk, Brevard's retirement village. Her name is Anne Milner and her husband unexpectedly died the latter half of 2009. She was giving their books to the library so she could move north to live near her brother in Connecticut. She is blind and will need his assistance and, I believe they had no children.

The internet is amazing isn't it? If you find out any more about Bert's wife or family, please let me know. Happy traveling to you. K.

* * * *

Dear Sylvia Lynton

Please excuse a bolt from the blue; I hope I have the right person. I put your name into Google and yours was the

first to come up. The address in Hove made me think I might be on the right lines. I wonder if you are the widow of Norbert Lynton, who was a former pupil of Douai School. The school closed in 1999, but the Abbey remains. I received the following e-mail this morning and I am fairly sure that the "Bert" referred to must be your late husband. The dates are right and I know that he went to the Courtauld, not a destination for many of our pupils then or since. Paul could be Paul Milner who is a retired doctor who lives in USA, which would fit. I have contact details for him.

* * * *

Dear Father Holt

I was surprised and delighted to hear from you about the letter written by my late husband in 1948, now found in a library in America. To have that link through his old school via you and then the internet to contact me, is truly amazing!

Thank you for taking the time and trouble to reach me. I shall be in touch with Karen Start this weekend and of course should love to read the letter from so long ago. I was sorry to hear that Douai school had closed, Norbert had very happy memories of being there. I am glad the Abbey remains, I caught a glimpse of it on the BBC 4 programme of Sacred Music which I am following, the Abbey looked wonderful.

You probably know the history of Norbert's life at Douai. The Loewenstein family had to leave Germany before WW2 because Norbert's father was Jewish (his mother a Catholic). The 3 boys were helped to get into good schools by the Church and were very lucky to do so. As far as I recall all 3 were "interviewed" at Douai, Norbert was chosen, I think by Fr Ignatius, because he was the youngest and would get the most benefit. His brothers Nicholas and Rolf went to the Oratory school near Reading. Norbert at 10 had little English but did well and became Head Boy at Douai. All the boys did well, 2 with Doctorates are still alive, sadly Norbert died in Oct 2007 after a distinguished career in the Arts. He first studied in the evenings at Birkbeck College, before attending the Courtauld In. He was called Bert in his early life, even on his Baptismal certificate, though Norbert was always his intended name. At confirmation he took on the name Ignatius- as the Headmaster, Fr Ignatius, had been such a wonderful influence and example in his life. He spoke of that first meeting movingly, in the last few weeks of his life. He has 4 sons, 2 from a previous marriage and 4 grandchildren. We will all be delighted to read the letter from a "young" Norbert. The family name was changed by Norbert's father and 2 brothers after the war. I do not know who the "Paul" mentioned is, his father was Paul, but this sounds like another ex pupil? I will see Nicholas next week when he is coming to Brighton to see me for lunch and then on to see my son Peter and his little family. It is possible N. will remember some of Norbert's friends from that time, he will certainly be interested in the letter.

Norbert felt he owed a great deal to Douai, he loved being there and it was a great influence on his life. It has been a great privilege to sort his papers /letters for the Tate archive, donate parts of his library to the Courtauld and to Chelsea school of Art, and see his book on Tatlin published posthumously. I think of him daily and we all still miss him. To have news of this letter out of the blue is so wonderful, many, many thanks for your involvement. I will be in touch again if I may, when I have read the letter after I am in touch with Karen Start and maybe Paul Milner too.

* * * *

Dear Fr. Oliver,

I hope you had a wonderful trip to South Carolina. Thank you so much for sending my e-mail to Sylvia. We have had a great adventure exchanging news and pictures. Bert's brother Nicolas visited her after we e-mailed the scanned letter to her. Nicolas, Sylvia, her sons and family had a great time reading the letter and figuring out who everyone was. Bert's other brother, Rolf, lives in eastern North Carolina and should be arriving there soon from India. What a small world! Karen

Bursary Report

In October 2007 I was fortunate enough to spend 2 weeks in the Philippines helping out with a charity called Gawad Kalinga. This was made possible for me by receiving funding from the Douai Bursary Fund. Gawad Kalinga work to build villages to help people out of poverty. The aim is that neighbours within impoverished villages help to build each other's houses, so that a sense of community is really built up too. I went with a team of young people from Sydney, Australia, to help out with this building process in the searing heat and muggy climate - we mixed cement (all manual labour, as there's no machinery), transported sand and mud, painted houses and most importantly we connected with the people. They welcomed us like royalty and the children gave us all the love they had! I lived in one of the houses built the previous year, with the family of 10 (cousins included) that live inside. The house can't have been bigger than my old kitchen and living room put together, the bathroom was a tiny stone room with a tub full of water and a scoop for showering and there was only a double bunk bed for the whole family. Despite the lack of space, my adopted family treated me like a special guest!

It was very humbling spending my time there and it really made me appreciate what I have in my life, at the same time as wishing I didn't have all the daily clutter that fills up my life! The fact that these people have hardly anything yet will happily give you everything they do have is a real sign of charity and love for others. A truly amazing experience!

This, however, was only a small part of the mission work I was taking part in on the other side of the world. After returning from the Philippines with this team of young adults, we entered a time of outreach and evangelization through working with young people in the Catholic schools in Sydney. I lived in community with the mission team (which is the stem of the work of the Catholic Youth Services to the Archdiocese) and we built our foundation on prayer, community life and service to young people. It was a time of growth, maturity and fun. I see it as the early fruit of my vocational discernment of working with young people in the Church; I am drawn to encouraging young people in their discovery of fullness of life and a hope found only through a relationship with our Lord Jesus. I was also in Sydney for World Youth Day '08 - an indescribable experience of the magnitude of God's love for young people!

So, my journey across the earth was just the beginning of this fruition. I have since returned to England and taken up role as Youth Ministry Coordinator to a deanery of 6 Catholic parishes near Newcastle. I have just completed a year now and it's amazing having the opportunity to journey with these young people as they go through their teenage years. Each day is an eye-opening challenge, whether I am working at the desk or in the schools and churches with the people. I also work with the adults to help them to help the young people become disciples and leaders!

John Paul II spoke of the *new evangelization*, and of the role that young people have in bringing the message of Christ to people in this millennium. I'm excited to be a part of the Church's evangelization mission! Thank you to the people behind the Douai Bursary Fund – with your help, I have been able to go forth in this journey.

Lydia Wills
daughter of the late David Wills (56-61)

MINUTES OF 136TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Held at Douai on Sunday 12th July 2009.

Members attending:

Michael Lockyer (41/46)	Paul Westby (38/42)
Michael Skivington (48/55)	Bernard Funston (55/61)
Kevin Murphy-O'Connor(43/50)	Hugh Berry (41/43)
Abbot Geoffrey Scott (62/66)	John Hoshimi (56/59)
Tony Burton (48/51)	Oliver Holt (62/67)
John Shaw (Hon.)	Chris Vale (71/76)
Matthew McCabe (63/65)	Godfrey Linnett (50/55)
C. John Priest (40/47)	Denis Hopkin (48/55)
Brian Quinlan (55/60)	Stephen Botcherby (49/54)
Christopher Allanson (52/57)	Chris Simpson (55/59)
Chris Cundy (61/64)	James Bairstow (92/97)
John Beresford (42/46)	Mike Lund-Yates (46/52)

1. Opening Prayers

Hon. President Godfrey Linnett opened the Meeting. In the unavoidable absence of Fr. Boniface, Fr Abbot led the Meeting in prayer and remembrance of all those Members who had died since the last Meeting, including:

Fr Robert Richardson (28/31)	8 January 2009
Idwal Humphrey (33/37)	3 March 2009
Kay Vis (38/46)	30th November 2008
Patrick Halligan (45/50)	in 2002
George Perry (48/51/56)	24th September 2008

David Sheehan (50/52/55)	10th October 2008
Ian Noble (83/85/90)	28th January 2009
Mark Gialanze (84/87)	14th April 2009
Dudley Elwes (Hon)	6th October 2008

Fr Abbot continued by welcoming all to Douai. He drew attention to the Abbatial Cross he was wearing. It had been presented by the Society to Abbot Sylvester Mooney on the occasion of his silver Jubilee in 1954. Some of the decorative enamel had decayed and fallen off and the Society had kindly borne the cost of its refurbishment as a gift to Fr Abbot to mark his own silver jubilee in 2008. The refurbishment was now complete. Fr Abbot thanked the Society for its generosity and invited inspection of the finished product. He also drew attention to the now very evident progress which had been made in the building of the new Monastery Library. It was a development very dear to his heart and one of which the Community could justifiably be proud. He looked forward to the day when the Community's treasured collection of rare works could at last be made readily available for study and research - and reminded the Meeting that the Fund for contributions to its cost was still open!

2. Apologies for Absence.

Apologies were recorded for:

Gordon Peacock (39/42); Tony Penny (86/89/94); Carl Watkins (49/52); Fr Boniface Moran (54/59); Frank Hind (48/55); Gerry Smith (37/42); Bill Brister (39/42); Bernard Caldwell (53/58/63); John Burke-Gaffney (46/49); Edward Vale (67/42); Paul Beven (72/76); Christopher Vaughan (67/71); Aubrey Ballhetchet (57/54); Christopher Smith (53/67/62); Frank Keating (52/55); Kit Morton (43/53); Bryan Peers (39/41); Alan Simpson (47/52); Fr Romuald Simpson (42/48); John Spence (44/51); John Wills (66/70); Luke O'Reilly (57/61/66); John Kelly (43/48); Quentin Hall(57/62); Michael Chesterman (78/83); Leopold Antelme (40/46); Michael Madigan (55/59); Mark Boag (74/76/81); John Renn (61/66/70); Charles Richards (44/46); Tony Wills (53/57) and John Kerr (61/66).

3. Minutes of 136th Annual General Meeting.

The Minutes had been circulated with the notice of the Meeting and were approved on the proposal of Michael Lockyer, seconded by Tony Burton, and signed.

There were no matters arising.

4. The President's Report.

The President thanked the Abbot and Community for their welcome and for the hospitality which was to follow at lunch.

He recorded that during the year the retirement of the Society's three trustees, Bryan Peers, Leopold Antelme and Bill Brister was given effect and three new trustees, Fr Oliver Holt (62/63/67), Christopher Allanson(52/57) and Chris Vale(71/76) were appointed by the Council. On the advice of Bryan Peers, who was the Society's investment adviser, the Council also streamlined the administration of the Society's investments by adopting a policy of investment in investment trusts rather than equity stock. The President warmly thanked the former trustees for their tenure of office and expressed particular gratitude to Bryan Peers for his skill and good husbandry in advising the Society over a long period of time.

He referred to the increasing success of the Society's policy of supporting regional and year reunions and reported that the Council had increased from £5 to £10 the amount of subsidy per head available to support such functions. He also mentioned the continuing efforts of the Douai Park users association to co-ordinate the raising of funds to repair or replace the Cricket Pavilion and refurbish the tennis courts, in which the Society continued to be involved. He hoped to be able to report more positive progress next year.

He concluded by announcing the publication of the new Year Book, copies of which were available for collection after the Meeting, and thanked Fr Oliver and James Bairstow for the considerable amount of work in which they were involved in its production.

5. Hon. Treasurers Report.

He circulated copies of the Society' audited Accounts for the year to 31st December 2008, with thanks to Berringer & Co who had again produced them without charge, in memory of John Berringer.

He drew attention to the Society's funds. Subscription income was down but that was acceptable and not surprising as the Society had no source of regular new membership. The changes in the Society's investments resulting from the change of policy recommended by Bryan Peers and referred to by the President were set out in Note 2 to the accounts. The Hon.Treasurer joined with the President in emphasising the debt owed by the Society to Bryan Peers

for his careful husbandry of the Society's financial resources over the years and the skill with which he had managed the complications arising from the historic policy of investment in equities. The Society's funds were now handled by the Stockbrokers Killick & Co., under the direction of The Treasurer. He also drew attention to Note 3 of the Accounts. This set out the Society's commitment to the cost of repair or replacement of the Cricket Pavilion, not yet advanced, and the payments to Maison St Benoit, the Grant to George Harley from the Society's General Fund and the cost of the refurbishment of the Abbatial Cross for Abbot Geoffrey. He also confirmed that the Society had paid in full the gift for the new library.

There were no questions and the Accounts were adopted on the proposal of Matthew McCabe, seconded by Tony Burton.

6. Election of Officers.

There was no nomination for the post of Hon. Secretary and all other Officers were in place.

Denis Hopkin agreed again to stand in as Hon. Secretary until a replacement could be found.

On the Proposal of the Council Richard Sims (90/92/97) was elected to the post of Hon. Cricket Secretary.

7. Election of Councillors.

Tosin Igbon and Max Pickwood retired by rotation and were not eligible for immediate re-election, leaving two vacancies for which James Bairstow (92/97)

and Richard Sims (90/92/97) were nominated by the Council. Both were elected on the proposal of Fr Oliver, seconded by Matthew McCabe.

8. Election of Chaplain.

Fr Boniface, unable to attend the Meeting, was re-elected Chaplain on the proposal of the President, seconded by Denis Hopkin.

9. Any Other Business.

Tony Burton offered his thanks to the Society on behalf of his grandson for the grant recently made to assist in his visit to Russia to study astrophysics.

The date of the next AGM was announced as 8th August 2010 and would, as usual, be preceded by the Mass for deceased Old Boys and followed by lunch, at which wives and guests would be welcomed.

There being no further business the Meeting was closed, with a vote of thanks to the Chair.

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