

The Douai Society



Newsletter Summer 2009

1940's

Michael Lund Yates (46/52) writes: all I have to report is (in common with probably quite a few of those who left in the early 50s) our Golden Wedding. This will be on the 5th September, and we had the privilege of attending the "Significant Anniversary" Mass which Bishop Crispian put on (for about 80 or so couples who were reaching such a stage this year) on the 25th April at St. Bede's in Basingstoke. There was even a pair of old codgers there who were celebrating their 70th this year! I wonder if that would be Platinum....?

Frank Hind (47/54) wrote after Fr Robert's death: I have fond memories of Fr Robert Richardson. Thanks to his patience I managed to pass O Level maths and acquired a good commonsense appreciation of simple arithmetic, geometry and algebra which came in very useful during my career as a Chartered Surveyor and even now in retirement. I remember being very impressed by his creating some 15 gears on his bicycle by marrying a 5 speed derailleur to his 3 speed hub. Interestingly this system has recently been taken up by the main stream manufacturers. Like him I have had much pleasure in pushing pedals for the past 69 years and still cycle every day.

Brian Reeve (48/51) writes from New Zealand: I am retired, fortunate to be in good health, living with wife of 48 years have a son and daughter-in-law, [English] and 4 beautiful noisy grandchildren living in Auckland, who seem to do an annual pilgrimage to the UK.

Kenneth Walsh (48/51) writes from Natal, South Africa: I would be very interested to get some news of Old Boys of my vintage ! I was at Douai from 1948 to 1951 and as a result of living abroad for many years have lost touch with friends from those , in the main , happy years .

Richard Trist (48/53) writes: I went to Australia in '08 and enjoyed Brisbane & Sydney and the sunshine (even the 39 degrees C). I am now helping at Portsmouth Cathedral (memorable visits of Bishop John Henry King to Douai are not forgotten) and have been spied in a red cassock. I am now an enthusiast for Lourdes and have even been to Medjugorje.

John Richardson (49/53) is a retired Bloodstock Agent & Auctioneer and also worked as a racing journalist. He is a former Fellow of Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and emigrated to New Zealand 1974. He wrote after the death of Fr Robert: I felt that I must write to extend my condolences to

the Community on the death of Father Robert Richardson. A namesake, but no relation, Father Robert taught me Maths (no mean feat) in the early fifties. I had known that he was still alive for the last 2 or 3 years, but quite amazingly I was lying in bed awake just a few nights ago looking back on an interesting life, as one does as one gets older, when I thought both of Father Robert and also of Father Augustine as two of my old well tried mentors who were still with us. It must have been very close to 8th January - the good Lord indeed moves in mysterious ways.

1950's

Dan Norman (54/58) writes: I have been retired fully since 2001 and therefore am unable to provide any really interesting details about my life. Suffice it to say that I seem to be busy doing things most of the time. My wife Ruth is also retired, so we do things together where possible. Our three children all live locally, so we get to see them often, I'm pleased to say. Sadly, no grand children yet!

Adrian Strickland (54/58) writes while on the road to Compostella: Since retiring I have done the camino immediately after the Order of Malta's annual pilgrimage to Lourdes. First from Lourdes to Santiago in 2007 and from Oporto in 2008 and now from Sevilla. We have 9 grandchildren, three by each of our children, and six of them live in Brussels.

Michael Madigan (55/59) writes: Failed all my A levels, sent to local college, discovered girls and parties and failed again. Started at Philips Electrical as junior in the advertising/Marketing Department, studied and awarded the Diploma in Marketing from the Institute of Marketing and then moved to Chesebrough-Ponds in the mid-sixties where I progressed to Product Manager for the Vaseline range of shampoos and petroleum jelly.

Married Deirdre, a secretary with an architectural practice and produced a son, Christopher. In 1968 moved to Market Harborough to join Golden Wonder, eventually progressing to be Head of Marketing. Produced two further offspring - Tara and Suzy In 1973 moved back to London to head up American consulting organisation, then in 1976 head-hunted to join Irish Sugar Company as Managing Director of Erin Foods subsidiary. Returned to London in 1979 to found a new food marketing company, Spearhead. Closed that in the late-eighties to acquire chilled ready-meals company in Wales supplying supermarkets. Company sold to Unigate in the nineties. Acquired the number 2 specialist blinds company, Appeal, in 1999 and have been building this business ever since.

Unfortunately my first marriage ended in the mid-eighties and after 20 years of bachelorhood I remarried in 2006 to Jane, an accountant with a Welsh re-cycling company Our main residence is a converted barn in Wales but we also own a rental cottage in Kerry, Ireland (www.kenmareirishcottages.com) and a property in Dartmouth where we spend most weekends in the summer. We are keen sailors with a yacht and a river launch moored in Dartmouth. I have no immediate plans to retire as I enjoy business too much.

Canon Nick France (52/56/60) is co-ordinating pastor of Jersey. He has donated a stained glass window of Mary to the Abbey. It has been installed in front of one of the new windows in the guest corridor and looks very fine.

Peter Newland (56/60) writes: After a long career as a Chartered Accountant in practice and business, I am retired, enjoying playing lots of golf! We keep in regular touch with Richard Hall (58/63) and his wife Barbara who now spend most of their year on the island of Barra in the Outer Hebrides!

John Rice (53/56/61) writes: A quick resume of life: 25 years as a Regular Army Officer in the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers and its immediate predecessor, The Royal Warwickshire Fusiliers - Retired in November 1988 and started in health insurance broking which, broadly, is what I continue to do. The office is in Birmingham. - Married Sandy in 1980 and we have 3 daughters, one a doctor in and around Worcester, senior twin working in HQ the Warwickshire Police and junior twin is a physiotherapist at Sutton Coldfield hospital. All with men in tow but no marriages yet although the doctor is engaged. - Through the Catenian Association, I meet Kit Morton regularly

Paul Sullivan (58/60) has lived for many years in Africa (Kenya and Ethiopia) and is about to start an on-line MA in English Studies with Nottingham University

Ian Gillespie (59/63) is a consultant ophthalmologist at the Royal Eye Unit in Kingston Hospital. He is married to Penny and they have two children Sylvie (21) and Robbie (18) who are both at university.

Esmond Lange (58/63) writes: I have completed another year in my life journey (64) and have so much to thank our Father for as my health, family and business life continues to be blessed on a daily basis. I have five beautiful grandchildren (10 yrs down to twins of 2) and see them all every week so I can't ask for more. I also still get to travel frequently through my business activities and was in Aberdeen for the month of May when again I was lucky that the weather was brilliant and it almost never rained!!! My wife and I will be briefly in the UK at the end of August this year as we transit for a few days to visit friends in Dorset and Somerset before heading to Italy for four weeks (Rome, Tuscany, Cinque Terre, Venice and Lake Como) touring.

1960's

Richard Canter (59/64/69) is the Associate Dean and Head of the Severn Postgraduate School of Surgery, based in Bristol

Jon Button (66/70) writes: A couple of months ago I visited Douai for the first time in many years, as I was on a fleeting visit from Singapore and passing close by. It was the first time I had seen the new Abbey and I must admit the architecture is quite striking. The whole place still has a very special aura and brought back some happy memories.

John Wills (66/70) has left the Royal Navy and now works for the Institute of Marine Engineering.

Vaughan Dennis (67/71) writes: I have entered one of the ten official toughest endurance events in the world, namely a 250 km foot race in the Sahara over 6 days carrying all your own gear (did a similar one in 2003 in Morocco - the Marathon des Sables - but need to prove to myself that I can do it again!)

James Wilding (67/71) is headmaster of Claires Court School in Maidenhead. He writes: Nothing has changed in the James and Jenny Wilding household, other than Claires Court continues to thrive, (1035 pupils as I type this, 'coz I know we won't be this size next September) and sons Thomas and Edward are now employed in London as barrister and ICT specialist, living together in a flat their mother is assisting in the purchase (she is my head of History, so her job is safe). If you want to see a bit more of what I am playing with, (social networking for headteachers and staff within ISA schools) then accept my invite to join the ISANet, and enjoy the carnage that is modern teaching and learning. They left me alone for so long it now appears I know stuff the system likes to learn...

Mark Hoyle (68/72) has been appointed as a Visiting Professor at the University of Leeds with the remit of developing programmes of study for the areas of Arab and Islamic Law and dispute resolution. He continues to work at the bar and does some part time judging and arbitration.

Simon Clark (69/73) and **Nick Keegan (69/73)** have organised a reunion of their contemporaries at Sandown race course in June – they hoped that about 24 would be attending.

Michael O'Reirdan (64/69/73) writes: I am living in the USA, in New Jersey, just outside Philadelphia. I am working for Comcast (Cable TV company / ISP) as a Distinguished Engineer on internet things like spam and malware and bots. I deal with the grubbier side of the internet on the side of the good guys. I have two kids, daughter Sophie, 28 and son Dominic 30.

Peter Worrall (69/72) writes: I keep in touch with my Spanish tutor John Campbell (at Tilehurst) and enjoyed a grand pre-Christmas evening with him and his wife Pat a year or so back.

1970's

Julian Boulding (70/73) writes: I'm happily married with two teenage daughters, one at Cambridge and one finishing school this year and hoping to go to Cambridge also. I run an international advertising consultancy called thenetworkone which keeps me busy when not with family

Brian Stack (72/76) writes: Just the run of the mill daily chores and attempting to keep one's head above the surface and below the parapet. Our son, Joseph, is in his first year at King's, London reading classics, and our daughter, Maria, who will be 18 in March (me 50 then too!) is in her last year of 'A' levels before going off to spend a gap year in Australia.

Simon Haynes (74/79) writes: On Monday 15th June I'm joining six others to cycle from Paris to St Tropez, a distance of some 550 miles which we're planning to complete within 5½ days, averaging 100 miles per day. I've been training for the past five months and although a little apprehensive, I'm relishing the challenge for which I am seeking to raise money for "Breakthrough", an established breast cancer charity, www.breakthrough.org.uk. If you would be kind enough to sponsor me, even in this tough economic environment, my charity link is <http://www.justgiving.com/simonhaynes1>

Grahame Dalley (70/75/80) has now retired from the RAF after 22 years and work for a commercial aviation organisation based near Farnborough.

Dominic Myers (75/80) writes: Our eldest daughter has just started at Prior Park in Bath and enjoying her first few days, very much her choice. The younger two (Barnaby and Jemima) are both in casts one with a lacerated foot from a glass and the other a broken ankle so lots of crutches and hopping at home! Otherwise all well and still here in Oman.

Julian Cabedo (76/81) has left the marketing company, Landor for whom he worked in Spain and is now hoping to set up his own design company.

Donal Brown (76/81) has worked in various countries for the Department for International Development. He writes: We are back in Winchester having cut short our Vietnam trip as I was called back to look after the DFID Middle East department - for me mainly Iraq and Yemen

Andrew Murphy (71/76/81) wrote: Myself, Sarah and our three children (Bethan – 13, Holly – 11 and Billy – 7) are all happy and living in Dorking. The two girls are at school at St Teresa's Convent school in Effingham.

John Lamond (73/76/81) writes: I am still based in Hong Kong. Have been here now for some 22 years! Married with 3 children

Marco Norman (76/79) is married to Yasmine and they have three children Louis 12, Emelia 9 and Ruben 6, with a 17 year old son Dino from a previous encounter. He writes: We moved to Norfolk for a better life 18 months ago, the kids are in a small independent school that has just gone skint. I hope to get involved in getting it restarted in a small way (every bit helps) but can't commit fully through pressures of work. I have my own company Safetyworks and Solutions Ltd that I started back in 99; we now employ about 25, even with the current situation we seem so far so good; touch wood and all that.

Nick Spinks (70/76/80) writes: I now have a daughter of my own going through her GCSE exams. As a parent, I think I am taking it more seriously than when I was in her shoes all those years ago! My resume reads that my wife Abbe is now a school nurse in Bedford, our 16 year old is in the throes of her GCSEs but would rather be in the pool playing waterpolo. As for me I'm in my 27th year in the Met police and currently work as a protection officer for the royal family travelling with them throughout the UK. It has its ups as well as downs!

Adrian Venn (70/76/81) writes: No earth shattering news on this front - still happily married to Helen, and the children now moving towards the independence phase with Michael finishing his 2nd year at the University of Gloucester reading Sports Education, Emmeline is at London Met reading performing arts, Molly is in her first year of GCSEs. My career in IT consulting continues - the technology may be a far cry from the punched cards era of Fr Wilfrid, but teaching IT (or "computing" as it was on those days) to 13 year olds in 1977 was surely ahead of its time.

Peter Rabley (77/82) is President of International Land Systems, based in Maryland, USA. He visits the UK (mainly Bristol and London) about four times a year. He lives in Bethesda with his wife Trudy-Ann and they have three children.

Ben Richards (78/83) is a Lt Colonel in the Army; he has just moved to a new post in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, where he is enjoying the ex-pat life.

Duncan Whitton (78/83) is deputy head of a school in Leicestershire. In the summer he earns a little extra cash by selling freshly squeezed orange juice at shows and sporting events.

Paul Dryden (79/84) was appointed Director of Development and Fellow of Hertford College. Oxford in September 2008. Previously he had spent three years as Appeal Director at Priors Court School for severely autistic children, where Fr Oliver is one of the trustees.

Felix Wong (78/82) writes from Melbourne Australia. My wife Stella and I decided to emigrate to Australia eight years ago, after an international business career that saw us living in the US, Hong Kong, and Malaysia. Along the way, Stella and I "accumulated" three children (aged 18, 16 and 2), one from each continent we have lived in. Needless to say, we are not moving again! I currently work as a Managing Director of a multinational conglomerate, and am mainly involved in putting together joint ventures and acquisitions. Life is good here in Australia, and particularly in Melbourne (it's frequently ranked as one of the "most liveable" cities in the world). Felix and Stella visited Douai at the beginning of June

Mark Christie (79/84) writes: I'm still in the Army, just finished a tour as an instructor here at the Staff College and about to start a 9 month tour in Afghan as a Colonel (promotion, but with pain!). Clair is working as a Nurse Practitioner in the Urgent Care Centre of the Great Western Hospital, Swindon. Our twin boys Karl and Frazier are about to hit GCSEs at Prior Park College, Bath, and their twin sisters Chloe and Patsie will be joining them next term from Prior Park Prep School.

Alex Wong (79/83) writes: I am taking a sabbatical in Sydney, Australia to try to finish a 7 year book project about the Malaysian Chinese. It has been a bit difficult adjusting to life here with few good job prospects and the lack of recognition of my US degrees. But at least I'm with family and working on the book.

1980's

Dominic Harwood (80/85) has been married to Kathleen since 1995. They live in Dallas, Texas and have two children, Kolton aged 9 and Savannah aged 17 months.

Paul Lindberg (78/80/85) writes: I have been working for Northern Rock for 19 years but the last 18 months have been interesting to say the least. Enough said on that front...I got married two years ago to Maureen and have inherited a couple of step children as a result. One, Robyn, is already at Sheffield University and Joe will be sitting his GCSEs this summer – they're a lot easier than in my day so he better get A's and A*'s!!

Keith Diamond (81/84) married Alison in 1998; they live in Winchester and have two children, Matthew (8) and Sophie (5).

Stephen Lang (79/81/86) is in senior management in a school in Retford, Notts.

Nicholas Harwood (82/87) was a pilot with United Airlines, but is now working for a private oil company in Texas.

Dominic Heath (82/87) writes: Sarah and I moved out to France in Jan 2008 with our two little'uns (Henry & Isobel) thereby fulfilling a long held dream. We're renting in the Southwest, an hour from Toulouse and only two hours up the road from a certain vineyard producing fab wine and owned by **Jim Pearce (82/87)**!! Had a great weekend pickling our livers with them and plan a repeat trip soon. Hoping to buy a place this year. I continue to work in the UK for a software company in London while I try to work out a plan to get me over to France - leaving on a Sunday night and returning on a Thursday is too much like boarding!!

Francis Davis (83/85) is Director of the Las Casas Institute and a Fellow of Blackfriars Hall, Oxford. He also directs the International Young Leaders Network which seeks to identify and nurture young leaders aged between 18 and 33 from any part of the world and all Christian denominations. Abbot Edmund Power is one of the patrons of the Network.

Simon Barry (80/82/87) is living in Ledbury where his parish priest is a Benedictine, Fr Richard Simons from Belmont. He is married to Fiona and they have a one year old son, Rory.

Tim Benbow (80/82/87) is currently teaching on a course at the Staff College for the highest-ranking officers that go there. Along with the three academics, there are five officers working on it. One who recently joined is **Mark Christie (79/84)** ; and then another one was replaced by **Jim Nisbet (77/82)**. So of the five current military staff, two are not only old Dowegians but were taught geography by Dad (**George Benbow (Hon)**)! Small world, as they say.

Aidan Brown (80/82/87) is the founder and director of Pico Consultants who provide various services and consultancy in telecommunications. They have recently opened an office in Lagos, Nigeria, where **Charles Opia (82/87)** is working for them.

Ronan Brown (80/82/87) writes: I am now living in San Diego with the family having transferred over here with my company in early 2007. It is really beautiful and great fun so I am not sure we will be coming back to the UK anytime soon particularly given the state of the economy and the fact that the weather seems to have deteriorated still further! We live just north of San Diego and although it is midwinter it is beautifully sunny and around 20 degrees outside at the moment. The nice thing is that summer temperatures generally hover around 25-28 so everyone claims it has the best weather in the world. **John Spence (80/82/87)** has recently spent some time with us, drumming up business for his safari company.

Piers Hoskins (82/87) writes: I am married to Una and we have two boys, Paddy (aged 3) and Sean (14 months). We live in Northern Ireland in a little village, Poyntzpass, close to the border with the Republic. Sean is lucky to be here as at 5 weeks premature, he contracted bronchitis and with no spare intensive care beds available in the whole of Ireland he was taken on Christmas Day 2007, (no room at the inn!) by Royal Navy Sea King helicopter to Glasgow Yorkhill Children's Hospital where he spent the next three weeks, before been stable enough to fly home and spend some time in a local hospital. Mother, Dad and brother staying across the road from him in Glasgow, courtesy of the Ronald MacDonald Family House. He's a wrecker now and loves nothing more than poking the dog's eyes and throwing his shoes in the bath.

Piers works for the Ulster Tatler.

Richard Hungerford (82/87) writes: married to Miranda – two children (Fergus & Cecilia) & one rug-rat on the way. Still practicing RC @ Sacred Heart, Wadhurst. Left Army, did MBA now working as

Group Procurement Manager, Superior Food Ltd.

John Matthews (80/82/87) is a doctor working in research. He writes: Roche just bought up my company - but I continue in San Francisco - working hard on respiratory early pipeline molecules.

Liam Beard (83/88) works for Cable and Wireless.

Matthew Bridle (83/88) now lives in Scotland but pursues his career as an operatic singer all over Europe, but particularly in Germany and Switzerland. He is about to be involved in some charity concerts in Bulawayo and Harare, Zimbabwe.

Ben Knollys (84/89) is a national account manager with the wine merchants, Hatch Mansfield. He and his wife Lucy now have two children, Freddie & Jessamy

David Lang (82/84/89) was working for RBS, but left them and is now working in Germany.

David Petts (82/84/89) is currently based in the Department of Archaeology at Durham University and about to start work on a major excavation on a Roman fort.

Gerald Strickland (84/89) writes: following short career in the British Army and some time working for the family business in Malta, I moved to Brussels (2001) to run the EU Lighting Industry lobby (ELC Federation) and to act as its spokesperson on climate, energy and environment policy. Increasing general awareness of the notion and consequences of climate change and resulting step change in energy and environment policy in the EU (and beyond) provided me with an opportunity to set up a new business - www.energs.com. Still in its infancy, the business promotes policy alignment between regional Governments to make law-making more effective & provides access to funding programs principally for business/academia in Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy projects. He and his wife, Becky, have three children George (5), Thomas (3) and Emma (1). At the time of writing he was planning to join his father **Adrian (54/58)** on the pilgrimage to Santiago at the end of May.

Chris Lang (83/85/90) runs his own accountancy firm in London (www.flashaccounts.com).

Edward Knight (86/91) and Amy live a house with the delightful name of "Down in the Wood" near Warminster. They have a son aged two and between them they cut wood and give riding lessons.

Paul McArdle (85/86/91) writes: Just started my own design and marketing business, Supreme Creative, www.supremecreative.co.uk Family: Wife Liz, two children, Molly 3 and George 6 months.

Peter Lang (85/87/93) writes: In the USA I was running the online services for an educational software company called PLATO. I left there and now work as an independent consultant on educational software. Most of the work is still related to PLATO but is in Africa and the Middle East.

Michael Lynch (86/87/90) is still in the Army and is currently living in Edinburgh; he will be going to Afghamistan in September.

Barrie Terry (87/92) is in the Army in the 2nd Battalion, The Yorkshire Regiment. He writes: I am married to Anya and live in the Forest of Dean, near Ross on Wye. We have 1 son (Theo 3 yr old) and a second boy who was born in May! As well as the Army we run a small organic farm, approx 50 acres - so life is pretty busy.

Andrew Narracott (86/88/93) has been working as a civil engineer with an international company. He is currently working as a water and sanitation engineer for the slums of Bangalore using UK DFID money; he will be living in Bangalore with his family for six months

Christian Grobel (89/94) has been working in the music industry for some years. He writes: I moved to Los Angeles for 6 months in 2007 and am still here, living in Hollywood. Always welcome hearing from Old Dowegians travelling to California, not that many do. On the music front, I've seen Gillian Weir perform here twice, at the Walt Disney Concert Hall, and many people are looking forward to Gustav Dudamel taking over the conductorship of the LA Philharmonic, later this year. I come back every 3-4 months - next trip is in August for a family get-together.

Joschi Herczeg (87/89/94) & Jocelyn Marchington (89/94) are working in the photography and design world together with a third friend. They are exhibiting at the Royal Academy Summer Show this year and samples of their work can be found on their website: <http://www.jocjonjosch.com/> They were featured on the BBC News website: http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/em/fr/-/1/hi/entertainment/arts_and_culture/8084008.stm

Tony Penny (86/89/94) ran the London Marathon for Children with Leukaemia – you can read about his training (and incidentally still sponsor him) on his blog: <http://web.me.com/antoinog/>

Richard Evens (88/90/95) has set up his own driving school in Newbury: www.ultimatedriving.net

1990's

Damien Byrne (88/91/96) was married in March. He is running his own events company in Dubai.

Sam Hawke (91/96) is working as a solicitor in Bristol. He and Nicky now have a son, George, born in September 2008.

Robert Wills (92/93/96) is in the Royal Navy; he is currently ashore, looking after the Navy's Engineering undergraduates at Southampton University.

Alfons Mensdorff-Pouilly (96/97) writes: I am working hard in a Venture Capital / Consulting Company and for the moment I am based in Zurich, although Vienna is still my home – engaged to Sophie..

Benedikt Franke (97/99) has recently been awarded a doctorate in International Relations from Cambridge University. He has now turned his theses into a book on Peace-keeping Operations and the African Union. He is working as speech-writer for Kofi Anan, the former Secretary-general of the United Nations in Geneva. He is about to take up a fellowship at Balliol College, Oxford.

Charlie Hoyle (97/99) is doing a Masters at SOAS, having finished his language degree at RHL.

Sophie Hoyle (98/99/xx) is in her last year at UCL doing Geography.

Peter Egan (97/99) is taking part in the Three Peaks Challenge on 1 August, climbing the three highest peaks in England, Scotland & Wales in 24 hours (including the driving) in aid of the Meningitis Trust; you can donate on: <http://justgiving.com/eganp>

Marriages

Joseph Midmore (91/96) to Carolyn Pignoly at Douai on 25 April 2009 Fr Dermot presided and Fr Oliver assisted. Immediately after the wedding their daughter, Sophia, was baptised by Fr Oliver, assisted by Fr Dermot - perhaps a first?

Thibaut Mervoyer (96/97) married to Marine in Ecquivilly, near Paris in September 2008: Fr Oliver assisted

James Sparks (90/93/98) and Laura Aylward (93/95/99) married on 26 July 2008 – perhaps a unique occasion in that both partners are Old Dowegians! - Fr Oliver gave a blessing.

Max Pickwood (93/95/99) to Naomi near Harrogate in May 2008. Fr Oliver assisted.

Baptisms

Artemis Essenhigh, daughter of **Angus Essenhigh (85/87/92)** in the ship's bell on the bridge of HMS Daring while tied up at Portsmouth on 29 March 2009. His sister Elspeth was baptised by Fr Oliver at Douai on 12 July 2008.

Deaths

Fr Robert Richardson (28/31) died on 8 January 2009. An appreciation appeared in the Douai Abbey Newsletter for April (available on-line: <http://www.douaiabbey.org.uk/Newsletter%2034.pdf>) and a full obituary will appear in the forthcoming Douai Magazine.

Patrick Halligan (45/50) died in 2002. His daughter, Tara, writes: After leaving Douai, a few years later he travelled to Canada where he resided until he very sadly and suddenly passed away in 2002, leaving behind his wife Joyce and two daughters Kelly and myself (Tara). He used my email for correspondence as he was not computer savvy! I had intended to email you sooner to let you know of his passing, but it has been a very difficult time dealing with the loss. He was a kindhearted and hardworking person, his family was very important to him. He spoke of Douai often and spoke of it fondly. Douai meant a lot to him as well. I am fortunate that my father did take us to visit Douai when I was young. I hope to one day visit again.

George Perry (48/51/56) on 24 September 2008

David Sheehan (50/52/55) on 10 October 2008

Kay Vis,(38/46) died on 30 November 2008. His full name was Cornelis Matteus Vis, born of Dutch parents in 1927 in Grays, Essex. He left Douai school in 1946, and went on to Sandhurst and served in the Royal Artillery (posted to Hong Kong) until about 1953. He qualified as an architect in 1957, the year he married, and eventually formed a business partnership with his brother **Bing**, also an old boy of Douai (45/53). He settled in York in 1961, and remained there until his death at home. He remained a devout Catholic all his life: his last words were to say that he wanted to go to mass. Father of 5 children, he is survived by his wife Pat, his 5 children and by 13 of his 14 grandchildren.

Ian Noble (83/85/90) died suddenly in his sleep on 28 January. His funeral was held at Douai, attended by many of his school contemporaries; the mass was concelebrated by Frs Boniface, Godric and Oliver.

Mark Gialanze (84/87) died suddenly in April at the age of only 40. He was married to Roberta and they had two sons, Isaac and Timothy. He was secretary of the Rotary Club in La Valletta in Malta.

Dudley Elwes (Hon) was a teacher of Classics at Douai for many years. He died on 6 October 2008. Fr Boniface presided at his funeral.

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St George's Day Lunch - 23rd April 2009 - 1950's Reunion - Royal Wimbledon Golf Club

Contrary to tradition, Kit Morton was invited by the organiser of the Reunion, Aubrey Balhetchet, to say a few words .

“I stand before you as someone akin to John the Baptist, who, as those amongst you who were listening to Fr Dunstan will remember, prepared the way for the Lord.

During my time at Douai, and with no disrespect to those who have gone before, we managed to produce two pretty useful XV-a-side teams, in 51/52 & 52/53 and despite all the odds, we recognised that although we were a small school of less than 200, by comparison with most of the other Schools, we had the basis of a couple of good 7-a-side teams, - and so it proved, as both my teams got to the last eight of the Rosslyn Park Sevens Competition, in those years. (I am delighted to see a few of the participants here today).

Teams thereafter were, I believe, inspired then by the possibilities that even a School as small as ours, could compete at Sevens, if good enough, and with a bit of luck, with some of the big schools, such as Uppingham, Oundle, Bedford, Clifton etc.

In 1958/59 there came together a very good bunch of players, who sailed through their 15-a-side season, as one of the School's best ever XV's, if not the best, - it hurts me to say!

So, they went to Rosslyn Park, 50 years ago this month, in April, to play in the largest competition of its kind - they played through six rounds, beating Sutton Valence, Eastbourne College, Haileybury, Llanelli Grammar School, Oundle and finally won the Competition – beating Royal Belfast Academy Institute 10-3 in the Final.

To those of us who were there on that great occasion, I don't suppose we remember much of those couple of days, except for the brilliance of the Rugby the lads played – Jimmy Anderson, flying down the wing, David Allanson of the wonderfully balanced run, slipping between the opposition, Captain Michael “Taffy” Horgan in the scrum, manufacturing opportunities for the rest, and of course, kicking the goals. Mike Welch, one of the very best sevens scrum halves in the game at that time, who became lost to Rugby as he headed for monastic life, - Bob Barnsley, a well built centre using his three-quarter skills to send Anderson away – Tony Rawlinson Plant, a rugged back row man who chased and chased through the whole competition and Tony Chetwynd-Chatwin, the hooker, who managed to obtain more than his fair share of the possession.

They all played wonderfully well, and it was a tremendous achievement, which gave the supporters the right to celebrate all night. I don't think I have been as bad before or since – it cost me a bunch of flowers the next day to my then girl friend, (now my wife of some 48 years).

Rosslyn Park Rugby Club very kindly sent a letter to Pete Walsh, reminding us of the anniversary occasion and they have sent congratulations on the great achievement, - which was very sporting and courteous.

It was a great triumph, and I ask you all to rise and toast ‘The victorious 7's Team of 1959’ . ”

After the toast the five representatives of the team (Messrs. Horgan, Plant, Barnsley, Welch, & Allanson) came forward to receive a small token of our appreciation. Captain Michael Horgan replied to the toast, thanking everyone present for the warmth of their appreciation, and said how gratifying it was that the event should be remembered in this way.

The formalities concluded in the usual way with Kit Morton leading the assembled throng in the inevitable rendering of *Ad Multos Annos*.

* * * * *

A letter from Neil Murphy

Neil Murphy (68/74/79) suffered a brain haemorrhage in December 2007, while on holiday in Spain. A Benefit match was held for him at Barnes Rugby Club in April; various rugby internationals and stars played in the match and many Old Dowegians attended. Neil writes in gratitude:

Dear Old Dowegian

A huge thank you for supporting my benefit match – to have the most capped player in the history of Rugby stand to applaud you for the team photo was truly emotional. As I said in my speech at the event before breaking down and doing a “Kate Winslet”, I was in fact dead for ten minutes on 13th December 2007 until my darling fiancée, Jackie, kept calm, asked someone to call an ambulance and set about reviving me. I was in a coma until 1 February 2008 when I woke up in the Wellington Hospital, London (with amusing stories I won't bore you with now). My long process of recovery started that day.

The milestones of my recovery included: 1) 15 May: I stood up for the first time, 2) June/July, took my first steps 3) was in a wheelchair until September, when to the amazement of my physiotherapist I asked for a stick. I then transferred to the NHS in Buckland Hospital, Dover with a view to a quick transfer to a proper transition unit, a half-way house between hospital and home, but despite my cottage in Herne Bay being rented out and unfurnished, Social Services declined to fund it.. My brother-in-law was generous enough to give me £10,000 to do the necessary adaptations and I moved into the cottages on 7 March.

I must be in the Good Lord's good books as he's not ready for me yet. Al-Queda tried to get me twice: I was standing under the World Trade Center on 9/11 and I was on the train that went on to Edgware Road on 7/7; I got off at Farringdon. And finally my brain blew up – each time the Good Lord said: No, not ready for him yet.

I have many people to thank and praise for my recovery. Clearly first is my fiancée, Jackie, who saved my life, her family who supported me and her children at our house in Spain. My ex-wife and her family who saw my children through a very scary time. I was a very active guy who loved to have a good time, always rushing around. So to see me plugged into every conceivable life-saving device in a Spanish hospital, having been told that I had only hours to live must have been scary; but they coped very well and made us all very proud. Thanks also to my brother-in-law, Michael Spencer who paid for me to be flown back to the UK, then in May for my stay in the Wellington until mid-September. In the intervening period he undertook my financial obligations to my ex-wife and children, as well as my son's school fees. To the dedicated staff at the Wellington who patiently taught me how to do everything we take for granted, especially to walk again.

It was great to see all the Old Boys again at the Rugby. For those if you there I didn't have time to say hello to, please forgive me, but when 2000 people all want a piece of you, time is limited. But I am delighted to tell those who couldn't make it that a call went over the tannoy to all Old Dowegians to meet by the Guinness tent where I stumbled along to and led a rousing rendition suitably supported by Aubrey Balhetchet and Chris Vale of “Ad Multos Annos”. In my speech I drew attention to the fact that “Swing Low, Sweet Chariot” was first sung at Twickenham by a part of Douai boys when England fought back against Ireland to secure a famous victory. Afterwards my best man, Hugo MacNeill said: “So you were the b*****s”; he had been playing in that game and saw the whole Irish side wilt under the “wall of sound” that hit them.

God bless you all for supporting me on such a special day – should any of you wish to make contact, my phone number is 0775 9495889

Kindest regards

Neil

* * * * *

The following two articles have been circulated privately, but it was thought that they deserved a wider readership.

Memories of Douai School 1934 -1938

In this centenary year of the community and school's arrival in England, I thought it an opportunity to share some memories of one who, in those 100 years, has been a Dowegian for nearly 70 of them. Pat Kavanagh and Henry Mayr Harting have written very interestingly of their experiences of post-war Douai so I won't repeat their general observations; this will be a much more personal account.

I can certainly endorse their view of the Headmaster in my time at school, Fr Ignatius Rice. A figure of commanding presence with that innate air of authority, he could quell the slightest indiscipline with a mere look, a lift of an eyebrow; erudite, moving among the famous Catholic 'literati' of what was called the "Chester-Belloc era", he was every inch the Headmaster. But there was another side to this Olympian figure. He really had the welfare of his boys at heart as I am glad to testify from personal experience. Most unusually, if you needed a postage stamp, you went to his study. This simple arrangement meant that, during the course of a term, he saw virtually every boy individually.

On one occasion, I went one evening for a stamp.

"Stickland" he said "you look very pale. Are you taking proper recreation?" "Well Father, I'm weak at maths so it takes most of my recreation to finish my prep." (which was true).

"You are to stop that at once and take your full time off. Who is your maths master?"

"Mr Dereham" I said.

"Right, I'll have a word with him. You are not to worry any more."

He must have had a word because thereafter, even when I often didn't finish my prep "Ham" never said a word. It's the memory of such kindness which can last a lifetime.

In the 1930's my entry to Douai, after the rigours of St Botolph's, was a wonderful experience and my four years at the school were very happy ones, with a strong family spirit and boys from 9 - 19 all under one roof. It was very much a monastic school; all the administration posts and most of the teaching was done by monks. Apart from the cricket 1st XI, all the games were coached or at any rate supervised by monks. There was an easy-going relationship between monks and boys made easier because it was a small school of perhaps 200 pupils.

ACADEMIA

If I were to be charitable, I would describe the teaching as second rate, at least in the lower part of the school. The trouble was that once a monk was ordained he either was sent out "on the Mission" i.e. to one of our many parishes or pitch-forked into the school to give him a job and to earn a living. Whether he could teach was another matter; he didn't need any qualifications apart from his theological knowledge to teach R.E. Inevitably there were some who had no idea how to control a class and so little learning was achieved.

The standard exam was the School Certificate, roughly equivalent to the modern GCSE. Very few went on to sit the Higher Certificate (A level). In fact, I think there were only 6 or 8 of us. There was no close supervision and we liked to think we were self taught! But the teaching must have been good because 3 of our number gained entry to Oxford.

An example of the "laissez-faire" attitude occurred at the end of our first year when we should have had full scale exams. Tod Sweeney and I were deputed to see the headmaster to see when these would start. Fr Ignatius replied: "We'll try to arrange something". We couldn't believe our ears. In fact nothing happened and we had a whale of a time that summer. This was one fault of the Head; he couldn't be bothered with administration details. His friend Abbot Mooney maintained he was lazy.

There were three lay masters in the school: one Mr Dereham (Ham). He was an irascible little man who freely laid about him if you made a mistake. He was said to be a frequent visitor to the local hostelry and there were some scurrilous verses written about him. He could be very sarcastic, an unfair and hurtful method to use on young boys. When I was in charge of the Tuck shop, "Ham" was a frequent visitor to ask for postal orders. "I have a lot of little nephews and nieces, you know," he used to say. It transpires that the "nephews and nieces" were the runners and riders on Newbury Race Course.

Mr Beesley (Beaver) taught French and was reputed to be a saintly man, a reputation enhanced because a

human skull always rested on his desk. Pictures pop up in one's memory. On a hot sunny day, Mr Beesley was sitting in the front bench in our class. A daring and slightly mad boy sitting behind him produced a magnifying glass and proceeded to focus it on the master's bald head. We watched in horror as the focal point got smaller and soon steam rose from his head. He lashed out with his strap on the miscreant. We noticed that a black hole remained in his skull. The boy deserved a severe punishment but "Beaver" being a practising Christian, probably forgave him.

Dr Paddy Lyons taught science. He was a tall dignified Irishman whom I admired for his courtesy and kindness. Unfortunately he was very deaf and so was suspicious of boys who sat at the back of class because he couldn't hear if they were chatting. But if you sat at the front you were obviously a keen student. So the naughty boys sat at the front and when asked questions used to mouth words without any sound issuing. Poor old "Dard" would then bang the large amplifier on his chest and say, "Dis damn ting's always going wrong." Cruel, but to insensitive boys it was just "fun".

MUSIC

This played a quite considerable part in school life. On big feasts we sang polyphonic masses by Palestrina and William Byrd. The highlight for me was the singing of Vittoria's Passion on Palm Sunday. I can still remember bits of the bass part. I once had the experience of standing next to Fr Francis Bennett who had a magnificent voice. It was like being next to a 16ft organ pipe!

In 1936 Gilbert and Sullivan's operettas were revived from "old Douai." Under the baton of Fr Aloysius and choreographed by Fr Dunstan, they proved immensely popular. With uncanny prescience, Alex Nicoll the First Sea Lord in "Pinafore" became a naval Commander and the Major General in the "Pirate King" ended his career as a Colonel. It was a great advantage to have a posse of trebles and altos in the school for both church and stage.

SPORT

This played a much more important part in the life of school than in future decades. Douai had a strong rucker tradition which enabled us to challenge and beat schools 2 or 3 times larger than ours. Members of the First Fifteen were treated as minor deities; junior boys vied with each other to clean the rucker boots of their heroes. Yes, True!

I was privileged to be a member of the 1937 team which had the unique achievement of winning all its school matches. This can be confirmed by reference to the Douai Magazine. Our captain was Ray Cooper who went on to gain a rucker "Blue" at Oxford and I think must be the only Dowegian ever to have had a trial for England at Twickenham. Cricket was very popular, greatly encouraged by the Headmaster who had played for Warwickshire. Soccer was rather looked down upon as a game for "cissies". In the Easter Term, you either played hockey or did cross-country runs or took part in Athletics. Everyone had to join in something most afternoons, so we were kept pretty fit.

DOMESTIC ARRANGEMENTS

These were fraught with complications. From some agency in Dublin were imported girls aged from late teens to early twenties, to do the cleaning and general chores. Some of them were no demure modest maidens but were openly flirtatious. You can imagine the impact this had on pre-, present and post-pubescent pupils in an all-male establishment.

An Irish lad, affected perhaps with the Romeo and Juliet syndrome, in dead of night obtained a ladder and placed it against the wall of the maids' dormitory (later the infirmary). One girl, hearing a noise, opened wide her casement (in Shakespearean language), saw a dark figure ascending. She obviously hadn't read the play because, in most un-Juliet fashion, uttered a loud scream fearing, perhaps, a fate worse than death. This brought the matron hot-foot from her bed, shone her torch on the fleeing Lothario (or frustrated Romeo) and recognised him. I believe his daring but hopeless enterprise ended in expulsion.

Either in 1936 or 1937, a flu' epidemic swept through the school, decimating the classes. The more serious cases lived in the infirmary but the normal cases remained in the dormitories. One boy, was so besotted with a maid in the infirmary that, on returning to the White Dorm was determined to get ill again to see his innamorata; so, dressed only in his pyjamas, he spent hours leaning out of his window. I can vouch for this because his cubicle was opposite to mine. He did contract pneumonia and was very ill indeed. Who can gauge the pain of calf love?

The last episode in this sorry saga occurred when I myself was in the Infirmary and heard the stentorian tones of the headmaster. Looking down the corridor, there he was looming over a sobbing girl and I distinctly heard him saying: "Don't you know that the bottom-most pit of Hell is reserved for girls who seduce young boys." Could he have been referring to our love-sick youth above?

EDUCATION THEN AND NOW

I write with a certain amount of knowledge as I taught in the Junior and Senior schools from 1942 to 1972. I think we were more care-free because we did not have the constant pressure of exams that pupils suffer from now-a-days. No SATS, no league tables, much more time for hobbies. I think the teaching in 60s to 70s was better because there were more professional teachers in the school and the curriculum was wider. On the other hand, we were more articulate in speech and writing. Everyone was taught formal grammar i.e. analysis and parsing and we read much more. Remember there was no television. Radio was confined to the Common Rooms. During recreation, the libraries were well occupied.

As regards speech, Fr Ignatius was very keen on Debating Societies, both junior and senior. The aim was to help us to overcome the natural shyness to speak in public. As he said, after our "privileged education" we were expected to be the public voice of the catholic laity, by word and example and to be able to hold our own in the business world. So attendance at these fortnightly meetings was compulsory and there was a powerful incentive to speak. Those who proposed and seconded motions or had spoken more than three times from the "floor" were given a whole day's holiday in the summer to row on the Thames from Pangbourne to Goring and have a "slap up tea" at the famous Beetle and Wedge inn. We were also expected to invite a monk into our boat as our guest: rather a nice idea. It was glorious fun, turning into "Bump Races" as on the Isis at Oxford. I remember a lock-keeper shouting to the spectators: "they come every year and there's always trouble."

Douai School was unique among Public schools and engendered much affection and loyalty among Old Boys and still does as I write. I know this essay is largely anecdotal but perhaps it gives a flavour and insight into the true life of the school that no brochure or official history can give.

Fr Augustine Stickland O.S.B. (1920-??)

monk, missionary, teacher, housemaster and weekend supply priest. June, 2003.

John Shaw

RUDE AWAKENING

On the morning in 1967 that he arrived at Douai to take up his new post as groundsman/ cricket coach, the eagerly keen expression on young John Shaw's apple-cheeked face at once turned a glum sort of grey as he surveyed, first, the wormcast state of the cricket-square "sanctum" and then the moth-eaten nets and mildewed, higgledy-piggledy pile of odd pads and chipped bats in the splintery old pavilion. His whole new empire obviously needed a complete and expensive overhaul and, as youthful go-getters do, he seethingly determined at once to demonstrate his new-broom dynamic and begin as he intended to continue by seeking out an inaugural showdown with the school's master-in-charge of cricket. Shaw strode down the Black Walk and beat a door to the Headmaster's office.

"Everything's in an utterly calamitous state," he announced, "have I your permission, Father, to sort it out immediately with your master-in-charge of cricket?"

Replied rotund Fr Alphonsus with that languidly quizzical spaniel's eye and famously twittering half-chuckle: "Master-in-charge of cricket, ol' boy? You *are* the master-in-charge of cricket!"

Thus, at the first time of asking, Shaw twigged he had entered a one-off world different to anything for which he had been prepared. "At once I realised that Douai was eccentrically like no other institution: unique -- gloriously, barmily, lovably, magically unique," he remembers 37 years on, by which time, of course, the wide-eyed young groundsman-pro had long progressed from that first-morning's shock promotion to become Douai's stalwart factotum and majordomo-- even headmaster's deputy, no less -- and a treasured part of the furniture remembered fondly and with gratitude by many passing generations of the school's pupils and staff. John Shaw is retiring with his beloved Angela to Newquay in Cornwall and his farewell dinner in April 2004 marked another poignant closing chapter in the sad, cold, harrowing final rites of the school at Douai ... just about the last, I daresay, and it is only warm memories of long

ago which gladden the cockles now....

EARLIER COACHES

Douai cricket on that handsome, heavenly wide field high on the hill was always fraternally content to take pastoral second place to the traditional and clamorously ferocious intensities of Douai rugby. But that gilded handful of sunstrewn months, when the mellow pick-pock of cricket and the lazy smattering of occasional hand-claps would waft across the Black Walk and wisp on soft breezes dreamily around the familiar rose-red buildings of Berkshire brick, provided lyrically imperishable flavours for boys with an ardour for the old summer game. The romance of cricket was in Douai's very air. In 1950, my good father only persuaded me to leave Belmont for Douai because the grand and fabled headmaster, Fr Ignatius, had once made up the same batting order for Warwickshire as Quaipe and Calthorpe, Parsons and "Tiger" Smith. My time coincided only a couple of summers with Fr Ignatius. He umpired a junior house match once and just about the only words he ever addressed to me were: "Play yourself in, boy, then start getting onto the front foot at every opportunity. You'll have more fun that way. Same goes for life, I suppose."

The summer before I arrived Douai's coach had been sun-browned Surrey salt Alan Peach (1890-1961), who had shared partnerships under the timeless Kennington gasometers with Hobbs himself and who once took four-in-four against Sussex. "Old Peach knew his stuff all right," I was told by an approving young Aubrey Balhetchet -- you bet he had, to the tune of 10,000 first-class runs and 800 wickets. Aubrey was one of the finest cricketers of my time at Douai, along with the likes of Peter Griffith, Denis Hopkin, George Chelley, Steve Botcherby and the two jolly Rogers, Segal and Maingot. My bits-n'pieces makeweights were fortunate to be appended to the 1st X I for two beguiling long summers and I still blush to read again, and recall the thrill of, my first mention in print when the Douai Mag signed me off in 1955: "Keating had a light-hearted approach, made a reasonable quota of runs, proved an excellent cover-point and, later in the summer, his bowling developed a considerable nip off the pitch." Such a too-generous testament to a scruff, happy hick was written by our passing coach, alumnus Charles Cuddon, author, scholar and dashing all-round cove who was to become a famed London classics teacher at Emanuel. Our little lot was mighty lucky with his post-Oxford Douai sabbaticals.

Of course, forever unhurriedly gazing and grazing out on the sanctum was Shippy, crabby old darling who would sit me down over match-day teas, contentedly munch handfuls of Miss Crook's inimitable sandwich-spread sarnies, and in his dry way inspire me with mouthwatering tales of his batting with the genius Gunn under longago Trent Bridge suns. Along with Cuddon, another esteemed Douai author is PJ Kavanagh, who recalled in his haunting memoir *The Perfect Stranger* (1966): "We had an old Nottinghamshire professional called Shipston of unrelieved gloom. I never heard him give any coaching advice at all except: 'Joost stay there. Roons'll coom. Roons'll coom.' But even he couldn't succeed in making cricket dreary." So did Shippy wince at my own batting's neurotic flashbangwallop insecurities: he was umpire when I once came in at 5.40 with tons of time soberly to re-establish the run-chase. "Joost 'aye a good look, son, till after the angelus -- if you're still here after the angelus we'll get 'ern, easy." Oh shame, ever shame -- once again I never made that 6-o'clock bell. (But dear Shippy himself, of course, was to live to make his own headline fame, not because he had played as a boy with Larwood and Voce as well as Gunn, but as the Wisden 2004 logs under "Cricketing Notables": Shipston, Frank William. Notts., Born 29.7.1906. Believed to be the oldest living first-class cricketer."

THE FIRST SEASON

So it was that fresh-faced young John Shaw followed a noble line. He looked, still does, like a West Country man. But he isn't, he's a "sarf-Lunnon span-a" from Wandsworth. At 14, John was identified as highly promising and dispatched from Alf Gover's famed neighbourhood cricket school to the Lord's groundstaff in the mid-1950s to join a vintage intake which included Test bats-to-be Peter Parfitt and Eric Russell. John captained them both before he was poached by former Somerset captain and celebrated founder headmaster of Millfield School, RJO Meyer. Interrupted by his National Service, John served one apprenticeship at Millfield, another on the Somerset CCC staff, and you can still find the young off-spinner's sunny deeds for the Army, Combined Services and Somerset minor counties' XIs speckling the small print of every Wisden through the late 1950s to the mid-60s. Till Douai was ready for him.

He is still not sure he was ready for Douai. Promoted that first morning to Master i/c cricket, he revitalised the sanctum, ordered new kit and prepared keenly for the Douai 1st XI's inaugural practice of the spring. Bruce Lowe was his first skipper and tipped as possible star batsman was a left-hander called Smith -- who came into the net and began batting right-handed. "Silly me, I thought you told me he was a leftie?" said the new coach. "He was last summer," explained Bruce, "but he didn't do too well, and fancies he might just get more runs as a right-hander." Only at Douai...unique glorious Douai...

That first Lowe summer the team was at least unbeaten (W3 LO D8) -- and just two years later in 1970 under captain John Coombes, a notably familiar Douai name, the 1st XI was posting, till then, Douai cricket's most resplendent record ever: P15 W11 L2 D2. The school's cricket was up and running again ... and almost 35 years later, in his reverie, the piercing-sharp old cricketer's eyes softened to a matey mellow as the hale and hoary old coach unwinds -- and re-winds -- to recall some of the grand feats and young fellows of his time..."take Martin Sullivan, now there was a terrific outswing bowler ... and the summers of Vale and Allan ... and Chris Rudd, a genuinely fine cricketer who went on to play for Derbyshire... and I'll never forget Richard Keeble's quite beautiful 100 against the MCC ... nor Mark Allan's ditto ... oh, so many good men and moments ... but very best of all might have been the wonderful morning Julian Forsyth bowled out St George's Weybridge for just 28 well before lunch -- oh, the haunted grey look on the face of their famous coach O'Gorman as he refused to eat a thing will stay with me for ever, it was far better even than when good Roger Aylward's Douai soccer team licked Eton that famous day...

CRICKET WEEKS

The Old Dowegian cricket weeks, nurtured lovingly all through his time by such stalwarts as Brian Peers and the aforesaid Balhetchet, remain fondly logged in the the old pro's trove of treasures. "I'd tell the boys, if you think Douai's given you an education -- then only a Douai cricket week can complete it." The nearest Shaw has to a cricketing philosophy is to look the part -- "Say to yourself, you'll play against better cricketers, maybe -- but smarter cricketers, never." This was the sort of ideal which Fr Wilfred embraced when he made his enthusiastic cricket coach his headmaster's deputy "i/c discipline" -- "I began with early-morning runs and took it from there..."

END OF AN ERA

The boys gave him a painting of the Pavilion as a farewell. He says it will be treasured more than they can imagine. As the school began its tortured end, John was made redundant in 1995. It shocked him. "I agree, the last couple of years were not much fun for anyone -- but the previous 25 had been so warmly happy that I thanked God every single day for them. The Catholic ethos kept Douai different and made it what it was -- which was a very, very special place. Unique."

He was a carpet salesman for a year, then became (obviously) eager busy-bee factotum westwards along the lanes at Downe House school. Now it is a bracing (voluntary) retirement for him and his beloved Angela in Newquay -- "the Pentine end, all very welcome, and we mean that."

LEARNING A LESSON

One thing the now gnarled, knowing, sun-browned, freshly bus-passed and retired old cricket pro from the Lord's and Taunton ground staffs says he did learn about coaching and teaching boys is that ("probably more than") half the time the truth is that those boys are, in fact, teaching you:

"I forget the year, but one summer the MCC brought down a particularly strong side. They won the toss and ruthlessly piled on a huge big innings and then smugly declared -- and at once we lost our first four wickets. It looked total humiliation, but first our middle-order dug in deep and grafted and stopped a complete rot. I can't tell you how proud I was. We got past tea and still they couldn't bowl us out as our tail went on cautiously, bravely defending everything they threw at us. It was a truly heroic rearguard. MCC were strutting about, livid with themselves. First ball of the final over we lost our ninth wicket. That we still needed 150-odd to win was totally by the by -- we just had to block out five balls for a really famous draw. The MCC field clustered round -- 1-2-3-4 balls were somehow, safely but fretfully, kept out by our No 11. The tension was palpable -- one solitary ball to go -- and he exultantly drives it through the covers and, punching the air with joy in mid-pitch, they're run out going for the third!"

Only at Douai... singular, wonderful, one-off Douai.

But Shaw goes on: "I admit I was beside myself, seething, humiliated. As a coach I felt I'd been ridiculed. The two boys came in, carefree, smiling, joshing. I took them behind the Pav and seriously bawled them out. Seemingly sheepish, they listened to my tirade -- then the chief culprit looked up at me, and he grinned: 'C'mon, sir, don't get het up so -- after all, it's only a game.'

Only at Douai dear, unique, lamented Douai.

**Frank Keating (52/55) - sports writer (and sometime sports editor) on The Guardian 1963 – 2004
April 2004**

* * * * *

Douai Society Bursaries - reports from two people who have been given bursaries

Pilgrimage to the Holy Land - February 2006

This is the story of my trip to the Holy land. I would like to share what I experienced there with you. Having been interested in the Israel/Palestine conflict and also having always wanted to visit the Holy Land, I enquired about an intranet posting placed by the Anglican Chaplain of the University of Wales, Bangor. It resulted with me going on the ten-day trip with a group of 22.

TEL-AVIV BEN GURION AIRPORT

Here I experienced a combination of anxiety and anticipation. There was a potential threat – the colour of my skin. I was removed swiftly from the queue and questioned. The origins of my surname and why I had come to Israel were some of the questions asked.

ISRAEL AND PALESTINE

This whole region is riddled with day-to-day difficulties and this will become evident as I describe my visits to historic places. We arrived in a village called Beit Sahour, near Bethlehem. We visited Hebron – a Palestinian city and saw the tomb of the Patriarchs in which Abraham rests. Hebron is a microcosm of what is happening in Palestine – it was an extremely intriguing place because it is believed by Jews, Muslims and Christians alike that we are descended from Abraham. Therefore an important place for many and a powerful symbolic separation occurs here; the tomb of Abraham itself is strategically split between a mosque and a synagogue!

HEBRON

Despite Hebron being the second largest Palestinian city, there are various Jewish settlements. It was the first time that I had been in a Mosque and I really did not know what to expect other than that you must remove your shoes. The females of the group had to wear what I can only describe as a “Jedi knight” costume because ‘our women’ were not allowed to enter unless they wore a headscarf.

LATER IN HEBRON

During a talk by a member of the Christian Peacemakers Team, an American lady, Barbara, received an urgent phone call from a colleague saying that some women were not allowed to pass through a checkpoint because they were refusing to walk through an x-ray machine. Somebody in our group volunteered on everyone’s behalf, much to my apprehension, to stage a surprise protest! Great, I am going to get shot, I thought! Selfishly I sulked about going, then suddenly realised that I had forgotten my passport. The rest of my group were showing their ID to pass through the heavily armed security checkpoint. Despite my attempts to shout at my group leader saying “*Don’t leave me here alone I can not come through!*”- I was just ignored and left to my own devices. After a few minutes I thought I would proceed and attempt to get through anyway. I was abruptly halted and asked for “*Passport/ID?!*” I shrugged my shoulders looked at the soldier with his M16 rifle, reached into my pocket and showed my Blockbuster video card. I was waved through and met my group who did not seem to have noticed my disappearance. We made a peaceful protest that I thought was futile and the soldiers just made fun of us. There were Arab women who were not allowed through and although some were teachers and some were

pregnant (incidentally two separate criteria to exempt them from having to pass through an x-ray hence the enthusiasm of our group to protest with them). They were still not allowed through.

During lunch a friend suggested that we go and have a walk through Hebron on our own to which I agreed. Admittedly this was a daunting experience as nearly everybody was staring at us, it seemed as if they had never seen tourists. Some inquisitive children came and tried to talk in what little English they knew, mainly about famous people they had heard of like David Beckham. Later while my friend was bartering for a pair of jeans somebody came up to me and asked if I was Danish, to which I replied, no. Then somebody else who had heard the word Danish came running over and within seconds I was completely surrounded by angry people who had a problem with Denmark or Danish people. It suddenly occurred to me that the (at the time) Danish caricatures depicting Mohammed as a bomb was linked to my predicament. I insisted that I was not Danish and added that I did not agree with anybody mocking their religion or anybody's religion. Subsequently everybody was a friend and I began introducing myself and shaking people's hands.

BETHLEHEM

Bethlehem is a very holy place for me, being the birthplace of Jesus Christ. We met the mayor of Bethlehem in his chambers. He told us that Bethlehem (a Palestinian town) was riddled with problems. Many people who live in Bethlehem but work in Jerusalem are unable to get to work because of the checkpoints and security barriers. The eight-metre high reinforced concrete wall cuts approximately half of the town off. The wall does not follow any official or internationally recognised border, it appears to have been built to harass the Palestinians and to divide the country. To me, it appeared that the wall failed to combat the fear of terrorism, as there were many places in which one could slip through and there were gaps in places. Also many curfews have been enforced in which no Palestinian is allowed to leave their home, whether it is for food or to see a loved one.

Seeing the church of the nativity, and kissing the ground where Jesus was born was a fulfilling experience for me. Physically being there was uncanny. Throughout my childhood I had re-enacted numerous nativity plays and being in the actual place of Christ's birth, re-ignited in me a faith that was lapsing. I said some prayers and rang my mother (who is badly sick). Later we visited Bethlehem University that in fact was set up in the 1970's by American Catholic scholars.

JERUSALEM

Jerusalem society is split into 3 religions: Judaism, Islam and Christianity. We entered a synagogue, my first time in one, we met Ardi a Jewish settler who was born in, and spent many years in, the US. He started by reading aloud something he found on the Internet, exhorting the Arabs to drink the blood of the Jews. Ardi seemed to be very defensive. He refused to accept that Palestine ever existed despite being questioned about the Balfour declaration of 1917 in which Britain had the mandate of the area that was Palestine. Ardi was worried that the Palestinians would "outbreed" the Jews. You can perhaps see his point because harsh curfews enforce them to stay indoors every evening! This is the primary reason that he did not agree with a one state solution. The Jewish view on the state of Israel is simple and you do not have to be a Zionist to believe this, there are many people including Christians who believe that according to the Torah or Old Testament, the land is given to Jews by God.

We visited the church of the Holy Sepulchre where Jesus walked, preached, was betrayed and crucified. It was difficult for me to sense any of this holy atmosphere whilst all around different faiths and denominations were being partitioned and shepherded like tourists in such a banal way.

Seeing East Jerusalem was upsetting because we walked through many ghettos and saw many Arabs living in absolute squalor. Living alongside them were Jewish settlers also living in squalor, but fortunately for them, permanently guarded by armed soldiers conscripted as part of their national service. Despite, the money spent on CCTV and young armed guards, the standard of living was disgusting. It is common for Palestinians to erect nets above themselves to catch the detritus of the many settlers who live on the levels above.

RAMALLAH

In Ramallah we visited Birzeit University which felt like any other university other than the obvious fact that most people were Muslim and most girls wore headscarves. A major problem was that since the construction of the wall it was extremely difficult for some students living in parts of the West Bank to get to university. If the IDF (Israel Defence Force) believes that they are suicide bombers then lengthy waiting times can occur.

Having lunch with the students and getting to know them, exchanging email addresses etc was a nice experience. I love Hummus; especially how it is made out there and there is no better way of getting to know somebody than talking to them over delicious food. All the students around me were Hamas supporters, and I criticised them for that, asking why it was so important for them. The consensus was that Hamas had a good social conscience and tried its hardest with the resources available to take care of its people. Incidentally the Hamas representative had to cancel a meeting with us but that was understandable considering we arrived only a fortnight after the first democratic elections there in 10 years.

CONCLUSION

I would like to thank the Douai Society very much for giving me the opportunity to experience this great diversity. I experienced feelings that I never knew I had the capacity for. Individual feelings such as sorrow were felt in different ways: Standing where Jesus stood when Judas, at the Mount of Olives, betrayed him was a powerful moment for me, imagining how Jesus and his disciples must have felt. In the here and now, there was my sadness for the refugees of the UN refugee camp in Bethlehem. They, who had been banished had the hope, but I believe a tragically forlorn one, that their campaign for the "right to return" to their homes in the State of Israel would succeed.

The trip was an experience that has left me sadder – yes, but wiser – I hope so.

Thank You.

David Hammond (92/95/99)

School trip to Spain

Dear Mr Kerr

Thank you for the hundred pounds that the Douai Society donated for my trip to Spain. The money was much appreciated. The trip was to the North-East of the country, about thirty kilometres from the border to France. The Rustington Explorer group and I stayed in Ainsa, a small village in the district of Huesco. On the first day we travelled through France after entering the country from Dieppe. The journey took us about two days to reach the Spanish border, including an overnight stop in France.

After entering Spain, we went for a couple of days on an excursion to Barcelona, the capital of Catalonia. This included a visit to the Sangrada Familia, Gaudi's uncompleted church; the harbour and the monument to Columbus.

Afterwards we went on to Ainsa to set up our camp. After nearly days setting up we prepared for our expeditions. This involved trekking through the Pyrenees with a smaller group of people carrying everything we needed to live for three days. It was very gruelling but eventually we all made it through, gaining our silver Duke of Edinburgh awards.

Also on the trip we did Horse riding in the foothills of the mountains, white water rafting in the river and caving in the side of the Pyrenees.

All of these experiences were once in a lifetime and will never be forgotten at least by me. Hopefully now I can go on in life and show the award and it will represent what it means to have gained it.

Thank you for your donation so it was possible to go to Spain and complete something over a year in the making.

Thomas Napper - grandson of Gerry Smith (37/42)

* * * * *

Tony Coombes (1913- 2006)

Tony Coombes, whose death was reported in our 2007 newsletter, was an accomplished cricketer as were his two younger brothers Jerry and Michael who all played cricket for the Douai Society when the opportunity offered. Before he came to Douai Tony's education took place at St. Augustine's Preparatory School, Ramsgate, remarkable (among other things, no doubt) for the fact that it spawned an enthusiastic Old Boys Cricket Club, the Old Augustinians, for which Tony, his two brothers and a number of other, less qualified, Douai cricketers played over the years until the "O.A."s were integrated with the Old Dowegians Cricket Club.

The following is an appreciation of Tony Coombes, written by his long-time friend Bryan Peers for the O.A. newsletter, which may be of interest to O.A. and Douai cricketers who knew Tony :-

Tony Coombes who died in July 2006 at the age of 93 was a prominent member of the O.A. Cricket Club before the war and a prolific run-getter in Hong Kong where he pursued his medical career and experienced internment under the Japanese. In his late sixties he hit a blithe half-century against the Douai School XI captained by his son, John.

Tony was a widower for 25 years, having lost Phillipa, sister of another O.A., and he outlived his two much younger brothers, prominent O.A. cricketers, who both lost their lives in air mishaps before the age of 40.

The two stories that follow reached me from reliable sources, and I believe them to be true.

The O.A. cricketers being in Ramsgate to play the School, closing time at "The Paragon" public house threatened, unsuccessfully, to foreclose a convivial evening, for the Monastic cellar was there to be raided in just such an emergency. Mission complete, Tony raised a finger to his lips for silence, whereupon the wine bottle under his arm obeyed the laws of gravity and smashed on the stone steps. Napkins from the Monastic refectory were enlisted to mop up the evidence before being thrown into the harbour.

When the Police reported blood stained napkins in the water Abbot Adrian Taylor, M.C. wondered whether the Old Boys might throw light on the mystery and, on receiving a full confession, requested that the next time the name of the Abbey be removed from the linen before disposal.

As a young doctor playing cricket against Coney Hatch Asylum, Tony took a brilliant catch, throwing himself full length in the deep. A lady sitting under a tree was heard by him to say to her companion - "Not bad for a lunatic".

Tony's raid on the Monastic refectory at Ramsgate was re-enacted by his two younger brothers years later, this time in a raid on the kitchen of the Monastic refectory at Douai during a Douai Cricket Week with food as the target. Having filled the pockets of his sports jacket with eggs, his brother Michael announced that he was going to enjoy a meal of boiled eggs. His brother Jerry, standing right behind him, hit him smartly on each pocket saying "They'll be much nicer scrambled".

Bryan Peers (39/41)

Community News

Current news can always be found on the Abbey website ([ww.douaiabbey.org.uk](http://www.douaiabbey.org.uk)) where Fr Gervase makes great efforts to keep all the different sections up to date.

The community has two novices at the moment and four other people who are at various stages of enquiry about our way of life.

Fr Boniface has been moved to our parish at Ormskirk, where he joins Fr Godric. His place as Prior has been taken by Fr Bernard.

The building of the library started in May. The community decided to go ahead with a project which has been many years in the planning. The architect is David Richmond who was also responsible for the new refectories, kitchen and guest accommodation. The community hopes that some more contributions to the Library Appeal will be forthcoming so that they do not have to use up too much of our reserves, which are not worth as much as they a year ago!

Fr Oliver thanks everyone who has sent in news for this newsletter and will be happy to receive any news of Old Dowegians or other contributions for future newsletters, either in this printed form or in e-mailed circulars. Please send them to him at Douai Abbey, Upper Woolhampton, Reading RG7 5TQ or (preferably) by e-mail to oliver@douaiabbey.org.uk

Minutes of 135th AGM held at Douai on Sunday 6 July 2008

Members attending

Leopold Antelme (40/46)	Oliver Holt OSB (62/67)	John Priest (40/47)
John Beresford (42/46)	John Hoshimi (56/59)	Brian Quinlan (55/60)
Hugh Berry (41/43)	John Kerr (61/66)	Geoffrey Scott OSB (62/66)
Christopher Blackburn (50/60)	Godfrey Linnett (50/55)	Romuald Simpson OSB (42/48)
Peter Blackburn (50/59)	Michael Lockyer (41/46)	Michael Skivington (48/55)
Michael Botcherby (96/99)	Michael Lund Yates (46/52)	Bernard Swinhoe OSB (44/49)
Stephen Botcherby (49/54)	Matthew McCabe (63/65)	Richard Trist (48/53)
Tony Burton (48/51)	Boniface Moran OSB (54/59)	Chris Vale (71/76)
Chris Cundy (61/64)	Kevin Murphy-O'Connor (43/50)	Paul Westby (38/42)
Bernard Funston (55/61)	Tony Penny (86/94)	

1. Opening Prayers

The President Fr Oliver opened the meeting. Fr Boniface led the meeting in prayer, and remembrance of those members who had died since the last meeting:

William Humphrey (33/35)	26/08/2007	Norbert Lynton (Lowenstein) (38/45)	31/10/2007
Raymund Cooper (34/37)	--/11/2007	Tom Scarisbrick (39/42)	15/04/2008
David Woollett (34/37)	12/10/2007	John Schofield (42/48)	09/07/2007
Christopher Derrick (34/39)	02/10/2007	Martin Hall (46/50)	04/02/2008
Richard Manwaring-White (36/40)	23/12/2007	Basil Potter (47/52)	24/08/2007
Roland Vivian (36/48)		Gavin Bridson (48/52)	10/01/2008
John Cunningham (34/40)		John Lloyd (50/55)	--/09/2007
Idwal Humphrey-Evans (37/41)	03/06/2007	Christopher Lovelock (53/57)	21/02/2008
Anthony Keig-Shevlin (36/41)	29/01/2008	John Philipson (56/61)	02/07/2007
Ian Humphrey-Evans (38/41)	21/04/2008	Brian Pounsett (Hon)	12/11/2007
John Braddick (38/41)	24/12/2007		

and for any others who have died.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were given for the following members who were unable to attend:

Gerry Smith (37/42), Patrick O'Donoghue (43/47), Bryan Peers (39/41), Anthony Polimeni (35/41), John Burke-Gaffney (46/49), Henry Duggan MBE (42/47), Denis Hopkin (48/55), Max Pickwood (93/99), Kit Morton (43/53), Tosin Igbon (95/99), Peter Delaney (36/40), Christian Grobel (89/94), Chris Simpson (55/59), Tony Wills (53/57), John Wills (66/70), William Brister (39/42), Anthony Gilsenan (56/61), Nicholas Banks (79/84) and Chris Smith (53/62).

3. Minutes of the 134th AGM

The minutes of last year's AGM had been circulated with the notice of the meeting.

Monastic graveyard: there was a suggestion last year that the Society might be prepared to finance the refurbishment of the headstones in the monastic graveyard. The Community had considered this and decided it would rather allow the headstones to naturally decay, although it appreciated that Members might wish to know where individuals are buried. Fr Bernard had previously drawn up a plan that will need to be updated. The council proposed, and the AGM agreed, that the Society could produce a permanent record/map of the graveyard that might be regularly updated.

There were no other matters arising. The minutes were agreed and approved: proposed by Michael Lockyer and seconded by Tony Burton.

4. School trophies

Members may recall that Tony Burton (Hon. Sec. at the time) had obtained a number of trophies at auction in 2000. (The money for these purchases had been recouped through the proceeds of sale of the contents of the school linen room.) None of the trophies are of major intrinsic value but may have been of some historic/personal interest. Since the closure of the school, there is limited space to display these, save for some of the shields that might be hung in the (to-be-refurbished) pavilion.

The Council proposed that after contacting the donors who had presented these to the school and offering them the first right of refusal, the remaining trophies should be sold to the highest bidders among members of the Society. The AGM agreed, subject to Fr Abbot identifying the Ignatius Rice Cup as being of important historic interest, which should remain in the Abbey.

5. The President's Report

The President thanked Fr Pat Davies for allowing the Council to use the presbytery at Golden Square in London for its meetings. The Council had met several times during the last 12 months and had continued to run the Society's affairs.

i. Martin Hall: Society members will have heard the sad news of the sudden death in February of Martin Hall (46/50), past Society President. His Requiem Mass and funeral was very well attended by Knights of the Holy Sepulchre, members of the Society of St Gregory, fellow parishioners and of course Old Dowegians, including three members of the monastic community. It was a magnificent send-off and the music was splendid, which was obviously appropriate for someone like Martin who was so involved in music all his life.

ii. Douai Directory: apologies that this has not yet been published. The President had got some printing quotes and made some progress, although an IT bug had delayed matters: once this has been rectified work can continue. The President noted that of 600 newsletters that had been mailed in May, only 4 had been returned which suggests that the lists are fairly accurate.

The membership database is live and members should feel to approach the Membership Sec. with contact detail requests. Year group reunions remain one of the main activities of the Society.

iii. Community news: work has been completed on a major part of the monastic refectory (where Frs Robert and Leo are residing). Further work is planned.

Work is also continuing on the redeveloped monastic library; Fr Abbot had sent a letter to the

Society providing an update, which the President read out to the AGM. The Society has donated £5,000 to the library appeal, with a further £5,000 to be given next year.

The Society has also donated £2,000 to the Maison-St-Benoit to refurbish their chapel. This gift has been used to provide a new altar, carpet and one of three hand-painted icons. The Society received a letter of thanks from Fr Peter which the President read out. Fr Finbar has been appointed Prior Administrator of Quarr Abbey, Isle of Wight, a monastery of the Solesmes Congregation, for a period of two years. His place at the Maison-St-Benoit, Douai, France, will be taken by Br David Hayes, a monk of Quarr.

There were no questions arising out of the President's report.

6. Treasurer's Report

The Hon. Treasurer presented the Annual Report from Messrs. F.W. Berringer, including:

- Income: subscriptions remain at a fairly even level from last year;
- Some investments had been sold from the Bursary fund;
- The RFU debenture ends this year as the ODRFC has been disbanded;
- A profit had been made on last year's AGM lunch(!);
- Expenses: bursary grants totalling £1,000 had been paid out;
- Incorporation tax (£395) became payable on interest received by the Society.

The Hon. Treasurer had written to thank Berringers and ask them if they would continue to audit the accounts. No response had yet been received and a follow-up may be necessary.

Beyond the accounts (dated 31 December 2007) and the commitments referred to previously library appeal, Maison-St-Benoit), the Society has committed to providing £10,000 to the refurbishment of the pavilion (agreed to at last year's AGM).

In short, the Society's finances continue to make an annual surplus and the investments are generating interest: there are therefore funds available to Society members (e.g. subsidies for class reunions, grants under the bursary fund).

Trustees' retirement: the Council had recently received a letter of resignation from Bryan Peers as investment adviser and on behalf of himself and his fellow trustees. The Hon. Treasurer thanks Bryan and the other trustees for all the work they had done. The Council will need to consider the Society's options: the Hon. Treasurer noted that the Council is empowered to appoint new trustees but that other actions may require an AGM/EGM.

Fr Abbot's silver jubilee: took place in January 2008. The Council had agreed to present a gift to him on behalf of the Society. Having considered several options, Fr Abbot had advised that he had a crucifix (presented to Abbot Sylvester by the Society on 1954 for his own silver jubilee) from which the enamel had come off. The members unanimously agreed that the Society might pay for the repair of the enamel.

As there were no other questions on the accounts, the Annual report was accepted, Godfrey Linnett proposing, John Kerr seconding.

7. Election of Officers

The following officers of the Society were elected unanimously:

- President: Godfrey Linnett, proposed by Fr Oliver and seconded by Kevin Murphy-O'Connor;
- Vice-president: John Kerr, proposed by Godfrey Linnett and seconded by Matthew McCabe;
- Hon. Treasurer: Chris Vale, proposed by John Kerr and seconded by Tony Penny.

There were no nominations for Hon. Secretary; the Hon. Assistant Secretary, Denis Hopkin, agreed to stand in on an interim basis until a permanent replacement can be found.

The Society thanked the outgoing President, Vice-President, Hon. Treasurer and Hon. Secretary for their work.

8. Election of Councillors

There were three vacancies (two Councillors whose terms were expiring and Martin Hall). Matthew McCabe, Kevin Murphy-O'Connor and Tony Penny were elected en bloc unanimously.

9. Appointment of Chaplain

The President thanked the Chaplain for performing his duties throughout the year. Fr Boniface had indicated his willingness to remain as chaplain to the Society. Included in his duties is to say mass on several occasions throughout the year for the intentions of the Society.

10. Sport Secretary's reports

Cricket: the Rick Byrne Memorial match will again take place this year although the date is not yet known. [Date subsequently confirmed as Sunday 10 August at 2pm.]

11. Resolutions received from members

Godfrey Linnett thanked the President for all the work that he has done.

12. Any other business

Date of the next AGM and lunch: will be Sunday 12 July 2009 at Douai: Mass at 11am followed immediately by the AGM and then followed immediately by lunch (wives and guests welcome).

There being no further business, the meeting closed with prayers.

Ad multos annos.