



AD-VISOR



The Newsletter of the Birkenhead Institute Old Boys

Issue 21, Autumn 2016

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Editorial

Once again last year has been particularly busy for me, but in a very different way. I have now finally retired from work, after doing a few extra years to try and rescue my pension. Only time will tell if I've been successful. This means that I can now work full time on anything I want, which as some of you already know, is a really nice feeling. As I mentioned last year, I rebuilt the website www.BIOB.co.uk myself, after attending a night school class at Wirral Met College in using "Dreamweaver" the web authoring software. As last year, I've fully implemented the adoption of PayPal to allow online transactions. So, now you can buy merchandise, order your dinner tickets, and make donations directly from the web site.

Keith Dutton (1960/63)

Usual Reminder

If you've received this through the mail, then please consider sending me your email address, or even someone else's email address, where I can contact you more quickly and cheaper than the mail system. If there's any old boy's news, then you can hear from me as soon as I find out.

Please also remember to update me if you move address, or change your email address, make sure you stay in the loop.

Discussion Point

I have not had much feedback from my suggestion in last year's Ad-Visor, concerning the admission of non-Old Boys to our annual dinner. Most of the feedback and most of my conversations around the proposal to widen the appeal of the Annual Dinner to certain other non-old boys has been very positive.

In particular, the idea that non-old boys who were long term members of the Old Instonians RUFC could be invited to our Annual Dinner, next year, 2016, as guests would seem a reasonable first step. How do you all feel about this? As a group, we are a diminishing species, and none of us are getting any younger. I would like to ensure the success of the annual dinner, by increasing the numbers attending, which I see as the highlight of the year. Contact me with your comments at Editor@BIOB.co.uk

Web Site www.BIOB.co.uk

I'm always interested in improving the content of the newsletter and the website. If anyone has anything they can contribute, to either, or to both, please let me know. I would be delighted to receive some additional content.

Old Farts Day – Prenton RUFC

As those of you who played rugby for Old Instonians RUFC at any time in the past will know, the Rugby Club at Woodchurch closed many years ago. Most of the members at the time then joined the then Old Rockferrians RUFC in Prenton Dell, and formed Prenton RUFC. This new club is now a very successful local club, regularly running 3 teams in various leagues.

To celebrate the joint Instonians/Rockferrians history of the club the committee normally hold a Former Players Reunion Day, in the first part of each season. This year, the Prenton RUFC committee have agreed to hold this event on the day after the BIOB Dinner, i.e. **Saturday 8th October**. The bar will be open from 13:30, followed by a buffet, and at 15:00 the 1st XV kick-off against Mosseley Hill, and the 3rd XV kick-off against Collegiate 4ths

[Prenton RUFC](#) is at Prenton Dell Rd, Birkenhead, Prenton, Merseyside CH43 3BS
0151 608 1501

Tollemache Road

I've had no response to my earlier request for information in general, or photographs in particular, that refer to Tollemache Road. Does anyone have any school magazines from any period, but again, especially from Tollemache Road, that they would be prepared to loan to me so that I can scan them for the web site? All material will be returned. Contact me at Editor@BIOB.co.uk.

Editor: The following article is a second instalment and was penned by Alun Hughes (1966/73). It is based on his research for a forthcoming book about the BI Old Boys who sacrificed their lives during the First World War.

BIOB at War – 1916

As the clock ticked over to bring in the New Year of 1916, there would have been mixed feelings amongst the Old Boys involved in the conflict. On one hand, there would have been a feeling of despondency; that what was spoken about as a war that was over by Christmas 1914 was one year later, seemingly now further from outcome. A disastrous campaign in Gallipoli had reinforced the brutal reality faced also by those in the static trenches of Flanders, that this was set to be a long haul. On the other hand, the Germans had played their cards and been stopped and the end of the Gallipoli campaign meant that there could at last be a focusing on an effort to dislodge the enemy and send them back home. The year 1915 could be a turning point and one big push might just sweep them away.

As planning progressed for a British attack, which Haigh thought should be delivered at Ypres, the casual violence of trench warfare continued unabated. [Malcolm Guthrie](#) had left his job in Marine Insurance to join of the Liverpool Pals regiments shortly after the outbreak of war. On January 12th, he received shrapnel from an exploding shell and was carried to the Casualty Clearing Station where he died.

One month later, almost to the day, Sergeant, [John Nixon](#) of the Kings Royal Rifle Corps, succumbed as did many others, to a sniper's bullet through his heart.

[Charles Leslie Evans](#) was heralded in the School's published history for his sporting and academic achievements at school; one of a handful of names thus acknowledged. 'Les' had joined the 5th Battalion of the King's Liverpool Regiment at the start of the war and bore the title of Rifleman. On 21st April, he lost his life to a sniper's shot to the head. He was perhaps not wearing the recently issued and unpopular, though necessary, steel helmet?

[Ralph Seward](#) was similarly lauded by the School for his academic success which had taken him to Oxford University. As Sergeant in the King's Royal Rifle Corps. he was not in obvious danger as he organised his men setting up bivouacs in woods to the rear of the front line. Death reached him in the form of a random shell that fell shattering the trees and showering splintered debris amongst them. It was 1st June.

By this time, Haigh's plans for an attack at Ypres had been abandoned in favour of an attack further South at the Somme. This was to relieve pressure on the French who had been fighting since February to defend Verdun from an early offensive by the German Army.

If people know nothing else about The Somme, they know that 1st July 1916 was the blackest day in the history of the British Army. Second Lieutenant, [William MacKenzie Campbell](#) had returned from Argentina to fight with the Royal Irish Rifles and fell attempting to take Thiepval that day.

To the South of the battlefield, the Liverpool Pals were in comparison, having considerable success which sadly proved to become bogged down. Sergeant, [Henry Victor Hughes](#) fell in the assault by the 2nd Liverpool Pals.

The battle for The Somme then degenerated into a number of actions for specific and difficult objectives that took place over the next five months. As the salient which the Liverpool Pals and others had carved open to the South, [James Cooke Chandler](#) in his newly promoted capacity as Second Lieutenant in the 11th Cheshires fell at Orvilliers on 12th July.

[Reginald Dodd](#) had returned from Australia as part of the Australian Imperial Force. He had been wounded shortly after his arrival in Gallipoli and had spent most of the war in hospital as a result of this and subsequent enteric fever. He returned to re-join his regiment on the day that they went into an ill-fated and notoriously badly planned diversionary attack north of The Somme, at Fromelles on 19th July where he became just another of the thousands of Australian casualties.

The same day, in the same action, [Eric Ronald Ratcliff-Gaylard](#) fell as part of the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry support of the British contribution to the attack. It was a shameful day.

Meanwhile on The Somme, action to extend the Salient was grinding on. Adjacent to the French who were on their right flank, the next obstacle to be cleared was the village of Guillemont and it was there that the Liverpool Pals were systematically blown away. The 30th July was the blackest day for the Old Boys with Sergeant [Percy Hancock](#) and [Charles Henry Easton](#) of the 1st and 4th Liverpool Pals respectively falling in the abortive attack, together with Lieutenant [William Lawson Harris](#) of the Royal Scots Fusiliers.

[Richard Pell](#) of the 26th Royal Fusiliers (The Bankers Battalion) had had what appeared to be a relatively simple injury to his knee, but in a pre-anti-biotic era, resulting complications caused his death in Hospital in Boulogne on 2nd August.

Guillemont continued to resist all attempts at its capture. so, the efforts of the King's Liverpool Regiment and others on the 8th August again drew a blank. [Ernest Clarke](#) was left on the battlefield and not seen again.

At the northern end of the Salient, the Allies were attempting to sweep around to seize the village of Thiepval from the side and rear. Monquet Farm in particular, stubbornly stood in the way. It

was here on 19th August that [Thomas Glyn Gough Williams](#) of the 2nd Royal Welsh Fusiliers met his end. In a re-run of the attack on 30th August, which proved equally unsuccessful, [Cecil Edgar Jones](#) of the Australian Imperial Force laid down his life.

As part of a broader attack that ranged from Monquet Farm to Flers on 15th September which saw the introduction of tanks for the first time, two more Old Boys went into action. [Percy Douglas Sinclair Broad](#) was one of three brothers who came back from Canada to fight. Each one was eventually to fall. His battalion, the Princess Patricia's Light Infantry did however help plant the seeds for the capture of the Farm the following day, but only as a result of his life amongst many others.

To the right of the advance that day, Sergeant, [Alfred George Beer](#) was in charge of two machine gun crews supporting the successful advance of Flers. A popular and lively individual at school and later by all accounts, he was with the East Kent Regiment (The Buffs). He did not see the day out.

[Thomas Stanley Davies](#) was the second of the Bankers Battalion to die. Like Richard Pell, he was an employee of Parrs Bank and worked at Charing Cross. He fell on 18th September.

On 25th September Sergeant, [Edward McGill](#) went into action with the Kings Liverpool Regiment in the company of his brother Corporal Phillip McGill. Both had been keen sportsmen and played for the B.I. Old Boys. In the ensuing fire fight, both were injured. Dragging his dead brother into the shelter of a shell hole, Phillip stayed with him before returning to the safety of the British trenches at nightfall, having first buried Edward before he left.

[Peregrine Fernie Cannon](#) was the last of the Bankers Battalion casualties to fall. This happened on 10th October.

As winter came, the weather caused direct action to stop. Troops then had to consolidate for the forthcoming Spring but the slow attrition of violence and death continued. [Frank Bunnell](#) of the Kings Own (Royal Lancaster Regiment) lost his life on 30th November when he and his Officer, passing along the front line fell victim to a German shell.

The final Old Boy death recorded in 1916 was that of Second Lieutenant, [George Walker Watson](#) who was training as part of the fledging Royal Flying Corps. Undergoing flying training over Egypt on 29th December, their plane appeared to malfunction and crash into the desert sands.

Twenty-Three Old Boys lost their life in 1916 compared with eleven up till that point. This number was almost matched in 1917.

Editor: The following article was written by Rob Wood (1953/60)

Rob, together with Alun Hughes, and Dean Johnson have been instrumental in ensuring that the memory of the BI Old Boys who fell in the First World War, and were remembered at the Ingleborough Road playing field, are never forgotten, now that the playing field has been sold for housing development.

INGLEBOROUGH ROAD MEMORIAL PLAYING FIELDS UPDATE

Now that Planning Consent has been granted for housing on the Playing Fields a small group of Old Boys have been involved in influencing proposals for a proper consideration be given to the sites cultural and historic significance.

This is being supported by David Armstrong the Deputy Chief Executive of Wirral Borough Council who has the agreement of Tranmere Rovers and Belway Homes to collectively allocate up to £90,000.00 between them to fund the provision of new and suitable memorial assets.

We developed this idea and proposed to David Armstrong that a memorial garden might be created in Hamilton Square incorporating some of the following elements:

- **Parts of the pavilion carefully removed from the site, including the foundation stone.**
- **Fence around the garden designed to symbolise the trees planted at Ingleborough Road in memory of the fallen.**
- **A sculpture of an exhausted soldier using the well-known illustration by Dave Jones in Jeff Walsh's book on Wilfred Owen. A miniature replica is in the process of being made and we hope to have this on display at the dinner.**
- **Resetting of the entrance gates under replica of the Memorial Arch.**
- **Visual interpretation of the themes of the poetry and in recognition of Wilfred Owen.**

A draft Architects' drawing by Michael Paddock has been produced and we hope to make a formal submission to the Planning Department imminently.

We would hope the memorial would be ready by 2018 to coincide with the commemoration of Wilfred Owen's death in 1918.

Bellway Homes have now purchased the Ingleborough Road site and commenced construction of 90 homes.

The pavilion has now been demolished and facing bricks along with the foundation stone safely stored for the new memorial.

Belway have allocated an area of land at Ingleborough Road for a further memorial and we are hoping to arrange a meeting with them to discuss the matter and our proposals which would include the positioning /commemorative panel of the sites history in the area allocated for the memorial on the site.

We have already been able to secure commemorative names for the two roads on the site which will be:

- **“Memorial Way” and “Archway Close”.**

We feel we have come a long way from the time when no one wanted to recognise or talk to us over our concerns and believe our proposals will be a fitting memorial both to the Birkenhead Institute School, and the fallen pupils in the First World War commemorated at the Ingleborough Road Memorial Playing Fields.

As our detailed plans for the memorial statue we would benefit from the professional advice of any Old Boy or interested person who would be able to help us with some of the structural engineering implications and we would welcome contact from any such person.

Vacancy – Structural Engineer - Temporary

In connection with the above War Memorial construction, we are looking for a Structural Engineer who can offer advice on a Pro-Bono advisory basis. If you, as an Old Boy are qualified in this discipline, and would be willing to offer your services, we would be pleased to hear from you. Alternatively, if you know of anyone else (i.e. non Old Boy) who would be willing to help, we would like to hear from them.

To volunteer, contact Editor@BIOB.co.uk

BIOB Funds

Currently, we have a healthy balance of funds. The main expenditure we face is the production of the “Ad-Visor” newsletter, together with postage. Costs have been reduced now that we email most members. We normally lose a small amount of money on the

annual dinner, but it is usually offset by the very kind donations that are made. The merchandise we sell also produces a small positive contribution to the balance sheet.

If you would like to make a donation at any time, a cheque, (made out to BIOB), would be gratefully received. Alternatively, you can make a PayPal donation at http://biob.co.uk/BIOB_Donate.html

BIOB Merchandise

We still have supplies of BIOB Ties, Cufflinks, Tie Tacks, Lapel Badges, they can be viewed and purchased on the website at http://biob.co.uk/BIOB_Tie.html, http://biob.co.uk/BIOB_Cufflinks.html, http://biob.co.uk/BIOB_Lapel_Badge.html. Ties are £10, Cufflinks are £10 and Tie Tack/Lapel Badges are £5. Postage on orders is £2.

Birkenhead Institute Trust

When the school (in Tollemache Road) closed, the Wirral Borough Council took control of all the school scholarship funds as a trustee, and formed The Birkenhead Institute Trust, as an educational charity. I am now trying to determine what the objectives were, and how these funds have been used, if at all. The Birkenhead Institute Trust consists of several other trust funds viz. The Solly History Prize, Henry Tate Exhibitions, Henry Tate (School) Scholarship Fund, Gwilym Rees Edwards Memorial Fund, Stitt Scholarship Fund, George Holt Prizes, and the Alan J Lewis Memorial Prize.

My initial request for information has been fobbed off, pointing to the WBC annual accounts, which only refer to the Stitt Scholarship, with assets of £37000. There is further category of "Other", with assets of £84000, but without any details of what this fund is. These funds are not included in the WBC balance sheet. None of these funds show any income or expenditure, so my next question is, "What do they do?"

I am not giving up, when I find anything out, I'll let you know.

School Song

Rob Wood tells me there was a school song, composed by Ernie (peb) Shaw, the first verse he remembers as follows:-

"In Queen Victoria's golden reign our founders' men discerning.

Built a school in Whetstone Lane to foster love and learning."

Can anyone else remember this? Can you remember any more?

I can't remember a school song, other than "I Vow to Thee My Country"

The Bike Sheds – Stories

Rob Wood also suggested that we may get some mileage out of reminiscences of events in the bike sheds.

If anyone would like to share their memories, I'd be more than happy to include them in the next Ad-Visor.

OBITUARY

Dog Griffith	1934/39
Andy Hodgson	1950/55
Peter Kevan	1956/63
David Lee	1952/56
Bob Smith	
Edward Ronald Whitmore	1936/40
Finch K. B.	1945/50

Old Instonians Golf Society 2016 Pyke Cup

Last year (2015) the Pyke Cup was again played for at Caldy G.C. and the competition was won by Mal Lynskey (1966 – 1971). This year the competition will take place on the afternoon of October 7th before the Dinner at the Golf Club. It is an excellent afternoon's golf on a well prepared course.

As usual, it is anticipated that a special green fee in the order of £20 for non-members (of Caldy G.C.), as charged last year, can be arranged with the Club for this year's competition.

It will take the form of a Stapleford Competition with full Handicap. Tee times available from 1.00pm to 2.00pm.

As usual, those wishing to play this year can contact the organiser, Arthur Howarth, by email at:- arthur.howarth@btinternet.com or on 0151 336 1026. If out, leave your details on his answer phone and Arthur will get back to you. Don't forget to leave your own phone number.

The golf is a pleasant outing in good company and enjoyed by all that play.

Annual Dinner 2016

I want to do my best to increase the numbers for the annual dinner, this year on Friday 7th October, as usual at Caldy Golf Club.

So the theme this year is **Bring a Friend**.

If you'd like to go to the dinner, but perhaps feel that you wouldn't know anyone there, then the answer would be to bring all your (ex-school) mates with you. Last year several groups of members organised their own tables, which made it much easier for me, and was very successful. Ideally tables will sit 8 to 10 people, if you can't make 8 or 10, then try a 4 or 5 half table, I'll put another small group with you.

As usual, you can pay with PayPal, or send me a cheque. Just let me know who is part of your group.

Don't forget, if you're travelling a long distance and staying over, there's a player's reunion at Prenton RUFC on Saturday 8th October.

APPLICATION FORM FOR THE ANNUAL DINNER

If you wish to attend, then please return the completed form to :-

Keith Dutton
11 Fininstall Road
Wirral
CH63 9YW



I will be attending the Dinner at Caldy Golf Club on Friday October 7th 2016

Time 6.30pm for 7.30pm.

(For those attending please enclose a cheque for **£28.00** made out to **BIOB**).

Donations for the draw will be welcome.

Dress:- Blazer and Flannels or Lounge Suit.

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

Email ADDRESS.....

TELEPHONE NUMBER..... (Including dial code)

SCHOOL YEARS AT B.I (To arrange SEATING Plan)

Any Special Dietary Requirements.....

Any Special Seating Requirements.....

Alternatively – use 