



AD-VISOR



The Newsletter of the Birkenhead Institute Old Boys

Issue 22, Autumn 2017

Edited by Keith Dutton, 11 Fininstall Road, Wirral, CH63 9YW

E mail:- Editor@BIOB.co.uk

Telephone:- 0151 334 0340

Editorial

Once again I could complain about how busy I've been, but the truth is, I haven't been busy at all. I'm really enjoying this retirement malarkey. I'm filling some of my time by volunteering at AGE UK, but that only works out at ½ day a week. I never seem to have any spare time, but then that's my choice, the world's my lobster!

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.

Web Site www.BirkenheadInstitute.co.uk

I've made some changes and major additions to the website. The website is now located at www.BirkenheadInstitute.co.uk. It's the same website as before, just moved address. If you write the old address of www.BIOB.co.uk you'll still find it, we still own the old address, it's set up as a "re-direct".

On the website itself, I've added reference to both War Memorial Plaques that used to hang in the school entrance hall. With the help of Alun Hughes (1966/73) and Les Highton (1966/71) I've identified all the 83 names on the First World War Plaque, (+ 1 other not on the plaque) who gave their lives. I've included hyperlinks from each name to more information on their lives and how they died. Most of the names are listed on the Imperial War Museum (IWM) site.

I've understood for many years that there were 88 Old Boys who gave their lives in the First World War, I'm now trying to track down the missing 4 Old Boys.

The Second World War Memorial Plaque is also shown, but there is no current information available on the details of the Old Boys who gave their lives. I hope to be able to track them down in due course.

I've added a link to all the Poems of Wilfred Owen. If the list is not complete, please advise me and I'll update the list and the links.

I've added 16 "Visor" magazines to the publications already listed. They fill most (but not all) of the gaps between Easter 1957 and December 1968, plus April 1970. Thanks to John Gurdon (1955/62) for loaning me his copies.

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 arranged to hold this event on the season opening weekend, **Saturday 2nd September**. The bar will be open from 13:30, followed by a buffet, and at 15:00 the 1st XV kick-off against Old Parkonians. In addition, any BIOB members who would like to visit the club on Saturday 7th October, the day after the dinner, will also be made most welcome by Prenton RUFC.

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

Tollemache Road

I've had no response to my many requests 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 third instalment and was penned by Alun Hughes (1966/73). This article covers 1917.

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 – 1917

Another year of war ahead and a war without end seemingly for the combatants. Not however for the Generals, who had visions of successful breakthroughs which would be beyond the ability of the Germans to resist. For the French, the Nivelle offence bled their Army white and led to mutiny but It also opened the door for Sir Douglas Haig to press ahead with what was to become his costly campaign in the Third Battle of Ypres.

Meanwhile, in a 'Sideshow' in Mesopotamia, the Indian Imperial Government's intervention went increasingly bad and poor leadership saw its unnecessary march of Baghdad isolated, surrounded and ultimately defeated, in 1916 at Kut.

Such a reversal was never going to be allowed to stand unavenged and [Mark Sanderson Watson](#) of the 1st Highland Light Infantry was part of that response, falling on 11 January, in the attack to retake the town.

Meanwhile back at the Western front the second of three brothers destined to die, met his end on 9 April. [William Edward Lee Broad](#), attached to the 5th Battalion, Canadian Expeditionary Force,

died as part of the well planned and executed capture of Vimy Ridge having watched the aerial antics of Richthofen's Flying Circus overhead a few days earlier.

[Frank Irvine Mercer](#) was of mature age, when war came and found him living peacefully in Southend. His abilities were valued for administrative work at home, however despite this, he died from dysentery in hospital in Dagenham. A 'lowly' sergeant but well respected, he was afforded a full military funeral.

The month of May arrived and for one of the highest ranking Old Boys, Major [Harold Edward Coates](#) was found fighting with the 13th King's (Liverpool) Regiment. He had married in the January and prior to his death had appeared with his men on the front page of the Daily Mirror, parading captured German equipment. He died a few days later, on 30 April.

The Germans had pulled back to the Hindenburg Line and [Alexander Garlshore Paul](#) as part of the 1st The King's (Liverpool) Regiments was pressing against their new front at Fresney, he was lost in action, never to be found.

[James Robinson](#) was an influential figure in peacetime at the Woodside Lairage, but this man, popular amongst his comrades, was lost on 20 May as part of the 4th The King's (Liverpool) Regiment attack on the Hindenburg Line that day.

Similarly, [Harold Edwin Ridgway](#) was a popular leader amongst his men of the 7th East Lancashire Regiment. Leading them into battle on 7 June as part of the attack, that saw the largest explosion ever seen at that time at Messines, he was wounded but insisted on carrying on, making the ultimate sacrifice.

To the south close to Arras, the Liverpool Scottish were about to embark on a little adventure, a daylight raid on the German trenches that came to be known as Dicky's Dash. The raid was not without its casualties as [Frederick William Jump](#) was evidence.

As the preparations for the Passchendaele Offensive were underway, a random death in the Ypres salient was [Henry Tudor Davies](#) of the Liverpool Irish who died from wounds sustained by a bursting shell.

Further to the South [George Browning](#) who had changed his name by deed poll from '[Breuninger](#)' fell to a sniper's bullet, the repayment for a moment's lapse of concentration.

[Bernard Hallett Williams](#) doesn't feature on the brass Roll of Honour but was an Old Boy nevertheless and died in the service of the 1/5th Loyal North Lancashire on the opening day of the Passchendaele Offensive on 31 July.

[Norman Bell](#) had served with the Liverpool Scottish during the earliest days of the War and before then as a Territorial. He received a Commission and trained as an Observer with the Royal Flying Corps. On his first flight on 18 August, he and his pilot set out early that morning, only to be fatally 'downed' over German lines.

[Clifford Ernest Neale](#) was a scholarly man and a physical condition not best suited for the rigours of trench warfare, but his determination propelled him into frontline duty with the 2/6th Royal Warwickshire Regiment where, east of Ypres, on 6 September, he died.

[John Hamilton Robinson](#) was part of the next attempt to take the same ground on 20 September, fighting with the 9th The King's (Liverpool) Regiment. This time the attack was successful, although bought at the cost of his life and many others.

In the meantime, back home and discharged from the Army on health grounds [Douglas Terry](#) finally succumbed to complications arising from chest wounds sustained just over a year earlier on the Somme.

The next two Old Boys to die in the Salient were [Cyprian Thomas Pearson](#) and [Donald McCulloch Brown](#), both Royal Field Artillery within a few days of each other in the October.

2 October saw the death from wounds of [Frank Edwards](#) serving with the 2/6th The King's (Liverpool) Regiment and his marked the last Old Boy death on the Passchendaele battlefield that year.

[William Crawford Poole](#) who died on 6 November had returned from Canada to fight for his home country and was with the 2nd Canadian Mounted Rifles.

A long way away from the mind of Flanders, in the heat of Palestine, [William Ernest Galloway](#) lost his life to a Turkish sniper's bullet while serving with the Welsh Regiment as an Intelligence Officer and further South again in East Africa, [Frank Jacob Schenkel](#) was engaged in a local, small but troublesome insurrection being maintained by a German guerrilla force. He was similarly an Intelligence Officer and having been badly wounded lost his fight to live.

As the battle died out at Passchendaele, Tank Commanders asked to be allowed to show what they could do on landscape of their choosing and an attack was made at Cambrai. During this action, on 30 November, [Donald Edwin Miller](#) serving with the Liverpool Scottish went into action for the final time. For a limited action, it was disproportionately successful but an important insight into the future potential value of tanks as a weapon of war.

For BIOB this was the last of 22 deaths in 1917, one less than the year before and five less than when, the following year, the War reached its conclusion.

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.

OLD INSTONIANS WAR MEMORIAL UP DATE

Hamilton Square Memorial: Futility

Since the last Ad-Visor things have moved on considerably.

Because of the extent of this project and its position in Hamilton Square, a grade one listed area we have been in discussions with Wirral Borough Council and our Architect Paddock Johnson to make sure our planning application went as smoothly as possible.

Early this year a formal planning application was made for the new memorial on the corner of Hamilton Street and Duncan Street. This required the removal of two old style phone boxes.

An objection to the removal of the phone boxes was made but this has now been resolved by moving them to another part of Hamilton Square.

We have been advised by our Architect that planning for the removal of the phone boxes and the Memorial can now proceed and approval for both applications together which should take about eight weeks.

While all of this was being resolved we have been having discussions with the Company who will provide the sculpture and the surrounding railings and replica Memorial Arch. A design has been approved and an estimate for carrying out the work provided. A full-size clay model will be constructed. Once minor adjustments are made to see it complies with Dave Jones original drawing. the final bronze will be cast. Likewise for the Memorial Arch which will be to the rear of the statue and the railings to the sides which will contain a motif of the poplar trees originally planted at Ingleborough Road. The pedestal for the statue will be constructed using salvaged facing bricks from the Ingleborough Road pavilion.

Ingleborough Road Memorial:

Discussions have been held with Belway and Wirral Borough Council over commemorating the playing fields earlier history.

The road through the development is now called Memorial Way and the small cul-de-sac off, Archway Close.

A plot at the Everest Road end of Ingleborough Road has been allocated for a memorial.

This area will be enclosed with railings and gates salvaged from the original railings.

A commemorative plaque will be displayed describing the history of the Ingleborough Road Memorial Playing Fields.

Final details for this have yet to be decided.

We expect both memorials to be ready for dedication by November 2018 to commemorate the end of the First World War and the death of Wilfred Owen which we expect will, create considerable national interest.

By the time of the annual dinner in October we will be able to provide more details.

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://www.birkenheadinstitute.co.uk/BIOB_Tie.html

http://www.birkenheadinstitute.co.uk.co.uk/BIOB_Cufflinks.html

http://www.birkenheadinstitute.co.uk.co.uk/BIOB_Lapel_Badge.html.

Ties are £10, Cufflinks are £10 and Tie Tack/Lapel Badges are £5. Postage on orders is £2.50.

OBITUARY

Mike Caddick	1941/48
Derek "Mick" Turner	1946/50
Roy Christian	1949/54

WILFRED OWEN MEMORIAL WINDOW AND BIRKENHEAD TRAIL

In March 1995, a celebration was held to unveil the splendid stain glass window erected in Wilfred Owen's memory at the Central Reference Library.

The window was designed by David Hillhouse Curator of the Williamson Museum and Gallery and an Old Instonian, created by William Davies Studios and dedicated by Peter Owen (Wilfred's nephew) who also unveiled the Memorial Plaque.

The Library Foyer was decorated with poppies and The Roll of Honour Memorial of pupils killed in the First World War was flanked by two poppy wreaths.

A brief history of the decision by the Wirral Arts Association to commission the window was given by Howard Mortimer.

Peter Owen told of his visit to France and the grave of his uncle and later unveiled the Plaque.

There followed a reading of some of Owen's poetry and the sounding of the Last Post as the standard was lowered by a British Legion representative.

To coincide with the unveiling of the window Norah Christall a member of the Birkenhead History Society wrote the original Owen Trail, a short walk around the area where Owen lived and grow up in while attending the Birkenhead Institute.

In 2008 to commutate the 90th anniversary of his death it was decided to update the Trail incorporating changes which had taken place since the original publication and to highlight the threat to the Ingleborough Road Memorial Playing Fields.

The new Trail was sponsored by The Birkenhead History Society and the Old Instonians.

The Trail starts at the Library with a visit to both the First and Second World War Memorials then to the first floor where access to numerous Owen related memorabilia is made available. The walk takes in the site of the Birkenhead Institute and the three family houses and other interesting properties which were around in Owen's youth, bringing the walk back to the Library. The brochure describing the Trail includes two poems written during his time in the trenches in the First World War, childhood letters written to his mother and a biographical account of his life together with original drawings by David S W Jones, former art teacher at the Birkenhead Institute.



The Owen Trail forms part of the Wirral History & Heritage open days Saturday 2nd September to Sunday 10th September 2017 and Rob Wood (B.I. 1954 to 1960) will be conducting the walk on Friday 9th September 2017.

A copy of the Trail can be obtained at the Central Reference Library for anyone wishing to carry out the walk themselves.

The Trail forms an important part in retaining Owen's link with Birkenhead and the education he received in his early years along with what was to him a young boy from a rural background the experience of living in what was at the time unique metropolis.

BIOB Funds

Currently, we still have a healthy balance of funds, slightly reduced from last year. 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 donate at any time, a cheque, (made out to BIOB), would be gratefully received. Alternatively, you can make a PayPal donation at http://www.birkenheadinstitute.co.uk.co.uk/BIOB_Donate.html

Old Instonians Golf Society 2017 Pyke Cup

Last year (2016) the Pyke Cup was again played for at Caldy G.C. and the competition was won by Allen Giles (1966 – 1973). This year the competition will take place on the afternoon of October 6th before the Dinner at the Golf Club. It is an excellent afternoon's golf on a well-prepared course.

As with last year's dinner, I want to try and increase the numbers. If you have a friend or relative who played for the Old Boys (Football or Rugby), and would like to play in the golf, then bring them along to the golf and dinner. They will not be eligible for the Pyke Trophy, but will be very welcome anyway.

It is anticipated that a special green fee in the order of £25 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.

Unfortunately, Arthur Howarth (1959/66) is not available for this year's competition, but has offered to help the organiser in the run up to the competition. Mike Hayman (1959/66) a member, former Captain of Caldy G.C., and all-round nice guy, has been volunteered to organise this year's competition. Those wishing to play this year can contact the organiser, Mike Hayman, by email at: - HaymanMike@BTInternet.com or on 0151 334 1002. If out, leave your details on his answer phone and Mike 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.

Readers' Letters

This note concerning the school song, from Kenneth Nelson (Atkin, 1956/7)

I have read the latest Ad-Visor newsletter &, as usual, thoroughly enjoyed your account of the latest events touching on BIOB. For once, I can make a small contribution towards the next issue, namely, in respect of the School Song. I was at BI in 1956/57 when the song was introduced & remember class & whole-school rehearsals of it under Mr Shaw's baton. What I remember of the lyrics is as follows:

"In Queen Victoria's golden reign, our founders,
men discerning,
Built us a school in Whetstone Lane
To foster love of learning:
That every true Instonian, whate'er his rank or
name, Sir,
Knows well that every learned man
Has in him riches great, Sir"

The melody was, as I recall, lifted straight from the popular ballad, "The Vicar of Bray" (which in the opening line references "Good King Charles's golden reign") & the final lines of the first & subsequent verses are a rendering, in English, of the School's Latin motto. Unfortunately, I have no memory at all, of any further verses, though I'm pretty sure there were some. Other, fairly insubstantial, recollections of the song's introduction were that one of the English masters was (as one might expect) a major collaborator; that the song was meant to be sung at a subsequent Speech Day; & that there appeared (to the eyes & ears of an inconsequential fifth-former) to be some resistance to the song amongst some of the other staff.

Perhaps something of the above sketchy recollection might strike a chord with those of my contemporaries at BI with better memories who could then fill in some of the obvious gaps in my account.

Best wishes & many thanks for all your hard work,

Kenneth Nelson (Atkins 1956/7)

A request from Les Cowle (1943/48)

If you do the maths you will see that I'm 84.

I have never been one for reunions. I did attend one years ago and I felt very isolated, so I never went again.

Probably because in my era at school, there were the haves and the have nots, and when I did attend, I encountered erstwhile colleagues who had become doctors and barristers etc, and I was but a lowly marine engineer, and (I felt) that I had difficulty in becoming accepted. Maybe I was wrong.

I don't have an inferiority complex, because I went on to become a chief engineer at sea and progressed well when I left the sea, and became an accomplished marine artist.

Anyway, it isn't important now. The reason I write to you is to make myself known to you, and to ask if you can help.

In the 1950's I was an engineer in the Brocklebank Line, and sailed on a ship called the "Markhor". The Fifth Engineer was a chap who was at school with me, he would be roughly my age give-or-take a year. His name was Gordon Jones (G.W Jones I think). And after the voyage I lost contact with him. and sailed in other ships in the Company as did he. I wondered if you had any way of knowing how to contact him or have a record of him, or even if he is still alive as I would love to make contact and talk about those halcyon days.

I am so happy to have been a B.I. boy and still think of it with pride.

A series of e-mails from John Jordan (1946/53), now in Tasmania

Subject: - Bells

The years 1946 - 1953 were in the pre-electronic era and progress had yet to catch up with Birkenhead Institute in the essential area of ringing bells. Not the kind to be found in church belfries, but those which sent boys and Staff hastening from one area to another. Someone had to ring the bells manually.

For two years that someone was me. It was a highly skilled and very necessary responsibility. I had to know the exact times when lessons began and ended as well as Morning Prayers, lunch and break times. Complications rose when, for some reason, the routine of the day changed.

Operating the bells took place on the outside wall of the Head's study, towards the front door. Here were 5 bell pushes which needed to be pushed at the same time: two fingers of the left hand and three of the right. Experimenting with other combinations was fraught with danger lest some area of the School missed out on the vital signal.

Holding such a lofty and responsible position as bell ringer did have some perks. By Royal command (the Head), I was permitted to leave class about 3 minutes early to ensure bells sounded at the right time. Thus for 2 years I did not ever complete a full lesson. Over the years I must have missed a fair amount of essential instruction. On occasion, I was offered bribes to ring the bell early but I never succumbed, largely because of a lack of quality or quantity in what was proffered. My sudden rising and heading for the classroom door towards the end of a lesson must have been disconcerting to Staff, particularly those new to the Institute.

I wonder whether, in the fullness of time, the bell ringer's position became redundant with the

installation of one of those new-tangled automatic bell ringing systems which now abound.

And were any of the actual bells or bell pushes preserved, perhaps in the Williamson Museum, as a testament to generations of responsible bell ringers?

Subject: - Junior School Building

In 1946, we were the first of the new Common Entrance pupils to enter Birkenhead Institute. The Junior School, as such, ceased to exist, except as a building.

This was an old house fronting on to Whetstone Lane, roughly facing the junction with Derby Rd. It had a very large garden extending down to Hollybank Road, with a path running in a circle round it. In the late 1940's, it was big enough to accommodate a sizeable Dining Room, complete with kitchen. That brings back many happy memories!

My first acquaintance with the Junior School was to line up on the path with about 50 others to be allocated a House by Mr Allison (sometimes referred to as 'Jake'). All those with a connection to B.I. (Fathers, brothers etc.) were told to step forward and they were placed in the family house. An equal number of the remainder were placed in each house - Atkin, Tate, Stitt or Westminster (which was my House and clearly the 'place to be'). As ties and cap badges carried the House colour we could now complete our School uniform. An absolute priority in those days.

The front of the Junior School house was allocated to the family of the School Janitor, Mr Robinson, a very large and important person. The rear rooms became classrooms and we had the room on the right as you entered over the balcony from the garden, as a form room. We were 3S. There was also a 3A. Upstairs was the Geography room presided over by Mr Allison and another classroom.

Access to the Junior School, as it was always called, from the main school building, was through a gap in the stone wall which divided the school playground from the house garden. Then there was a walk, slightly uphill, of about 60 yards to reach the house. It was therefore possible to have some warning of the arrival of Teachers so that a peaceful reception would welcome them even if all hell had broken loose previously. Bearing in mind that Mr Allison was upstairs, this had to be carefully regulated anyway. If caught, the Rajah of Sarawak operated with the emphasis, we were told, very much on the "wak". Several Old Instonians will doubtless bear testimony to the strength of Mr Allison's arm!

Six years after using our 3S room, it again became 'home' to the 3 members of 6 Arts, while the room across the corridor was inhabited by 9 members of 6 Science. The battles fought across the corridor are another story. Suffice it to say that, 65 years later, several of us are still in touch and share a meal together when possible, often at the Hinderton Arms. For the record, fish and chips is a popular choice.

It is many years since my last visit to the area. I know the main building has been replaced by houses and I suppose that, logically, the Junior

School has gone the same way. Such is progress (?).

Subject: - Morning Assembly

Having taught for 30 years where morning assemblies were not held, I concluded that the 17 years, spent either 7 at the Institute as a pupil and 10 more teaching where they were held, the morning get-together of Staff and pupils was a very essential part of the day. Spiritually or socially it gave the day a very positive start.

At B.I. Registration came first. Around 9 a.m. we trooped down to the gym for the 25-minute gathering. At the end of the

corridor before the steps leading down to the hall stood a Prefect whose job was to check that everyone had a hymn book, a slender green volume in my time also used on occasion by the Prefect to silence chatters.

Entering the hall, we formed lines by forms with first years at the front, seniors towards the back. Prefects formed a line against the wall bars on the Whetstone Lane side while the Staff had seats under the balcony on the other side.

A Staff member, often Len Malcolm in my time, ensured silence prevailed. The door of the classroom adjoining the platform opened and the Head arrived to take the service.

We opened with a hymn. Mr Bailey was the usual pianist but if he happened to be unavailable WEW or, properly, Mr Williams deputised. I loved those mornings as WEW by some means could make the piano sound like a cathedral organ. There was no repeating the hymn because of poor volume on those occasions!

Next came a reading of some kind. For one term, Prefects had to mount the platform and deliver a reading of their own choice on Tuesday mornings. This was not popular for most. Psalm 117 was not considered adequate!

The Head would then deliver a homily of some kind, perhaps based on the reading.

Then came prayers. Left arm across the chest, right elbow in the left palm, and brow on the right hand. This often offered a time for meditation on the day ahead like formulating a sufficient excuse for homework not done.

Finally, on three days we sang an 'anthem'. Mondays it was the Creation hymn, Wednesday's: I vow to thee my country and Friday's 'Jerusalem'. If the Head was not satisfied it was repeated. Possibly several times.

At this point those excused attendance for some reason or late comers entered the Hall. The School was now complete.

To close the assembly, the day's announcements were given. We marched out to something rousing. I particularly liked the 'War March of the Priests' played by WEW.

The senior classes went first - down the Whetstone Lane side then across in front of the platform under the Head's eagle eye. The First years turned to their left and made a complete circuit of the hall. Woe betide anyone lacking a tie or looking untidy! Spiritually refreshed, and probably by now actually awake, we made our way to our first lesson. The day had begun.

An afterthought: at the last Annual Dinner, I was able to attend, about 10 years ago, at the end around 100 Old Instonians rose. David Jones gave the note and we sang 'I vow to thee'. It was an unforgettable experience.

Subject: - The Gym.

In an ideal world, the gym has a highly polished floor completely devoid of any damage or unwanted marks in which it would quite probably be possible to see one's face. If needed. Not a speck of dust to be seen.

Contrast this with the Whetstone Lane building. There would have been around 350 pupils and Staff who, at least once daily and, on occasion, more than once, entered the gym wearing their outside footwear. First came the Morning Assembly when around 700 feet shuffled around, not long in from the outside world of dust, mud or grit.

Then, at least for one period, the daily ritual of drinking the allotted bottle of milk took place in the gym. Entry as for the Assembly via the main corridor and down the steps. Imbibe the milk and, on exit through the door nearest Whetstone Lane, replace the bottle in the crate provided. Another 700 or so feet over the floor surface. Was it any wonder that the floor had, to say the least, a 'used' look?

For gym lessons, we changed on the balcony, a rather strange stepped affair. I could never see what its real purpose was. To sit on it as spectators for something going on at floor level would, to say the least, have been very uncomfortable. To put chairs on it would probably have been dangerous or just not possible. Short of hanging over the balcony rail, the only view of proceedings below would have been confined to a strip on the Whetstone Lane side and the raised platform.

During Morning Assembly, it did provide cover for the Staff, some of whom could be seen to have a quiet nap. It was quite dark under there. At major Assemblies, like end of term, distinguished Old Boys sat on the balcony and were held up as shining examples to the assembled School.

During P.E. Lessons we jumped, stretched, climbed and fell all-round the gym. By the end of a lesson, we must have been rather dirty and sweaty. But there was only one shower and that strictly reserved for Staff use only. So, we got dressed on the balcony and made our glowing way

to the next period. Space was limited and I wonder whether, in an enlightened age, showers were ever provided for the boys?

Not being a gymnast, P.E. was way down the list of my favourite subjects. Jumping over boxes and horses using springboards was not enthralling. Neither was trying to get my chin up to the beam very enticing. I could usually manage to walk across the narrow bit on an inverted bench. My confidence in the Whetstone Lane side wall bars evaporated one morning after a lesson.

One of the many different P.E. Teachers we had over the years was doing exercises on the wall bars while we changed upstairs on the balcony. Having reached the top, he then proceeded to take his feet off the bars so that he was horizontal to the floor, kept up solely by his arms. Most impressive. At this point the wall bars snapped and he fell about 6 feet to the floor. I cannot remember whether he was injured but the bars were instantly condemned and quickly removed. Perhaps this removed my interest in gymnastics completely.

From the balcony on a sunny morning, with the sun shining through the high windows on the Whetstone Lane side, a rather pretty sight was to be the dust from 700 feet rose and glistened in the rays.

Missing E-Mail Addresses

The following members have changed e-mail address, without letting me know their new one.

If you know a current e-mail address for the following members, please let me know, and let them know too, give them a slap on the wrist.

Paul Grannon	1969/74
David Anson	1957/61
Sam Thomas	No Details
Andy Halliday	1961/68
Phil Whitehead	1962/68
Geoffrey Wollaston	1942/48
Guy Freeman	1972/79
Robert Morris	No Details

If you know of any other Old Boys who are not on our lists, then please let me know their details, I'll add them.

Annual Dinner 2017

I am still hoping to increase the numbers for the annual dinner, this year on Friday 6th October, as usual at Caldy Golf Club. Frankly, last year was rather disappointing, in the numbers who attended. I was the lowest number in my memory, 55 attendees, in spite of a group from the Rugby Club on their first visit.

So, as last year the theme 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.

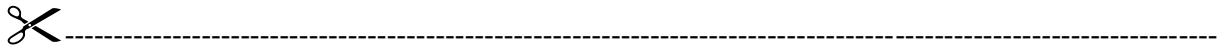
As usual, you can pay with PayPal, or send me a cheque. Just let me know who is part of your group.

Don't forget, if you're travelling a long distance and staying over, there's a normal fixture at Prenton RUFC on Saturday 7th October. Visitors would be most welcome.

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 6th 2017

Time 6.30pm for 7.30pm.

(For those attending please enclose a cheque for **£30.00** 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 