



# AD - VISOR



## The Newsletter of Birkenhead Institute Old Boys Issue 3

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### WINTER 1999/2000

#### EDITORIAL

Firstly, a very Happy New Year, year 2000, Y2K or whatever it is called - we made it. Whoever would have believed we would get there - but we did.

It is exactly two years since I decided to have a go and start a register of B.I.O.B. I was very diffident about the whole thing but I was prepared to put £50 up front and if it did not work I had limited my losses. I need not have worried because, before very long, it became obvious that there were many more who had such a loving feeling for B.I. as myself. However, I have to confess that, two years later, the fact that we have over 400 on the register was a dream that I could not possibly have visualised. I decided at the outset that that the whole thing had to be of a very high standard, in keeping with my image of B.I. I decided no subscriptions because that would have meant an A.G.M., a Constitution, accounts, a committee and I

thought that would never work. So, quite undemocratically, I decided on a committee of one - one thing for sure there would be no arguments. Therefore the whole system depended on donations. It worked and I am very humble when I think that so many of you, some who have never even met me, have entrusted me with your donations - thank you.

I have been very fortunate, indeed, to have found such wonderful henchmen:- Eric Jackson, who looks after the finances. Vic Swift, without whose computer skills we would never have got so far along the road. Dave (DSW) Jones for his wonderful art work and unbounding enthusiasm and Len Malcolm with his fund of knowledge of B.I. and his magnificent support.

So we have made good progress and I am delighted but we must not rest on our laurels. To have over 400 on the Register is good but my

aim by the year 2001 is to top 500. It can be done. Most of you know at least one BIOB who is not on the register. Please let me know names and addresses etc.

On a personal note, I have renewed many long lost friendships and also made many new acquaintances. It has been hard work but very worthwhile and rewarding.

#### ANECDOTES

Bill Billing (1950-54)

A contribution from someone with lots of fond memories: -

"Tragedy - Walter and William found hanging in the Art room"

No - sorry to disappoint all those with macabre tastes (and certain of the masters who held a jaundiced opinion of us), this wasn't a suicide pact it was actually my only claim to "fame" whilst attending BI. Sad to say I was never much of a scholar. A 'B' stream boy. I was in the top 7 in the class for the first two years and then



discovered that those funny creatures in brown skirts (remember the Convent school at the top of the hill?) were actually rather pleasant!

As for my athletic prowess - a giant called Jeff Walsh effectively put paid to my putative rugby career as during trials for my house (good old Tate) I had the temerity to attempt a tackle head-on when Jeff was steaming towards our tryline. Tunes of glory were buzzing in my head as he roared towards me so that I didn't hear the collective groan "OH NO" Suffice it to say that as Jeff reached me I squared up to him and the next thing I remember is feeling like I had been run over by a coach and four. Roy Christian, who was an interested observer, related to me later that Jeff didn't even break stride: he simply ran down the length of my body as if he was running through fine mist. Strange as it may seem, my heart was never really in rugby after that and I only began to recover about a decade ago, playing mostly for the seconds and thirds at the Old Boys - "happy days".

Now to clear up the hanging story - Wally Girven (where are you now my friend?), and I had the dubious distinction of looking alike and our beloved (of all the young schoolboys I believe) Nancy Price (the art Mistress) offered to paint our portraits if we would sit for her whilst we had our breaks. Sit for her! I would

have crawled for miles over broken glass. Anyway, the upshot was that we did indeed attend the sittings (much to the suspicion of Wally's form master who was I think the fabled Len Malcolm). Lenny appeared to be convinced that we had organised some sort of scam but the truth was that Wally and I had just got lucky and thought we had died and gone to heaven to be able to spend time in the hallowed presence of Nancy Price. Hey ho I wonder what happened to the portrait - it was probably painted over - happy days.

In conclusion - my regards to all my old school chums 1950 to 54 and to the lovely lads with whom I played rugby at the Old Boys.

#### **John Moseley (1935-40)**

writes that cricket and rugby featured greatly in the "Ad-Visor" but draws attention to soccer. He writes that in 1938 - 1940 there was a school/Old Boys soccer side that played very successfully against such sides as Heswall Rangers (B.I. won 6 - 0). The following were members of the B.I. extended team:-

J. Allen, John Beckett, Bowers, Cartwright, Arthur Darlington, C. Darlington, H. Darlington, "Sconny" Evans, Probert, Fairclough, Cyril Griffiths, Hartley, Geoff Hughes, Stu. Lichfield, Marshall, Joe. Sudworth, R. Morgan, John Moseley, Newbrook, Cliff Rowlands, J. Vickery, Wolstenholme, Woodward, G. Woodhead.

#### **George Donaldson (1916-24)**

writes that he was a contemporary of Professor

Cohen of medical fame. George, or to give him his full title, Group Captain D.F.C., A.F.C.. (American D.F.C.), F.R. Met.S., F.R.Ae.S. is author of "Did I take the right turning?", his autobiography published by Pelham Press Ltd., Edinburgh. He also states that Bill Howard, who was an Old Birkenian and a British Lion, went to Birkenhead Institute before going to Birkenhead School so B.I.O.B. can claim a British Lion.

#### **John Jordan (1946-53)**

is Secretary of the Old Instonians' Association (Australia) and he writes that Bibby and Perkin (Grange Road) held stocks of Instonian Ties, Blazer Badges, Wooden Wall Shields, Car Badges, Cufflinks, even striped blazers. Can Eric Bibby (1926-32) help us?

#### **Keith Dutton 1960 -1963**

(13 plus) writes on a similar subject.

Does anyone have a pair of BIOB cufflinks that I believe were available? I am trying to trace the manufacturer, to see if it is possible to obtain further sets. I have a silver thread blazer badge which I believe I bought from Bibby and Perkin in Grange Road, around 1968. I suspect that they were the supplier of the cuff links too. Does anyone have any information?

#### **Beau Hassal (1934-41)**

recalls "Janney's Tuck Shop" sited in the basement at Whetstone Lane. It stocked "goodies" such as buttered buns, cakes, Milky Ways, plus drinks such as fruit cordials



and aerowater and, Beau's favourite American Cream Soda. In the winter steaming cups of Oxo and chocolate were particularly welcome on frosty mornings when the school milk was so frozen it could not be sucked through the straws!

#### **John Edwards (1936-41)**

was a great pal of Jasper Bartlett (see "Rugby Giants" in issue No. 2) and recalls one lunch break being sandwiched between Jasper and another large boy, Edgar Campbell and they were discussing which branch of service they would join - Jasper said 'The Grenadier Guards' and Edgar 'The Scots Guards'. John says he, the 10 stone weakling was the one who ended up in The Guards.

Reprint of an Article in December '99 issue of the "Wirral Champion"

**BIRKENHEAD INSTITUTE**  
Birkenhead Institute as a school ceased to exist some 10 years ago. The building in Whetstone Lane which housed the school for 80 years of its life, is no longer standing neither is the building in Tollemache Road which was the school headquarters for its last 20 years.

However that is not the end of the story for the spirit of BI is far from dead. About 2 years ago a register was started which now contains over 400 names. These 400 live in various parts of the U.K. plus a considerable number from Australia,

South Africa, USA, Bahrain, Thailand, New Zealand and Canada. This year was the 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the school in 1889. A very successful dinner was held in October when 120 attended - their ages ranging from 33 - 87. There was a Charity Draw and Auction which raised £450 for the Alzheimer Society, Age Concern and the Arthritis Research Council. Len Malcolm, at BI as pupil and teacher for 46 years, gave a fine speech about his memories. It speaks very highly of the former teachers at BI that so many old boys hold the time they spent there in such high regard that they wish to be on the BIOB register and attend Reunions. As one old school mate who I had not met for 57 years wrote *"it proves that the Phoenix can rise from the ashes"* It is sad that politicians allowed the demise and eventual death of such a fine school as B.I. It is interesting that two of Wirral's MPs have spoken out in favour of our Grammar Schools. A pity more of their predecessors did not think along the same lines. BIOB now have a twice-yearly newsletter 'The Ad-Visor', an annual Golf Tournament, an annual Dinner and an annual Buffet Dance.

#### **DIARY DATES**

##### **Ladies' Night Buffet Dance**

Friday 7<sup>th</sup> April, 2000 at Prenton Golf Club

##### **Old Instonians' Golf Society Meeting**

This will be held at Prenton Golf Club in May 2000. Last

year was very successful and the numbers increased. It is run by Derek (Mick) Turner (1946-50) 46 Cornwall Drive, Prenton (Tel. 0151-608-5785). Contact him for further details. There is a dinner after the golf to which any Old Boy is very welcome.

#### **MILLENNIUM DINNER**

Friday 13<sup>th</sup> October, 2000 at Prenton Golf Club

#### **TIES**

There are a limited number of 110<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Ties available. The cost is £11 (including p+p) £12 overseas. Should you wish to order please send remittance payable to Greg Pandit at 107b Banks Road, West Kirby, Wirral CH48 0AB Tel. 0151-625-6601.

E-mail [Pansco@aol.com](mailto:Pansco@aol.com)

#### **FINANCE**

As stated there is no subscription. To finance the production of The Ad-Visor, postage, 'phone and stationery we rely on your donations. Cheques payable to BIOB please. Thank you in anticipation.

#### **LADIES' NIGHT BUFFET DANCE**

Last year's Ladies Night was a great success. This year there will be a repeat on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> April, 2000. Please note this is not confined to couples and singles are most welcome both ladies and gentlemen. Many re-unions were made last year, some after 60 years! Come and meet your friends but be warned it looks like being a sell-out so early application is strongly advised.

## CONGRATULATIONS

We are pleased to report that E.G. (Gordon) Williams (1933-38) was awarded the M.B.E. in the New Years' Honours List for services to education and the community.

### OBITUARIES

**We regret to report the following deaths**

Ken Aspey (1944 - 49)  
Bebington. Aged 66

Ted Boyd  
Alberta Canada

Joe Mason (1922 - 30)  
Heswall. Aged 86

Jimmy Williams (1932 - 39)  
Bebington Aged 75

***"Gone but not forgotten"***

### WHERE ARE THEY NOW - ANY NEWS PLEASE.

Ted Wood 76  
Gerry Dodd 67  
Dave Docherty 55  
Bert Thomas 71  
G.A. (Gas) Smith 71  
Brian Bowker 55  
Dave Sherlock 65  
Bill Keating 56  
John Farrell 55  
Norman Boyd 72

Ted (Joe) Pringle 71  
John Kitching 67  
Alan Brammall 64  
Graham Baxter 75  
Terry Doveston 67  
Barry Doveston 62  
Probert 76  
Alan Parkinson 63  
Bob Bladon 70