



AD-VISOR

The Newsletter of the Birkenhead Institute Old Boys

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

E-mail:- Editor@BIOB.co.uk

Telephone:- 0151 334 0340

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Editorial

I would like to thank all those members who responded to my request for AdVisor copy. I received a few e-mails with excellent copy for use herein. There are some wonderful recollections, which I consider a real success for the AdVisor. If your story has not been included, then let me know, I must have lost it! It was my intention to include all stories that I received. So, send me another copy, please be patient, it will be in the next issue.

This newsletter is best read online. - In case you're reading this on paper, wondering what the blue text means. Blue text is for Hypertext, that means text that is a link to something else, either within the document or on the Internet. So, to make Hypertext work, you need to be reading this on a computer, with access to the Internet. Click on the Blue text and it will take you to a related subject, somewhere else. Try it on [HERE](#), then on the browser click on the "Back" button to return here.

This copy of the AdVisor is online at:-

http://birkenheadinstitute.co.uk/BIOB%20AdVisor/AdVisor_2020.pdf

Obviously, you can't click on anything when you're reading a paper copy!

Keith Dutton (Tate 1960/63)

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Usual Reminder

If you've received this through the-mail, then please consider sending me your e-mail address, or even a family or friend's e-mail address, where I can contact you more quickly and cheaper than the-mail system. This is particularly useful when an Old Boy passes on, I can notify you of the funeral details much quicker. If there's any old boy's news, then you can hear from me as soon as I find out.

With the current coronavirus situation being as severe as it is, can I suggest that you DO NOT use your work email address on BIOB. There is a danger that you may miss some important emails if you're not in work. Taking out a "gmail" address is very simple, and I would recommend it, you can then receive your emails anywhere including on your mobile phone.

At the moment we have a large number of email addresses that fail when I send emails. So, please also **remember to update me** if you move address, or change your e-mail address, make sure you stay in the loop. This can be done online at our website see http://www.birkenheadinstitute.co.uk/BIOB_Membership.html.

Web Site www.BirkenheadInstitute.co.uk

As usual this year, and particularly during the lockdown I have made huge changes and major additions to the website, mostly involving newly available photographs. The website is at www.BirkenheadInstitute.co.uk. As last time, it's the same basic website as before, but with additional functionality. 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".

Unfortunately, due to the lockdown, I have not been able to visit Wirral Archives and scan the rest of their copies of the "Visor" school magazine. At present we have a total of 97 "Visor" magazines online. For those who don't know, the first "Visor" was published at Christmas 1927. You can find them here. https://www.birkenheadinstitute.co.uk/BIOB_School_Visor.html

I've finished, as much as I can on investigating the names on the WW2 War Memorial plaque in the Central Library. When the 1921 Census information is released next year, 2021, I will continue to update the website. Please check back at regular intervals and see how it's progressing. https://www.birkenheadinstitute.co.uk/BIOB_WW2.html

If anyone has any suggestions for additions, improvements or changes please let me know at webmaster@biob.co.uk

My main objective when I created the website back in 2010 was to make a place where anyone looking for information about the Birkenhead Institute could look. I want our website to be the primary source of research information on the Birkenhead Institute. As far as I could, I made sure that all photographs were identified, and all people in the photographs were identified. I created a system whereby all people were numbered, so that anyone who could identify someone could let me know their number and give me their identity. I have had an excellent response to my request for names and dates of people in the photographs, but I will only be satisfied when everyone, and every event is fully identified.

Data Security

A few words of reassurance on the data that we hold on you. All your data is held in a password protected database on a single computer. Your data is NOT held on the internet. Your data will not be shared with anyone else, without your express permission. So, if a long-lost friend contacts me asking for your details, I will not share that information with them. I will contact you with their details and ask you to contact them. Only if you give express permission at that point will I share your information, and only with that individual.

Old Farts Day – Prenton RUFC

More formally known as the Former Player’s Reunion Day. An opportunity to meet with your former playing colleagues, and a chance to share a beer and reminisce. Unfortunately, due to the coronavirus, the date of the Old Farts Day has not been established. If this changes, I will update everyone by email as soon as I find out. [Prenton RUFC](#) is at Prenton Dell Rd, Birkenhead, Prenton, Merseyside CH43 3BS 0151 608 1501

Tollemache Road

The response from pupils who attended Tollemache Road has improved, but not nearly as much as I hoped. Does anyone have any photographs, stories, school magazines or memorabilia 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.

History of Old Instonians RUFC, unknown author.

Editor’s Note. This document is copied from a photocopy of a handwritten history by an unknown Old Boy author sometime around 1972. It came into my possession in February 2020 together with lots of photographs and other memorabilia that appears to have come from the Old Instonians RUFC. It was donated by Gwilym Williams who was at the Institute between 1956 and 1963 and played for the Rugby Club for many years. I have copied the written text as best as I can, I have not edited any of the writing, and in a few places, I was not able to understand the writing.

If anyone can identify the author, then please let me know so that I can give him the credit he deserves.

This story is about the work and development of the Old Instonians Rugby Union Football Club. It begins at 7:45 PM on Monday the 18th of November 1935 in the school dining room of the Birkenhead Institute in Whetstone Lane. There were 52 old boys and pupils of the school presents. A leading figure was Ken Rice who opened the meeting formally proposing that Mr. A.O. Jones be elected chairman, which proposal was carried unanimously Mr. Jones was Chemistry Master at the school and was known affectionately to thousands of boys as “Chemmy” or “Bummy” Jones.

It is amazing how small things are taken for granted today, even the title of the club. It was originally called Birkenhead Institute Old Boys Rugby Football Club but obviously this was too much of a mouthful and something shorter had to be found. There was a strong body of opinion for calling it Old Birkonians but eventually the majority came down in favour of Old Instonians.

The first officers of the club were as follows: -

President – A. Wynne-Hughes

Chairman – A.O. Jones

Vice Chairman - K.J. Rice

General Secretary – P. Burrell

Treasurer and Fixture Secretary – E. Todd

1st. XV Captain – G.G. Wilson

1st. XV Vice Captain – K.J. Rice

2nd. XV Captain – C.K. Coughtrie

In addition, H.T. Davies and D. Rigby were elected to the general committee.

Mr. E. Wynne-Hughes (nicknamed “Chemmy”) was headmaster of the school for over 20 years from the late 1920’s and it was he who was instrumental in changing the school from soccer to

rugby in the mid 1930's. As a young man in Cardiff he had been a distinguished performer at both codes of football. Peter Burrell in later years was better known at cricket and was a very distinguished captain of Oxton C.C. Ken Coughtrie whose mate Don was a very well-known figure in the scouting world later emigrated to South Africa. Don Rigby still takes an active interest in the club appearing at such functions as hotspots and dinners and the occasional match, often with his friends from playing days Jeff Eddleston and Alan Theobald ("Theo").

Much hard work went into getting the club functioning, and saving money was an important feature. Annual subscriptions were fixed at 2/6d per annum. Dances were arranged at PAX Hall, and the Kingsland in addition to Hot Pots and even bridge drives. A ground was found in the vicinity of Bidston Church which was rented for £6 per annum and changing accommodation was found at Bidston school for 2/6d per week. Unfortunately there was no means of washing after a match but the ever resourceful G.G. Wilson obtained the committee's permission to purchase 6 zinc baths and a boiler for the staggering sum of £1 the caretaker of the school agreed to provide tea and also to prepare the water and baths for 5/- per week.

G.G. Wilson was obviously a leading light in the early days as in addition to being club captain his name appears as a leader of the club in many directions, many younger members of the club will remember him for a brilliant after dinner speech at the annual dinner about 1970.

Unfortunately (or possibly Fortunately), no records of results of matches can be found but it appears that 2 XV's were regularly fielded and the 1st XV played teams such as Old Parkonians II, Rainhill Hospital, Port Sunlight II, Birkenhead Park III and other teams like Bidston R.F.C. and Birkenhead YMCA, both now defunct.

By good fortune a document was found showing team selections of 1937 containing the following names G.R. Edwards, Todd, Carr, Lawson, Don Rigby, Ward, E.G. Williams, Norman Little, Ken Coughtrie, Dickie Bell, Peter Burrell, Weir, Lockett, J.G. Williams, Hallin Winter, Gullen (killed in World War 2) and Atkinson, P.O. Jones. G.G. Wilson, N.E. Hosker and E.T. Hosker.

It is interesting to note that in the pre-war period K.W.R. (Ken) Carr and W.N. (Bill) Garry were both admitted as members of the club having left school. In fact, Ken Carr was elected to the committee as the first year out of school member. A document dated 27th of August 1938 in the shape of "Form of Proposal for Membership for William N. Garry" still exists. Incidentally according to the document Bill had no profession, nor at that date had he found a proposer or seconder. Both these players subsequently played for Birkenhead Park and Cheshire, and in fact Ken Carr successfully captained Birkenhead Park and the County for a number of years.

The club continued to function successfully until the outbreak of the Second World War in September 1939 when it was compelled to disband temporarily although it would appear as though a few matches were played in 1940 with L. Black as captain and G. Lawson as vice-captain.

The club was reformed after the war when the headquarters were moved to the school playing fields at Ingleborough Road and remained there until 1958. Although the club appeared to function fairly satisfactorily from the end of the war to 1953, in retrospect it appears as though it was becoming weaker in both playing strength and possibly fixtures, and the financial position was nothing short of disastrous. The facilities for men at the school ground were inadequate and at least 1 club dropped fixtures because of this. In an attempt to improve this Norman Little was the leading light in building a bath and better extra boilers, but funds were so low that Norman actually lent the club £50.00 to finance this operation. The treasurer Paddy Bolam is recorded in the minutes of the committee meeting in November 1953 as stating that the club was not solvent but that by the end of the season 1953/4 it was hoped to be. In addition to the financial difficulties there were definite difficulties in playing strength. Firstly, quite a large number of very good players had moved to senior clubs in order to obtain better playing conditions or to enhance their chances of playing County or even international rugby. Among such players were Ken Carr and Jasper Bartlett. Jasper went to Waterloo playing for Cheshire and eventually England. Secondly this was the time of national service so that this delayed the recruitment of many promising schoolboys.

Indeed, things looked black for the club, and although many members worked hard there appeared to be a lack of direction with much effort being wasted with the consequent frustrations. It is difficult to single out one person within a club but it's fair to say that two persons played a very large part at this time to get the club back on course. These two were G.A.T. (Gordon) Thomas and S.B. (Stu) Huntriss. Gordon was an academic having graduated from Cambridge and he had a flair for ideas and putting them over. Suffice to say that the newsletter was produced completely by himself for very many years and it is still going strong today. Stu was a born leader and athlete. Ex-RAF pilot. ex-school Victor Ludorum, ex-Birkenhead Park and Cheshire winger, he commanded respect both on and off the field. For the seasons 1953/55 these two captained the 1st. XV between them. Such were their powers of leadership that with very few changes the side from having slipped badly became probably the most successful the club has known and stayed that way for about 7 years. The North Wales 7 a-side was in April 1954. It is imagining amazing what a winning side will do for the morale and this now became very good. But the club still needed direction. These two together with other stalwarts such as Norman Little and Gordon Williams maintained that the club must have an aim and an ambition and that this must be "a ground and clubhouse of our own". Remember in 1953 the club had to borrow £50.00 from one of its members.

The financial turning point seemed to take place in 1954 when a number of successive fundraising schemes were run. Stu Huntriss was responsible for organising a Christmas draw for a TV set (a most exceptional prize in those days) which produced £100.00 profit. (Interesting to note that 19 years after the event Mike Pearson happened to mention that he sold the winning ticket.) Norman Little organised a Christmas dance which produce £40.00 and Ray Binyon a profitable jumble sale. Other smaller but profitable functions were also held so that in January 1955 the treasurer was instructed to invest £250.00 in paid up shares in the Halifax Building Society. This was the new Ground Fund which was to grow gradually until 1961 when it reached the sum of £1000.00. It is worthy of note that in January 1955 the following were members of the general committee E.G. Webb (Chairman), E.G. Williams, S.B. Huntriss, T.P. Bolam (Treasurer), S. Lichfield, N.G. Little, H.G. Scott, J.S. McDonald, R. Binyon, R.E.P. Wright, Jeff Eddleston, Brian Huntriss, G.A. Thomas (Secretary), Mike Pollard and Jeff Thomas.

At this stage it would be appropriate to mention some fundraising schemes during the period 1955 to 1961. Ron Harris was deeply involved as was Ted wood and Ray Lamb and special mention must be made of the weekly Tombola sessions at the Kingsland organised by Len Malcolm and aided and abetted by such as John Mandy, Bert Bushell and Brian Riley.

It would also be appropriate to note that in the early 1950s many meetings were held at 9 The Weind, Rock Ferry which was the home of E.G. Webb the chairman. His guidance was most welcome as was the free use of his home for meetings on so many occasions. The club is indebted to him for his hospitality and also to Mrs Webb who provided welcome refreshments so many times.

A committee that met more regularly than most was the selection committee. During the 1950s until the club had its own clubhouse, selection was held usually on Monday evenings at the home of various members. This committee consisted of the team captains and one other nonplaying member plus the team secretary. Amongst outstanding team secretaries in this period there was Bob Howard who set a very high standard and indeed in the quiet efficient way he discharged this difficult job. For many years Len Malcolm was a dedicated chairman of selection whose sage head was of enormous help on the general committee. Among non-playing members who did their stints on selection were Paddy Ryan and Harold Beckett. Paddy usually watching matches at home because of his commitments on the club bar and Harold usually in the Wilds of Lancashire, Cheshire, or North Wales with an away side.

A point worth making is how the increasing popularity of the car has played its part in changing the nature of fixtures of rugby generally. In the early days of the club most fixtures were very local even mainly confined to the Wirral. After 1946 the club tended to broaden its horizons, so that fixtures were as far afield as Widnes, Orrell and Saint Helens in Lancashire and Rhyl and Bangor (1952 onwards) in North Wales. It is interesting to note that when playing away at Old

Widnesians (now Widnes) the team caught the steam train from Liverpool Central High level (now no more) to Farnworth Station. The return journey in a coach with no corridor after a few pints in the Station Hotel could be decidedly tricky. Meeting places for away games were very often Pier Head, Woodside Hotel, or Hamilton Square Station. Very often on return journeys players from different clubs met at various hostelrys such as The Pier and Rigby's (in Liverpool) and the Woodside. Many clubs having no club houses of their own, teams often had favourite pubs where they met and in the Old Instonians case this was the "Prenton", Old Parkonians use the "Claughton", Old Wirralians the "Bridge Inn", Old Birkonians the "Caernarvon" and so on.

A very sad event had to be recorded in 1956 and that was the sudden and untimely death of Jeff Thomas. Jeff (younger) brother of Gordon had only been married 3 months when he died and naturally his wife, father and brother were grief stricken. He had been a very keen enthusiastic hooker for the club and although never having played 1st. team rugby his game was never less than wholehearted. In his memory his father and brother donated the Jeff Thomas Memorial Trophy which was to be awarded annually "to the playing member who in the opinion of the general committee has done most for the club both on and off the field". For the very reason for which it was donated and because it is open to be worn by any playing member regardless of the team he played for this trophy has become a most coveted award and it is appropriate that its winners are recorded.

1956/7	-	P.A. Ryan
1957/8	-	N.G. Little
1958/9	-	J. Fisher
1959/60	-	J. Bassett
1960/1	-	R. Harris
1961/2	-	H.S. Jones
1962/3	-	T.S. Hodgson
1963/4	-	J. Mandy
1964/5	-	J.G. Williams
1965/6	-	L.C. Lindop
1966/7	-	J.B. Huntriss
1967/8	-	A.K. Jones
1968/9	-	R.W. Jones
1969/70	-	I.G. McDougall
1970/1	-	G.F. Brown
1971/2	-	M. Armitage

When thinking about the game of rugby and records of various seasons one is bound to think of captains. The Old Instonians RUFC has always insisted that they have not a "1st. XV" captain but a "club" captain. This makes the job harder but also much more rewarding. Over the years some players have made good playing captains but poor social captains and some wonderful social captains but whose playing record was dismal. It is hard to single out any one captain, but two do suggest themselves as being outstanding. Firstly, Stu Huntriss who as mentioned earlier was a true leader of men who could show by example both on and off the field the high standard he required. It was a pleasure to watch him control his threequarters and to see the artistry he himself displayed. Secondly, Jack Bassett who was a very different type of man to Stu was who nevertheless commanded the respect of all who played for him. He had a knack of making players raise their game when he was captain and could make an ordinary side look good and a good side look great. Always a man to call a spade a spade, and with no favourites, so that even his best friends were not protected from his sharp but honest tongue on selection. A loyal Instonian, Jack never made the big time, in fact he himself says the nearest he came to it was when he was sent off at Caldy in the early 1950s. He later received a letter from Cheshire Disciplinary Committee stating that because of his misdemeanour he would not be considered for County selection that season.

Perhaps at this stage one ought to mention some of the backroom boys whose names appear on no honours boards but who have worked hard for the club. People like John Mandy who for many years captain the 3rd. XV and was a loyal and hard-working member of the bar committee. Tom Hodgson, Rod Jones, John Fisher, Ron Kirchner, Jeff Eddleston, Lefty Clark, Roy Lamb, Dave Jones, Bert Bushell, Harry Smith, Ray Binyon, Jet Kearney, Billy Upton, Jack Bell and many more who helped in so many ways on and off the field to make the club tick. Also here is a chance to say thank you to some of the backroom girls. To people like Winnie Eddleston, May Huntriss, Hazel Theobald, making teas at Ingleborough Road. To Jill Beckett and Norma Nora Ryan slogging through the mud of Greasby or helping man the barricades to repel invaders at the club's famous Greasby barbecues. To Mona Bell for her devotion in typing the weekly newsletter for such a long period and too many more who although remaining anonymous nonetheless deserve the thanks of all.

From 1954 onwards the search was on to obtain a site which would be suitable for playing pitches and club HQ. For a number of years, the Ground Sub-Committee first under the chairmanship of Ray Binyon and later under Arthur Rixon scoured Wirral looking at sites at Hooton, Eastham, Heswall, Thurstason and Neston, in fact almost anywhere but mainly without any success. Sometimes with some success only to find insurmountable problems or dead ends. It was a most frustrating time to all engaged on the problem. The situation became more and more pressing as time went by as the club's tenure on Ingleborough Road became less and less secure. It was only a matter of time before it would receive final notice to quit. During 1957 the Ground Committee found that the sports ground belonging to the RAF at Pump Lane, Greasby was not in use and that furthermore there was a pavilion on the site with water and some heating laid on. In many ways this was far from an ideal site, too far out of Birkenhead (it was in 1957) no electricity laid on, no more than one year's lease at a time (this being most important). However, beggars cannot be choosers and it was decided to move on to Greasby Ground as soon as possible. The annual rent for the ground and pavilion was £55.00 per annum and the first game was played there in March 1958.

It is a simple matter to write that the club moved ground to Greasby, but the move brought so many problems and frustrations, the club was stretched to near breaking point. It was forced to move in the middle of the season and undoubtedly one of the hardest hit people was the club captain E.T. Wood. Fortunately, Ted was an amiable chap with very broad shoulders (both literally and metaphorically) and he staggered through a season when many a lesser person would have resigned. A new ground of our own brought new problems such as marking out the pitch, putting up the posts, lighting the boiler and fire, cleaning out the pavilion, etc. These things were new, and new arrangements and help was required, it was a case of learning by experience. Of course, the problems were overcome, and things gradually got better, and Jack Bassett led the club to two very successful seasons from 1958 to 1960. However, the efforts of members were side-tracked for two or three years to the physical running of Greasby Ground, away from the money-making functions still required if we were to eventually obtain a permanent site for the club. Nevertheless, some wonderful times were had during our five years staying at Greasby not least of all the magnificent pints drawn straight from the wood by Paddy Ryan and drunk under hurricane lamps and tasting like nectar. When Paddy's ale ran out one could always retire to the New Inn, a cosy little pub eventually pulled down to make way for the Red Cat. The club actually ran dances or "hops" as they were known at Greasby and the hardy and sporting girlfriends and wives used to make their way through the rain and mud outside in the car park to the warmth and hospitality of the clubhouse to dance to the gramophone (before the days of record players) kindly brought along by Norah Wilkinson now much better known as Nora Ryan.

Norman Little conceived the idea of a Summer Barbecue and the first one in 1958 was most successful with about 200 people present. This became an annual event and grew and grew in size so that in 1962 (our last year at Greasby) about 650 people attended what was considered to be a most successful social function. That year the Barbecue was also a great financial success and including the profits on the bar made about £230.00. Brian Cadman was social secretary and

did much hard work as did Ron Hartley, Paddy Ryan, and Harold Beckett with the help of his wife Jill and of course many more willing hands. The club did run one more Barbecue at Woodchurch but the site did not lend itself in the same way as Greasby and in any events this was the dawning of the age of vandalism which finally swayed the Committee to cancel what have been a most enjoyable annual affair.

The RAF indicated that they intended to sell the land at Greasby, but enquiries soon led the club to realise that it was not within our reach (probably a good job in the long run). The hunt began again for a new ground and after prolonged searching the Ground Committee came up with a piece of land on the Arrowse Park side of the Fender adjacent to the road bridge taking Woodchurch Road over the Fender. It is difficult to picture now but in retrospect it looked a very scruffy piece of land uneven and covered in scrub, gorse and hawthorn hedge, the last place for a rugby ground. However it was discovered that the land belonged to Birkenhead Corporation who had absolutely no plans for its use (and probably could not understand how anyone could have) and we were only too pleased to rent the land at £50.00 per annum on a 25 year lease. It was discovered that planning permission could be obtained to build a pavilion. The decision to move to Woodchurch was made in December 1960.

Since moving to Greasby in 1958 the club's expenditure had increased and to begin with our revenue had declined, although in 1961 and 1962 this swing in revenue was reversed. Nevertheless, in June 1961 the Ground Form stood at only £1,000.00 but the minimum amount required for Woodchurch Ground was £1,000.00 to level, drain and seed two pitches and £2,000.00 plus for the building of a pavilion. It was hoped to raise the £2,000.00 plus by way of loans from the Rugby Football Union and Cheshire Rugby Union. Any deficit above this figure would be met out of profits made on current functions. Looking back, it rather reminds one of wartime airplanes "coming in on a wing and a prayer". However, the club was fortunate in having P.A. Ryan as its treasurer from 1960 for eleven years. To the uninitiated, Paddy can make a Balance Sheet appear to members at an AGM that the end of the world is nigh, and if they do not immediately sell 10 books of draw tickets and pay their subscriptions at once, the club will fold up at the end of the month. Paddy can take the same balance sheet to the bank the following day and on production of which and a letter from the secretary of the RFU obtain a temporary overdraft of £500.00.

It appeared that the combined cost of the pavilion and ground was £3,800.00 and the bulk of this was financed by club funds £1,500.00, loan from RFU £1,500.00, loan from Cheshire RU £300.00. It was felt that once the pavilion was built and operational all money from social functions at the club would soon pay off any deficits the club might incur in the building of the pavilion.

The move from Greasby to Woodchurch took place at the beginning of the season 1960/63 and once again the club captain this time G.A. (Tony) Doveston must have everyone's sympathies. To begin with no pictures were available at Woodchurch and games were played at Ingleborough Road, the Solly Recreation Ground or an Old Birkenonian RFC pitch, and very often it was not known until an hour before the game which pitches would be used. In addition, the clubhouse was but barely finished, bar not properly fitted and inadequate heating (this heating problem took a long time to overcome). For the next nine months one of the paramount tasks was to make money and this meant using the clubhouse to the utmost for social functions. Praise must go to members like Paddy Ryan, John Mandy, Tom Hodgson, and Harold Beckett during this period for organising and running some kind of "dance" (for want of a better word) very nearly each Saturday. The money certainly started to flow in and the financial position shown at the next AGM was far better than might have been expected.

Unfortunately, membership, particularly playing strength, had deteriorated because of the poor playing conditions but the club was fortunate in one respect. At the time of the move to Woodchurch the Head Prefect of Birkenhead Institute was A.K. (Alan) Jones and he was most helpful, (especially to the selection committee) and each week would produce anything up to ten school boys to help make up the junior side players like Len Lindop, Geoff Clays, Alec Cotgrave and Peter Kevin. It is certain that because of Alan the club had a very good flow of new members

which undoubtedly helped in later years, incidentally Alan served the club well in many capacities and was a member of the General Committee for some six years. One of the main talking points at the time was whether or not the club should remain a closed old boys club as it was one of the very few left. It would be wrong to take sides on this issue because at the time of writing the question is still not fully resolved although about 1970 a rule was passed allowing a 10% intake of non old boys. There is a strong body of opinion that the club should be fully open and even change his name to getaway from the old boy image. Naturally there are some older members who opposed such a move built in times of “the winds of change” this course seems inevitable. One thing is certain, however, the name of the new club will be very much harder to conceive than the name Old Instonians.

Gradually from 1963 onwards things began to settle down and the clubhouse gradually took on a character of its own and even became relatively warm eventually. It was obvious some mistakes had been made in the design but nothing now could be done, for example there was no smallish bar where the older non playing members could meet for a drink and a chat and this was a great pity as it is essential to any club that these type of members are fostered as they are most useful in many ways. From a playing point of view things are not too good and the club went through some lean years which compared poorly with the mid and late 1950s. Perhaps this was inevitable because the two moves, both to Greasby and then the Woodchurch had sapped the club's energy. And then the bombshell fell with the advent of the M 53. Incidentally in the minutes this was variously named the West Wirral Road, the Mid Wirral Motorway, Central Wirral Road, Cross Wirral Motorway. The fact the M 53 would disturb the clubhouse and ground first became evident about end of 1966 and in mid 1967 a committee was formed comprising Dr. A. (Andy) Hodgson, R.W. (Bob) Smith and Norman Little to investigate and report on the implications.

A further difficulty arose on the horizon. The Birkenhead education Department announced plans to close the Birkenhead Institute and to transfer the boys and staff to Rock Ferry High School. In fact, this never took place (probably due to very strong protests from old boys of the school in all walks of life) but at the time and for a number of years this remained a real threat. Such a threat in fact that three or four meetings took place between officials of the Old Instonians and Old Rockferrians Rugby Clubs with a view to a merger. Plans were quite advanced before it was eventually decided against this move.

It is a long story, but briefly it became evident that a slip road was planned to run directly through the ground upon which the clubhouse stood, and the future appeared bleak indeed. Although it may seem laughable now the general committee committees first reaction was to try and persuade the planners to divert the M 53! It soon became clear that this could not be done, and some other course needed to be taken. Once again fortune smiled on the club in the shape of Brian Huntriss (Stu's little brother) who was elected chairman. Brian is a different character to his brother being more brash and more of an extrovert, but he has two fine qualities, 1) he fears no man. 2) he is nothing if not persistent and persuasive. (a person on the other side could say stubborn and menacing.) These qualities were just what the club required, and the committee sought the outside help of anyone, local councillors, local MP's, R.F.U., Cheshire Rugby Union, and sympathetic persons who might be of help. It will be in 1962 the club signed a 25-year lease of the ground with the Birkenhead Corporation and this proved to be a trump if not the trump card. The committee pressed on with unflagging enthusiasm to obtain the maximum compensation from the authorities that was possible in order to realise sufficient cash for the club to rebuild its clubhouse and ground to the highest possible standards. Suffice to say that they were extremely successful as evidenced in the magnificent developments the club now has at Woodchurch. It is a far cry from Bidston and zinc baths of 35 years ago. One does not like to single out members for their efforts but in connection with the building of the new ground and clubhouse and the obtaining of compensation the three names Brian Huntriss, Howard Jones, and Andy Hodgson stand out. To all these other club members and friends outside who fought the club's battles so well, we shall ever be indebted.

So, it came to pass that once again we moved onto new ground and clubhouse in September 1970. Once again, an easy thing to write, but so hard to accomplish. The bulldozers moved in

and smashed the old clubhouse in August 1969 and for twelve long months the club had no HQ. At this stage no thanks can be too high to the Old Birkonian RFC, who granted full use of the facilities of their clubhouse. In addition to one or two pitches provided Old Instonians could arrange their own changing facilities. This the club did with the cooperation of Birkenhead education committee and Park High School. Obviously, conditions were far from perfect but at least the club functioned in the season 1969/70. Once again, the man that bore the brunt was the club captain R. (Bobby) Byrne who struggled manfully under arduous conditions. Doubtless Ted Wood and Tony Doveston both out of the district knew exactly what he went through. The seasons wore on and the new clubhouse slowly went up and then was finished and September 1970 arrived, and the move took place. The new clubhouse contains amongst many other things a separate cocktail bar and it has been pleasing to note some of the "older" faces that are now seen at the club taking talking over times past. Unfortunately, Brian Huntriss suffered ill health at this time and resigned as chairman but was succeeded by Jack Bassett.

The club only had one pitch to use until early 1973 when the new first team pitch became available and again the club were indebted to the Birkonian RFC (as they were then called) for allowing them use of one of their pitches. Under the captaincy of Geoff Brown and Len Lindop the playing record of the club began to improve and the signs of coaching under Alan Steadman started to show but it is a slow process and hard work and graft will be required to reach even satisfactory standards let alone good or even great ones. In effect, the club moved ground 3 times in 12 years with consequent upheaval and strain put on the administration and playing strength. This probably put the club back 10 years compared with other clubs who made one move in the 1950s or early 1960s and in these days of hard competition this is a lot of leeway to make up but if the members of the present and future apply themselves with the vigour of those of the past the club will surely move from strength to strength. Remember from insolvency to a £25,000.00 ground/clubhouse complex from 1950 to 1970 and anything is possible.

In social activities the club undoubtedly reached its zenith in February 1972 when the Annual Dinner was held at the clubhouse for the first time. Over 100 people sat down to enjoy most unforgettable evening. The meal itself was good by any standards and even a strike producing a power cut from 21:00 to midnight only added to the atmosphere with after dinner speeches by candlelight (once again the committee was up to the occasion). The principal guest was the famous Welsh International and British Lion Cliff Morgan who spoke magnificently and who obviously enjoyed the informal club atmosphere. He was well supported by ex-England captain Dick Greenwood and the club's own Jeff Eddleston.

Pen pictures of some Old Instonians.

J.S. (Jack) Bassett played regular first team rugby from 1947 to early 1960s at wing forward. A devastatingly destructive player who would panic the opposition into many mistakes. An outstanding captain who appeared regularly in West Cheshire representative matches, later Club Chairman.

A. (Arthur) Rixon the club's outstanding scrum half of certain County potential. Played for Birkenhead Park 1st. XV on a number of occasions. Although pressed to join park many times he preferred to be loyal to Old Instonians undoubtedly through his own disadvantage. Captain 1955/6 and Cheshire Trialist.

M. (Mike) Pollard an exceptional athlete, in addition to being a flyhalf whose ability was recognised by a Cheshire Trial, he was a fine soccer and cricket player. Captained the club often after a spell with ???????.(unreadable)

S.B. (Stu) Huntriss after a spell with Birkenhead Park where he gained Cheshire caps on the wing. He returned to the club for two playing seasons 1953/55. Captain 1953/54 with exceptional success and his leadership and expertise laid the foundations of good rugby for many years. Later served on general committee.

J.R. (Jim) Crowe first played for the club in 1954 after a number of years at soccer. A player of tremendous strength and stamina operating for the Old Instonians as prop, hooker, and no. 8. joined Birkenhead park in 1959 and subsequently captained them for a number of seasons and

was capped for Cheshire many times. A very hard but very clean player who earned the respect of friend and foe alike.

A.R. (Tony) Morris first appeared for the club 1st. XV as a young winger in 1952. He subsequently captained the club from 2nd row in 1968/69 and was still playing first team rugby 1972/3. A very hard and capable player.

A. (Andy) Mackintosh [sic] yet another convert from soccer in 1962/63 subsequently skippered the club for two seasons 1965/67. Joined Birkenhead Park and had several successful seasons with them scoring many tries before re-joining Old Instonians in 1971. Later left the district and played for Davenport, centre or wing.

A. (Alan) Steadman [sic] a very early developer at the game, playing for Birkenhead Park 1st. XV when only 17 at full back. Joined Old Instonians later in 1966. He successfully skippered the club in 1967/68 from fly half mainly. A shrewd reader of the game became the club first coach in the season 1972/73.

A.R. (Bert) Bushell an outstandingly loyal club player and member who played regularly from the late 1940s until 1972. Bert would play for any team in any position, home or away, at a minute's notice. Served on committee and spent long hours working for the club in many capacities.

J.R. (John) Mandy played for the club for many years from the early 1950s to the late 1960s. A good player in his own right at fly half, centre, or full back. He very successfully captained the 3rd. XV for many years in the mid 1960s keeping the junior playing strength together as a crucial time.

A.G. (Norman) Little played for the club from June 1939 as hooker. Later played 1st. XV prop for a number of years then became a very staunch 3rd. XV captain. Served the club on committee for many years in such capacities as Social Secretary, Secretary and Chairman.

G.A.T. (Gordon) Thomas a fine flank forward, who skippered the side 1954/5 and later served the club for 5 years as Secretary and 4 years as Chairman. Gordon had a fine brain and was very witty with a range of ????? which in his day was second to none.

P.A. (Paddy) Ryan an accomplished player for many years who played in many positions but who is probably best remembered as a very successful hooker in the early 1950s. He later captained the 2nd. XV to some very fine playing records for a number of seasons. Probably the most loyal Old Instonian of all time having been Social Secretary, Treasurer for 11 years, Chairman Bar Committee, member of Selection Committee etc. Colour of eyes black and Amber.

J.B. (Brian) Huntriss a very fine three quarter in his day who really took some stopping when flat out. He was probably at his best when playing under big brother Stu. Later was a power as Chairman in negotiations with the authorities for the move onto the present clubhouse and ground.

H.G. (Harold) Beckett another convert from soccer. Was loose head prop for 1st. XV during most of the 1950s. Successful social captain of club 1952/53. Later chairman of selection and Liverpool Society Referee.

R. (Ron) Harris an enthusiastic player and worker for the club in many capacities. Played prop, hooker, and flank forward, for 1st. XV and captain the club 1961/2. Later left the district and played for and captained Thornton Cleveleys.

L.C. (Len) Lindop first played for Old Instonians at the age of 15. A very good flanker. Captain of club 1971/2 and 1972/73. A very loyal Old Instonian who has worked hard for the club in very many ways.

AN OLD INSTONIAN LOOKS BACK HALF A CENTURY

Mr. T. K. Ward of 8 Osborne Road, Birkenhead writes:-

I became a member of Old Instonians R.F.C. sometime before the commencement of the 1935 Rugby season, and, as there are very few of us left, I feel I should give an authoritative account of the conception and birth of the club as I witnessed it. The founding fathers were a small group

of Old Boys namely Don Rigby, Eric Todd, Peter Burrell, Ken Coughtrie and Alan Bracknell, with the assistance of Mr. A. O. Jones, then Chemistry Master at the Birkenhead Institute. The idea was kicked around during the early months of 1935, well nourished by draughts of Birkenhead Brewery No. 1 Strong Ale, and translated into action in the spring. This working committee reconnoitred the rural areas for a piece of land to the required dimensions before concluding an arrangement to rent the cow-pasture at Bidston, as related by Dick Bell in his excellent article in the News, 17th October. Don Rigby can relate a harrowing account of the effort expended by the working party who set up the goal posts.

A number of matches were played against the school team at Ingleborough Road to enable the increasing number of members to achieve some sort of cohesion, before commencing their fixture list at Bidston. The first team on that list was Oldershaw and the Old Boys were comprehensively defeated.

An old war horse, named Gordon Wilson, had been elected Captain. He had already been campaigning for some dozen or more seasons with the now defunct Bidston R.F.C. and was a hardened warrior. Under the fierce lash of his tongue the Old Boys sharpened their game and began to win a few. Old Parkonians refused to give a first team fixture and the Old Boys had to be content to sharpen their teeth on Old Parkonians Second Team until that club eventually sent along their first team to seek revenge. Rivalry between the two clubs intensified and the clashes became more and more physical until, at the end of the 1938 season, Old Parkonians broke off fixtures alleging "ungentlemanly conduct". when their letter was read out at the General Meeting, Old Instonians felt that they had gained a victory. That was to be the last season until after the war. So many Old Instonians were members of the Territorial Army, R.N.V.R., or R.A.F.V.R. that it was not possible to raise a team.

My fellow playing members, from these pre-war years, perhaps now to be called Ancient Instonians rather than Old Instonians, included - J. Abbott, L. Black, A. Brecknell, P. Burrell, R. Bell, K. Carr, K. Coughtrie, R. Colenso, F. Francis, E. Hosker, R. Hardie, R. Lawson, R. Lockey, A. McFarlane, A. Moss, G. Nixon, K. Page, N. Rees, K. Rice, D. Rigby, T. Smart, A. Theobald, E. Todd, G. Todd, A. Tweedy, R. Weir, G. Wilson, and E. G. Williams.

One of the most unforgettable characters at this time was not an Old Boy at all. He was an indefatigable sparrow of a man, named Cole (we never learned his first name), who was engaged, on a casual basis, as a groundsman. He marked out the ground, heated the water for after-match ablutions, and prepared refreshments. He stood on the touchline for the first half, a self-appointed critic, making pithy comments on our efforts with that dry wit characteristic of Merseysiders, driving us on to greater and better efforts. At half-time he departed to the temporary changing-rooms at Bidston School to see to the rest of his duties. Had we been able to field a team for the 1939 season, it would have been without Cole, for he too was a Territorial Soldier, and had more pressing engagements.

Phase Two of the Old Instonians story commenced in 1945. On their return from military service Don Rigby and Ken Coughtrie contacted as many pre-war members as they could- After a few special meetings, and much behind-the-scenes activity, two teams were in action for the 1946-47 season. The school headmaster, Mr. Wynne Hughes, was elected President, and home games were played on the School ground. at Ingleborough Road.

A veritable mine of young talent was discovered among those who had left the Birkenhead Institute during the war years, including J. Bassett, L. Crossley, R. Lambert, J. Morris, F. Owers, M. Pollard, G. A. Smith and H. D. Thomas. Hallin Winter, who had been elected first-team captain immediately had at his disposal a very talented and impressive team, with ample supply of first-class reserves in the second team. Fixtures with Old Parkonians were resumed, all past differences forgotten, or submerged. Dick Bell gave an account of one of the matches played at Ingleborough Road against Old Parkonians. I think I can put a gloss on it. Dick, in his modest manner, omitted to say that he was a superb player with an unerring boot. It was largely due to his superlative play that kept Old Instonians on level terms, and, when in the dying minutes, Dick addressed himself to the penalty kick that would settle the issue one way or another, few Old Instonians doubted that, regardless of the poor light and the wind, the ball would go safely

over the bar. And so, it did. Later, in the pavilion, during refreshments, Dick Bell's voice was heard asking for the jam. The Old Parkonian captain, Phil Pryce-Roberts, commented wryly "Dick, you have already had more than your share of jam today!" Dick's other memory was of the Park Sevens tournament won by Old Instonians. I am able to settle for all time the arguments over who were the players in that final. I have the actual programme for that day, April 19th, 1947, and I quote from the text. Old Instonians reached the final by victories over Old Rockferrians, Birkenhead Park, and Waterloo, and Old Parkonians got there by defeating Old Wirralians, St. Helens, and Old Caldeians. The teams were - Old Instonians - W. Garry, I. Podmore, H. Thomas, A. Theobald, H. Winter, A. Lambert, R. Bell, Reserve - G. A. Smith. Old Parkonians - C. Hargreaves, J. Jones, J. Dobie, G. Reed, P. Roberts, C. F. Jones, E. Johnson; Reserve - J. Hislop. Again, there was a closely contested match, being decided in Old Instonians favour by the last-minute conversion by Bill Garry. At this time Bill Garry was probably the best full-back in Junior Rugby and eventually he went to Birkenhead Park R.F.C. where he served with great distinction for several seasons until he made a career move to the United States. Ken Carr also went to Birkenhead Park R.F.C. and played in the second row for that team and for Cheshire for many years. His early death so soon after his retirement from the game was a great blow, particularly to St. Anselm's School where he was games master. Another Old Boy who scintillated on the County scene was Stuart Huntriss. In a County Match versus Lancashire, played at Birkenhead Park, Stuart, in defence, was eluded by his opposing wing three-quarter, who happened to be the speedy Dickie Guest, England's choice of wing three-quarter at that time. Stuart took up the pursuit, and, overhauling Guest, dumped him unceremoniously from behind. I doubt if there have been many players who had been able to do that to Guest.

At the end of the 1955 season after twenty years service to the club in various capacities, player, team captain, team secretary, club secretary, committee man and vice-president, I relinquished the post of club secretary. Norman Little was elected to the post and Paddy Ryan became treasurer. Both became prime movers in the club and guided it for many years, through Phase Three, when the club moved to a new location near Greasby, and into Phase Four when the new ground in Woodchurch Road was bought and developed. If There is any history of these Phases to be written, it would be best left to Norman Little and Paddy Ryan, for they will know more about it than anyone else.

I have no doubt that some several hundred players have appeared for one or other of the Old Instonian team. I myself have known well over a hundred. However, there is only one member who can claim the distinction of having been a member from Day One to the present time, and that is Don Rigby. It has been said of Don that if you cut him, he would bleed black and old gold. I know that is true because I was the one who said it. During his half-century of membership, it is doubtful that any other single person has devoted so much time and energy to club matters. Long after his playing days were finished, he would do things like standing on the touch line urging on the Old Instonians while the fainter-hearted of us were sitting in warmth and comfort at home watching the England v. Wales Rugby International on B.B.C's Grandstand. While not being privy to the thoughts of the present committee, I can make a fair guess at who will occupy the chair of honour at the forthcoming fiftieth anniversary celebrations.

The Birkenhead Institute Roll of Honour of Old Boys who fell during the 1939/45 war lists a total of 89 names. Of these 15 were the names of Old Boys who had played for one or other of the Old Instonians teams. They were D. K. Ashton, L. Black, L. Clarke, G. R. Edwards, J. Gullan, G. Hardie, R. Hardie, W. Jones, A. Moss, N. Rees, T. Smart, A.E. Smith, G. Todd, A. C. Williams, and J. A. Williams. Dennis Ashton sold his life dearly in a fighter plane defending Malta, Lionel Black died in service of the R.A.F. The Hardie brothers Ron and Graham, and Gordon Todd, died in the German offensive during the summer of 1940, Walter Jones died in a bomber shot down over Germany, Alan Moss was with a Commando Unit and was killed during the invasion of St. Nazaire, Tommy Smart, D.F.C. was a member of the Caterpillar Club, and let those who do not know what that means ask their fathers, or their grandfathers. Alex Smith was killed in the North African campaign, and J. A. Williams, M.M. died in France. I know nothing of the circumstances of the passing of others listed. Those of us who were fortunate enough to

survive active service remember well these Old Instonians who made the ultimate sacrifice. We remember them as bright keen young men, filled with determination and enthusiasm. They will always be young, they were not given the opportunity to become old, as their contemporaries have. The torch has passed. May the present Old Instonians do as well!

New Birkenhead Institute War Memorial

The special occasions we held to mark the completion of the first phase of our new memorial in Hamilton Square were truly remarkable in terms of the attention that was brought to the events held firstly on 4 November 2018, the 100th anniversary of the death of Wilfred Owen, when local media coverage drew a wide local crowd to witness Right Hon. Frank Field and Dame Patricia Routledge unveil our physical manifestation of Dave (D.S.W.) Jones' iconic image and then on 15 February this year when the patronage of Prince Harry and Meghan drew the attention of the World's Press to Birkenhead.

Thus, conditions were well placed for subsequent discussions with Wirral Council over the use of the remaining budget to complete the memorial with the new backdrop arch and decorative screen.

The Council have as a result placed the order for the remaining work and plan in addition to add to the eventual outcome with some hedge and tree planting together with mood lighting. After discussion with the foundry that manufactured the statue, we have decided to accept their proposal for a backdrop screen which will imagine a Flanders landscape thus making visual reference to the 88 Poplar trees that were planted around the perimeter of Ingleborough Road in 1932. An explanation of the symbolism of elements of the memorial is to be placed on one of the sides of the statue's plinth.

Some work remains to be done at Ingleborough Road to make best use of the enclosure and garden which represents the war memorial left there and this is something which is being given attention to at present.

The plan for the unveiling of the final phase of the memorial was set for Saturday 5 October 2019 but was delayed and then postponed by the Coronavirus pandemic.

Alun Hughes (1966/73) has recently been in discussion with the Council and they have advised him that the provisional arrangements for the building work in connection with the above are as follows.

03.08.2020 - Contractor starts on site

24.08.2020 - Installation of Arch and screen

04.09.2020 - Completion on site

Covid 19 presents problems for me (Alan) with this and I am hoping that Mark Dunn the structural engineer can be relied upon to continue to give us his support, but I think these dates are feasible. We had tentatively arranged with the Lord Lieutenant's Office for both the Lord Lieutenant and his deputy to perform the eventual unveiling and if that is to be accomplished in time for Remembrance Day as I hope, it will need particular thought given that the Virus will still be with us at that time.

We then need to finalise how we are leaving Ingleborough Road also.

Editor – I will update members by email, as time progresses, and the situation clarifies.

BIOB Merchandise

We still have supplies of BIOB Cufflinks, Tie Tacks, and 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_Lapel_Badge.html.

Cufflinks at £12 per pair, or £7 each (for replacements) Tie Tack/Lapel Badges are £5. Postage on orders is £3.00.

Unfortunately, the Ties have now SOLD OUT, there are no current plans to re-stock.

Old Instonians Golf Society 2019 Pyke Cup

Last year (2019) the Pyke Cup was again played for at Caldy G.C. and the competition was won by Mike Hayman (1959 – 1965). This year, due to the coronavirus pandemic, the competition has been postponed to a future date.

OBITUARY

John Baker	1941/46
William Cusick	1952/54
Roy Davies	1960/65
Walter Jackson	1942/47
Glynne Jones	1937/41
David Moore	1943/52
Billy Roe	1968/75
Chris Slevin	1947/52
A.A. Smith	1942/50
Angus Tilston	1944/49
Bill Williams	1929/38
R.E.P. Wright	1940/48

Readers' Letters

The “escape” clause. - I have corrected most of the spellings, and some of the grammar, but take no responsibility for the content. The views expressed here are those of the correspondents and are not necessarily those of BIOB or the Editor. So, feel free to write to me anytime the mood takes you. It all goes in!

An email from John Baker (1946/53)

From Tasmania

Dictums in se se per divisions haberdashery. So, my illiterate Apple iPad interpreted my attempt at a Latin heading. Shades of Trump?? I will try again.

Doctus in se semper divitias habet. So reads the line from Virgil known to hundreds of Instonians over many years. Perhaps for the ladies, in this super correct age, we might take Doctus to mean a learned person instead of just a mere man. In 1946 I became pupil number 3804. Like ones Army or Service number, it stays with one eternally. Or does it?

But the School motto certainly does, if for no other reason than writing 'lines'.

I write in Tasmania in mid-May with the COVID-19 lockdown very much in full force. Like many others, I view the early attempts at a return to some semblance of normality with a degree of considerable scepticism. Time will tell, but.....

In the Island State of Tasmania ('This other England' or 'The apple isle' to quote J.E. Allison's lesson on the topic) we have had almost 300 cases with 13 deaths. Our population is just 535000 people.

So how does Doctus cope with self-isolation apart from the odd sortie to town for essential supplies only? Such things as food and drink, the chemist, or medical appointments.

Perhaps one resorts to much reading, listening to music, crosswords, the iPad, YouTube or jigsaws. Then there are the often-postponed delights like house renovation or the garden. Even a thorough clean for the car. Or oft delayed letters to write.

Or does Doctus simply rely on the divitias which are possessed in se? (semper we hope).

I wish everyone 'felicitas'.

An email from George Edwards (1955/60)

Old Trafford

My everlasting memory was in 1956 when the school ran a day trip to the test match v Australia at Old Trafford. Myself, Alan Steedman and others who I cannot remember managed to get on this trip even though it was for older years to begin with.

What a day, it was the Friday and we sat on the grass where upon we had a six hit right over our heads as England mounted a mighty score of 4 or 5 hundred. However, the drama was yet to happen, England proceeded to have Australia all out for about 50 runs. Lock taking 1 wicket and Jim Laker the other nine. England asked Australia to bat again and by the time the day finished Jim Laker had taken 4 or 5 wickets, (to make his game total 14 or 15)

This was part of probably one of the most famous games of cricket ever, with Jim Laker taking 19 wickets, a world best, a record I believe which still stands today.

What a day and to think the B.I. was represented.

An email from Alun Hughes

School Trip 1968 Recollections

I was very fortunate that my mother, despite being a single mum following the death of my father a year earlier indulged me by ensuring that I went on three Summer holidays with the school of which the trip to Switzerland was the second. All the trips opened my eyes to wonders which broadened my horizons and imagination, but the Swiss trip filled me also with warm memories albeit dulled by the passage of years.

An article was written in the December 1968 Visor apparently by a consortium of older boys and it captures matters of fact which I neglected to keep myself except my recollections relate more to moments and experiences in a way which I would have struggled to have articulated then. Fortunately, also I took a decent camera (for the time) and looking through these in recent times fills more gaps. A picture paints a

thousand words they say, and I hope these may speak to you.

Thanks to the Visor article I can recall the trip on the chair lift to (presumably?) Frahnalpstock. We had been warned by Lenny Malcolm not to make a noise as we were carried up but instead enjoy the serenity of the moment which we did, and I have to agree it was blissful. I remember the mirror maze in Lucerne. What stands out in my mind as well in Lucerne was the trip to the Glacier Park and its demonstration of the power of packed ice melting ice-water evidenced by the scouring out of a bowl in the rock by a captive rounded stone. Clearly the same attritional principle that saw bored schoolboys use pennies to grind out circular cupped indentations in the soft sandstone wall of the premises in Whetstone Lane



The school trip to Switzerland came at the end of my second year at the Institute and was the only one where we assembled for a Group photo. Colour photography was pretty novel in 1968 and I took slides so that I could project/enlarge it onto a screen to better see and explain the amazing things I witnessed. Now of course we can zoom in effortlessly on our computers. Faces I recognise (all friendly masters away from the discipline of school) include Mr Malcolm (of course), Mr Pierce and Mr Hughes. Not sure who the other was? As for my contemporaries, Derek Jones, Lenny Davies, Derek Roberts, Mike Worthy and William Gleeson. It was nice for some of the teacher's families to come along and those lads used to younger siblings looked after their youngsters.



Although we had glorious weather in the valleys the mountain tops were always misty when we visited sadly but I've been back since and they would have been amazing. Derek Roberts on the right, next to him a lad called David Liston and next to him a lad called Ollie ??



Brunnen was the town on Lucerne above which we stayed in a village called Morschach. Everything was so modern clean and unusual to my eye.



The waiters at the hotel were really good fun. I think one of them was called Edouard.



I was blown away by this pedestrian bridge at Lucerne with biblical scenes painted in the apex of the roof. I returned there last year, and it was still remarkable, but life experience and one's physical size at that age cloud that assessment. I was more amazed to learn this time around that it was built to allow wealthy worshippers to get to the church in the background!



Lake Lucerne is still as lovely as it always was. Blue water and steep green hills rising from its surface always do it for me.



Our hotel in Morschach. I don't remember its name and its probably apartments now? I remember that there was another school from the south of England staying there at the same time. Some of my contemporaries showed us how it was possible to lean out of their window and direct a stream of water along the inside of a hotel coat-hanger down

and through the open window of the bedroom below where some of them were staying. The benefits of a Grammar School education...or the perfect crime?



You could in your spare time walk down to Brunnen and either walk back up or catch the cog railway. Apparently, it closed down shortly after our visit never to reopen, which is a shame but nothing to do with us I believe?!



Above the village of Morschach and a short walk away you really felt that you were in the Mountains. I've checked the same view today on Google and its nearly the same. I'm sure that there is now just a little less snow these days? Global warming? I love snow topped mountains.



No doubt where this is...its Rigi Kulm. Disappointed as usual to find it obscured by mist and no snow but there you are. I still

have the pennant of my visit there. On my most recent visit to Switzerland we elected to go for the nearby and higher Mt Titlis (I can see why they didn't take us there!) which had everything that Rigi didn't and which took my breath away...literally! My lungs not being what they used to be and at an altitude of 10,000 ft. I was glad to be away from the thin air when back in the valley.



Beautiful Lucerne will always hold a special place in my heart.



The Mersey Ferry boats take some beating but our trips on the Lake seemed idyllic, like the notion we have of long, sunny summers of our youth. A less attractive side on reflection was the pursuit of an attractive blond and well endowed (for her age) young lady of about the same age as a group of my contemporaries around the ship, including close contact (shall I say) before disembarking. Obviously in these enlightened times it is highly reprehensible behaviour, but in those days, it seemed a bit of innocent fun...and the young lady didn't seem to mind much either!



They say that smells and sounds can transport you in an instant to a place in your memory. I love the cow bells and its is great to hear them still in use in modern day Switzerland.



I never really knew why we went here but apparently it used to hold what was considered to be the founding document of the Swiss Constitution (Museum of the Swiss Charters of Confederation to give it its full, 'snappy' title). Apparently, the honour has since gone elsewhere now more documents have been uncovered but it gave us the opportunity of a trip across the lake, to see Tellskapelle (William Tell's chapel) and have a nice walk,



Another cog railway but where to? I should have kept a note book but you don't think....unless you want to be a journalist when you grow up?



Here is the cog railway waiting at Brunnen to take passengers up to Morschach. It does look a bit ropery to be fair, but it's a shame to lose things like that. Two of my classmates taking the hike up instead.

Annual Dinner 2020 (Postponed)

Due to the unpredictable nature of the coronavirus and the need to protect the health of our ageing and vulnerable members it has been decided to postpone this year's Annual Reunion Dinner to a future date.

The future date determined by the progress of the virus and/or the availability of a vaccine.

Anyone wishing to make a donation to club funds may do so by sending a cheque made out to BIOB or transfer an amount to Sort Code = **30-15-52** Account = **03162233** Account Name = **Birkenhead Institute Old Boys** remember to include your name in order to identify the payment. All donations gratefully received.

If donating by Bank Transfer, please send an e-mail confirmation after doing the transfer to webmaster@BIOB.co.uk