

OLD MICHAELIAN ASSOCIATION



The Rectory Ingoldisthorpe

THE MITRE



2016



EDITORIAL

WELCOME.....to the 2016 'MITRE'. My name is John Wallington and it is my pleasure to be your guide through this special edition of our annual publication in this special Anniversary year as we celebrate the 70th Anniversary of the Founding of.....

St. Michael's School

Within this publication we hope 'The Mitre' will help you remember the good times you spent as a pupil and/or teacher and we will attempt to stir the passions and memories of school days in NW Norfolk.

Together we will recall some of the images of school life at St. Michael's and help to revive some of the many memories that linger in the mind many years since.

The much read article, "***The Founding of St. Michael's School,***" written many years ago, provides for us all an insight into the daily life of pupils and staff at St. Michael's School and it is my intention to publish this article again for you all to read. Unfortunately, the ownership of the article is unknown but if you were a contributor, please accept our grateful Thanks.



There are some pictures in my mind that sum up the image of the school and will probably do so for the remainder of my life. Arriving at Heacham station on a September day in 1957 with my brother Cliff and being met in the car park by this huge man and being ushered onto a very old double decker bus is a memory I will never forget!

That old bus has so many memories for me and probably for you as well. It became so recognisable to all local NW Norfolk folk and how the 'old' dear managed to climb that steep hill up from Ingoldisthorpe to The Manor each day, let alone managed to stay in control on the way down, was a constant mystery to me.

We all have our special memories of our time at St. Michael's School. For some, it was not all it was cracked up to be, for others it was a constant struggle to stay the right side of the rules. But I suspect that, for the majority, the school provided a secure and enjoyable place where growing up became the priority, lifelong friends were made and maintained and boys and girls were enrolled into men and women schooled for the adult life ahead. I sincerely hope that you all enjoy the content of this edition of 'The Mitre' and, equally, I hope we may be able to welcome many of you to the Anniversary Reunion weekend in Hunstanton this year towards the end of October. It will be a pleasure to see you again.

Best Wishes

John Wallington, Editor

FOUNDING OF ST. MICHAEL'S



The train from Liverpool Street ploughs slowly out of London heading NE towards Cambridge and beyond across the flat expanse of fenland to Kings Lynn and the Wash. At Kings Lynn the train needs another locomotive to steer the passenger carriages on a separate branch line past the Royal Waiting Rooms at Wolferton, up the Norfolk coast adjacent to the Wash, past Castle Rising, Snettisham and on to Heacham a few miles from its destination at Hunstanton.

The small town (or large village) of Heacham stands on some of the best agricultural land in the country, its rural life subsidised by the flourishing summer holiday trade and by the close proximity to the Sandringham Estate.



It has a fine old church that, over the centuries, was enriched by the Neville-Rolfe family who used to occupy Heacham Hall. It is due to the enterprise of the vicar of Heacham Church that this article is all about. The Reverend Roger Pott is a man of many parts. Vicar of Heacham Church, Rector of Ingoldisthorpe Church (approximately 3 miles away) and Headmaster of St. Michael's School, Ingoldisthorpe schooling some 150 pupils.



*The Rectory, Ingoldisthorpe
By Barbara Strudde*

The school is at Ingoldisthorpe, in a vast old Rectory opposite St. Michael's and all Angel's parish church. The nucleus of the staff, led by the Headmaster, has been drawn from local clergy and those who have the qualifications and inclinations to work with children in the field of education and learning.

To start a new school so soon after the end of World War II was a formidable objective. Before the doors were opened in 1946 several battles had to be fought and won with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Works. Private enterprise in education has always been suspect – sometimes for good reason – but few people, such as Roger Pott, could have had the favourable background experience that accompanied him to accept the post of vicar of Heacham Parish Church.

Early in his career he began to combine teacher training with full time service in the Ministry of the Church of England. In 1935 the Headmaster was appointed Chaplain to the presiding Bishop in Japan. The appointment, in Yokohama, required him to supervise the English speaking church. This in turn introduced him to many different nationalities in that cosmopolitan city and as time went on the Headmaster soon found that his responsibilities had increased and included the role of Headmaster of the existing International School.

This new role enabled Roger Pott to engage and learn some of the difficulties children were experiencing due to language barriers and by living abroad.

3.

We will show how valuable this work was in **Yokohama** as this story develops and the spotlight falls on **NW Norfolk**.

Soon after he was demobbed from the Royal Navy as Chaplain, the Headmaster was appointed Vicar of Heacham.

Roger Pott decided to follow tradition, as a country priest, and attempt to increase his stipend in Heacham by offering coaching to a hand full of boys at the Vicarage. His idea was to help those boys who were slow to learn or whose education had been interrupted due to illness or some other reason causing them to slip behind the education requirement to pass the Common Entrance exam.



His principles were very clear in his own mind. He did not consider that the opportunities to educate children were not restricted to those children who were maladjusted and/or sub-normal, he wanted to offer education to all children no matter their nationality, religion, ability or background. He believed that, given the opportunity and the correct teaching, every child had the ability to learn and strive to go as far as possible on the academic road to success. His contempt for the 11+ examination system was unbounded. He did not believe that it was a fair system and he would never do so until the system was itself examined and the techniques changed and it was conducted anonymously by an independent examining body.

The Rectory at Ingoldisthorpe had remained empty for a very long time and the Parish had been without a vicar for far too long. The enterprise scheme promoted by Roger Pott was beginning to show signs of strength and numbers were increasing. It became very clear to the Headmaster that there was a clear need for an additional schooling establishment throughout NW Norfolk and the word was out that there was an opportunity in Heacham for boys to receive an education that just may be perfect for those boys who needed a special kind of schooling.

The Headmaster decided to start a campaign within the Diocese of Norwich to debate the issue of usage of Ingoldisthorpe Rectory promoting the idea that, since the Rectory could be considered to be far too large to accommodate a single family, that the Diocese should consider the possibility of selecting a suitable incumbent as vicar of Ingoldisthorpe and at the same time agreeing to the idea that the existing Rectory building should be used as an educational establishment. There was quite obviously a plan afoot!!!

This campaign did not run for too long because, aware of the existing ambitions of Roger Pott, they decided to appoint the Headmaster as Vicar of Heacham with joint responsibilities as Rector of Ingoldisthorpe with access and full use of the Ingoldisthorpe Rectory for the education of children. In addition, the Diocese decided to offer the H Headmaster a curate to help in this venture.

4.

St. Michael's School opened with 70 pupils aged between 5 years and 14 years selected from 120 applicants. There were 11 boarders.



Gresham House

What made the school possible was the generosity of an elderly American lady. She made a present of her large house in Heacham that was soon converted into the main boarding house supporting the school and is affectionately known to all as Gresham House. This generous gift to the school was not the only good fortune for the Headmaster. The school was also given an anonymous donation of £5000 and this provided the initial capital. Beyond this, the school is expected to be self-supporting. The Diocese are pleased that they have appointed a new rector at Ingoldisthorpe and they are content that the Rectory building at Ingoldisthorpe is being well used as an educational establishment, but they have not offered any responsibility financially.



The school boarding house is 3 miles away from Ingoldisthorpe and it was decided that the school would benefit from the purchase of a double-decker bus. The sight of the school bus around the roads and lanes of NW Norfolk was a sight to behold but in just a short time, the residents of both Heacham and Ingoldisthorpe became used to this addition to the road traffic.

The school also acquired a few other vehicles that all contributed to the day-to-day life of the school. One interesting policy of the Headmaster was to encourage all pupils, who reached the age of 17 years, to learn to drive a vehicle and eventually, take the driving test with a chance of passing! A visitor to the school may well receive a letter from the Headmaster explaining the following: *"a school prefect will meet you at the station with a car!"*.

As the school matures, more pupils are accepted and 35 girl pupils are added to the numbers. Some are day pupils and 12 girls board at a house in Ingoldisthorpe.

The religious element fits naturally into the pattern of the school. Each day starts with Chapel attendance at Ingoldisthorpe Church. One ambition of Roger Pott is to witness a pupils from St. Michael's School ordained into the church.

The school is now described as a 'good grammar school of an old fashioned type'. It is strong in classics and weak in science but not mathematics. Everyone learns French and Latin and some include Greek within their specialised subjects.

The school has become well known as a credible church choir who support most church services at both Heacham and Ingoldisthorpe.

The success of the birth of St. Michael's School would not have been possible without the contribution and support from the teaching staff.

At the beginning the Headmaster relied heavily on the support from local clergy to manage the classes and local residents to provide the necessary staff required to staff the kitchens and prepare the various meals.

The Reverend Robert Tomlinson and the Reverend Geoffrey Muzio were two of the first Teachers to enter Ingoldisthorpe Rectory followed by the Reverend Richard Tatlock, Mr Walwyn Adams and Mr Henry Taylor. A little later Miss Margaret Hayes-Williams joined the teaching staff at Ingoldisthorpe.

During the early days of the school the sixth form was relatively short of numbers and only two boys were working on 'A' level subjects. This number will inevitably increase as pupils move from 'O' level subjects to 'A' level subjects.

St. Michael's School became well known for the serious concentration on sport and each school day, pupils were encouraged to participate in various sports activities including Football and Hockey during the winter terms and Athletics, Cricket and Tennis during the summer term.

Word quickly spread of this new enterprising school in NW Norfolk who was prepared to accept both boys and girls either as day pupils or as boarders from any part of the United Kingdom and, quite literally, from anywhere in the World.

The growth of St. Michael's School was becoming remarkable.

Queen Mary, during her last years at Sandringham, showed a keen interest in the school and paid regular visits to the school to keep herself informed about progress made.

The 'Ingoldisthorpe Experiment' to give it a label, is a challenging example of what could be done with some church property that encumbers many parishes. It is also in the best tradition of independent education, doing what the State system cannot provide, refusing to allow the exception to be crushed by the rule and all of this against a background of Christian doctrine and practice.

This article was first published in the early 1950's and probably was published as part of the first edition of 'The Mitre'. It provides a vital insight into events in NW Norfolk immediately after the War and the determination of Roger Pott to succeed. Ed.

6.

A YOUNG MONK ARRIVES AT THE MONASTERY



A young monk arrives at the Monastery. He is assigned to helping the other monks in copying the old canons and laws of the church..... by hand.



He notices, however, that all of the monks are copying from copies and not from the original manuscript.

So, the new monk goes to the Old Abbot to question this, pointing out that if someone made even a small error in the first copy, it would never be picked up!

In fact, that error would be continued in all of the subsequent copies.



The head monk says, *"We have been copying from the copies for centuries, but you make a good point my son"*.



He goes down into the dark caves underneath the monastery where the original manuscripts are held as archives and into a locked vault that has not been opened for hundreds of years.

Hours go by and nobody sees or hears from the Old Abbot.

So, the new young monk gets worried and goes down to the vault to look for him. When he arrives in the vault he sees the Old Abbot banging his head against the wall wailing and screaming.....

“We missed the R! We missed the R!”

His forehead is all bloody and bruised and the Old Abbot is crying uncontrollably.....

“We missed the R! We missed the bloody R!”

The young monk is confused and asks the Old Abbot, “What’s wrong father?”

With a choking voice, the Old Abbot replies

“The word was.....”



CELEBRATE!”

8.

IN MEMORY



I ask you all to remember in your thoughts and prays the following Old Michaelian's, either former pupils, former staff and all other people who were associated with St. Michael's School, who have passed away. At this special time we ask you to remember:

MARCUS ERNEST DIXON WORTLEY Bsc

Marcus attended the school from the very beginning and became Head Boy. It is our pleasure to remember Marcus in the words of Ian Richmond.

'Marcus, born in May 1933, was a contemporary of mine at St. Michael's School during my time there (1946 – 1950). We were in the same classes throughout and we sat the School Certificate at the same time. He was a boarder and was one of the original pupils at St. Michael's becoming Head Boy. He was gentle, academic but sporty and a great asset to the school.

He was the only son of the Reverend Wortley, Rector of Swanington, Norfolk. He had three sisters, one of whom, Mrs Joan Wallace, lives in Heacham. Marcus was an accomplished musician and composer and an organist at St. Peter's Mancroft, near Norwich.

He joined the Norwich Union at its Head Office in Norwich and became an Estates Manager. I was his Best Man when he married Maureen, a Norwich Union executive secretary. Maureen suffered poor health in later life and passed away a couple of years before Marcus. They had no children.

Just before his death, Marcus had a humerous book published entitled, "Placing the Limerick".

Marcus passed away aged 80 years in August 2013.

Ian Richmond

Thank you Ian. Ed.

IN MEMORY



The Old Michaelian Association offers our sincere condolences and sympathy to all Family and Friends of:

TIMOTHY JONATHAN TOOKE

Tim passed away, quite suddenly at his home, on Sunday 24 May 2015.
The Funeral Service for Tim took place at All Saints Church, Tilney All Saints on Wednesday 10 June 2015 to a packed congregation of family and friends. The OMA was represented at the Funeral.



DEATH IS A DOOR



Death is only an old door
Set in a garden wall
On gentle hinges it gives, at dusk
When the thrushes call
Along the linted are green leaves
Beyond the light lies still
Very willing and weary feet
Go over the sill
There is nothing to trouble any heart
Nothing to hurt at all
Death is only a quiet door
In an old wall.

Nancy Byrd Turner

10.



The Old Michaelian Association offers our sincere condolences and sympathy to all Family and Friends of:

SIR CHRISTOPHER WHITE

Affectionately known as Chris White, he was a very well-liked Teacher at St. Michael's School from 1963 'til the closure of the school.

Chris will be well remembered for driving a Hearse as his mode of transport and being responsible for teaching English Literature, some Sports and Producing and Directing at least three major Plays at the school.

Chris' lifelong friend, Michael le Strange Meakin kindly provided the following additional information for 'The Mitre'.

'Christopher White was born in 1940, the son of Sir Richard White of Boulge, Suffolk and Elizabeth Townshend of the Raynham, Norfolk family.

His Grandmother, the Dowager Lady Townshend married Bernard le Strange of Hunstanton Hall where Christopher spent much of his early years and gained an affection for the area.

For details of his life see www.thepeerage.com (personal page 6268)

I first contacted Christopher in connection with the will of Bernard le Strange and in 1963 Christopher turned up in Hunstanton. I introduced him to Roger Pott who immediately offered Christopher a teaching post at St. Michael's School.

He was Best Man at my wedding in 1966 and, unfortunately, we lost touch for many years. I know he spent some time in Norfolk and I believe he travelled to Turkey in 1985. I have corresponded with him, via email, in recent years but I am sure there are other friends who have kept in contact with Christopher over the years as well.

I am sure there will be many memories from former pupils of the school and I particularly recall his succession of old cars. At one time he was the proud owner of a hearse! There was also his production of 'Oliver'. He told me quite recently that the production of 'Oliver' became an annual event in Istanbul for many years. We will miss him.'

Thank you very much, Michael. Ed

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT



John Wallington

I am inclined to start this Chairman's Report with the words....."Where has the year gone?"

Since I last wrote my Chairman's Report I am pleased to confirm that the Association, your Association, remains in extremely good shape. Mind you, with such an enthusiastic and reliable OMA Committee, there is never any reason to believe that the essential work necessary will not be achieved. Under the direction of our President, Simon Pott, the Association continues to look forward and we are all encouraged with the continuing support we receive from our Members throughout the year. I know that these following words have been used many time before, but it is an astonishing fact that, so many years after the school closed its doors for the last time, there is still an enthusiasm and great support for the Association.

The 2015 OMA Reunion in Hunstanton proved, once again, that the Membership are supportive of our annual Reunion each year and we were all delighted to welcome a good number of OM's together with their respective partners, to the Le Strange Arms Hotel to help us celebrate yet another OMA Reunion weekend. Not only that, but we were delighted to welcome two new OM's to our weekend, namely Paul Joyner and Robert Laming, together with their wives, to join in the fun.

This will be an exceptional year for the OMA as we collectively remember St. Michael's School and the very first days Roger Pott worked hard to gain official sanction to open the doors of his new school and accept the first few pupils into his care and achieve a long ambition to provide a new teaching establishment in NW Norfolk.

The Anniversary Reunion weekend this year will be very special and we look forward to welcoming many OM's and their partners to join us for the whole weekend of fun and some very special memories. If it is impossible for you to be in NW Norfolk for our Anniversary Reunion, why not write a few lines of comment that will be included during the Saturday Reunion Dinner for everyone to appreciate. These inclusions can be sent directly to me via email to the following address: hinckleytowers@btinternet.com

My very best wishes to you all and we all look forward to meeting with you all again in Hunstanton over the weekend of 29/30 October 2016.

John Wallington
Chairman
OMA

OOPS!

It is always a real pleasure to include a contribution from Michael Fleming in 'The Mitre' and, over the years, we have enjoyed the anecdotes and tales of life at St. Michael's from Michael that have tempted other OM's to contribute their memories. Michael was one of the 'Class of 1946' and has a clear memory of life in the very early years. Thanks a million Michael. Ed.



1st June 1953.....63 years ago! Trip to London for the Coronation.

The Brouche (a Studebaker Station Wagon capable of carrying up to 12 Michaelian's) had dropped off all of its passengers in The Mall. "Take the Brouche" said the

Headmaster. He meant for me to take the vehicle to an empty house in West London. (I think Mr Pott had a friend or relative in the Real Estate business) and this is where our party would be staying overnight and for the remainder of the week.

I drove off in some very heavy Coronation traffic, wearing my school cap (of course). The London traffic was bumper to bumper stuff!



I headed towards Buckingham Palace and into Constitution Hill. Suddenly, a truck pulled out of Palace Yard and locked horns with the Brouche. There was this horrible tearing noise. The wooden side suffered the worse and was heavily splintered. The driver of

the truck did not even stop and sped away. I managed to keep going onwards to the address in West London where I parked the vehicle and returned back to The Mall by the Underground Tube to link up with my colleagues.



I summoned enough courage to approach the Headmaster and explain to him what had happened during my short journey across London. He did not seem to register what I was telling him in fact I

doubt he heard one single word! At least, he did not seem as upset about the incident as I was!!

We spent the night on the pavement. It was not as uncomfortable and bad as it sounds. It had been raining for most of the day so the air was damp. Newspaper boys began to shout the main headline of the day, "Hillary climbs Everest – read all about it!". During the morning, as even more people arrived in The Mall, it started to rain again but nobody really cared. The rain stopped just before the start of the Coronation Procession on its way towards Westminster Abbey. We all stayed in place waiting for the return procession to pass by. I was there to witness every moment.



The Queen of Tonga was one of the Heads of State in the procession. Unlike many of the other dignitaries, she decided to keep the hood of her Landau down, even though there was some light drizzle, so that the spectators could see her. This gesture caused enormous cheering from the crowds. As the next processional carriage approached, the crowd noticed that the hood was placed down and, as a consequence, the crowds all started to boo. This was very puzzling to a 17 year old boy. It was only some time later that it was explained that this carriage was occupied by D F Malan, the South African Prime Minister. Apartheid was well and truly in place and the crowds showed their displeasure. Little did I know that Africa and mainly South Africa, was destined to be our home for more than 50 years.

By the end of the day we were all exhausted and we spent most of the evening in and around Trafalgar Square, but eventually we did make it back to West London and the house where we all bedded down on lilos on the floor. Needless to say, we all slept like babies!

Suddenly it was morning! The doors were thrown open and there was the Headmaster. He was not amused. He had obviously seen the damage to the Brouche. To make matters even worse, we had all slept without opening a window! A major crime had been committed! Since I was the most senior of the whole group, most of the attention of blame was centred on me. *“Back to Heacham, Michael, immediately”*.

I'll cut the rest of the story short. I was forgiven for the errors of my ways. Back to school to sit GCE exams and enjoy my last five weeks at St. Michael's School.

Those were the days.....

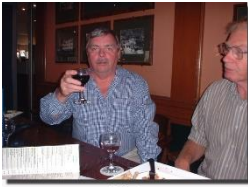
Michael Fleming 1947 – 1953

MUM OF THE YEAR



The Association offers huge **CONGRATULATIONS** to our very own Felicity Cole (nee Sutton) who was voted “Isle of Wight Radio’s **NUMBER ONE MUM**”.
“I am not too sure what feats of wonderment were expected of you but I am sure it was richly deserved. Well done. Ed”.

THINGS WE DID TO KEEP SANE!



It is always pleasing to hear from the OMAA at this time with a contribution from Les Roberts. Thanks Les. Ed.

'Life was fairly good as a Boarder at St. Michael's School provided you had the sense to ensure you "filled your time with amusing and interesting past-times". Cycling was fun cycling with Colin Ratcliff from Gresham House to The Shooting Lodge for breakfast and then attempting to race the school bus from Heacham to the school at Ingoldisthorpe.

The cross-country runs were too much for some of us so Mick Clarke, Rodney Crowfoot and I were always first out and up the hill at a sprint. Once we got round the bend, we would all dive into a haystack to hide from the following 'pack'. After 20 minutes we would all emerge from our hiding place, brush ourselves down and jog back down the hill and back to the playing field where we would present ourselves clearly out of breath!! Being an acolyte at church was another great scam to avoid school work. Going off with Roger Pott, Rodney Crowfoot as the second acolyte and Colin Ratcliff as the organist at Ingoldisthorpe Church on Sunday mornings. The Headmaster frequently forgot to take the communion wine and he would call in at the Manor Hotel for supplies. Electrical power was a continuing problem at the church and, during times of a lack of power, the acolytes were expected to manually pump the organ bellows. Yes, there was even competition to take into account even at the rear of the organ. Colin would select a piece of music that required lots of wind. The acolytes quickly took the 'wind out of his sails' by stopping pumping!! We all got the Headmaster stare. We also had to count the number of people making up the congregation including the two elderly ladies who always attempted to hide behind the pillars. "How many today, Roberts?" "Seven sir". "Do you agree with that, Crowfoot?" "Yes sir". I lost count of the number of times we forgot to include the two elderly ladies and/or forgot to include ourselves in the numbers!

My best 'lurk' to avoid school work was being asked to maintain the paraffin heaters in each classroom. As everyone will remember, these damn heaters frequently smoked. I would be called out of lessons and told by the Headmaster to take the offending heater away "... ..and get it fixed". I spent many happy hours in the outhouse pretending to fix them. Proof of my extraordinary work was the award of a prefecture. My leaving certificate states very clearly, "PREFECT IN CHARGE OF HEATING". So there! Another fun time was when the Headmaster decided we all needed to learn how to dance! The main attraction was that some of the local girls came along to Ingoldisthorpe Village Hall to join in this venture.

One such girl I remember was Lyla Green. I was even allowed to visit her at her home for afternoon tea. The dance lessons were a huge success until the Headmaster insisted that we needed more advanced lessons and insisted on taking the lead role for the Quickstep!

There were those occasions when authority came to bare. The Headmaster insisted that we all sat upright with straight backs whenever we were in the Dining Room. Listening to the 8am News bulletin at breakfast and then dreading your name being voiced and being invited by the Headmaster to relate on some important News topic. Fish pie on Friday. Revolting tea. Burnt toast.....I am sure there must a long list! But, it all made men of us!!

Keep smiling

Les Roberts (1956 – 1958)

CLASS OF 1946

“All Old Michaelian’s are some of the most amazing people in the World. As you all know, our annual publications are circulated to Members residing in all Continents and it is the only way we know to be able to keep the Old Michaelian Family connected and updated.

So, when I sent out a circular to the ‘Class of 1946’ I was clear in my mind that we could expect some response. On cue was the following article received from Hilary Bland nee Russell. Thank you so very much Hilary and equally, Thanks to your very obliging husband (secretary) Alan!

“I greatly enjoyed my time spent at St. Michael’s School, especially remembering Miss Low, a great teacher and a lovely lady. Highlights include trips to London in a bus driven by Roger Pott. On one occasion we stayed at a Hotel, what an experience that was!! The Headmaster also lent us his car to go to Norwich (very trusting) to see a Shakespeare play followed by a meal at a Lyons Corner House.

Six of us were caught behind the bike shed smoking one shared cigarette! We were deservedly punished for that! But, there was no punishment for me when the Headmaster heard my screams at finding a dead rat in my school desk and on another occasion a live grass snake. The culprit shall remain nameless..... but you know who you are!!!!

I greatly regret not being able to join you all at the annual OMA Reunion weekends and being able to share happy memories with dear friends and I will be with you all as you celebrate the 70th Anniversary of the Founding of St. Michael’s School. But distance makes it impossible and my fear of flying after a bad experience many years ago.

I hope you all have a great Anniversary Reunion weekend in October. Please remember me to everyone. I will be thinking of you all remembering you as teenagers”.

Hilary Russell (1946 – 1956)

CELEBRATING THE 90th BIRTHDAY OF HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN



It is with enormous pride that the Old Michaelian Association recognises and acknowledges the 90th Birthday of Her Majesty the Queen.

We wish Her Majesty a Very Happy Birthday.



Her Majesty's 90th Birthday Party this year will be a celebration of The Queen's life, her love of horses, her dedication to the Commonwealth and International affairs and her deep involvement with the Navy, Army and Air Force.



ANNIVERSARY OMA REUNION WEEKEND 2016



29 & 30 OCTOBER

Old Michaelian's who have attended previous OMA Reunion weekends will already be familiar with the general format of the weekend. But for those of you who are returning to NW Norfolk for the first time for many years, here are some information for you to note, especially the times... "So, *don't be late, boy!!*"

We are already aware that certain events during the weekend are likely to be full to capacity and so it is important that the whole weekend programme is timed to perfection and the Members of the OMA Committee will be working their soaks off to ensure that the timetable is kept strictly to plan.

Over the weekend of the 29/30 October 2016 the OMA will be celebrating the 70th Anniversary of the Founding of St. Michael's School by the Headmaster, the Reverend Roger Pott. It will be a weekend of celebration and fond memories led by our Association President, Simon Pott.

Saturday 29 October 2016

We encourage all Old Michaelian's to assemble at the Le Strange Arms Hotel, Old Hunstanton at lunchtime and acquaint themselves with 'old' friends who they may not have met for many years. The Oak Bar in the Hotel is a very acceptable meeting point for conversations and a spot of lunch if needed.

Members of the OMA Committee will be on hand to 'meet & greet' all OM's with particular attention made to making partners/guests of OM's very welcome.

It has been a tradition, stretching back many years, that the OMA Committee, under the direction of John King, arrange a fabulous photographic display in the Banqueting Suite for all OM's and their partners/guests to view. This display is really worth a viewing and we can guarantee that all visitors to the display will be fascinated by the many photographs available. Special 'Thanks' are directed to John King and his band of special helpers for making this display available to us all again this year.

18.

Lunch is available at the Le Strange Arms Hotel at various locations including the Ancient Mariners Bar and the Oak Bar. All of these locations are within an easy stride of the Banqueting Suite.

3:30pm The Annual General Meeting of the Old Michaelian Association will begin promptly at 3:30pm in the Banqueting Suite of the Le Strange Arms Hotel. On arrival each Member will be provided with relevant papers for the Meeting and it is our sincere wish that as many OM's attend this AGM and recognise the importance of this first official event of the Anniversary Reunion weekend.

The AGM is an extremely important part of the management of the Association and this is the opportunity for Members to voice opinions and praise towards our President, Chairman and Members of the Committee relating to the general management of the Association. You will also hear at first hand reports from the Treasurer and the Secretary and be given the opportunity to vote on the re-election of the principle Officers of the Association together with the re-election of all OMA Committee Members.

The Agenda will be as short as possible but we would reiterate how important this whole process is in assuring that the Association is managed in accordance with the Constitution.

After the AGM has been concluded, afternoon tea will be served and we invite all Members partners/guests to join us in the Banqueting Suite on this occasion.



7pm for 7:45pm We invite all Old Michaelian's, Partners/Guests to meet in the Banqueting Suite of the Le Strange Arms Hotel for our **Anniversary OMA Reunion Dinner**. This is always a special occasion over the Reunion weekend and, after registration and pre-dinner drinks, you will be invited to take your seats ready to enjoy a sumptuous Anniversary Dinner served to you by the staff of the Le Strange Arms Hotel. After the Reunion Dinner the ladies of the Committee will do 'anything' to tease huge wads of money from your purses and wallets in readiness for the Raffle of the Century. There will be plenty of time for good conversation and the after-dinner speeches have become very popular over many years.

No matter how late the evening entertainment stops you from retiring to your respective beds, you are safe in the knowledge that the Old Michaelian Association has negotiated with Central Government to re-set the Nations clocks BACK one hour. Thank God for the OMA!!

We are delighted to confirm that David Pleming will be joining us all for the Reunion weekend armed with his magical camera. So, can I suggested that the suit is given an extra press (all the ladies will look wonderful as always) and the smile is given a bit of a trial!!

The Anniversary OMA Reunion Dinner promises to be a very fine event and an opportunity for us all to scrub-up and dress for the occasion.

All of the OMA have worked very hard throughout the year to ensure that the whole weekend will put a smile on everyone's face and, without a doubt, the Anniversary OMA Reunion Dinner will be a wonderful evening of scrummy food, rich conversation and plenty of laughter.

The OMA Committee have always successfully negotiated the best possible price for our Annual Reunion Dinner and, this year, is no exception. We are offering this wonderful Reunion Dinner for just **£25 per person**. To make your mouth water with expectation the Le Strange Arms Hotel will be serving the following to our guests:

Starter: Salmon and chive Fish Cakes with lemon crème fraiche

Main: Braised Feather blade of Beef with potato puree, buttered Greens and a red wine and juniper jus

Dessert: Salted Caramel and Chocolate tart with fresh cream

For our Vegetarian guests:

Wild mushroom, semi dried tomato and Rocket risotto

There will be the obligatory after Dinner speeches from our President and Chairman and we also invite our guests to take part in this entertaining event during the evening. If you do have an urge to say something meaningful and entertaining, please let the Chairman know in advance and we will ensure you are allocated a slot.

It is very important that you ensure you have contacted our Treasurer Ruth Chilvers well in advance to book your place(s) for the Reunion Dinner and to pay for the Dinner in advance. At the rear of this publication of 'The Mitre' is a Booking Form and we would ask you to fill in the details and mail this, with your cheque, directly to Ruth as soon as possible. The last thing we want to happen is for a Member (with or without a partner) to arrive at the Reunion Dinner without a reserved place.

Sunday 30 October 2016

Recovering from such an enjoyable and exhilarating Saturday evening entertainment may be a little of a struggle for some of our guests and we really hope that the extra hour in bed will provide some help in approaching another day devoted to the **OMA Anniversary Reunion weekend**.

Many of our guests and partners (if not all) will be making their way the few miles to Ingoldisthorpe Parish Church in plenty of time for our OMA Anniversary Reunion Eucharist.

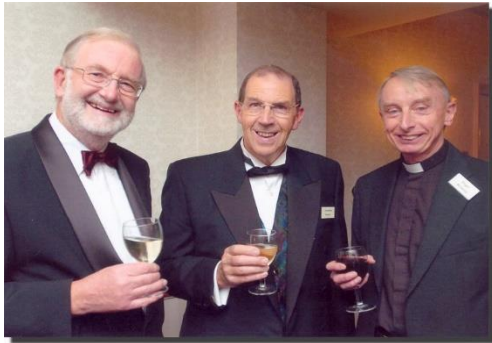
11:00 The Old Michaelian Association is once again indebted to the Rector of Ingoldisthorpe and the parishioners of Ingoldisthorpe to permit our Association to make full use of the church for the purpose of conducting our annual Eucharist and we really do hope that as many of you as possible will choose to join us again at Ingoldisthorpe Parish church on this important occasion.



Ingoldisthorpe Parish Church conjures up memories for many former pupils of St. Michaels School. This is where we met each and every school day for our school assembly.

St. Michaels and all Angels Parish church is a beautiful church set in some amazing grounds and it is here that we hope every pew will be filled to celebrate, in a more formal manner, the 70th Anniversary of the Founding of St.

Michaels School by the Headmaster and former Rector of Ingoldisthorpe, Roger Pott.



We are all delighted to confirm that our Anniversary Eucharist will be lead entirely by Old Michaelians and we can confirm that David Ratcliff will once again be our Celebrant at our Eucharist. Not only that, but Roger Wikely has agreed to Preach at our service. Both David and Roger have voiced their total support for the OMA and look forward to joining us all for the Reunion weekend.

If that were not enough, Jonathan Russell will also be joining us all in NW Norfolk for the weekend and will be playing the organ at Ingoldisthorpe Parish church. Jonathan wrote to me in May this year and promised he will be supporting the excellent hymns, selected by the OMA Committee for the Eucharist, professionally and robustly.

The ladies of the OMA Committee will be preparing and distributing light refreshments at the rear of the church after our Eucharist to all members of the congregation.

So, all in all, this is a big event and one that I am sure you will wish to add into your diaries and include into your fabulous OMA Anniversary Reunion weekend and will inevitably become a fitting way to end a wonderful weekend.

The OMA Booking Form, located at the rear of 'The Mitre' will enable you to easily make your reservation(s) for the Anniversary Reunion Dinner on the Saturday evening. Please do not delay, fill in the Booking Form as soon as possible and mail it to **Ruth Chilvers** and reserve your places. Please do not forget to include your cheque made payable to the **Old Michaelian Association**.

You can all be assured of a warm welcome in NW Norfolk.

GEOFF PRESTON (FORMER TEACHER)

As Editor of 'The Mitre' I am constantly amazed at the power of the Internet and the success our own Web Site (www.oma.org.uk) has developed and matured over the years. I fail to remember the number of former pupils who have been in contact with the Association as a direct result of 'finding' our Web Site and we are indebted to Bill Cullin for all of the work he carries out on behalf of the Association in this regard.

How delighted we all were when we were contacted by a former Teacher of St. Michaels School, by name of Geoff Preston who, not only is planning to join us all in Hunstanton in October with his wife Christine for our Anniversary Reunion weekend, but has also submitted an article for 'The Mitre'. A million Thanks, Geoff.

"Memory is unreliable, even fickle. After 50 years reality and fantasy become confused, so please don't take these 'memories' too literally.

What is not disputed is that the winter of 1962/63 was very very cold. The sea at Hunstanton formed icebergs and diesel fuel turned into a slushy slime. It refused to flow along pipes and as a result the school vehicles ground to a halt.



The two double-decker buses were the life-line of St. Michaels School. No transport... no school! When dawn broke one very frosty morning and the buses would not start, there was mild panic. However, the Headmaster had drilled into each and every pupil the importance of self-help, so scouts were sent out to collect matches (the known smokers had plenty), newspaper and kindling wood.



A 'selected' pupil crawled under one of the buses and lit a small fire using all the materials gathered. This procedure was repeated under the second bus and also under a huge diesel storage tank. The flames quickly licked up around the engine and fuel pipes and Muhklis climbed dutifully into the driving cab, pressed the starter and, to mass cheering from the assembled pupils, the engine burst into life. Cliff Wallington was also cheered roundly as he successfully started the second bus and both buses were driven away from the roaring fires beneath. The fire, now burning fiercely (probably out of control) around the storage tank, was successfully extinguished and the buses refuelled with free flowing diesel.

One of my favourite pupils was Fred who came from the East End of London. "Oim from Befnal Green Sir" he told me. Fred had an infectious smile and not a care in the World. He was growing fast and had befriended the school cook to ensure he was always at the front of the dinner queue!

"Me Mum runs an 'ostel for lorry drivers. We have ten stay some nights". He confided and added, "Oive had lots of fathers. One was a huge man and on me Mum's birfday he picked her up in the dining room and danced round the room with her".

"But my favourite 'Dad' used to drive to Scotland and he always brought me back a present when he came back. He was great!"

The weekends were time for football, netball and going to church and there was always some free time to enjoy. One Saturday evening I decided to explore the outbuildings and the barns where, in years gone by, the Parish Vicar would keep his horses. I climbed up a ladder to explore the loft area. As I peered into the darkness I swear I heard voices. I knew immediately I had stumbled across a little love-nest. I didn't know what to do. Plan 'A' was to descend quickly and pretend I had seen nothing but that became impossible when a familiar voice of "Romeo" addressed me. *"Hello Sir. I thought you were organising football this afternoon"*.

"No! It's too wet for football, it's been cancelled". I replied to give myself time to think.

"I think we had better have a talk. See you in the study in a few minutes".

I had no idea what I was going to say and when "Romeo and Juliet entered the study and sat down in front of me I blurted out, *"You know the Headmaster would not approve?"*

Romeo took a comb from his pocket and swept it through his Elvis style hair and looked me straight in the eye. *"Sir, you don't understand, Juliet and I are deeply in love and we are responsible adults"*. He smiled reassuringly and asked Juliet to confirm this statement.

Juliet responded, *"You know Sir, you really don't understand. Romeo and I have pledged to spend the rest of our lives together. We'll live in the country and have lots of children. We are so in love"*.

I started to sympathise and thought about the romance of young love. Simple, idealistic and uncomplicated. We talked. They explained. I was only a few years older but knew a little more about the World than they did. What, I wondered, would the Headmaster make of this?

"There's no need to tell the Headmaster" Romeo assured me, *"He has lots more important things to worry about"*.

"Look" I said hesitatingly, *"Be responsible and don't say a word to anyone about this conversation"*.

"There you are Sir. I knew you would see it from our point of view. We'll be sensible – Trust us"

They both got to their feet, gave me a smile and returned to the common room.

I remember many of the people at St. Michaels School including staff, pupils, local residents and the laughter in the staffroom. But overall, I remember Roger Pott. He was a remarkable man – indefatigable, visionary, charming and a lovely person. He gave so much. In the staffroom he would explain to us all his chaotic but extraordinary diary of future events while he stood gobbling down mouthfuls of lunch and it all sounded so normal while the rest of us felt very much like couch potatoes!

The Headmaster's energy was remarkable but the way he related to the pupils was his most outstanding skill. He knew the pupils and their backgrounds and treated each as he would if they were his own family. If a child was distressed he would give them a hug and a smile and make them feel loved.....and they were.

Roger Pott loved them all".

Geoff Preston

Thanks a million Geoff. We all look forward to welcoming both you and Christine to Hunstanton. Ed.

Our President – Simon Pott



Simon Pott

What on earth had The Reverend Roger Pott in mind when he took a few boys for tuition just about 70 years ago? I know he would be astonished to know that at the end of October 2016 would see the celebration of this amazing milestone, the 70th Anniversary of the Founding of St. Michael's School.

He was responsible for overseeing all of the various facets and development of the school during its various phases of growth. He would have relished the very thought that, in 2016, the Association would be preparing for yet another huge party at the Le Strange Arms Hotel.

How good it would be if some of the earliest Pioneers could return and join us all for this Anniversary OMA Reunion weekend towards the end of October and share with us their memories and stories of the Beginning mixed with the usual wonderful tales from the Middle Ages and bring us all up to date with reports from around the World.

Old Michaelian's are expected to arrive in Hunstanton from most continents for our very special Anniversary Reunion and a look at the OMA Web Site will reveal who has committed to attend.

www.oma.org.uk

The OMA Committee have worked tirelessly to ensure a fabulous attendance. Your very best response would be to join us all in Hunstanton over the weekend of 29/30 October 2016 and enjoy something that is unique in British Education. Oh yes it is!!

I look forward to meeting with as many of you as possible in October.

Best Wishes

Simon Pott

OMAA

Our Association is very lucky to continue to receive support from OM's from all over the World and one of the principle objectives of 'The Mitre' is to continue to communicate with as many of our Members no matter where they reside. It is a known fact that, over the years, many OM's have left the UK shores to seek fame and fortune living in Australia and New Zealand and, although it has sometimes been difficult to keep track of everyone, the OMA has relied heavily on the OMAA Members to keep 'alive' the spirit and communication between the OMA and the OMAA and it is my belief that this has proved to be very successful.

This year Robert Thomas and his wife Suzanne made the long journey from their home in Canada to spend vacation time touring Australia and, significantly, Robert was determined to meet up with as many OM's as possible during their tour. Not only was the objective realised but, I hope you will all agree from reading the following article, both Robert and Suzanne were well received during their tour. The following article was written by Robert Thomas and endorsed by many Members of the OMAA. Ed.

AN OLD MICHAELIAN IN THE SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE:

HAPPY REUNIONS AND GASTRONOMIC DELIGHTS

Sitting on the upper deck, sailing across the Equator in calm seas, heading back to North America, is the perfect time for me to share with you recent news of our fellow Michaelians whom I have just visited in Australia.

“Oz” is renowned for its pie shops of which one or more are to be found in every shopping precinct. They have been an integral part of Aussie life since long before Starbucks became ubiquitous in the Northern Hemisphere.

So it was at a pie shop that Bob Balfour and I, with our spouses, met between their home on the southern tip of mainland Australia, and where Suzanne and I were staying in Melbourne. Bob, as you can see (on the right with me on the left), is hail and hearty. His wife, Lyn, with whom he emigrated from Scotland in the early 60s and Suzanne, were gob-smacked at how Bob and I instantly connected, he and I reminiscing all afternoon about our St Michaels schooldays, our friends and teachers there and, of course, that enormous influence on our lives, Mr. Pott. All this despite the fact that Bob left St Michaels the term before my arrival so this was our first meeting!



Afterwards, we visited a dairy farm with Bob and Lyn: fascinating as they owned such a farm for many years before Bob pursued his career at a dairy co-op. Bob and Lyn invited us to their home in Cape Patterson several days later. There, former colleagues and friends called by and gave us abundant information to help with our upcoming exploration of the “Red Centre” and “Top End” of Oz. Bob and Lyn then drove us around the wonderful Philip Bay views, minutes from where they live. Afterwards, Lyn treated us to a sumptuous meal which she had prepared (see below). This we enjoyed with Bob and Lyn’s son, Michael, and his partner, Pauli.



It was not easy to bid a heartfelt “au revoir” to Bob and Lyn.

Two months later, after a 11,000 km drive up centre to the Top End (Darwin) of Oz and back down the east coast, Suzanne and I stood alongside Circular Quay in Sydney waiting expectantly for Richard Munge. How does one recognize someone whom one has not seen since St Michael’s 55 years ago? Richard provided a detailed description of something easy (his vehicle) to assist recognition! Yes, I knew him right away, but he admitted he had rather more difficulty

recognizing me! (Something to do with the distinguished, film-star looks I have acquired in maturity.)

He and I have corresponded since I “discovered” the OMA three years ago. It is remarkable how we each pursued similar careers: both in banking, first gaining important experience in English bank branches which we each valued; then, we now find, both receiving offers from the same Canadian bank. However, that was not to be. I headed west to Canada and Richard across the Equator to another bank in Australia. Our career paths within banking evolved differently but ultimately converged in that we each live some eight kilometers from the centre of the largest cities in our adopted countries: Sydney for Richard; Toronto for me. Also, how strange it was that I had visited Sydney many times on business and vacation, only now to find out that Richard was working in offices not far away and that he and I knew many of the same people because, at that stage, he was working globally with institutional / international businesses.

Richard scooped us up and drove us around parts of Sydney we had never seen and also the burbs with incredible views of the city and harbor close to his home. Now, I knew Sydney was beautiful but with the vegetation so green and the shrubbery it is truly spectacular. Richard is extremely active as a volunteer in the local community: golf club volunteer course maintenance leader; at the church where he is project managing the construction of the pastor’s new home; “disk jockey” for a weekly choral and sacred music program for a local radio network, which he shares with three others.

After the tour Richard took us to his home where we met Angela. They both hail from Kent and, for a short while lived in the same town, where they almost certainly frequented the same pubs. Nonetheless, they never did meet until they were both in Oztralia!

Angela put on such a lovely luncheon spread. I have never seen prawns so large in my life: they seem to have been on steroids - they were like small crayfish and you would think that with their huge size they would lose some of their flavor - not a bit of it, they were the most flavorful we Suzanne and I have ever had. Can you imagine sitting in a lovely garden, drinking our first bottle of champers surrounded by very colorful vegetation and wonderful company eating these things - pure heaven (see below).



The prawns came from the local fish shop which happens to be frequented by John Howard, a remarkable character who was Prime Minister of Oztralia for some ten years! Richard has a modest but impressive wine cellar and we tried very hard to make a reasonable dent in it!!! I won't tell you how many bottles he told us that he put out into the garbage at the end of our two days together!

Richard had arranged for us to lunch with two other OMs, Les Roberts and John Dring, the next day. We met at the Mooney Mooney Workers Club on the banks of the Hawkesbury River, and then the fun started. Angela and Suzanne were seated at the end of the table so they could talk amongst themselves but then they started hearing the school stories. Les, they learned, was the Prefect in Charge of Heating! He also said that he would volunteer for anything so that he didn't have to go to classes. He would go for the cross country sprints and he and three others would start at a great pace, round a corner where nobody could see them and then sit in a haystack or field whilst judging when the other runners would return, then start sprinting back and putting on a great show of exhaustion. John also had wonderful stories and had brought along photos from all the years that he was there. I have to say his remarkable journey to become an ordained minister is a testament to his faith and determination as is his ministry as pastor to several communities since his ordination.

Richard had a long old school photo, plus two cricket caps, which hardly fitted on our heads, and a school soccer scarf. With all this memorabilia we commandeered the table next to ours and loudly, with voices and much laughter, went down memory lane. Fortunately we were located outside on the club balcony. Before saying our goodbyes, we visited the nearby grave of another OM, David Winter / McMahan and his son, which Les Roberts has been carefully tending.



The next day it was another sad farewell, this time with Richard and Angela. They gave us a wonderful send-off. They were not allowed to board our ship but said they would be standing next to the right tower of Sydney Harbor Bridge holding up a black and white umbrella at 4 pm when we were due to sail. The rain was teaming down and it was getting rather chilly. We went on the upper deck around 3:30 pm and ordered a bottle of champers. Despite the rain, we were determined to wave goodbye to our friends who, we knew, were waiting for us to go – I suspect making sure we did leave (see below)! The ship didn't sail! Eventually el Capitaine came over the loud speaker to say we wouldn't be leaving until 6 pm. So Richard and Angela went home, but with the improved weather, Richard came back at 6 pm to the same spot with his flashlight. Now we had Richard and I "flashing each other" across Sydney Harbour as our ship sailed away. Our court case for flashing comes up next year!!!!



Sydney Harbour, of all the world harbours, requires champagne on departure. It is truly breathtaking to behold. I wonder how our mentor and teacher, Mr. Pott, reacted when he saw it all those years ago. Among his numerous experiences and qualities from whom we all benefitted, he was, at one time, as a "jackeroo" in South Australia, rounding up cattle and sheep on a ranch. How cool is that! Also we must not forget Miss Hayes Williams, Hatty to all of us, who told us so much about the big land down under.

To OMs north of the Equator, have a delightful summer. To our fun-loving, friends in the OMA down under where you have built a wonderful life in that magnificent country, thank you for great memories and culinary delights and keep warm these winter months! Cheers Mates!

.....

Lastly... ..lastly

It has been a real pleasure again this year to guide you..... carefully.....through this edition of 'The Mitre'.

To every one of the contributors.....a huge THANK YOU.

I would love to hear back any comments you may have on any of our publications so that every effort can be made to make our printed matter as relevant as possible.

In the meantime, all you have to do is find the Anniversary OMA Reunion Booking Form lurking somewhere at the back of 'The Mitre', fill out the details and mail it immediately to Ruth Chilvers to reserve your place at the Anniversary Reunion Dinner.

We all look forward to welcoming you all in Hunstanton.

Thank you.

John Wallington

Editor



OMA 2016 ANNIVERSARY REUNION BOOKING FORM

PLEASE RESERVE ME..... NUMBER OF PLACES FOR THE 2016
OMA REUNION DINNER ON SATURDAY 29 OCTOBER 2016.

Name:.....

Partners Name:.....

Address:.....

.....

Post Code:.....

Tel: No.....

Email address.....

If possible, please sit me with.....

I enclose my cheque (£25 per person) to the value of £.....

Please make all cheques payable to the Old Michaelian
Association. Thank you.

Please detach this completed form and send it, with your cheque,
to RUTH CHILVERS, 85 ELLIOTT ROAD, MARCH, CAMBS PE15 8BP

LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU ALL AGAIN.