

The Mitre 2007—Page 1

The Mitre



ommunicating with Old Michaelian's All Over the <u>World</u>

A Message from our President

Once again, I am delighted to extend a warm welcome to all **Old Michaelian's** to **'The Mitre'.**

After the astonishing **OMA Reunion** in 2006, preparations are well in advance for the 27 - 28 October 2007 at the **Le Strange Arms Hotel**, **Old Hunstanton**.

I suppose there were those of us who imagined that the Reunions might gradually subside with numbers drifting away leaving a hardcore of the 'old faithful' who would get together to embellish their stories.

Not a bit of it! Curiously the opposite has happened and each year a greater number of pupils of **St Michael's School** return and are delighted to find friends and colleagues who they may not have seen for 40 - 60 years. Far from the **OMA** becoming a shrinking violet, it continues to grow and new members are added to our Association on each occasion.

For those **Old Michaelian's** who have come before, I can tell you that the format will broadly follow what has happened over a number of years. For those **Old Michaelian's** who have not joined us before at a Reunion, I would urge that you make a huge effort because I am certain you will find the whole experience hugely enjoyable and rewarding.

I very much look forward to seeing you all at the end of October in Hunstanton and I hope you all enjoy a good and successful summer.

Best wishes to you all

Simon Pott President Old Michaelian Association



Visit us at: www.oma.org.uk

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Page 27 O M A 2007 Reunion Dinner Booking Form "Publication of 'The Mitre' would not be the same without a detailed account of adventures in Norfolk by Chris & Jose Gibbs. This year is no exception and this account of alternative places to explore will, I know, be of enormous interest to our readers."

.....and so to Norfolk, the big one.

Following on from last year's weekend, we again decided to travel up early. This time we had decided to explore King's Lynn. I don't think that we had been there since I had left. José had asked one of her (young) work colleagues who had lived there, "what was there to visit in Lynn?" "...nothing" was the reply! Well, I didn't believe that as I knew that it had a well-known ancient Customs House, big churches, we had sung in one of them once I think, and being a port, an extensive quayside and many little old streets.

We parked and followed the signs through the maze of the modern shopping precinct and then suddenly we were in the old town. We spent a little time looking around a museum that was in a converted church. It was now late afternoon and being thirsty we approached a small café, "sorry darlin', we're closed now!" Right, OK, thank you King's Lynn, that was a nice welcome! Alright, it *had* just gone 4 o'clock. Why shut at 4, there are still people around?

Anyway, undaunted we sauntered along the very pleasant rejuvenated quayside and found a welcoming café/gift-shop/ exhibition centre near the end in what must have been an ancient grain store judging by the size of the huge timber beams holding up the floors. Refreshed with tea and carrot cake, we made our way back along the narrow streets admiring the architecture, especially the Elizabethan town hall. We decided that we would have to come again and spend longer exploring the old town and its buildings and also look in the churches.

Back to the car then, having almost got lost in the modern shopping centre again! Onward to Old Hunstanton, slowly at first, as the traffic was heavy. We were staying at the Neptune, and had booked dinner there as well for the Friday evening. The food and service here is excellent. We shall be going back again even if just for the desert. Apple cheesecake with Calvados ice cream, oooooh yummy! Incomparable with the cold tasteless strawberries that we had the following night...

To burn off the calories we walked along to the Le Strange Arms and met David and Vera Winter and a few other Old Michaelians. After a drink and a good chat and some laughs we returned to the Neptune.

Where to go on Saturday? St. Mary's Old Hunstanton was very close and I vaguely remember coming here to sing at some time or other. Walking up the path and approaching the porch I spotted a familiar name on a gravestone- Geoffrey Muzio, and also his wife. I hadn't realised that he was vicar here for a time in the 50s and 60s. Many of you will remember him as a teacher and a few younger ones will remember Mrs Muzio as a teacher as well. The church is very wide and spacious with a lofty roof of fine timbers.

Returning to the Neptune and borrowing a guidebook from their excellent little collection, we headed off to Pensthorpe Nature Reserve near Fakenham via Heacham church which we knew would be open. Some reordering has taken place here. An altar has been set up on a dais under the tower, the main nave seats are now very comfortable chairs and the organ has been enlarged again with a rebuilt console in the south isle. A vaguely familiar face greeted us. Yes, Henry Townsend, who many will remember as a churchwarden, always present at fetes in charge of the PA system, and other things (!) electrical. He recognised that I used to play the organ. It wasn't long before I was seated and studying the new additions. Oh! 16' Ophicleide added to the



pedals. (Loud and bass trombone-like for those not in the know) I would have loved that in my time! Not having played for something like 25 years except for doodling on the piano at home I was a little apprehensive, however, my fingers seemed to make reasonable if somewhat boring music as they "wandered over the noisy keys". At least John King and Pat Dove- who suddenly appeared- thought so! And yes, I gave the pedals some stick with that 16' and also a 32' acoustic bass which is actually a very quiet purr.

Picture of the Norfolk Coast

.....and so to Norfolk, the big one.....Continued.....

Leaving the church and going past the Norfolk Lavender centre on the Sedgeford road, we headed off to Fakenham. A brief stop here to look around, then on to Pensthorpe. We had our picnic lunch in the car before beginning a walk around the reserve. All manner of water birds here. Some in large enclosed areas, others in the natural wild. Many types of duck which seem to just wander about risking being trodden on! Beautiful crested storks and two huge African Marabou with equally huge beaks. Dainty oyster catchers and avocets. There are many different paths that one can follow, through areas of open water or through woodland. We spent ages in a hide watching various members of the tit family feeding. Later, sitting on the veranda of a log cabin beside the river Wensum, we watched swans feeding on the



watercress. We could have spent longer, but it was time to go, but not without the obligatory cup of tea!

Back at the Neptune we finished off the complimentary sherry and prepared for the evening. Soon we were amongst old friends again, and were aware of some we had not seen for many many years. What a tremendous turn-out. There was hardly room to move and not enough time to talk to everyone. It was only after we had left that I remembered that we hadn't spoken to a few people that I knew should be there. The dinner came and went, the speeches came and went, and more chatter! After saying our goodbyes we walked back to the Neptune.

The next morning at breakfast we found Liz Hollands, one of my contemporaries, and Keith Colman and their party. More chatting, more catching up to do. So now to Ingoldisthorpe for the Eucharist. Another warm sunny day as we stood by Miss Hayes-Williams's seat in the churchyard. The church was packed, there were very few spares seats for the service led by David Ratcliff, with Roger Wikeley preaching and accompanied by Colin Ratcliff at the organ.

After the service tea and biscuits were served at the back of the church. More chatting! Soon we said our goodbyes and headed off to Snettisham beach. Well, we had not been on the beach yet and usually get a breath of fresh air on the beach just below the Le Strange Arms when we are staying there. Having come all this way from Margate we couldn't go home again not having had a little time beside the sea! It was still quite warm and very sunny. The tide was out and sandbanks were visible in The Wash. We sat on the beach and had our lunch. Suddenly out to sea a large "wave" appeared. My immediate thoughts were tsunami! But no, thousands and thousands of birds had just taken off from a sandbank. The sky was black with them. They rose up and spread out and as they turned their white undersides caught the sun. It was breathtaking. They swooped around then gradually settled further along. Several times this happened, changing colour as they turned and dived. Quite spectacular, we have never seen quite this many birds before.

We had booked ourselves in for an evening meal with our daughter and son-in-law at Bishop's Stortford - useful things daughters - so reluctantly we left the beautiful beach and headed south. Everyone else was too!

So when is the next big "do" then? Best wishes to you all and maybe see you next year.

Chris and José Gibbs.

"It is with much sadness and regret that I report the untimely death of an Old Michaelian. The following announcement was published in the **Eastern Daily Press** on 21 July 2006"



Morgan: On 15 July 2006 peacefully at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, **Gareth John Morgan** aged 60 years. Beloved son of Robert (deceased) and Margaret and much loved brother of Lois, twin brother Greville, Perdita, Juliette & Glyn. Godfather to niece Lucia and irreplaceable uncle to Sacha, Charlotte, Alexa, Amelia, Patrick, Sophia, Oliver, Adam, Alicia and Eleanor.

The funeral service took place at St. Margaret's Church, Kings Lynn on Tuesday 1 August 2006 and the Old Michaelian Association was represented by our Chairman **Ian Dupont.**

OLD MICHAELIAN'S CELEBRATE IN STYLE

Date: October 2006 Place: Hunstanton Event: Old Michaelian Association Annual Reunion

A he 2006 **OMA Reunion** was, without doubt, a huge success and I know I speak on behalf of our President, Chairman and the OMA Committee when I say a mammoth '**THANKYOU**' to everyone who travelled to Hunstanton to help us all celebrate the **Diamond Jubilee Anniversary** of the opening of St. Michael's School Ingoldisthorpe. Old Michaelian's from all over the World descended on Hunstanton and, not only filled The Palace Suite Bar area at The Le Strange Arms Hotel for our annual AGM, but also filled The Palace Suite later for our annual Reunion Dinner.

It would be unfair to mention individual people, some of whom travelled thousands of miles to join us, just in case in my excitement, I were to forget someone. Believe me, we are truly grateful to everyone who attended last October and help us celebrate in style.

Let me give you all some figures to think about. The Le Strange Arms Hotel restricted us to a maximum of 150 people sitting in The Palace Suite for dinner due to Health & Safety regulations. We managed to take this to its limit by sitting 147 Old Michaelian's and their partners! A true party atmosphere was created.

Let me, on your behalf, pay tribute to the Management and staff of The Le Strange Arms Hotel who conducted themselves in a very professional manner during the whole of the Reunion weekend but special thanks must be given to the Hotel staff who attended to us at our tables during the Reunion Dinner.

Our President, **Simon Pott**, conducted a very professionally organised raffle after dinner and ably supported by our Vice Chair **Geraldine Moorehouse**. Soon afterwards we were rewarded with a very special event. Our very own **Barbara Graville** had donated a Water Colour Painting of **The Rectory** at Ingoldisthorpe for auction and this auction was expertly and enthusiastically managed by **Simon** himself. After a very hard fought fight, the painting was eventually snapped up by **Jeremy Le Poer Power** for a huge sum of money.

As I said earlier, we were joined throughout the weekend by Old Michaelian's from all over the World including Australia, South Africa, Canada, USA and Europe. But, of course, the bulk of Old Michaelian's came from the United Kingdom.

The customary after dinner speeches were one of the highlights of the whole evening and we were ably entertained by **Simon Pott** with an explosion of memories involving the late Headmaster. We were also entertained by our very own **Les**



Roberts representing our Australian colleagues who was able to bring us up to date with Old Michaelian's down under.

Then it was the turn of the ladies. First we heard from **Rosemary Yarker** who spoke about Reunions in general and provided some fitting anecdotes. To this day I am not entirely certain whether or not **Peter** was clued up on what his wife was about to reveal because his expression was priceless. Next, it was the turn of **Evelyn Catterick** who amused everyone with her memories of culinary experiences as remembered also by her husband **Michael**.

A very special moment was remembered by everyone during the evening when **Simon Pott** expressed, on behalf of all Old Michaelian's, our sincere thanks to **Reggie Wood** and his wife **Pidge** for their devotion and support over many years to the **Old Michaelian Association**.

Thank goodness for that extra hour in bed on the Sunday morning. I think all of us

needed that. After breakfast I was hauled kicking and screaming for a bracing walk along Hunstanton beach by **Bob Hill** and then it was time for church.

Old Michaelian's Celebrate in Style...Continued...

I do not know exactly how many people St. Michael and All Angels Church, Ingoldisthorpe will hold but what I do know is that there were very few spare places to fill for the OMA Reunion Eucharist on the Sunday morning. I have not seen the church that full for many a year. The Celebrant this year was David Ratcliff and the Preacher was Roger Wikeley and tickling the ivories on the organ was our own Colin Ratcliff. There is always a moment at any major event when you are able to think back and remember a memorable moment that you witnessed or heard and for me, and I know for many other Old Michaelian's, it was when we were ably entertained during the Sunday Eucharist by Simon & Jenny's daughter Genevieve Pott singing John Rutter's "The Lord Bless you and keep you". To say that this was simply a stunning performance does not do justice to Genevieve and her beautiful singing voice. I know you would want me to pass on to Genevieve our sincere 'Thanks'.

The collection at the Sunday Eucharist, in aid of church restoration, came to a staggering £416 and I am as certain as I can be that the Vicar. The Reverend Geoff Suart, will want to invite us back again this year.

A truly remarkable Reunion Weekend and I know we all went back home with many memories and a host of names and addresses for our Christmas Card listing.

Thank you everyone who made the **2006 OMA Reunion** so eventful.

John Wallington **Editor** hinckleytowers@aol.com



HYPNOTISMsorry we apologise in advance for this joke!!!!



His funeral service will be held on Saturday.



"Michael Littler is one of the many Old Michaelian's who have been caught up in our Web Site. Michael is one of the original pupils of St. Michael's School and writes a very interesting article for 'The Mitre'. Welcome on board Michael."

Memories of my Days at St. Michaels School—By Pupil No. 2

For someone used to looking forward all his life, thinking back to my school days some sixty years ago is a little strange. My thoughts seem to lack very little educational content or people's names!

I had already attended a boarding school from the age of 8 years until my 11th birthday. My father died just after my 10th birthday and as my mother was bed ridden she could no longer afford to keep me at the boarding school in Market Rasen. Hence my arrival at **St. Michael's School** in 1946 listed and recorded as **Pupil No. 2** in the School Register.

I travelled to Heacham by train with a label hung around my neck. The Headmaster was at Heacham Station to meet us. I say 'us' because there were other children travelling on the same train as me who were not known to me at that time

I have no clear memories about my early days at the Shooting Lodge, I suppose I was concentrating all the time on the new rules which had to be obeyed.

I do remember The Rectory at Ingoldisthorpe and especially my first day. I remember the Rectory grounds even better especially the Greenhouse behind the Stable Block with the vines full of grapes which were very soon consumed - I do not think we even thought to ask permission!

Forgive me, I find it very difficult to remember fine detail so many years ago so I will recall what I can:

- Removing ragwort from the football pitch
- Avoiding the cow-pats while playing football
- Climbing trees and ripping my trousers in the process
- Waiting armed with a large snowball for someone to come through the Courtyard arch. Oh dear, it was Roger!!
- Lighting the oil filled radiators in such a way that they would smoke, thereby delaying lessons
- Playing cricket on a concrete pitch
- Rolling the Sports Field with this huge roller and testing to see how fast the thing would roll. We broke it.
- Being caned, well and truly, for breaking the Roller
- Learning that Hockey is a damned dangerous game
- Debating whether or not to hide Roger's canes
- Deciding to debate another subject
- Going down Snettisham Hill in the Morris 8 with a leaner driver in very icy conditions
- How did we manage to flip the car over into a field finishing upsidedown?
- Oh, did I forget to mention the fact that Roger was the front seat passenger
- ♣ "Silly Boy!"
- Kidnapping someone's chicken. Chopping off the head, plucking it, gutting it and then trying to cook the thing.
- Don't try this at home!
- Digging a cave in the sand near the Horse Chestnut Tree adjacent to the Shooting Lodge
- Catching Maybugs and putting them in the younger boys beds

On one occasion a group of us were walking down Beach Road in Heacham when we came across a derelict bungalow. We decided to take a peep. The garden was completely overgrown and in one of the outhouses we found an old Rolls Royce. We found an open door to the house and decided to explore inside. It was a young boys paradise. Every conceivable space was covered with objects of interest that seemed to originate from the Far East. One of our group tried some other doors leading from the kitchen and as he opened one of the doors there was a blood curdling scream which I still remember to this day. In my desperation to escape from the house I launched myself through the serving hatch which disintegrated under me. We ran as fast as we could not knowing whether of not the occupier had noticed our uniform and whether we would be reported to the Headmaster.



I was caned for a variety of reasons, certainly once per term. St Michael's School taught me rules for life. It taught me honesty, integrity, hard work and how not to get caught! It also taught me a sense of humour.

For the majority of my working life I was Managing Director of a Engineering Company. My first wife, Janet, and mother to my two daughters, died in 1993.

I met and married Lynn in 1995 just one day before my 60th birthday. I am now retired and both Lynn and I live on the Wirral.

One final point. Would anyone involved in the adventures I have described please identify themselves. I am sure our Editor would like to publish <u>your</u> version of events!!

Michael John Littler



Article from the Chairman

A warm welcome, after a spring that must have made all who retired to Marbella for a better winter, a bit sick to say the least, with much higher temperatures here and less precipitation.

Re-reading the Newsletter, I could hardly believe it myself, so I can understand if you found it difficult, all that bonhomie leaping off the page at you about the delights of the Diamond Jubilee Anniversary. Surely all those spotty- faced irks of a bygone era (error?) can't have turned into such enjoyable company, and if they have, don't you think it would be worth swapping lawn cutting one weekend in October? Of course it would! You could also include a walk along the beach at Old Hunst'on. And then perhaps the suave individual before you who's obviously seen a few summers, will be an Old Michaelian, wearing a name badge courtesy of Martin Graville and not a stranger! So, as long as you have the right specs on, and your memory is in reasonable nick, you should be all right.

If you have kept up with any of your old school friends, you could always turn up mob-handed, as it were, and take a table for the dinner, breaking yourself in gently to the general atmosphere of geriatric appliances and mothballs that may either trip you up or pong you out all weekend.

It's extraordinary what a cross section of years turn up and last year was no exception. We had number 2 on the school register (i.e.1946), all the years in between, and one from 1969 the last year the school was running!

So how about the weekend of October 27th & 28th. Make the effort to join us at the Le Strange...., sup a pint or what ever your poison may be at lunch time in the Mariners Arms next door...., walk through the sand dunes during the afternoon...., and join in the pandemonium which is the AGM. You could even help us complete the names in the blanks on the dozens of old school photographs which are being added to every year, and then in the evening enjoy the not too formal dinner.

The following morning after the clocks have gone back, see St. Michael's and all Angels once again in all its glory at Ingoldisthorpe. I hope this sufficiently wets your appetite for you to want to join us, because we'd be delighted to have your company.

Finally I must, on both your behalf, and mine, thank the committee for making it such a wonderful weekend, it doesn't just happen, but they once again waved their magic wands (load of fairies) and ensured we had a brilliant time. This doesn't mean we aren't open to suggestions for improving the weekend, we would be quite happy to tune it for an even better performance



Best Wishes

Ian Dupont

"You will recall that last year for 'The Mitre' we received a long and interesting article from David Jakobsson about his life in Germany and last year we covered the early years and, as promised, the article this year will bring us right up to date."

Go East, Young Man! (part 2)

Weimar - the early years.

Weimar was, and is, a cultural high spot in the Region having in its list of celebrated past citizens such important figures as J S Bach, Goethe, Schiller, Liszt to mention but a few. The list is long. It is a smaller town than Plauen and looks a less daunting place to live. Well, that was our first impression until we set sight of the house we would be living in. It was early 20th century and consisted of four floors. Our flat was on the third floor at the end of a gruelling 75 steps because no lift had been provided for the building. Believe me, Pickfords were not amused!

The flat was basic and that is all I would wish to reveal at this stage.

My office was on the ground floor and there were serious management problems associated with the existing owners of the building, who occupied the first two upper floors of the building, for example we were not allowed to use the front entrance of the building.

Besides all of these restrictions we did settle down into our new environment and I even managed to install a telephone extention from our private flat on the 3rd floor down to the office on the ground floor just so that we could operate our business activities relatively normally.

After a few months in business we were given the opportunity of buying the building which we completed without hesitation. Now we had the upper hand and now our existing neighbours, who were formerly our Landlords, were now our Tenants. We made some amazing discoveries. We found a fully equipped telephone exchange!

The telephone exchange occupied an entire room and was, allegedly, used to 'tap' every telephone in the town. We found plenty of evidence to support this theory. We also found a life size bust of Lenin, store rooms full of flags, GDR Party ephemera and award badges together with boxes of carbon paper, indelible ink and rubber stamps. We later discovered that this building had once been used by the Stasi (GDR State Security Service). Many times, while sitting in my office, I would notice passers-by habitually looking up to my window with apparent trepidation and now I knew why.

The streets were covered with ash and soot from the coal fires. The amount of dark grey smoke issuing from the chimneys had to be seen to be believed. Add to that the emissions from the Trabants and Wartburgs with their 2-stroke engines and it caused



an almost unbreathable atmosphere at the best of times.

The Russian occupying forces were still ever present standing on street corners making everyone feel a little nervous. They were now completely without an official role but they still made their presence felt in the town.

We never did get around to building that house. Building work in the Weimar villa, above and below us, rendered life impossible for us and we had to make some fast decisions to get out of there. We bought a run down house in the nearby town of Tiefengruben. Within a few months it had been renovated and we could move in. The good thing was that the house came complete with a barn and a stable block and I was able to quickly convert the stable block into a very satisfactory office for myself and my business. The stable block contains my office upstairs and below there is additional living accommodation that we use for guests. One of these days I will get around to converting the Barn into two very acceptable dwellings.

Okay Mr (Michael) White, here is the end of my 3000 words but I am not sure whether there is a beginning, a middle or an end.

David & Inge Jakobsson

How to know when you are getting old!!

Everything hurts What doesn't hurt doesn't work The gleam in your eye Is the sun shining on your bi-focals You feel like the morning after But you haven't been anywhere Your children begin to look middle aged.

You join a Health Club, but you don't go A dripping tap causes an uncontrollable urge You have all the answers, but nobody asks you

the questions You look forward to a dull evening. You need glasses to find your glasses.

Your House is too big Your medicine Box is not big enough You sink your teeth into a steak, and they stay there Your birthday cake collapses from the weight of all the candles!





You turn out the lights for economy instead of Romance You are in a rocking chair but cant make it go Your knees buckle but your belt won't Your back goes out more than you do

"I have been called a Male Chauvinistic Pig many times in my life, so I thought to myself "Why should I keep this all to myself". Here is a wonderful example of humour and certainly not to be taken too seriously!! "

A letter to Technical Support

Dear Sirs,

Last year I upgraded from Girlfriend 7.0 to Wife 1.0. I soon noticed that the new program began unexpected child processing that took up a huge amount of space and valuable resources. In addition, Wife 1.0 installed itself into all other programs and now monitors all other system activity.

Applications such as Poker Night 10.3, Football 5.0, Hunting 7.5, Beer Night 7.3 and Racing 3.6 no longer run and crashing the system whenever selected.

I can't seem to keep Wife 1.0 in the background while attempting to run my favourite applications. I'm thinking about going back to Girlfriend 7.0 but the uninstall program on Wife 1.0 does not work. Please help!! Thanks

A Troubled User

Dear Troubled User,

This is a very common problem that men complain about.

Many people upgrade from Girlfriend 7.0 to Wife 1.0 thinking that it is just a Utilities and Entertainment program. Wife 1.0 is an OPERATING SYSTEM and is designed by its creator to run EVERYTHING!!! It is also impossible to delete Wife 1.0 and return to Girlfriend 7.0. It is impossible to uninstall or purge the program files from the system once installed.

You cannot go back to Girlfriend 7.0 because Wife 1.0 is not designed to not allow this. Look in Wife 1.0 Manual under 'Warnings-Alimony-Child Support'. I recommend you keep Wife 1.0 and work on improving the situation. I also suggest installing the background application 'Yes Dear' to alleviate software augmentation.

The best course of action is to enter the command C:\APOLOGISE because ultimately you will have to give the apologise command before the system will return to normal anyway.

Wife 1.0 is a great program but tends to be very high maintenance. Wife 1.0 comes with several programs such as Clean and Pick Up After me 3.0, Cook Food 4.3 and Find the Bloody Obvious 4.3. Be very careful how you use these programs. Improper use will cause the system to launch the program Nag Nag 9.5. Once this happens the only way to improve the performance of Wife 1.0 is to purchase the following recommended software. I highly recommend Flowers 2.1 and/or Diamonds 5.0!!

WARNING!!!! DO NOT under any circumstances install Secretary with Short Skirt 3.3. This application is not supported by Wife 1.0 and will cause irreversible damage to the operating system.

Best of Luck Technical Support "The following article was sent to me by Les Roberts just after the deadline for the 2006 'Mitre' and as a consequence I was unable to include it. But I can this year. Thanks Les and say a fond 'Hello' to all OM's down under."

The Football Season

Remember those damp, cloudy days in the Winter term when we played soccer. 1957 comes to mind. That was a long time ago.

We changed in the "loft " above the stables at the back of the School. Into shorts, shirts , socks and lastly boots. Now these where real boots. None of your "Beckham specials" . These were made of thick leather, had reinforced toes, real leather laces and came up above the ankle for support. And they had real studs. Remember. A "bung " of leather almost the size of your thumb with four nails to fasten it to the sole of the boot. The ones in the heal where OK as there was adequate depth of leather to accommodate the nails. The sole was a different kettle of fish. This was a bit thin and unless you had access to a metal shoe hod they tended to leave you with the sharp end of a nail or indeed nails sticking through. These often where not noticed until one ran. Bit late then.

So, dutifully clad in your football gear, one trudged out into the cold mist and walked with head down along the back path, across the road and into the paddock that served as the soccer field. The clue was two sets of goal posts leaning at an angle. I say two as frequently one could not see the far end because of the mist so one assumed it was there.

One was then encouraged to run up and down the field to warm up. This encouragement from a prefect as the "referee" never turned up until the last moment.

Having done two lengths everything was now sodden, especially the boots. Even if you had applied copious quantities of dubbin they still absorbed water at an alarming rate and now weighed a ton each.

At this point the referee would appear. We all sweated – well not literally – as to who this would be. If it was dear old Henry Taylor we all cheered. He hated the situation more than we did and we could almost guarantee 10 minute halves. If it was a senior pre or the "Head Boy" we knew we were in for a standard game. If it was RP we knew we where in trouble.

RP would first get you all in a line and check if you had anything under your shirt – like to keep you from dying of cold. If you had you were told to "get that thing off, boy "fresh air is good for you.



Þ

Teams where picked or we had the House competitions. So we lined up in some vague fashion that looked nothing like the Manchester United or Chelsea formation. The whistle blew and off we went.

We started in the conventional manner with the centre forward passing the ball to his mate who would boot it up the wing in the hope the winger could actually see it and if very lucky get to the ball and put in the classic cross. This was the theory.

You may recollect that in those "good old days " we had "real " soccer balls. Real heavy duty leather rectangles stitched together with the obligatory four inch laced seam where one inserted the rubber bladder. This was then blown up as hard as possible, the bladder blow tube tied with string , stuffed into the seam which was then sewn up with a leather lace. The whole thing was then soaked in dubbin. You were supposed to kick this without breaking your foot and God forbid head the damn thing. The lace area could inflict severe injury. I think I still have scars to this day on my forehead.

We endured this game for 30 minutes each way if RP was reffing, 20 if it was a prefect and only 10 minutes if we had Henry. Thank you Henry!

We would then trudge back, covered in mud, bleeding in many places and with nails sticking in your feet from those "studs"

Cannot remember how we got clean. Think we just changed into our school gear and showered when we got back to the Lodge or Gresham House.

This was "making the man from the boy" taken to the nth degree.

The crazy thing was we did it every week, unless it was actually chucking it down. Funny thing was it never seemed to chuck it down on sports days. Just that awfully cold drizzle.

Thank you St Michaels for stiffening my backbone. I now have rheumatism.

Les Roberts 1955 - 58





Before Christmas '06 I received several communications from our dear friends Down Under. There did not seem to be too much festive cheer, just a load of sneering and joking about some cricket contest in the searing heat of an Aussie summer.

As you will see from the caption, and I refrain from publishing the name of the OM who sent this to me, it depicts a joyous group of Australian cricket players displaying a little pot!!



Oh Les, (whoops) you have been well and truly duped! It was always our intention to lose The Ashes series just so that when the series is replayed again in the UK we will really pull the crowds in.

Oh yes, one more thing. Sorry you did not win the One Day Series!!



Be afraid.....be very <u>afraid!!</u>

"Not more input from Aussie Land!! Just kidding Folks. It is always good to hear from OM's down under and especially from our dear friend Richard Munge. Here, he is disguised as a representative from the New Zealand Tourist Board. This is a great article and very well written. Thanks Richard."

Life at Leisure

In retirement, one of our aims is to travel, visit places both in Australia and around the world and take time to enjoy the richness that they have to offer. So, in the time that we now have, we begin thinking of where we would like to go many months ahead, research those places to ensure that we allow enough time to enjoy our stay. So it was with our trip to the New Zealand's South Island last October. Most organized tours to the South Island are for 10/12 days. Driving ourselves we considered 19/20 days would be more in step with our leisurely pace, thus enabling us to do what we like, when we like and organize specific tours along the way. For those who have not visited New Zealand's South Island let me say now – you should put it on your "to do" list. The population is about 1 million people and, approximately 20 million sheep, give or take a few million allowing for the fact that we visited during the lambing season. We had a great time, we were snowed in, rained out, blown all over the place, enjoyed many days of warm sunshine, met many interesting people along the way and the scenery is quite magnificent and diverse.

We flew from Sydney to Christchurch, collected our hire car and, after an over night stop, headed southwest towards the snow capped ranges. With so little traffic the drive was very relaxing across the Canterbury Plains, which are criss-crossed by rows of manicured trees that provide windbreaks for the many sheep and cattle. After about two hours we were already close to the ski fields of Mount Hutt. We continued driving south along the foothills to Lake Tekapo and Lake Pukaki that embrace the foothills of the Mount Cook region, with the majestic mountains forming a backdrop. By the side of Lake Tekapo is the small interdenominational Church of The Good Shepherd, constructed in memory of the pioneers of this region. The lake and the snow-capped mountains are picturesquely framed through the window over the altar, creating a stunning sense of infinity.

The next day we head to the coast and the Moeraki Marbles. These are large spherical concretions lying on the foreshore and formed over millions of years in the surrounding mudstone, when it was covered by the sea. Journeying further south we arrived at the university town of Dunedin that is noted for its 19th century architecture. Dunedin was settled in its early days by many folk of Scottish decent. One, William Larnach so liked the area and, following his appointment to head the Bank of Otago, built a castle in 1871 high on the Otago peninsula, about 12 kms east of Dunedin. We stayed a night at The Lodge in the castle grounds. Our room was themed in the Victorian style and luxuriously appointed with a spa bathroom as our en suite - a step or two up from The Shooting Lodge at Heacham in the grounds of Castle Pott! No paraffin heaters and no need to put on the wellies and plastic mac to go for a leak in the middle of the night here! Dinner that night was in the baronial dining room of the castle with 15 other guests – the ambience and food was far removed from that served at meal times in The Shooting Lodge!!. The weather that night turned foul. Rain, rain and more rain and a cold wind blowing from Antarctica. This was more akin to Norfolk weather!! Was I dreaming?

The Otago peninsula protects the port of Dunedin on the southern side from the Antarctic weather. Taiaroa Heads, at the very tip of this peninsula, is the only mainland home in the world for a breeding colony of the Royal Albatross. These majestic birds, which rely on constant wind currents for their flight, rather than flapping their wings, can land and get airborne with ease from this headland. Right in the middle of this colony is a relic of the First World War, a "disappearing gun". Don't worry folks this is not an extract from The Goons. This gun was installed to protect the Port of Dunedin and it was built in England by Armstrong and Co, Newcastle upon Tyne in 1886. It is housed in a pit below ground level and is elevated, with the help a hand pumped water / air ram, to fire a shot and then lowered for reloading. Of course, it did not take someone too long to work out its location. The resultant flash and smoke at the time of firing pinpointed its position. We later learnt this well preserved gun had never been fired in anger and became obsolete by 1912.

I digress. We have already passed through three distinct changes of scenery from the Canterbury Plains, the eastern snowfields and mountains and now, the sparsely populated craggy rolling countryside of the southeast coast. We continued our journey to Te Anau via Innisfail, the main most southerly town of the South Island and then westward across ranges towards the Fjiordland and its wonderful vistas. During this journey heavy rain fell and then turned to sleet reminding me of winter journeys to Ingoldisthorpe by the trusty St. Michael's transport system. Not since moving to this part of the world have I had to drive in this meteorological condition. It was not long before the snow line was at road level. Luckily, as quickly as this cold weather arrived so it departed as we descended to the beautiful lakeside township of Te Anau that was to be our home for the next few days.



Life at Leisure.....continued....

Before we had signed in at our motel, our host was on the phone making inquiries for bookings and getting an update on local weather conditions so that we could make the most of our stay. Within ten minutes our next few days were all organized. Some walks, an afternoon trip to the Glow Worm Caves across the lake and, on our last day, a trip to Milford Sound, one of the most written about and spectacular areas of the South Island. These plans turned out to be just right. More snow fell over night and the snowline had descended to the lakeside and the road to Milford Sound was closed. Our trip to The Sound, with six others in a small coach and then by luxury motorized yacht, was all that had been promised and augmented by our local guide who had spent his lifetime in the area. Although the sun did not shine, we were treated to countless spectacular waterfalls, deep glacial valleys with peaks rising way above the snow line. As we gazed at this scenery we were told that over eight metres of rain falls every year in this region, just what we needed in drought stricken Australia. Each waterfall was different and fuelled by the recent rains and melting snow. Twice, the skipper skilfully manoeuvred the bow of the yacht into the cascading waterfalls so that we could get up real close and personal with the ice-cold torrent. I remember learning about glacial valleys from Miss Hayes-Williams who, come to think of it, could be partly responsible for me now residing this side of the world. Thank you Hatty.

We left this rugged part of New Zealand and headed north towards the skiing centre of Queenstown that, in recent times, has been made famous by the film Lord Of The Rings. This lakeside town had much more bustle about it. Many backpackers, very cosmopolitan with groups from Japan, China, other parts of Asia and Europe visiting points of interest. This global aspect was very evident from the varying and number of restaurants offering different cuisines and foreign language signs in shop windows. Here there were lake cruises, walks, jet boat tours, a skyway lift and all the trappings of a mountain resort. We left Queenstown and headed northwest to the Fox and Franz Joseph Glaciers via the historic mining town of Arrowtown and a ravine where some younger folk were bungy jumping - not for the faint-hearted. Leaving the sun and warm climate of Queenstown grey skies appeared as we drove over the Haast Pass towards the west coast. The rain was torrential and it seemed as though the eight metres we had been told about earlier was falling in one afternoon. We checked into our next hotel only to find out that some of our planned walks would not be possible due to washouts and flooding. What do we do now? As always, get on with it – this is the plus side of organizing your own schedule, you can easily change plans. After continuous heavy rain for about 18 hours, the next morning the clouds started receding up the mountains, so it was off to the glaciers. We were rewarded not only by blue sky, but also the spectacular blue and grey of the glacial ice and some avalanches of snow and rock loosened by the rain. Our planned helicopter flight to land and then walk on the glacier was cancelled in view of the changing weather conditions, which was a pity. Ah well, another "to do" in the diary for the future.

We continued north, along the western coast that provides some great scenery and, a different road sign "Beware - Penguins next 15 kms". There were none on the road but some were in the rocky enclaves by the beach. This very treacherous coastline is a graveyard of many sailing ships that floundered here in rough weather during the years of early settlement in the 1800's. There is particular evidence of this with plaques / monuments at the harbour entrance at Hokitika, a town now noted for its jade, jewellery manufacture and as a small fishing port situated at the mouth of the Arahura river. Further north we were treated to yet another spectacle, Punekaki Rocks, otherwise known as Pancake Rocks. A walk along the cliff top provided us with information on the rock formations and how they have been weathered into the sight we now see. Just like layer upon layer of pancakes, but in rock.

After a night stay at the small industrial town of Greymouth, we head northeast, across many ranges, through valleys and across rivers to the town of Nelson. This is not a route for the faint-hearted. Driving along narrow roads hewn out of the sides of glacial valleys and certainly no way for a double-decker bus, notwithstanding the skill of the late RP for taking



the school transport most places!! In Nelson we checked into an English Tudor styled hotel The Honest Lawyer – no correspondence will be entered into regarding this possible oxymoron!!! This is the main industrial town of the region and close to the port of Picton where one can board a ferry for Wellington and New Zealand's North Island. This area is also noted for its wines. There are many vineyards along the roadside all offering cellar door sales and tasting. For our palate they produce excellent white wine varieties and some lighter reds – no real heavy reds that can be found in parts of Australia or France.

Life at Leisure.....continued....

By a different route, partly along the whale, dolphin and seal habitated shores of the Southern Pacific Ocean and, via the spa town of Hanmer Springs, we make our way westwards back to Greymouth to return our car and board the Tranz Alpine train to Christchurch. This spectacular train journey takes about five hours to travel 250 kms from the west to the east coast of the South Island. As the train slowly climbs the varying gradients there are many "Oohs and Aahs" as different mountainous scenery comes into view. Eventually we enter the 8.5 kms long Otira Tunnel. This took some 15 years to excavate / construct and is the longest train tunnel in the southern hemisphere but, in just 20 minutes on this train trip, we emerge on the eastern side at the stop of Arthur's Pass, the highest rail station on the South Island at 737metres above sea level. The rest of the journey down to Christchurch is across many high pasture areas and four viaducts that enable the train to traverse deep ravines and work its way down and along the side of steep rock faces to the Canterbury Plains and eventually back to Christchurch.

In Christchurch we organized tours to visit the Antarctic Centre (a most informative experience), a trip around the city and, a bus / cruise tour to Akaroa, a small French influenced town (reflecting earlier settlers) situated on the shores of a crater lake of an extinct volcano. A really sensational sight when viewed from high on the crater rim. Enough said, our holiday was at an end and after a few days in Christchurch and travelling about 3,500 kms around the Island, it was time to go home after a most enjoyable 20 days.

Well my friends, if you do plan to visit New Zealand you can experience all this, and more, for yourselves. If you do, do not forget to come and see some of the OM's in Australia while you are in this part of the world!!! Come to think of it, there must be some OM's in New Zealand? Perhaps we could enlarge OMAA to become OMANZA?

My best wishes to you all and that is it for now, Richard Munge, Sydney, Australia

Snake Joke!!!!!

Two snakes were talking and one snake asked the other snake:

"Are we poisonous?"

"I don't know mate, why do you ask?"

"I've just bit my tongue!"



Hello Folks

Hello Folks,

Here I am back home again feeling slightly jaded and rather unsettled. My mind is still going over everything that happened during the Reunion weekend. What a truly magical time it all was. From the moment I walked through the front doors of the 'Le Strange Arms Hotel' I was transported back to the past and stayed there like '*Alice Through the Looking Glass'* until I walked back out of those doors on the Sunday morning.

Everyone looked so wonderful and not a Zimmer frame in sight. All your memories so vivid and sometimes just a little too vivid for my liking! Conversations flowed freely as if we had never been apart. It was not quite as romantic as it had once been, ie.....the best treatment and cure for Haemorrhoids and how to live with a Prolapse were discussed in depth. There was also a very lively debate on whether or not I should wear the 'Magic Knickers' I had bought from M & S. After much discussion and some terrifying stories I was advised against this idea because I was told that they make your ankles swell!! Needless to say, my ankles did not swell but I did have to breath in twice as hard during the Reunion dinner!

This year I relented and allowed my husband John to join me in Hunstanton. He enjoyed every moment of the weekend but now believes that I must have been quite a 'raver' during my school days in spite of all the strong denials. You all made him feel so welcome and he now knows what St. Michael's School meant to us all.

It was a very special evening with so many people brought together at one time and at one place. Some people I had not met before but that did not get in the way of instant friendship. There were no tensions, no difficult silences, just a feeling of belonging and of true friendship.

This is what Roger Pott gave to me and what I sometimes miss in every day life. I have many friends but not quite the warmth that Old Michaelian's seem to exude in abundance.. The years may pass but still the closeness stays and will be inside me for the rest of my life.

Thanks to all of you. Good luck and God bless Felicity

PS (A gem from my Grandaughter Ellie aged 8 years)

"Grandma......you know that cream Mummy gave you for your birthday, you know, the one that is suppose to make you look beautiful in two weeks?"

"Yes".....I reply slowly "Well.....Ireply slowly Don't you just love them? Bliss. My euphoria is complete!!



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"Another very welcome article from one of our Aussie colleagues. Do you think there is any danger that Australia may take over the World one of these days? No, neither do I. A warm welcome to John Curtis who is new to our Association but who holds the distinction of being one of the first pupils to grace the corridors of St Michael's School. Over to you John......'

Thoughts of a Senior Citizen

As a pupil on the opening day of the School, I feel slightly privileged to have been there at all although, to be honest, I cannot remember exactly how many pupils were there but I would guess no more than 70 in total.

I recall the overgrown garden and the wonderful school lunches. Fish pie was great if you liked fish concealed in baked beans or mashed potato.

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This reminds me of one lady who worked in the kitchen and maybe the Girls boarding house. Her name was Susie Godfrey. She was a friend to all of the pupils and later I married her God Daughter. Sadly, Susie died not so long ago aged 100 years. Back to school memories.....

As a day boy living in Kings Lynn my brothers and I caught a red bus at 7:30am for the 30 minute ride to Ingoldisthorpe and the walk up the hill. I clearly remember the winter of 1947 which was extremely harsh. As we waited for our bus in Kings Lynn another bus came along, hit a patch of black ice on the road and did a flawless 360 degree spin. My mother who was waiting with us decided we should enjoy a day off school because it was far too dangerous to travel!

An alternative mode of transport was the bicycle and during the summer months it made a welcome change to ride to school instead of taking the bus.

Later, as an older pupil, there was the other joy of arriving early at Ingoldisthorpe and preparing the oil filled radiators. This job was undertaken with an enormous amount of risk since the antiquated equipment tended to smoke out the whole room if not supervised.

There was other fun and games for the curious young pupils who arrived early. Explore the hay loft over the stables which were used as cloakrooms. Climb the ladder into the roof space and onto the roof and keep a watchful eye out for the boarders arriving for the school day. What was kept in the basement? I happen to know but do you? Oh yes, and all of those trees to climb. The top of the big pine tree was always on the list of trees to climb.

Who remembers the school sports teams?

Football and cricket. And being taken to play these games at away venues and travelling in the Ford V8 Pilot Station Wagon was exciting for all of us especially the straight road between Castle Rising and South Wootton. I remember on one occasion we reached the staggering speed of 70mph and still the passengers wanted more!!

Do you remember when the old tennis courts were cleared of weeds and thistles and the installation of the two concrete cricket pitches? A dangerous place to field as I found to my cost when the Headmaster was batting and I was fielding at silly mid-off. I suffered a broken nose for my pains! (Silly boy!).

I cannot resist a comment or two about cricket as I sit at my keyboard typing this little article. It is only two hours ago that Australia went 3 - 0 up in the recent Ashes series. (Here we go again. You just could not resist mentioning it could you John) There are so many great memories of my days attending St Michael's School. The school choir and the visits to Norwich Cathedral and the excursion to the Festival of Britain (1950?). Singing at a Society Wedding in St Margaret's Church Westminister. Oh, happy days.

Enough of this memory test. It makes me realise that time has slipped by and 60 years has passed without really realising.

I wished I had known about OMA activities before because I may have made it to the Anniversary Reunion but I will savour that for another time in the not too distant future.

My regards to all who were my Fellow Pupils

John Curtis (1946 - 1953)

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A day for a Boat Ride?

It is a mostly sunny day and the 25 or so minutes trip across the James River to Surry (and, yes, it is spelled without the "e") is a pleasant one. This car ferry, which runs between Jamestown and Scotland, is the only free ferry in the State of Virginia and is part of the road system. Today, I am thankful that the waters are calm!

This trip with my brother John, has purpose, for it entails a visit to the town of Smithfield - after which the famous Virginia Hams are named. Smithfield is a town I have wanted to visit since I was sent a Newspaper article by the late **Anna Godfrey**. Little did I know then that I would end up in Williamsburg which is just a short distance from Smithfield and shares this part of southern Virginia. The article, which appeared in the King's Lynn Citizen in 1997, was written by Jo Gardner following a contact with a Barbara Cook and concerns an organ which used to reside at **Hunstanton Hall** – the latter now mostly derelict, I understand. (Well, nearly right Bruv. I did get a chance to visit the Hall last October with Flip, Bob Hill and Martin Coats and some of the Hall has been preserved and two wings have been converted into living space).



The rare Tudor organ, made by Bernard Smith in England, with wooden pipes

dates from around 1630 and has become the 'jewel' of St Luke's Church, Smithfield – known locally as "Old Brick Church" - which is the only original Gothic church and the oldest church of English Foundation in America. St Luke's Church is an Episcopal church which, in English parlance, translates to Anglican. The organ, which has had its beautifully painted doors restored is now in the National Shrine of St Luke's.

As the story goes, the Hunstanton Hall Estate was sold by auction in 1949 and the organ was part of that auction. The organ. listed in the Le Strange family inventory of 1630, was sold for £500.00 and thence transported to Virginia. Quite how and when no one is sure but, it seems, the organ may have arrived in Smithfield when the Church was restored in 1950. Its history only came to light when an historian from the Smithsonian Museum in Washington D. C. came to advise on restoration. The foot bellows (for it is more like a Harmonium) are in poor repair after some 400 years but, if they are repaired or replaced the



organ will no longer enjoy the status of being an Antique.

A piece of music especially written for the 1630 English Chamber Organ by Doctor Daniel Pinkham of Massachusetts was performed in St Luke's Church in June 2006. (I presume that some sort of special electric device was used to produce the wind for the ancient instrument!)

St Luke's Church itself was built around 1632 in Warrosquyoake Parish which is today's Isle of Wight County. It originally served around 522 residents by 1634 and the General Court of the Colony of Virginia was permitted to convene in the Church. Today, Weddings, Baptisms and other special ceremonies are held at the Church and, on the fifth Sunday of the month an Episcopal Service is held. To quote from the Church vistor's guide: "Thus the 'Old Brick Church' endures – a continuing symbol of American History."

Many Thanks

<u>Cliff and Janet Wallington</u>

"The Association resumed its long term acquaintance with another 'Old Boy' just a couple of years ago and since then **Jeremy Spalding** is beginning to be part of the furniture! This is a fascinating insight into just how one individual can cram so much into one lifetime. Welcome back Jeremy and don't let another year go by without you making an appearance at the OMA Reunion."

Not another Prodigal Son!

My name is **Jeremy Spalding**. I like to think of myself as a "Prodigal Pupil". I left St Michael's School, after six 'formative' years, in the summer of 1953 just months before the first tentative buds of the Association peeped shyly from the good earth of North West Norfolk.

Blissfully ignorant of the activities of Mr Pleming & Co. I flew off to the stars, via a Grammar School in Sussex, a sixth Form College in Norwich, a University in Scotland and lived through the 'Summer of Love' the Vietnam War (Yes, I did manage to avoid the Draft) Watergate and spending my untamed youth in 'The Land of the Free'. During my time across the Pond I also learned how to ride and rope calves (Yee Ha!) *Yes, okay Jeremy. We get the picture. JW.* Learned to ski in Colorado and got paid to play football for the Denver Continentals in the 'Mile High Soccer League'. *Don't you just hate people who are so good at everything? JW.*

I then returned to respectable citizenship and fatherhood in Norfolk in the late 70's.

Fifty years on, after retiring in 2003, I made landfall again in Ingoldisthorpe to seek out an old classmate whose vitriolic tirades against Her Magesty's Government I had spotted in the letters pages of the Eastern Daily Press. I assumed, correctly, that the good Lord would not have inflicted TWO **Michael Vawser's** on us. Thus I came to be standing with Mrs Vawser watching Mike's car come up Ingoldisthorpe Hill. "**Great scott**" I said to Mrs V. "**He looks just like his father!**". Anyway, my meeting with **Michael Vawser** after fifty years alerted me to the existence of the OMA with a promise of further information in the mail and news of another old chum, **John Wroth**, was back living in the old family home in Docking.

The next day I went out into the highways and byways of Norfolk in search of John. Our first exchange of words when we first met was something along the lines of: "Good God. I would never have recognised you if I had passed you in the street".



To which John replied: "I would have known you anywhere - you look just like your father!".

So, a few months later I made the relatively short journey from my home in Norwich to the Le Strange Arms Hotel in Hunstanton and what a wondrous sight befell my gaze. There were laconic ferry captains, animated garage proprietors, lugubrious garden centre owners, humorous auctioneers, weather beaten North Sea oilmen, pipe smoking potentates and even a lady who remembered the deep munitions store that we slept in when the school party went to London in 1951 for the 'Festival of Britain'. Home at last!!

Hands up those of you who remember their first meeting with the Headmaster. A veritable forest of hands no doubt!

My first encounter took place at the Shooting Lodge in the late summer of 1947. The Headmaster had given my parents and I 'the'

tourof the facilities and prior to them handing over their little pink son to this man's care, Roger leaned forward, bent down and looked me straight in the eye and said: "And do you have any questions to ask, Boy!?"

I had rehearsed this moment many times before so I was well prepared: "Please sir, am I allowed to listen to Dick Barton, Special Agent?" I never do remember ever seeing the Headmaster so open mouthed and speechless ever again. Needless to say, the dramatic nightly radio serial was NOT on the school curriculum!!

Not another Prodigal Son!....continued....

The dreaming golden days of an idyllic childhood rolled serenely on into the second half of the 20th century. What am I saying? this is St Michael's School, not Brideshead Revisited!

By 1951/52 my classmates and I had mastered the conker trees on the top bank where the school grounds met the arable field of the local farmer. It was break time and we were dressed in shorts and vests ready for the approaching PE Lesson. We burst out of the school building and swarmed up the first conker tree like Blackbeard's crew up the rigging of the 'Queen Anne's Revenge'. The unseemly haste proved to be the undoing of one young lad and losing footing, grip and dignity I plunged head first towards the ground below. Undoubtedly, leaves, twigs and small branches broke my fall as did the leaf mould and vegetation on the ground saving me from some deforming injury and the school from litigation. Gales of laughter followed my progress from tree to ground (children can be so cruel) and I landed in a heap and somewhat dented pride. My ordeal was not entirely over since the vegetation patch contained an abundance of stinging nettles and, boy, where I received the stings only I am able to remember but never to reveal. By now all of the 'Apes' had descended from the tree and were stood around me howling derision. I was forced into the only action I knew......I screamed and screamed and screamed. Eventually a

school master appeared from the school, strode fearlessly into the nettles, scooped me up into his arms and carried me off in the direction of the school and into the safe and comforting arms of Matron. I had the last laugh though. I was able to miss lessons for the remainder of the day and I received a gentle rub-down by Matron of calamine lotion. So there. How cruel some boys can be but I have a long memory. I KNOW WHO YOU ARE!!

So here are just a few memories I recall of my early life at St Michael's School. A school that undoubtedly leaves an indelible mark on the lives of **Old Michaelian's.** Where else could a 12 year old gain the working knowledge of gang mowing a sports field, daisy chain construction, drain rodding, Egyptian embalming, macrame, egg blowing, snorkelling with reeds, car maintenance, orienteering in London with only sixpence in his pocket and choral singing.

Bless you St Michael's, we will never see your like again.



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Jeremy Spalding

FOR ALL YOU SUDOKU FANS OUT THERE.....

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"Last year I published a very amusing article written by **Robin Batchelor** entitled 'ello 'ello. Well, I am delighted to say that **Robin** has contributed some more revealing and amusing tales of his time working within the Police Force. Thanks Robin - please keep the stories rolling in. JW"

Tales from the Constabulary

1. Driving a Police Car

In the dim and distance past, having completed nine years service in the Metropolitan Police Force, I received an instruction from my Superintendent to attend a Standard Car Driving Course at the Force Driving School in Hendon. The upside of all of this was that I would be attending the best driving school in the country......for free!! The downside was a journey from Sidcup in Kent to Hendon in Northwest London.

The course was to last five weeks driving to all points on the compass six days per week. This resulted in a classification of 5 after a successful final drive. Subsequent driving courses at 6 months and 1 year reduced my classification to 3. But this still allowed me to drive most police cars.

The Class 3, or Intermediate Course of two weeks taught me how to drive and overtake at high speed. We used 'S' Type Jaguars and a 3.5 Rover Coupe and during the course I quickly had to learn all about commentary driving. At 30mph

everything sounds quite relaxed and audible, but at 100mph I began to sound a bit like Stanley Unwin!! The very first time I reached 100mph I have to admit the effect went straight to the pit of my stomach.

It is 2am in the Greenwich area of Southeast London and I am driving a Austin Allegro Panda Police Car back towards the Police Station for my refreshment break. A Ford Cortina pulls out in front of me without any lights and I give the customary flash of lights but receive no response. I stay on his tail and as we turn onto a main road I notice a puff of smoke from the rear of his car. A tell tail sign that his right foot has hit the floor. The chase is on. We reached speeds of between 50mph and 70 mph heading towards Deptford. We headed into Creek Road and towards a hump back bridge. Still in pursuit I vaulted the bridge and as car and driver landed on the other side, dust



and all kinds of rubbish hit me straight between the eyes. The pursuit continued and after another 3 miles the Cortina entered a Council Estate and drove straight into a private garage. The only thing that the young driver had not accounted for was the fact that the garage doors were closed and there was another car already in the garage!! Four teenagers were duly arrested that night.

It is the middle of the afternoon in New Cross and I am driving a 'S' Type Jaguar. My radio operator is a uniform officer and there are plain clothes observers sitting in the back of the car. We received a call to respond to a PC who required urgent assistance. We were only three miles away but it still required me to put my foot to the floor. We must have been travelling at about 60mph through heavy traffic with our siren turned on and the blue lights on. (Actually, in those days it was a single blue light on the roof of the police car). Immediately in front of us is a Morris Traveller travelling in the centre of the road and indicating that he/she intend to turn right. I skilfully line up my car so as to pass him on his nearside. He sees me in his rear view mirror and starts to move to the left. Everyone in the car held on to whatever there was to hang on to and together we took a good deep intake of air. How we managed to get through that gap I will never know. Oh yes. The urgent call to assist a PC? It turned out to be a bogus call.



It is now early evening. I am still driving the same 'S' Type, I still have the same crew on board but it is now a different day.

The call we receive is to assist at an on-going burglary. We were approximately 6 miles away. Same situation as before. Siren turned on and single blue light flashing. We were very near our target address and it was necessary for us to negotiate some traffic lights at the bottom of a very steep hill. As we approached the lights they turned to red and I applied, or I thought I had applied some heavy braking but.....nothing happened! Imagine approaching a major intersection with your right foot heavily engaged in trying to control the speed of the car and nothing, and I mean nothing, was happening. We sped across the junction at enormous speed without a scratch. However, even though

my crew did have to return back to base to change their underwear, not before we had reached our target address and arrested 2 burglar's on the spot.

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How is it that some people can be so stupid in life? This is my last story this time around and it involves the time when my colleague and I were following a very old Austin Cambridge that was travelling at 5mph. We were obviously curious and so we decided to have a chat with the driver. Nothing that we did next could bring our presence to the notice of the driver. He was completely oblivious of our being there. Siren blasting, blue light flashing and even my colleague shouting at the top of his voice did not seem to have any effect on the driver of the Austin. Eventually, we did attract his attention and he stopped his car right on the crown of a bend. For reasons of safety I carefully parked the Police car in front of the Austin. The driver was so drunk he could hardly walk and he was duly arrested on the spot and put into the back of the Police car. We then had the task of securing the Austin and moving it to a much safer position on the road. My colleague jumps into the car and gently engages reverse and the car starts to move. The look of horror on his face was priceless because he quickly realised that the Austin had no brakes whatsoever and the only obstacle in the way was......the Police car! I just managed to jump clear before the two cars collided. Ouch!! It was only when we eventually delievered the man to the Police Station that he told the Duty Officer why he drove so slowly. Yes, you've guessed it, *"My brakes don't work!"*

Real life is stranger than fiction.

Robin Batchelor



Dear Old Michaelian's

In this year's **OMA Newsletter** we mentioned in one article how generous **Old Michaelian's** are and always have been.

Over the years, there have been many examples that emphasis this point, and previous and present **OMA** Committee Members have always and will always be delighted to receive help, in whatever way it is offered, to ensure that the **Old Michaelian Association** continues to flourish for as long as possible. Also mentioned in the article to you was how grateful we all were to **Bill Cullin** who, over a few years, was able to offer a printing service that served the Association well. It is also true to say that, over recent years, there have been many other **OM's** who have supported our Association in similar ways.

During the **2006 OMA Reunion weekend** I was approached, on three seperate occasions, by **OM's** asking me about our general policy relating directly to sponsorship and I really hope that, having been put on the spot, I was able to give some guidance on this subject. As a direct result of these conversations I decided to put the whole subject of sponsorship on the table at our most recent **OMA Committee Meeting** so that the subject could be debated and a decision reached as to whether or not this article should be included into '**The Mitre'** this year.

At the committee meeting I reminded my fellow committee members that during the **OMA Reunion weekend** a very large box of copy paper was placed in the boot of my car. Clearly a gift from a **OM** but also could be loosely regarded as a type of sponsorship. I know who generously made this donation and we are all extremely grateful.

Also, during 2006 we successfully discussed with our own **Peter Yarker** how his own local Parish Church Council could assist the **OMA** in providing a full printing service to our Association and I am extremely pleased to report that this is now up and running.

As a direct result of my discussions with **OM's** I believe that a generous financial donation has been offered to the **Old Michaelian Association**, and accepted, and we are extremely grateful for this very kind sponsorship of our Association.

Sponsorship does not necessarily have to be offered in a financial way. It can be offered in which ever way you feel is appropriate. It can be offered as a service to the Association, and whether or not you feel it needs to be made anonymously is entirely up to you, but I can assure you all that whatever decision you make with this regard, it will be fully respected by our Association.

Do you have some additional resource to offer to the **Old Michaelian Association?** If you do, please do not hesitate in discussing this directly with an **OM Committee member** and we will be pleased to guide you through the process.

We look forward to hearing from as many of you as possible.

Best Wishes John Wallington Editor

Editorial

Without fail, when I get to this point in time of writing my Editorial piece I know, with some certainty, that we are nearing the completion of yet another 'Mitre' publication.

Before I say another word about this year, I would like to say a huge 'THANKYOU' to all Old Michaelian's who voiced and mailed so many compliments about our 2006 publication. Yes, there were one or two mistakes, some of which were noticed and some that we appear to have got away with, but overall I was pleased with the terrific contribution and the fact that I believe the publication played its own part in attracting such a fabulous turn-out for our Diamond Jubilee Reunion weekend last year.

So, you have persevered with this year's publication and made it this far so you may as well read on and finish off the remainder of 'The Mitre'.

I really do hope that you have found the contents of the 2007 publication interesting, informative and a little humorous. I have been astonished at the number of articles received from Old Michaelian's and extremely grateful to everyone who has taken the time and effort to write some amazing articles for inclusion. 'THANKYOU' to everyone who has contributed.

I am beginning to get an exciting feeling (no, I am far too old for those types of feelings) that there may be a resurgence of interest within our Association wanting to be part of 'The Mitre' and, without a doubt, this feeling has been supported this year by the fact that we have been able to fill so many more pages. All I would say to you all is, if you have an article itching to be published, just send it along to me in whatever format and I will do the rest. I will make sure that at the end of this Editorial I publish the various ways articles may be submitted so, come on, don't leave it until next year, make sure I hear from you now.

Two further points I would like to include.

The first is an apology. After the success of including an interview with Peter Yarker in our 2006 publication, I had every intention of including a regular piece for 'The Mitre' entitled <u>IN THE SPOT-LIGHT</u>. I had already selected my victim (sorry, I did mean to say Old Michaelian) but time and personal matters prevented me from completing this task but I promise it will be included in time for the 2008 publication.

Secondly, I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of all Old Michaelian Members to express my sincere thanks to my daughter Vicky for all of the supportive work she has been involved in making sure that 'The Mitre' is prepared and presented in a totally acceptable fashion. 'THANK YOU VICKY'.

That's it. I really do hope you have enjoyed the read and I will always welcome comments, both good and bad, from as many of you as possible.

Please accept my sincere good wishes to you all for the remainder of the year and we all look forward to welcoming as many of you as possible at the forthcoming OMA Reunion Weekend in Hunstanton on 27/28 October 2007.

Best Regards to you all

John Wallington Editor 'The Mitre' email: hinckleytowers@aol.com

Stop Press

The following information was kindly provided by our own Tom Healey and is published on the OMA Web Site.

"The Golden Lion Hotel has been bought by the parent Company of the coach firm 'Shearings' and is being refurbished. As is The Lodge Hotel.

The new Vicar of Heacham is the Rev. Steve Davis who comes from Winchester. I have heard that his wife Allison is also ordained.

Barbara Perryman who will be known to those OM's who boarded at the Shooting Lodge, died recently".

Extract's from the OMA Web Site Guestbook

21 March 2007

"In January this year we visited Yokohama to stay with our son Peter and his family. The children attend the Yokohama International School so I was able to check the 'Past Head Teachers' brass plaque in the front Hall and there, sure enough, was commemorated one **Rev. Roger Pott!!** The school Librarian thought there may be some archive material and I was going to meet up with him again later during our stay but unfortunately he was taken ill and we were unable to follow this up.

By the way, a very late 'Thank you' for the organisation behind the Reunion last October and also to **Simon** for his moving tribute to his Father.

Best Wishes

Elizabeth MacLeod (nee Shearman)

<u>9 March 2007</u> Hello to everyone.

Today I was feeling a little nostalgic and decided to take a look at the OMA Web Site pages. To my surprise, I found all those wonderful photographs of **Heacham**.

Congratulations to John Barrett, fantastic work. Here's hoping that more photographs can be sent to be shown like these.

Stephanie Cullin

19 December 2006 Gordon Littlewood (1955 - 1958)

Believe it or not, I have just found the OMA Web Site today. Memories came flooding back. Saw myself on the school photographs, even though you do not have my name on them. When I was at St. Michael's School I lived in Kilmarnock, Ayrshire. Now living in Hull. I came to St. Michael's with others from St. Chad's near Nuneaton after a serious fire. Remember Robert Balfour, Barry & Anita Batchelor, Roger Davidson, Geraldine Moorehouse, Jane Tuck, Michael & John Butler (twins), Serge Nqren, Chang Tu and Elizabeth Herring. Does anyone remember me?

Gordon Littlewood

"Phew! I am not sure about you, but I am only just getting over the last OMA Reunion Weekend. Those **OM's** who did not manage to join us in Hunstanton last year will hopefully be able to make it and join in the fun this coming October.

After the success of 2006 our President, Chairman and all Committee Members are expecting enormous continuing support for your Association again this year. So, just so that you do not get a chance of forgetting the date:"

27/28 OCTOBER 2007

Diamond Jubilee + 1 OMA Reunion Weekend

The format for our annual Reunion Weekend is unchanged and for those of you who join us each and every year, I make no apologies for taking up valuable printing space within **'The Mitre'** to confirm to all Members what our Reunion Weekend is all about.

May I at this stage make a request to all regular **OM's** who support our Reunion Weekend each October. The **OMA Committee** have asked me to request that if anyone has room in their car and would be prepared to offer a car ride to and from Hunstanton for other **OM's**, please would you make contact with any Committee Member. Thank you

Friday 26 October 2007

Each year you can rely on the fact that all **OMA Committee Members** will be registered, encamped and propping up the Bar at the Le Strange Arms Hotel from......no later than 5pm! The important fact is that all of us will be there to welcome as many **OM's** as possible on the Friday evening and engage in trivia and a huge amount of banter. Anyone who is visiting our **OMA Reunion Weekend** for the first time will be given the opportunity to find their bearings, chat with **OM's** and generally become comfortable with the events as they unfold throughout the evening. There is nothing official about the Friday but it is true to say that more and more **OM's** are beginning to include the Friday and make the weekend a total **Old Michaelian** experience. Even if you have decided not to stay at the Le Strange Arms Hotel, you will still be made very welcome by all Committee Members.

Saturday 27 October 2007

Now the fun <u>really</u> begins.....

The **Old Michaelian Association** take over the whole of the Palace Suite at the Le Strange Arms Hotel for the duration of our weekend and we always make sure that we use this facility 100% So, during the Friday evening and well into the Saturday morning **John King** prepares a gigantic display of old photographs, many of which do not show us at our best, and these will be on display in the Palace Suite for the best part of Saturday including the evening function. **John King** has generated a dazzling variety of photographs spanning many decades and kindly donated to the **OMA** by many **Old Michaelian's.** Every year this display attracts an enormous amount of interest and discussion and I am sure that you will thoroughly enjoy everything you see. Of course, if you have stored away in the attic any old photographs you would like to add and donate to John's growing display, bring them along and make them available for other **OM's** to appreciate.

Lunchtime is spent in the friendly atmosphere of the Mariner's Bar and although we do attempt to keep space reserved especially for **Old Michaelian's**, unfortunately we are unable to guaranty that you all get a seat, so **COME EARLY!!** This is a special time for **OM's** to meet up and socialise and even when **OM's** have not met for some considerable time, it provides the opportunity to chat informally and remember years gone by. Badges will be provided so that new **OM's** will be easily spotted and made welcome.

The first official event of our Reunion Weekend kicks off at **3:30pm** with our **AGM** held in the Palace Suite. This is a time when Members can examine the workings of the Association and question/debate/criticise/applaude/vote on a variety of subjects as discussed. Our President **Simon Pott** together with our Chairman **Ian Dupont** and all Committee Members will be available at the AGM to answer any queries you may have relating to the running of our Association. Our Association Officers and Committee will need to be elected and if you relish the idea of playing a part in the running of our Association please do not hesitate in letting us know as soon as possible **before** the Reunion Weekend. The AGM is usually a lively and well constructed occasion and we encourage as many **OM's** to attend the afternoon programme as possible.

I've said it before and I make no apologies for saying again, **the OMA Reunion Dinner is always the highlight of our whole weekend.** Last year we sat 147 bums on seats for our Diamond Jubilee Reunion Dinner. Wouldn't it be fantastic if we were able to attract a similar number again this year.

Besides a scrummy dinner presented and served by the professional staff of the Le Strange Arms Hotel, all **OM's** and partners and friends can look forward to a very entertaining evening. Yes, we can look forward again to a very amusing and entertaining after dinner speech by our President **Simon Pott**, but don't let Simon hog the spotlight all evening! We want to hear from as many **OM's** as possible. So if you have something relevant to say and you are able to speak confidently for no more than three minutes without deviation, hestitation or slurring, let us know and we will be happy to include you for the after dinner speeches.

Last year we were delighted to meet with many **OM's** + **partners** who had travelled great distances to join us for our Reunion Weekend and we appreciate the fact that it is simply not possible for that effort to be made each and every year. You will have already noticed that we have been very fortunate to receive contributions to '**The Mitre**' again from all over the World and we are extremely grateful for that. However, if you are unable to join us in Hunstanton this coming October, maybe you would consider sending a short speech of your own that we would be delighted to read on your behalf at the Reunion Dinner.

Your **OMA Committee** have decided to retain the price charged for the Reunion Dinner to **£20 per head** and I am sure that all of you will agree this is a very attractive price to pay. At the back of this **Mitre** you will find a Booking Form, printed in such a way <u>this year</u> so as to not interfere with any other articles, and all we would ask you to do is to fill out the Booking Form as soon as possible and send it to our Treasurer **Ruth Chilvers with your cheque**.

The Reunion Dinner is for you and your partner to thoroughly enjoy and we know, because we have been told many times before, that this occasion is the highlight of the whole weekend **for everyone**.

So, just to recap. Pre-Dinner drinks will be served in the Palace Suite at **7pm** when everyone will have the opportunity to order wine, soft drinks etc. for the forthcoming Dinner. Dinner will be served at **7:45pm....ish**

Sunday 28 October 2007

The organisation and arrangements that go into every **OMA Reunion Weekend** is undescribable. You are not going to believe this, but we have even arranged for the whole Nation to alter their clocks and watches so that all **Old Michaelian's** can enjoy an extra hour in bed on the Sunday morning! That has to be the biggest plus af the whole weekend.

Our **Old Michaelian Reunion Eucharist** will take place at **St Michaels Church, Ingoldisthorpe** and I know we will be made most welcome by the Rector and Parishioners of **St Michael's Church.** Last year we very nearly filled the church and the occasion was, for me, never to be forgotten. It is hoped that **Old Michaelian's** will officiate at our Eucharist, however, at the time of going to print the details have not yet been finalised.

We would love to see as many **OM's + partners** in Ingoldisthorpe as possible on Sunday morning and so that there is no excuse by anyone the **Eucharist starts promptly at 11am**.

Tea, coffee and light refreshments will be served at the back of the church immediately after the Eucharist by the **OMA Committee Members.**

What more can I tell you?

That is the detail, now all we need is for you to join us.

Michael Catterick

At the 2006 Annual General Meeting of the **Old Michaelian Association** our very own **Michael Catterick** announced that he would be standing down as an **OMA** Committee Member.

We could not possibly let this event pass by without a very special tribute and thanks to Michael for his long term support of our Association as Member, Committee Member and Chairman.

For as long as I can remember both Michael and his wife Evelyn have steadfastly supported the Old Michaelian Association for many years and it is now time for us all to express our sincere 'Thanks' to both Michael and Evelyn Catterick for their time, devotion and support of the Old Michaelian Association.

We all thoroughly enjoyed **Evelyn's** after dinner speech at our **Diamond Jubilee Reunion Dinner** last year and it is a real hope shared by all **OMA Members** that we will see both **Michael & Evelyn** continuing to enjoy many more Reunion Weekends in Hunstanton each and every October with us all.

'THANK YOU'

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SEE IF TOU CAN FIND 13 WORDS HIDDEN IN THIS WORDSEARCH THAT RELATE TO THE MITRE......GOOD LUCK

$OMA \leq$	2007
OMA <u>2</u> Reunion	Dinner
Booking	Form

Can you please reserve me.....number of tickets for the 2007 reunion weekend.

Name:
Partners Name:
Address:
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Post Code:
Telephone Number:
Email Address:
I should like to sit with (if possible):
I enclose my cheque to the value of \pm
Please detach this form and send it to Ruth Chilvers, 85 Elliott Road, March, Cambridgeshire, PE15 8BP