

The Egbertian

NEWS FROM THE OLD EGBERTIAN ASSOCIATION

see our website at www.oldegbertians.com



INAUGURATED 1928

Summer 2012

Editor's Comment

Welcome to the Summer Edition of *EgbertNews*.

Thank you to all those who have contributed to this issue as without input from the

membership there would not really be a magazine of any great note. If you have a story to tell about your College days or what you have done since you left school then do let me know as I would like to hear from you.

In this issue we have College recollections from our Chairman Peter Burke, an article including several paintings from John Willis, who is a talented artist, and Clive Boon who is wondering what happened to his peers. Were you one of them?

Finally, if your membership is outstanding then please pay it by return.

We rely on membership fees to keep the organisation going so your help in doing this would be appreciated.

Enjoy what is left of the Summer.

Jeff Thomas

College Memories

by Peter Burke

Continuing a series of articles from members of your committee which started with a piece by Brian Pieri on his college memories in our winter 2011 edition of the newsletter.

My recollections of the college buildings and its environs in the early 1960's were similar to Brian's – a little austere with paint on the walls put on for durability rather than artistic merit, likewise the building itself sitting very imposingly at the end of a rather long drive.

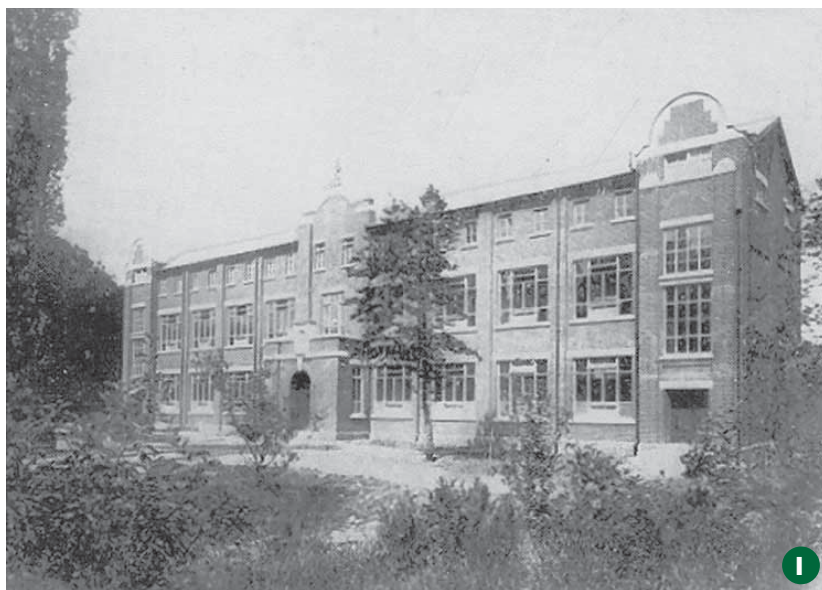
The entrance was lined with a row of impressive dark green poplars whose height gave a peaceful shade in summer and shelter from the winds in winter. The picture of the college building (1) illustrates the atmosphere nicely – those of us who can remember the setting

of the drive would

remember the school building as the first thing that they saw at the end of it.

Sadly all that is left to remind us today is a standard road sign (2) at the Ridgeway end that indicates the start of an entrance road to a bland housing estate with no trace of the school, sports field or playground to be seen.

The Town Hall to the left of the drive has thankfully remained intact albeit in name only (3) as it



1

Continued on page 2

NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2012

Continued from page 1



is in a state of dereliction. The appalling 1960's addition has now been demolished but the rest of the Town Hall site remains as it was as it is, I believe, subject to listed building status. There are plans possibly to develop the whole site with yet more housing. (Those Old Egs footballers amongst us would then presumably have nowhere to meet on a Saturday afternoon!)

I cannot remember the playground roller skating that Brian recalls, the photo at (4) shows football goals fixed to the fences at both ends (one is just behind the second boy to the left in the back row) and my recollections were that of footballers simply knocking everybody else out of the way – a technique still alive today at the Egbertian club level. If one looks carefully the entrance from Kings Head Hill is just visible in the area of top right.

I tried to find evidence of this entrance to the playground with the famous Pracy's tuck shop at the gate. Part of me still expected him to be there selling (old) penny chews and gob stoppers (probably not allowed today under current EU rules) to crunch on. However as the building was rustic to say the least then and unless Mr. P. had found the secret of eternal life, this is not a realistic proposition. Sadly the best I could do was to find what I thought would have been the entrance in (5) which could be, I confess anywhere. However let me reassure readers that the picture is authentic although hurried as the new Police Station in Kings Head Hill across the road, which replaced the Dixon of Dock Green era structure, presumably had extensive surveillance camera facilities covering my every move. This must have seemed suspicious

to say the least when searching the dense undergrowth for a missing entrance to a school that no longer existed!

In conclusion I join Brian in his sentiments in the closing remarks of his article adding only my own comments concerning some of his refereeing decisions in later years which could only be described on a good day as being highly suspect.

However on a more positive note we are all extremely grateful to Brian for his tireless work in providing an enjoyable social programme.

I hope this has jogged a few memories. The Editor would be pleased to hear from you if you have your own memories and experiences that you would like to share with fellow readers.

Peter Burke



St John's Wood London Walk, 17th June 2012

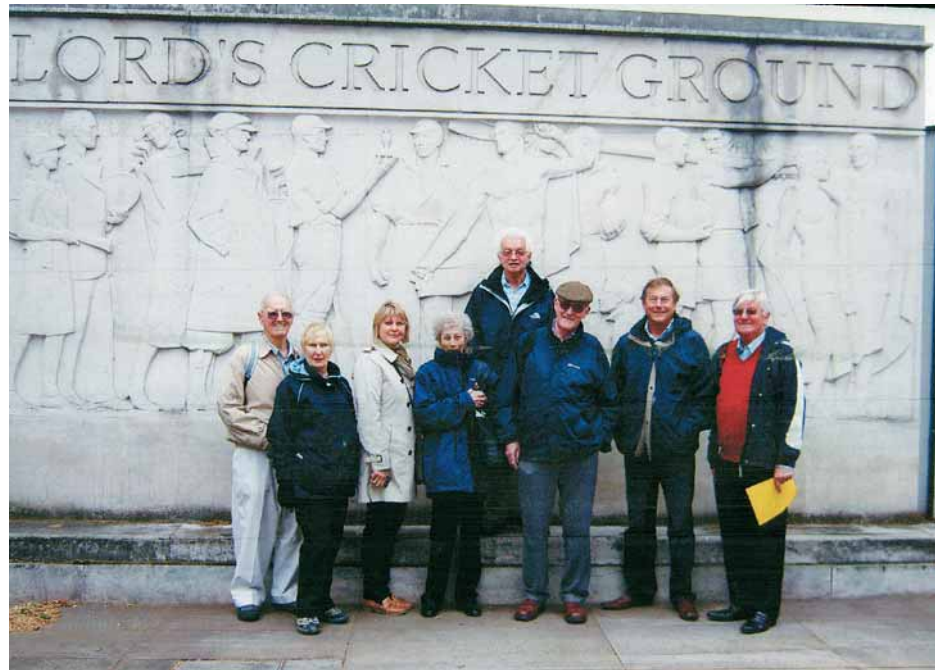
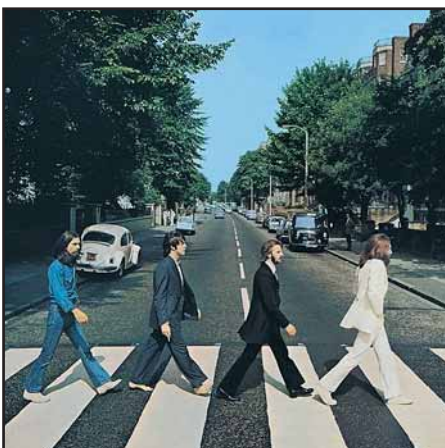
We gathered at 10.45am on Saturday morning at St John's Wood Underground Station. Numbers were reduced from previous years for various reasons - probably the most significant one being the prospect of inclement weather. There were nine of us in total including our intrepid guide Malcolm Dick. What we lacked in numbers we made up for in enthusiasm.

The St John's Wood area was once part of the Great Middlesex forest and was later owned by the Knights of St John of Jerusalem until it was wrested from them by King Henry VIII. It remained Crown property from 1536 and later passed to the Dukes of Portland.

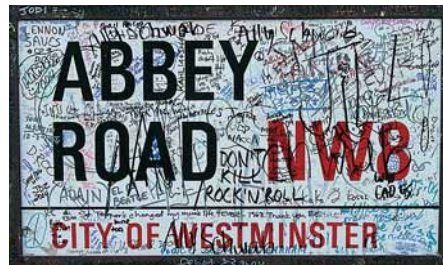
From about 1837 the area opened up for building development and was one of the first London suburbs to be developed with a large amount of low density "villa" housing, as opposed to terraced housing, which was the norm in London up to the 19th century even in expensive areas. In the 18th and 19th centuries this area was known for the keeping of a mistress in a certain style by the landed gentry and city merchants.

Parts of St John's Wood have been rebuilt at a higher density since then but still remains one of the most expensive parts of London with houses regularly exceeding £2 million.

We proceeded from the station, crossed the road and entered the



area of sumptuous houses which all seemingly had six foot walls around them. Unfortunately some had been demolished and replaced by uninspiring flats.



As we walked another two hundred yards Abbey Road appeared. In front of us was the famous crossing just by the Abbey Road Studios - well

known from the LP cover of the same name by the Beatles. Apparently it was the only photograph of them walking in step. While we were there the traffic was constantly held up by tourists taking photographs of their friends emulating this iconic photograph.

It was interesting to note that the crossing was moved by the council several years ago to a new position further down the road, and that the road sign is permanently encased as it kept getting stolen.

Abbey Road itself obtained the name from the Abbey which was

Continued on page 6



John Willis

An old friend of mine, Bob Nettmann, emailed me a copy of *The Egbertian*. It was the issue with the first 'College Memories' written by Brian Pieri and he suggested that I should share a particular memory about Brother Felix.

Brian's description of the college buildings, the sports field, the Brothers and lay teachers took me back to 1948 when I started school at St Egberts.



Firstly, I can add a few names to Brian's list of Brothers; Brother Jarlath, who taught French with the most wonderfully extravagant accent. Brother Alfred, a quiet, gentle man liked by all, and Brother Columban, the Head Master. He was a large, stern man with snow white hair and a pink complexion with a talent for meting out punishment with 'The Tolly'; a razor



strop that left the recipient's hands incapable of holding pen or pencil for a considerable time.

Brian mentioned the 'sports field' (cow meadow) during the football season. My memory is of cricket. The field was cleared of cattle but not of cow's muck! An unfortunate fielder runs to get the ball which has buried itself into a deep pile of it. He hops around on one foot trying to extricate the ball with the other, then kicks it about on the grass before throwing it back... during which time about forty runs have been scored!

Every day began with a scripture lesson. On one occasion, we were being told that everyone had a Guardian Angel. A boy put his hand up to enquire whereabouts our Angel was. "He stands just behind your right shoulder", was the reply. Every eight-year-old, me included, slowly turned their heads expecting to see some ghostly, winged apparition gazing down at them. The end of the day saw the sound of feet clattering down the central wooden staircase.

The news that buzzed around one winter's day was about an old tramp found dead in the boiler room.

The screwed-up face of a boy receiving a rap on the knuckles with the edge of a box rule. Mr Keegan's favourite punishment for class control.



The disappointing news that Peter Sellars, then billed on the radio as 'The man with a thousand voices' had come to the school to entertain us. But not me. I was at home feigning sickness and missed it! Evidently, Sellars was an old boy from our sister school' in Highgate, St Aloysius. There was an article written about the visit in the Summer 2011 edition of *The Egbertian*.

My happiest memory is of Brother Felix, who was a bald-headed, jolly little man who liked his beer. Dressed in mufti, he used to frequent the Royal Forest Hotel or the Bull & Crown and the highlight of my 'happiest days' was of one sports day in 1953 or 1954.

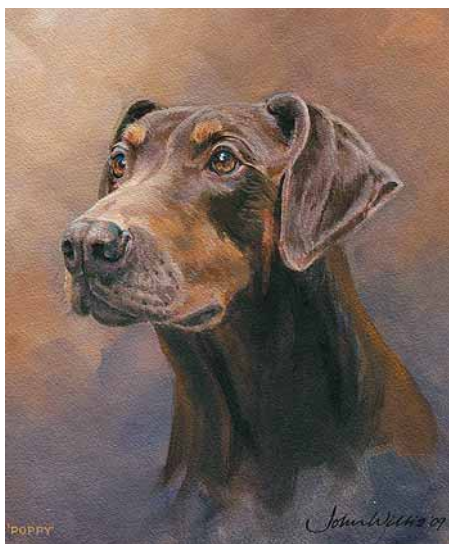




On college sports day, parents and staff were all seated atop the bank left and right of the table where the prizes were displayed. When all the events were completed, boys were sat in lines on the field for prize giving. The Headmaster, Brother Columban, stood at the microphone and announced the winner of each event and to enthusiastic applause from parents, each boy ran up the steps to receive his prize.

Brother Felix's task was to select the relevant prize from the table and hand it to Brother Columban who then made the presentation.

On this day, Brother Felix appeared to be enjoying the proceedings more than usual as, smiling from ear to ear, he handed over each prize.



Brother Columban was not enjoying the proceedings. His pink complexion changed to a dark shade of scarlet as Brother Felix got noticeably more unsteady on his feet. It was very plain to all that he'd 'had a few'.

Eventually, to his relief, Brother Columban announced the final prize: a large, double handled, silver cup which was presented to the Head Boy each year. Brother Felix tottered over with the cup but wouldn't let go of the handle. Brother Columban tugged from his side as they battled left and right for possession.

Brother Felix won and triumphantly held the trophy aloft!

I wish that I could report that there was wild applause the parents. There was not.

I wonder how many Old Egbertians still around can remember that day.

I left St Egberts in 1956, failed O Level Art but nevertheless went to art school to do a two year course in graphic design. I then went job hunting and managed to get a position with an advertising agency in Holborn as a 'Junior Layout Artist' earning a whopping £4/10/00 per week!

Twenty years later and one or two agencies later, I joined the family hotel business in Wiltshire but this didn't work out. Ten years later and one or two catering and property businesses run with my wife later, I bought a gallery/restoration/framing shop in Norwich which I ran for fifteen years or so until I retired in 2005.

During all those years, I always painted and for the last seven years have worked to commission, specialising in animal portraits in acrylics and human portraits in oils.

The Editor asked me to supply some images of past work. So, I obliged with a few.

John Willis



Continued from page 3

there about three hundred years ago. People deposited money with the Abbey which then enabled them to buy a house. This was the origins of the Abbey National Building Society which is now part of Santander.

St John's Wood's most famous piece of real estate is Lords Cricket Ground, which is owned by the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) and is home to Middlesex Cricket Club amongst other cricket organisations. The ground was one of three built by its founder Thomas Lord. The first was on the site where Dorset Square now stands. The second ground, used between 1811-1813 had to be

moved due to the construction of the Regents Canal. The third and current location is home to the MCC Museum which is the world's oldest sporting museum and home to a vast collection of cricket memorabilia including the Ashes.

We finally arrived at St John's Wood High Street which is a very civilised mixture of shops restaurants and pubs - there was no sign of any boarded up premises which has affected many other UK high streets.

Lunch was taken in a local pub after which we said our goodbyes and departed. The weather had been kind to us and this year's walk was

voted a great success. Thanks once gain to Malcolm Dick for giving up his time to the Association.



From Clive Boon...

Hi, Clive Boon here.

I would love to hear from any of my former schoolmates who might just a) still be alive, b) remember me, c) want to go down memory lane!

There is a photograph of many of my peers on the football team page including Martin Bacon, David (Paddy) Flynn, Bernie Sims and Ted Roche. I was mainly called Boonie and am now 67 and getting nostalgic, which may be an age thing!

I did see a few of my school mates after I left College. Barry Cox and I saw each other at the Wells on Woodford Green - this was before his film debut and then his huge success in the Hard Rock Café but this was years ago. Barry's brother Melvyn was local and lived next to a friend of mine but I realise it is 50 years since my class disbanded! My best friends and classmates were Jimmy Lord, Andrew Black, Jimmy Dennis, Martin (Fred) Farman, Alan Fidoe, Steve Eastgate, John Bayfield and Martin Bacon.

In my fifth form year my peers included: Pat Clarke, Ivor Brent, Mick Murphy, David Mangham, Bernard Sims (who lived near me

in Woodford in later life but with whom I lost touch) and Ted Roche but there must be many more.

There are a couple of pictures here that I found recently. The first shows James Dennis, Chris Farman Steve Eastgate and myself in the fourth form room, circa 1958-9. The other picture is of myself and the 'infamous' Henry Lee, who was our form master in 1956 and took the whole senior school for English and Latin.

We must have made his life hell but I have to say, somewhat begrudgingly, that he did help me with my English, especially literature and I enjoyed and endured Latin with him too. I believe he left St Egberts having been driven



completely nuts by us all!! But he was odd and to us the height of hilarity in the classroom. I remember only too well setting him up for this photograph which took a lot of courage from me. I would surely have been beaten with his 'coat-hanger' cane had he known what we were up to!

Some other names from the past include Brother Fergus, Brother Peter, Brothers Felix and Columban, Joe the Cook, Bill (don't bend over) Hayes, Monsieur Wallie: French and sports, Gordon Spurgeon: PT - I sweat just thinking of him!



Past Students - 1962-67 *from Paul Freeman.*

Students

Jim Randell
 Alan Green
 Michael Holt
 David Lowe
 Peter Field
 Shane O'Brien
 Michael Dyer

Can you fill in the missing names from that era?

Teachers

Brother Fergus - Headmaster
 Brother Peter – 2B form Master
 Brother John - History
 Mr Moran – Chemistry and Maths
 Mr Sturgess - PE
 Mr Deneen – Physics

Obituaries

The OEA was saddened to hear of the recent deaths of Terry Piper and Tony Butler. We are still getting together information for an obituary for Terry Piper but Tony Butler's daughter kindly supplied the following information.

Anthony Butler was a pupil at St Egberts between 1943 and 1945. He joined the civil service after leaving the school and went on to marry Margaret Bassett and they had five children together.

Tony had many interests particularly films and jazz and contributed as a long standing member of the Catenians, the OEA and other organisations. He leaves behind his second wife Fidelbe whom he married on being widowed. Many people attended his funeral and he will be sadly missed by all who knew him.



Football Matters *by EFC Secretary Jeff Thomas*

Our **First team** under Tom White, were relegated for the fourth consecutive season, having finished bottom of Division Two. Our **Second team**, in Division Three under the captaincy of Andrew Williams finished in a creditable seventh position. The **Third team**, managed by Steve Haydon, were our most successful league team and finished runner up in Division Four after having only lost one league game all season. It was a real struggle for the **Fourth team** who lost all 16 league games in Division Five, conceding 105 goals with a goal difference of minus 89. The **Veteran team** headed up by Ewan Thomson had their best ever season winning 21 of their 27 games played, with

only two defeats, in their series of friendly games.

However, despite our second and third team (who were runners up) holding their own, league rules dictated that our first, second and third teams were all relegated (plus our fourth team) as our first team finished in a relegation position.

It was a very harsh ruling by the league and especially hard on our third team who had done so well but to be fair the league had been consistent with previous seasons. The rule is designed to make clubs play their strongest teams as their highest teams. The committee took the decision not to appeal as given the respective finishing

positions of each team it would have been hard to argue that we had complied with this rule.

Off the field the increased membership and match fees imposed last season has rebalanced our finances and we broke even for the first time in many seasons. We were boosted by the very welcome donations from the OEA, for which we are very grateful, and a very generous donation from the courier company DHL, which has certainly boosted our coffers.

Hopefully with the five good captains that we have in place we can look forward to next season with some optimism.

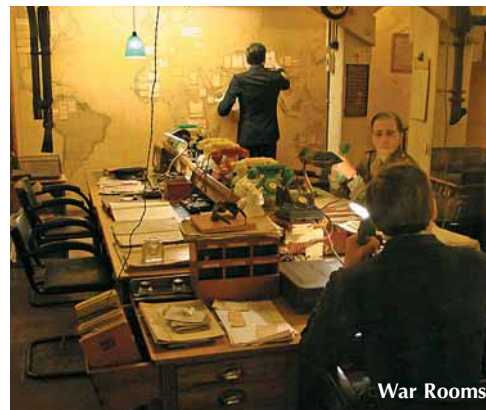
Social Events



Firm dates for the rest of the Social events are yet to be confirmed but the **Buckingham Palace Trip** has proved to be very popular and has been pencilled in for September. There was an equal split in interest in the **War Rooms** visit and the **Transport Museum** so these will be arranged for October and February respectively.



Those who have intimated on their social form that they wish to partake in these events will be contacted in due course. However, it is not too late to take part by contacting Brian Pieri on 020 8524 0258.



Membership

We are half way through the year and membership numbers are about where we would expect them to be at this stage with 65 paid members, 3 Honorary members and three life members.

If your membership fee is due, and there will be a letter reminding you within this newsletter, then we would appreciate you paying your membership forthwith.

The Association relies on its membership fees (and donations) as it is our only significant source of income. Our costs are ever rising and the membership fees pays for publications such as this, the History of the Order booklet and the website.

Snippets

Do we have your email address? We have 66 verified email addresses to date, which from an organization of about 100 people is impressive.

If we don't, and you would like to be added onto our email mailing list, then do drop me an email - jeffctomas@yahoo.com.

The Old Egbertian Association

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