

# Old Xaverians' Association



Newsletter 4      November 2011

## 1. OX Annual Dinner 1 October 2011

We decided to hold the annual dinner this year at Anfield - on the day of the derby match at Goodison Park when (Suarez - oops, sorry!) Rodwell committed a serious foul. The format for the event has always been pretty much the same, but we have tried a number of different venues in the last few years. There have been some positive reports - good food, well presented and served, spacious and comfortable surroundings and excellent company. 36 people attended, but a few people (who had paid) had to cry off at the last minute and there were about a dozen apologies. The target for next year is at least 60.

The meeting of the Old Xaverian Council on 17 October considered a number of suggestions that had been made about next year's dinner - buffet, name badges, venues, speeches - and decided against them, except that we will definitely have a speaker next year, when the dinner will be held, probably at Anfield, on **Saturday, 22 September 2012**. Put it in your diary now.

This report can be seen also on the website [oldxaverians.org.uk](http://oldxaverians.org.uk) plus photos by the OX official photographer, Peter McFall (46-54)



**Back Row** Julian Daley, David Bolton, Brother Peter, Danny Magill, Peter Bentley, Charles Boulton, Des Hardman, Tom Hall, David Reynolds, John Caulfield, Ron Parr, Tom Ford, Terry McGuinness, Charles Doyle, Bishop Vincent Malone, Jim Manning, Derek Smith, Jim Hough, Peter Aindow, Charles Rowe, Chris Corkhill, Father Desmond Power, Brother Kenneth Vance, S.J, John McCann

**Front Row:** Monsignor Peter Fleetwood, Fr. Anthony Horan, S.J., Nick King, Laurence Jackson, Frank Gibbons, Jack Heery, Peter Sullivan, Brother Francis, Ken Lewis

*Also present Peter McFall (behind the camera) and Tom Leddy (who had to leave early)*

***Annual Dinner at Liverpool FC***

## 2. Hugh F Kearney (OX 1935-1942)

Hugh won a major scholarship to Peterhouse in Cambridge in 1942 and after many senior appointments finished his career as Professor of British History at the University of Pittsburg. He has written this personal account of the poet Gerald Manley Hopkins.

### Gerald Manley Hopkins. A Personal Note

"I first crossed paths with Hopkins in 1939 via St Beuno's, the Jesuit Seminary near St Asaph in North Wales; the College was evacuated here in 1939. Had I known more about Hopkins then, I could have made a better use of exploring the area. Hopkins went to Beuno's in 1874 where he developed a special interest in St Winifred and in the study of Welsh. Hopkins' interest in Welsh helped to counter the over-stress on Irish in Liverpool's history.

Hopkins moved North in 1877, spending a year as a curate at SFX parish. During his time here he wrote a fine poem 'Felix Randall' – a farrier from a local backstreet, whom the critic F.R. Leavis identified with rural life, but whom Hopkins knew as an SFX parishioner.

Hopkins preferred 'the Glasgow Irish to the Liverpool Irish' despite them being 'more drunken and Irish'. At SFX College the boys regularly used the parish church which would have been very familiar to Hopkins himself. In 1884 Hopkins moved to take up a chair in Greek at University College Dublin, where eventually in 1950 I myself became a history lecturer. Hopkins died in 1889 of peritonitis and is buried at Glasnevin Cemetery Dublin.

At SFX a particular enthusiast for Hopkins was Fr Stephenson who wrote an article for *Scrutiny*. One personal link with SFX is my cousin Fr. Alfred Thomas, a biographer of Hopkins, who sadly was unable to afford the college fees in the 1930s despite being a parishioner. Fr Thomas showed the links of Felix Randal with SFX parish, not the rural world as Leavis had supposed.

Hopkins first seen as a minor poet has now assumed greater literary importance."  
Hugh has selected this poem as an example of Hopkins' best poetry:

### Felix Randal

Felix Randal the farrier, O is he dead then? My duty all ended,  
Who have watched his mould of man, big-boned and hardy-handsome  
Pining, pining, till time when reason rambled in it, and some  
Fatal four disorders, fleshed there, all contended?

Sickness broke him. Impatient, he cursed at first, but mended  
Being anointed and all; though a heavenlier heart began some  
Months earlier, since I had our sweet reprieve and ransom  
Tendered to him. Ah well, God rest him all road ever he offended!

This seeing the sick endears them to us, us too it endears.  
My tongue had taught thee comfort, touch had quenched thy tears,  
Thy tears that touched my heart, child, Felix, poor Felix Randal;

How far from then forethought of, all thy more boisterous years,  
When thou at the random grim forge, powerful amidst peers,  
Didst fettle for the great grey drayhorse his bright and battering sandal!

*(Hugh Kearney: history scholar Peterhouse, Cambridge in 1942 and M.A in 1947. 1947-48 Sorbonne; 1950-62 Lecturer in History University College Dublin; 1962-70 Lecturer University of Sussex; 1970- 75 Professor of Modern History Edinburgh University. 1975-99 Amundsen Professor of British History University of Pittsburgh.)*

### 3. Notes and Responses to last Newsletter

I call your attention again to the website at [www.oldxaverians.org.uk](http://www.oldxaverians.org.uk). Peter Dowd (52-59) has really done us proud and I would urge any OX to contribute items – general, personal, idiosyncratic, privately reminiscent, or publicly Liverpudlian etc.

Find further contributions to obituaries by friends and relatives at the website; Brian Meehan's Catenian obit can be found there as can additional contributions from Jim Lee's family (*enter site>alumni>past alumni> name.*) **No** suggestions yet for a new masthead.

**From Joe O'Connor (36/41).** *Sorry to hear of Frank Hart's passing. I must have missed the June Newsletter. He was Head Boy when I started in 1936 with four other "Snollies" boys (Scholarship boys from St.Alphonsus) --W.H.Dodd, C.B.Hardy, J.Lynch, P.L.McIver plus myself, J.O'Connor. Frank's brother, Tom, was a couple of years ahead of me but whether he was fee-paying or not I don't know. Certainly there were other scholarship pupils to SFX in the following years until the outbreak of war from St.Alphonsus - so the gap of sixteen years mentioned by Jim/Pete does not exist. Sorry fellahs! I could go on about Miss "Mamie" Marks but that might take too long!!*

**From Denis Mannix** - *I like the new flow of News though I don't know any of the people mentioned .* **From Julian Daley (65-72)** - *It's a pity you couldn't get all the contributions from current Xavs in the Newsletter as it's really important to encourage them to get involved; they are our future after all.* **From Eddie Gray** *Thanks for your email and newsletter which is excellent. Living in Derby, it is now difficult for me to take part in the functions in Liverpool at the present time – particularly as for health reasons driving is at the moment out of the question).* **And from Peter Madden, Peter Fleetwood, David Bolton, Tom Shufflebotham, SJ, and Tony Connerty.**

### 4. Contributions from Year 12 Students

#### The College Choir: Sean Wearing

SFX has a large variety of enjoyable out of school groups for the pupils to take part in, but arguably one of the most successful of these is the school choir. The choir's achievements are vast. We performed for Pope John Paul II and we were inducted into the Guinness Book of Records. The choir was first formed in 1994 and since then it has provided a creative outlet for many of the students at SFX.

Liam Jennions has been a member of the choir for six years and is still amazed by some of the venues in which he has performed at. He told me of the choir's tour of Spain and when they sang at the Toledo Cathedral. The Cathedral itself is more than 140 ft high, making it the second largest Cathedral in Spain, and unsurprisingly Liam told me it was one of the greatest venues he had ever sung at. Despite the great atmosphere of the Cathedral, the choir did not originally plan to sing there. Mrs Anderson, the head of the choir, asked if they could perform there whilst the choir were visiting and luckily she happened to have some sheet music with her at the time. Despite the lack of rehearsal, the choir came out sounding beautiful. People were quick to surround them and Liam described the performance as, "The best singing on the whole trip".

As well as singing in far away places like Spain, the choir have also had great performances closer to home whilst supporting the school. In March, Peter Bullen, a former governor and pupil of SFX, was married and the choir was there to celebrate the occasion. Although the British weather may not have matched that of Sunny Spain, the voice of the choir was just as good as it's ever been. The occasion provided the choir with an opportunity to help the

school and the community, which the choir persistently do with other events such as the Proclamation. This is a time when the pupils of the school receive their rewards for a year of hard work and many parents attend to support their children by embarrassing them thoroughly with their cheers and applause when they get their award! Despite this, the choir manage to make the event something to remember for the whole of the family by providing songs such as Yesterday by The Beatles and You'll Never Walk Alone by Rodgers and Hammerstein. As well as singing to help the school, the choir also use their talent to support charities.

Zoe's Place organised the 'Light up a Life' ceremony for the children in the hospice for Christmas. The choir attended the event and managed to bring some joy to the families for the occasion. Many of the choir members considered it a memorable experience. Jordan said he considered the event to be one of the highlights of his whole time singing for the choir. "It was touching to see the sick children and their parents all singing along and enjoying the songs we were performing." The SFX choir have also had the honour of singing for the critically acclaimed Sami Yusuf as part of the backing track for his new album. Sami has raised a significant amount of money for charity over the years, performing multiple charity concerts each year, and the choir are helping him to raise even more money by singing with him on his album. The choir have also sung at St Pascal Baylon Church and managed to raise over £700 towards the development of baby care facilities in Liverpool. As well as all of this, the choir have been involved in many more things over the past few years such as singing at St George's Hall, the Metropolitan Cathedral and even with Mark Lester, the original Oliver. It is very safe to say that the SFX choir is something that the school can be very proud of and the fact that it is still going strong shows this and it is looking as if it will continue like this into the far future.

### **St Francis Xavier's : a Footballing Factory : Peter Ndahiro**

St Francis Xavier's' College has always had a regional and a national reputation for its great sporting teams - particularly boasting successes in football.

Its footballing notables include English internationals - Healey (1907), Sammy Lee (1970s), Major Frank Buckley (1914), John Harding (1960s), and John's brother who played for Australia. Now the College can claim a new crop of footballing successes. Steven Irwin, Matthew McGiveron, John Flanagan and Adam Morgan - all on Liverpool's books.

Steven Irwin (2001 – 2006) Steven's PE teacher, Mr Pedder, remembers Steven as determined and aspiring, destined for footballing success. While still at SFX Steven, 16 years-old, played in the Liverpool U-18 squad. He left College at the age of 17 and signed a professional contract for Liverpool. Starting in the U-18 team, Steven went on to captain the Liverpool U-18 side. He then got his chance in the Reserve Team where he gave many establishing performances in several positions. In fact, Steven claims "I've played in every single position during my time at Liverpool. I actually played in goal once against Wolves. The goalkeeper got injured after 10 minutes. I had loads of saves to make - so I'll be pushing Pepe Reina soon!" Steven started in the Reserves in 2008, eventually becoming captain. Matthew McGiveron and John Flanagan, a Liverpool academy and reserve pairing, attended SFX from 2003 to 2008. Matthew McGiveron is the current Liverpool U-18 first team centre back. Matthew is renowned for his long throw and great determination.

John Flanagan, labelled as 'the next Jamie Carragher', started his Liverpool career at right back in the U-18 team alongside Matthew McGiveron. John played for the Reserves at 18 years old, rose up through the ranks and eventually was picked to play for the Liverpool First Team. John has performed brilliantly at the highest level of football, defending successfully against internationals like Mario Balotelli and Samir Nasri.

Adam Morgan, (SFX 2004-2009), the last and youngest of the group, as a footballer has been labelled as 'the next Robbie Fowler' by Liverpool ex-players and he certainly does fit the bill. In

his first season Adam, a striker for the U-18s and Reserves, scored in 13 consecutive games, scoring 20 goals in all competitions. Currently playing for the England U-17s in the World Cup, Adam has been identified as a player that could bring great success to Liverpool in the future, and one of the best prospects for the national team.

From Sammy Lee to Adam Morgan, St Francis Xavier's College has shown through its regional tournament success, and the fantastic footballers it has produced and helped to grow that it certainly is in itself a footballing factory.

## **5. HILARY JAMES (JIM) LEE (OX 1943-1950) July 2, 1933 - May 11, 2010**

Jim was born in the sub-district of Wavertree, to Basil and Vera (Jolly) Lee, a brother to Patricia, their first-born. He is survived by his younger sister Yvonne who lives in Bicester, England.

Jim's father, Basil, was born in 1900. He attended St. Francis Xavier's College. After graduation, he entered the Seminary of the Franciscan Order of Friars Minor in Chilworth, England. While there, he learned several foreign languages. He left the Seminary before his final vows, and later married. When Jim was born, Basil worked as a foreign correspondent with Meccano, a company which employed linguists to "correspond" with customers all over the world. Sometime later, he joined the British Army and resigned a couple of years after the War with the rank of Major. He then acquired the "Seven Stars" a public house in Piddington, Oxon. Basil passed away in 1963 and Jim's mother, Vera, passed away in 1990.

Following in the footsteps of his father Jim graduated from SFX in 1950. While attending St. Xavier's, he was actively involved with the school's sports teams. He gained admission to Trinity College, Dublin, but never attended.

Instead, Jim served in the compulsory National Service in the U.K., Europe and Africa, concluding service as the first National Serviceman to attain the rank of Sergeant. He then went on to do his Reserve Territorial Service in the Parachute Regiment based in Oxfordshire. He had 52 jumps to his credit. Training entailed weekend drops into France, Holland and the U.K.

Jim emigrated to Toronto, Canada with his wife, Isla (who predeceased him) and his son, Michael. Prior to that he was a partner (with his parents) in the "Seven Stars". Then he was employed in sales by the then largest manufacturer of farm animal food in Britain. Jim was their top salesman. When a more senior position came up, he applied for it and was turned down because management felt that "although he qualified he was too young for the position." It was then that he left England for Canada where he believed that the opportunities for career advancement would be greater. That turned out to be the case.

Jim became a Canadian Citizen several years after his arrival in Canada. His career path was widely diversified. He attained a broad and intensive range of involvement in Market Research, Broadcasting, Advertising, Stock Brokerage and the Oil and Gas Exploration Industry. During this time, he travelled widely in North and South America, Russia and China and developed a wealth of knowledge, experience and contacts. Jim achieved considerable success in each of the above fields. Later in life, his varied and extensive background led him into Entrepreneurial Enterprise, Business Consulting and Stock Promotion. He eventually retired from active business involvement around 2006 but occasionally could not resist "putting his finger in the pie" when his expertise was in demand.

On a personal note, Jim was a devoted father and husband. He was always ready to give anyone a helping hand or advice whenever it was requested or needed. He had a great sense of humour, was a prolific and gifted poet and an avid reader. He remained a Liverpool Football Club fan all his life, played a mean game of golf and raced in various makes of cars, including

a Formula Ford car and a vintage Porsche 911.

Jim fought a long and brave battle with cancer in Brighton, Ontario. Upon his death, he left his four grown-up children, Michael, Theresa, Beverley and Deborah, his sister, Yvonne, his second wife, Jeannine, and their extended families. As pre-arranged by Jim, his remains were donated to the School of Anatomy, Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, to be used for teaching and research activities. As a first step, his eyes were sent to the Eye Bank of Canada and someone who was blind was given "the gift of sight" as so well phrased by the Eye Bank.

Jim is greatly missed by all his family members and those who knew and associated with him.

Here is a poem by Jim from a collection of his poems which he had had accepted for publication.

Go to the website for a second poem by Jim and contributions from his children.

### TO THE NILE

Lonely Nile, and strange, wherein great secrets rest,  
What wisdom could I find, of life, in your encumbered depths?  
Embellished, sweetened, by the suns of endless time,  
You hold, in deeps unknown, of sights and scenes untold!

Restless is the spirit urging on this tired body  
Craving loves and wilds, from towns afar,  
Torturing this tender conscience – and not pity  
For in hardship and strife, it revels more and more.

Nile, oh Nile, do you know the reason why?  
Can you not tell, from secret source of age  
The wherefore of my wanderings, the reason why I fly?  
Knowledge alone can ban this torment, quell this inner rage.

Unhinge your pensive portals then, sweet Nile,  
That I may stare into your knowing well,  
And slake my constant thirst the while,  
Before I fade and am no more but dust. **Khartoum 1/8/52**

**Also the website has an extended obituary for Brian Meehan by a fellow-Catenian.**

#### **6. The Old Xaverians' Golf Tournament, Woolton Golf Club, 23/10/11.**

16 golfers competed for the Ray O'Connor Memorial Trophy. Joe Lavelle, Ray Parr, Jim Burns, Jim Pauling, Sean Sexton, Colin Flewitt, Peter Bullen, Vic Welsh from Liverpool; John Burns from Manchester; Peter Smears and Mike Burns from the Wirral. From further afield Terry Rotherham (Durham), Lou Gobbi (Bedale), Paddy McDonald (Surrey) and Mike Bushell (Ross on Wye). Rob Clough (Rainhill), three times winner of the trophy, attempted in vain to win for an unprecedented fourth time.

The day itself was one of the summer's few fine days. The golfers assembled in the spike bar between 1pm and 1.30pm for a sandwich and a pint or, in some cases, two pints. We were delighted to welcome Dave Jack, past President, O.X.F.C.

For the afternoon's play, the O.X. golfers were wedged (an intentional pun!) between a Catenian

Golf Society and Woolton Golf Club's mixed foursomes competition. This did not create a problem, as we played in two two-balls followed by four three-balls. Joe Lavelle, a retired G.P., successfully treated one our golfers, taken ill (which he did without charge).

After the last group of golfers returned to the clubhouse Jim Manning, Jack Heery, Des Hardman, Peter Madden, Frank Burgana, John Leaker and Mike Lalor joined us in the bar before dinner - a truly excellent meal. Mushroom soup, fish and chips with mushy peas, followed by cherry pie and ice cream. It being a day of abstinence, our choice of fish and chips, thoroughly enjoyed by everyone, made us feel almost sanctimonious when we were informed that the Catenian golfers next door were enjoying(?) a hot pot supper!

After dinner the results were declared and prizes distributed:

Winner of the Ray O'Connor Trophy---- Vic Welsh

Second-----Peter Smears

Third-----Jim Burns

Longest drive on the 17th hole----- Vic Welsh

Nearest the pin on the 7th hole----- Peter Bullen

Thanks to Jack Heery for presenting the prizes, to Peter Madden for his photographic expertise and to all participants, golfers and diners for making the OX.Golf day such an enjoyable event. A letter was sent to Woolton Golf Club , thanking them for their help in arranging the event, for a course in fine condition and for the excellent meal.

We will shortly announce the time of next year's golf tournament, which will be held at Woolton in June or July. Jim Burns

## 7. Accounts

I have butchered the Treasurer's report to get what I consider to be the important bits in. I apologize to him and to you if I have made any errors.

### Income for Year ending December 2010

Annual Subscriptions	<b>710.00</b>	
Annual Dinner - Ticket Sales	<b>825.00</b>	
Ties	<b>125.00</b>	
Building Society Interest	<b>183.10</b>	
		<b><u>1,843.10</u></b>

This compares with income of £2,242 for the previous year.

### Expenditure for Year ending December 2010

Annual Dinner - Cost of meal	<b>1,350.00</b>	
Postage and Photocopying	<b>260.00</b>	
Bishop Malone Prize	<b>25.00</b>	
Donations	<b>250.00</b>	
		<b><u>1,885.00</u></b>

This compares with expenditure of £2,088 for the previous year.

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## BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2010

### Assets

Birmingham Midshires Building Society	<b>10388.49</b>	
Britannia Building Society	<b>11492.71</b>	
Barclays Bank - Current Account	<b>1404.74</b>	
		<b>23285.94</b>
<b>Less Annual Subscriptions - proportion paid in advance</b>		<b>680.00</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>		<b><u>22605.94</u></b>