

THE OLD ALTRINCHAMIAN ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER 2008/2009

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ANNUAL REUNION DINNER

This year's Annual Reunion Dinner (the 94th) was held at the new "The Grammar" sports hall, which generously accommodated all 90 attendees.

The President, Peter Morton, got proceedings underway with a moment's silence to those Old Boys and retired teachers who had passed away over the last 12 months. Grace was given by Dr Kenneth Lea before tucking into an excellent dinner of butternut and sweet potato soup followed by roast sirloin of beef, bramley apple pie and cheese and biscuits.

The President commenced his address with the traditional lighting of candles in memory of former Old Boy and Schoolmaster, Reggie Thompson. The President welcomed the Headmaster and his wife Hilary, existing and retired teachers, the Head Boy Oliver Marsh and his table of Prefects.

The Charles Laver golf prize, won by Brian Little was collected in his absence by Mike Gittins, and the Marlborough Trophy was also presented to Mike Gittins who was pleased to announce that this was the 9th year that the match has been played between the Old Boys and the staff and pupils of the School, with the recent victory tipping the balance 5-4 in favour of the Old Boys.

A special presentation was then made to Robin Ellis by Duncan Bayley, a former AGSB pupil and now Financial Director of Cheshire Football Association, as well as being a Football Association Councillor. Robin joined Old Altrinchamians Football Club in 1946 and two years later took on the role of Club Secretary, a job he is still doing today, over 60 years later – a remarkable achievement.

A toast was made to "The School" by The Association Chairman, accompanied by a cheque for £750 made payable to the School Discretionary Fund. Headmaster, Tim Gartside, responded welcoming everyone to the fantastic new facilities which had been designed by Old Boy and architect, Tom Green, (who was in attendance at the dinner) and opened in September 2008 by Mike Butterworth of supporters Peel Holdings, and Andrew Flintoff, (who unfortunately was not in attendance at the dinner). Not only had the building been

shortlisted in the annual Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors Awards as having a significant community impact, the Headmaster commented that it also added an extra dynamic to school life with the school day starting for many boys at 8.00 am in the new gym, as well as it forming a pleasant social club venue for the boys during lunch and after-school hours.

The facilities are open to the wider community with a growing gym membership, as well as being used by Sale Sharks Rugby Club as a training camp, and providing facilities for the recent European Hockey Festival.

The Headmaster was rightly proud of the latest exam results with 70% of A Level results being at grades A and B, 13 Oxbridge places being offered (making a total of 41 over the last three years), and 60% of GCSE results being at grades A and A*. The Sixth Form now boasted 288 students demonstrating the increased success of the school over the recent years.

The School, having previously been awarded "Language College" status had now also been awarded "Science and Maths College" status, which principally provides additional funding, all boding well for the future.

There then followed an amusing double act by Head Boy, Oliver Marsh and Deputy Head Boy, Adam Al-Hakim who thanked Headmaster "Timmy G" (oh how times have changed!) and gave the pupils' insight to the new facilities and school life in general.

A toast was made to "The Association" by the President and a response was made by guest speaker, Ken Veitch, who attended the school between 1954 and 1961, and whom I believe had the proud honour of being featured in the Guinness World Book of Records for his achievements at tiddlywinks!

Ken recounted fun days of turning up to school along an un-tarmaced Marlborough Road, donning his school cap. Perhaps his most lasting memory from the school was the ability of former Schoolmaster, Norman Bird, being able to flick a piece of chalk half way across the room and land it in the bin, whilst still smoking his pipe – a skill that Ken after 32 years of teaching could still not master.

Tribute was paid to former School Master, George Peters, who had recently died, quoting one of his many sayings – "a wasted day is a day we do not laugh", as perhaps best summarising George Peters' view to life.

The dinner formalities finished just after 11.00 pm with many people staying around to take advantage of the bar facilities provided.

By way of a footnote, the general consensus from those who attended was that the new venue worked well, and whilst the price of tickets was slightly higher than previous years, the drinks were cheaper, making for a good value dinner. Any views and feedback from those who attended, or who have previously attended the Annual Dinner, would be much appreciated.

OLD ALTRINCHAMIANS' GOLF SOCIETY

The society held its 21st event for the CHARLES LAVER TROPHY at Styal Golf Club on June 6th 2008. The weather was once again fine and sunny with the course in excellent condition.

Entries were slightly down on last year as one or two injuries and school activities prevented regular member's attendance.

The Charles Laver Trophy was won by Brian Little with a score of 40 points.

In second place was Geoff Gittins with 39 pts, in third place was Paul Stockton with a respectable 38 pts.

It was nice to see our President, Peter Morton, Ian Bell and Brian Dickinson collect prizes.

Nearest the pin awards went to Colin Bamford and Brian Little, and the longest drives which were both in the 300 yard range, by Paul Stockton and regular winner, Dave Smith.

Dave Pincombe won the Guest Prize with a score of 36 pts.

Diary Note: Next year's event will be held at Styal Golf Club on Friday 5th June 2009 – Please endeavour to bring a new member or guest.

The INTER SCHOOL OLD BOYS GOLF competition took place at Bramhall Golf Club on 14th July 2008. Once again team numbers were low, and despite valiant efforts the six Old Alts players brought home the 'wooden spoon'. This years event has been provisionally booked for Wednesday 8th July 2009 at Bramhall Golf Club and it is hoped that greater numbers will help improve the Schools performance.

The MARLBOROUGH TROPHY, played between the School (pupils and teachers) versus the Old Boys was won in 2008 by the Old Boys, bringing the overall match score to 5-4 in favour of the Old Boys. This years match (date to be confirmed) will be keenly contested and anyone wishing to play should put their name forward to Brian Little.

Brian Little

ASHLEY (OLD ALTRINCHAMIANS) CRICKET CLUB

Ashley Cricket Club, incorporating Old Altrinchamians C.C., can look forward to another season in the top divisions of the Meller Braggins Cheshire Cricket League in 2009 with both 1st and 2nd XI maintaining their status after tough seasons. With the influx of players the club will run a record number of teams in 2009; 4 senior teams and 5 junior sides, at Under 9,11,13,15 and 18 level. As always we are on the lookout for players of all abilities to join us, but especially 1st XI batsmen.

The 1st XI will again be captained by the Yorkshire duo of Ian Barber and his vice captain Craig Knight. After the success of 2007's import Trevor Daly from Victoria, we are actively seeking another overseas player for 2009, hopefully a top order batsman or quick bowler. We hope to offer a youngster the chance to develop his skills on English pitches and the chance to sample everything the North West can offer; we also need to help him secure a job, if anyone has any useful contacts please get in touch with the club.

Newly installed as captain for the 2nd XI is Ally Horn, son of old boy Ian. He will have the support of a few season veterans as they look to avoid another season battling against relegation.

Peter Burgess continues as 3rd team skipper, and he will also be looking for a better year as they finished next to bottom last year; he will continue to utilise the talent and enthusiasm of the club's burgeoning junior section.

The new 4th team will look to give all the new recruits and a few old timers some regular cricket as they take their place in a competitive County League 4th division and they too will

need to pick up a few wins as there is now a 5th division in this league so relegation is a possibility.

Several Old Alts are still regularly turning out for the 2nd and 3rd XI, namely Chris Pendlebury, Dave Jackson, John Ward and Ian Horn.

The 5 junior sides are competing in the Right Move Abroad County League and the South Manchester Junior Cricket League, with the Under 11s managed by Old Alt, Sefton Kwasnik.

With extra teams and hopefully drier weather than last year there will be extra work for the clubs volunteers and grounds man, to whom we are very thankful. Once again we are grateful to Biffaward who have provided us with a grant to relay three pitches on the Railway side of the ground.

We are also very grateful to the many club sponsors who have helped in providing finances to buy kit, coaching and match balls. We would ask everyone to continue supporting our many sponsors, and if you would like to become a new club sponsor please get in touch.

Summer practice nights are Mondays for juniors and Tuesday and occasionally Wednesday for seniors, from 6:30pm at the club.

www.ashleycc.co.uk

OLD ALTRINCHAMIANS' AMATEUR FOOTBALL CLUB

2008/09 must be the most successful season for Old Alts for over thirty years. Many of our current players were not even born when the 1st XI won the Cheshire Amateur Cup and the Gilgryst Cup in successive seasons in 1975 and 1976. Arguably you would have to go back even further to the halcyon days of the mid-sixties when the Club was winning most of the trophies in the Lancashire Amateur League to match the all round successes accomplished this season.

The 1st XI achieved the Club's first success by winning the Murray Shield in a tight 1 – 0 victory against West Didsbury. This team managed by Lee Bennett and Andy Machin now needs to win their last league game to win promotion back into the top flight of the Manchester League.

The Sunday XI achieved the next cup success by winning the Altrincham & District F.A. Sunday Cup Final at Moss Lane. After going 1 – 0 down midway through the first half, the team kept on battling and were the stronger team in the second half. Their reward came with only minutes to spare when they got a much-deserved equaliser. Two extra time goals emphasised Old Alts eventual superiority and the Cup was won 3–1 against the Wythenshawe League's Jolly Butcher.

This team has also reached the Altrincham Sunday League Cup Final, where they meet Trafford Hawks. The team has a strong management team in Ged Manning, Phil Watkins and Joel Adams and could still yet win the Premier Division of the Altrincham Sunday League for the second year in a row.

The 2nd XI has also reached its League Cup Final and furthermore it is also still in the running for its second promotion in successive years. The managers, who are Paul Schofield and Colm O'Neil, are hoping that by winning their last three games in the Manchester League

Division 3, the team will secure the runners-up slot and promotion to Division 2, which is the highest level at which reserve teams can compete in this League.

The Altrincham League side has already won promotion to the top division of the Altrincham League and can become Division 2 champions by winning their last two games. Steve Brookes and Steve Gregory, who manage this side, have also been successful in steering the team to both the League Cup Final and the Broadheath Central Cup Final.

The Club has a strong tradition of offering open age football at all levels and in addition to the four teams already mentioned we turn out three rather more social teams each Saturday in the East Cheshire League. These include our Veterans XI managed by Dave Stephens and Chris Hill, who have slipped from last season's second spot to a still very creditable fifth position. The next team, managed by Dave Richards and John O'Connor, ran the Vets very closely in the League and had the consolation of reaching the League Cup semi final, where Club AZ narrowly beat them. Lastly much credit goes to Rob James and Martin Officer, who finished in bottom position for the second year in a row, but turned out a full team plus two or three substitutes for every game of the season.

The match between recent Old Boys and the School 1st XI took place for the second time in April. The 1st XI won an exciting game by the same 2 – 1 score line as last year and therefore retain the Stamford Cup. We are hoping that many of those playing in this game will decide to play for Old Alts in the years to come. Our thanks go once again to sports teacher, Kevin Morris, for organising this very successful event.

In addition to all the club's successes on the field of play, a very enjoyable Sportsman's Dinner was held at The Cresta Court in November when our guest speaker was Jan Molby, the Danish International and Liverpool stalwart. This annual event will take place again this year on Thursday 26th November 2009 and anyone reading this report will be most welcome to attend. Please ring me on 0161 428 9836 for tickets.

Finally it would be remiss of me not to mention that last September Robin Ellis completed 60 years service to our football club. This amazing achievement was marked by presentations to Robin both from the Club and from the Football Association. Many thanks go to Robin for all his hard work over some many years. It is fitting that this remarkable landmark should be celebrated by the Club winning so much silverware this season!

Brian Clark (1954-62)

SAVILLE LAVER SOCIETY

The 10th anniversary dinner of the Saville Laver Society took place at Trinity College, Cambridge on Saturday 22nd November 2008. A record attendance saw some 30 old boys, teachers and friends of the school meet in the magnificent environs of the Old Kitchen, Trinity College. Particularly pleasing was the number of recent old boys currently enjoying their university courses at Oxford and Cambridge.

Senior Master Kevin Pearson kindly stood in for Headmaster Tim Gartside and gave us an update on recent developments at the School, and in particular the new sports facilities.

Thanks go to the Michal Kwasigroch who ably orchestrated the evening and ensured that the Trinity kitchens showed us their best hospitality.

Looking back over the first decade of the society have been lucky enough to enjoy terrific dinners in many different colleges in Oxford and Cambridge including Hertford, Oriel, Keble

and Mansfield at Oxford and Clare, Selwyn, and now Trinity in Cambridge. As the society continues to prosper we hope to visit a good many more in the future.

The society was established in 1998 in honour of the first Headmaster of the School, Laurence Saville Laver, a Cambridge Foundation Scholar, and is open to all Old Boys of the Schools with a connection to the Universities of Oxford or Cambridge. Further details can be obtained from Alistair or Will Allen, or Michal Kwasigroch. New members are always very welcome.

HALE AND OLD ALTRINCHAMIANS LODGE

Following the amalgamation of Old Altrinchamians Lodge with its Mother Lodge, The Hale Lodge, to form The Hale & Old Altrinchamians Lodge (No. 3749), the strength in numbers and vitality of the Lodge has attracted new candidates and newly joining members alike, which bodes well for the future. In February 2009 Russell Lindsay was installed as Worshipful Master for the first time.

Freemasonry, as a whole has unjustly suffered 'bad press' over a number of years and below are a few FAQ's which may help to enlighten a few curious minds.

Q. What is Freemasonry?

A. The UK's largest secular, fraternal and charitable organisation. This year alone, Grand Lodge has donated £2m to 17 different national charities.

Q. How many Masons are in the UK?

A. Over 300,000

Q. Who do I know who is or was a Mason?

A. Over the centuries there have been numerous famous people who were Freemasons, including a number of monarchs, Sir Winston Churchill, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Sir Alexander Fleming, Henry Ford and Rudyard Kipling. The Grand Master is HRH The Duke of Kent.

Q. Is it a secret society?

A. No, but like many other groups, meetings are private and open only to members.

Q. Are Masons expected to give preference to other Masons, when giving jobs, promotions, contracts, etc?

A. Absolutely not. Masons expect no material gain from membership.

Q. What is initiation?

A. A meeting when a man becomes a Mason, during which the candidate is taught lessons in self-knowledge.

Q. Isn't it true that Masons only look after their own?

A. No. Masons give millions of pounds to large national charities, as well as smaller local causes, such as school facilities.

Q. Is Masonry a religion?

A. No, it is not a replacement for religion and welcomes men of all faiths.

Q. What does Masonry stand for?

A. Brotherly love, relief and truth. In other words, care for others, kindness in the community and fairness in all things.

Q. Who can join?

A. Masonry is multi-racial and multi-cultural. Membership is open to law-abiding men of all faiths, who are of good character, and who acknowledge a belief in God.

Q. How do I get more information?

A. Information is widely available. In the first instance try www.cheshiremasons.co.uk or contact Don Boden at donald.boden@ntlworld.com who is an Old Boy of the School.

RECENT SCHOOL LEAVERS SPORTS MATCHES

The Association has been keen to encourage recent School-leavers to keep in touch with the School and therefore last year re-kindled the traditional 'Old Boys' v School football and rugby matches. This years matches were both held on 1st April and were well supported by pupil, teachers, old boys and parents.

FIRST XI v OLD BOYS XI

Despite the current First XI having won their last seven games on the bounce they looked as if they'd have their work cut out facing on paper, a very strong Old Boys XI. The game kicked off with spectators still arriving and the opening encounter was an equal affair, both sides having solid periods of possession. In the middle of the park for the Old Boys were Clancy and Leishman who were strong in the tackle, though Bates and Irwin were matching them. It was the Old Boys who took the initiative from a defensive error; Tom Timmins pounced and punished the First XI by slotting the ball beyond the outstretched Tumor-Wilson. A routine celebration followed which was greatly appreciated by the supporters on the sideline. The School responded with sustained pressure on the Old Boys defence until they equalised, the move beginning with a superb cross from Tom Nuttall, which was met by Guy Horlock who powered his header beyond the flailing stand-in year 11 keeper Phil McNally, leaving the sides evenly matched at the interval. The Old Boys seemed comfortable at the back especially the central defensive pairing of Flanagan and Entwistle. However they were unable to prevent the ball being lashed into the roof of their own net by the right back in the second half. The First XI should have made it three when Nuttall ran on to a measured through ball from Bates but McNally pulled off a spectacular double save to Nuttall's despair. Timmins and Kerr continued to show moments of magic but were unable to get the better of Chris Thomas who was a rock in the School defence, carrying on his form in previous matches. The match ended 2-1 to the First XI and was played in good spirit. Both teams showed their gratitude to Mr Butler, as it was his final game in charge after a phenomenal 35-year reign as manager of the First Team.

Dominic Bates

FIRST XV v OLD BOYS XV

On a sunny unseasonably warm spring afternoon the Old Boys returned for their annual challenge to the 1st XV, bringing with them a strong squad including several county players and an England international. The School XV started the game strongly controlling possession and continually attacking until a quickly taken penalty close to the Old Boys line brought the first score of the game. The School continued to dominate possession until the second quarter when the size and power of the Old Boys allied to some fine passing led to a quick succession of tries and a well deserved half time lead.

In the second half the school rallied for a twenty minute period with some dynamic running from the back row and three quarter line leading to two further tries but as the school tired the Old Boys once again began to dominate and scored three further tries. The game was played in a good spirit and both teams were able to demonstrate excellent skills and commitment.

Final Score: School 21 - Old Boys 43

OBITUARIES

Capt L J Thompson

Capt L J Thompson 10 April 1924-11 January 2008. Born in Maidstone in Kent, he moved to Hale Altrincham when his fathers' job in the AA took him North. He attended Altrincham Grammar School and left at the age of 16 to attend the training ship The HMS Conway 1939-1941. He was Bowman of the No 1 Motor Boat that rescued the 45 crew from the S S Tahoma City which was blown up by a magnetic mine near the Conway in March 1941. During the voyage at the age of 18 on the Blue Star m.v Dunedin Star he was shipwrecked and rescued from the notorious Skeleton Coast in SW Africa. These exploits are covered in the book and film Skeleton Coast. In 2000 he published his own account of the adventures entitled The Loss of a Ship. He served twice as the President of the Conway Club, between 1986-90 and 1992-96, and has been Chairman of the HMS Conway Trust from 1988 to 2005.

He married in 1952 to Patricia Thompson, settled in the South and had two children and since 4 grandchildren. He left the sea in 1954 and worked for Hovies, BP, EJO in the city of London and in 1974 after being made redundant he set up his own company L J Thompson Marine Services. He retired in 1986 and spent the remainder of his time with his wife since his children had grown up, married and left home. He was taken into hospital 27 December 2008 after a short illness of 2 weeks, diagnosed with cancer and died 2 weeks later. He was known to be a strong character with great morals and principles.

Harry Bardsley

Harry was born on the 22nd April 1921 and died on the 7th November 2008. He left the school in 1937 having obtained School Certificate and Matriculation. He was the oldest of three children, a sister, Mona, and Ken Bardsley, (also an Old Boy of the School). Harry remained a bachelor in the family home in Timperley until his death.

During the war he joined the RAF and served in India. On demobilisation he worked in the drawing office of Edward Wood in Trafford Park and later at Booths at Bury.

Frank Donald Hart

Born on 6th January 1933, His Honour Judge Donald Hart was a pupil at Altrincham Grammar School for Boys from 1943 to 1950. He obtained his School Certificate in 1947, Higher School Certificate in 1949, became a prefect in 1949, and was named School Captain in 1950. He had a good singing voice and appeared in the School's production of "The Mikado" in 1950 in the role of Go-To.

On leaving school, he became a Life Member of the Old Altrinchamians' Association. Though not a regular attender at the Association's Annual Reunion Dinner, he proposed the Toast to the Association in February 1979 at that year's dinner, held in the Cresta Court Hotel , Altrincham.

Donald undertook National Service before going up to Magdalen College, Oxford, where he read law (1952-55). He went on to Grays Inn, there winning the Lee Essay prize. Noted for his hard work, he began his career in the legal profession on being called to the bar in 1956 and was appointed Circuit Judge in 1989 on the Northern Circuit. Additionally, he served as a Designated Family Judge for Liverpool, 1992-98, and as President, Mental Health Review Tribunals, 1983 – 2000.

He was twice married, firstly to Glenys Thomas, having two sons and two daughters, and then to Joan Turton, in later years settling in Grappenhall, Cheshire. He listed his recreations as "Garden, Opera and Cuisine". He died on 24th April, 2007, at age 74, and his ashes were scattered in Addison's Walk, a quiet haven at Magdalen College.

Robert Buchanan Morton

Born 2nd June 1940, Bob attended the School from 1951 to 1958 and remained a local man working at Granada Television. He was actively involved with many local clubs including Hale Barns Cricket Club, Warburton Ringway Clay Pigeon Club and Adlington Morris Men. He died on 1st December 2008.

Philip Arnold

Philip was born in Sheffield on 28th December 1917 and soon afterwards his family moved to Timperley. After leaving School in 1938 Philip started an apprenticeship with Daimler Car Company in Coventry – the start of a life-long love affair with fast, beautiful cars. In 1939 as part of the Warwickshire Yeoman Territorials he was sent to the Middle East, and subsequently transferred to the Armoured Brigade in North Africa taking part in the Battle of El Alamein and the subsequent invasion of Italy.

Phil met Una in 1945 (to whom he was married for 61 years) and after the war re-joined Daimlers. In 1948 they moved to Barnstable where Phil subsequently became a founder of Chivenor Company, a firm of architectural woodcraftsmen. He retired in his fifties, enjoying 38 full and interesting years in retirement with Una. He died on 26th July 2008, aged 90.

John Wild

John was born on 5th June 1917 in Port Arthur, Canada, before his family moved back to Hale at the close of the First World War. He attended the School from 1928 – 1934.

After leaving school he took up a position as a bank clerk in Manchester, where his career progression was brought to an abrupt end by the outbreak of the Second World War. John was called-up in 1941 to join the Lancashire Fusiliers where he attained the rank of 2nd Lieutenant. However, in 1942 he was captured and held prisoner at Rangoon as a Japanese POW for over 2 years.

On being de-mobbed John took over the family joinery business where he worked until retirement in 1982, after which he and his wife, Joan moved to West Linton, Scotland to be close to their only son, Boyd and their two granddaughters.

John had been a keen cricketer at Timperley Cricket Club where he eventually became Chairman. He was also a lifetime member of Altrincham Garrick where he also later became Chairman. John died after a long illness on 29th November 2008 and is survived by Joan.

Roy F Bateman

Roy attended the School from 1952-1957, and afterwards, along with his brother Keith (also an Old Boy) ran Batemans Decorators & DIY shop in Hale Village for many years.

Roy had also been a keen cricketer for Hale Barns Cricket Club.

Anthony Arthur Lowe-Wheeler

Tony Wheeler was born in London, in 1921, and spent all of his childhood in Acton, West London. He left school just as war was declared and went straight into the Fleet Air Arm, flying Swordfish and Mosquitoes. It was during the war that he married Mary Sheldon, a Wren, and the two of them remained together until Mary died, in 1982. After the war, they moved north, first to Northwich, Tony teaching at Rudheath Secondary Modern, and then to Hale Barns. Tony began teaching at Altrincham Grammar School for Boys, where he remained until his retirement, in 1982. He taught Physics and Art, and was also Head of Careers. Outside the classroom, his passions were chess – he played chess regularly with Ron Tilley and Owen Pritchard – cricket and table tennis. When his two sons started to take an interest in classical music – Adrian learning the clarinet, Martyn the cello – Tony took up the oboe and became sufficiently accomplished to play as first oboe in the Gorton Philharmonic. Tony was also a AAA discus coach and a brown belt judoka. When he was a boy at school himself, and later, in the navy, he had been a keen and accomplished heavyweight boxer.

Tony's two sons, Martyn and Adrian, were both pupils at the school, and his daughter, Philippa, a pupil at Altrincham Grammar School for Girls.

After retirement, Tony remained for a couple of years in Cheshire, but then moved up to Wigan, where he remained for the rest of his life. He remarried, and is survived by his widow, Mrs Susan Renwick Wheeler and the two of them enjoyed more than twenty years together. It was only in the last year of his life that Tony had a series of strokes, meaning he had to move to a residential home in Wigan, and then, just before Christmas, 2008, he had two more strokes and had to be rushed to hospital. He died in hospital, having just reached his eighty seventh year.

Tony will be remembered as a dedicated and caring teacher; as a fine county chess player; an accomplished artist; a gifted musician and as a man with many and varied interests, some going back to childhood, others taken up later in life. He was one of the last surviving members of that generation of AGS staff whose academic studies were cut short by the war, who fought for the six years of the war, and who then trained after the war, coming into teaching at a time of huge social change. Tony would often reminisce about his years in the Fleet Air Arm, and remember fondly the camaraderie of the squadron; he was lucky to find in the staffroom at AGS that same camaraderie, and to have served under a great Head, Albert Crowther, "Twitch". There will be many who have fond memories of AGS in the fifties, sixties and seventies, and many whom Tony taught, who will be grateful for his uncanny ability to predict O' level Physics questions!

JOTTINGS

'The Grammar' Sports Hall Opening

September 2008 saw the opening of Altrincham Grammar's prestigious new sports hall, which included a surprise guest appearance by Andrew "Freddie" Flintoff. The building was unveiled by Mike Butterworth, the father of a former pupil and Property Director of Peel Holdings, who had donated £600,000 to the project. The Old Altrinchamians Association donated photographs featuring former pupil Paul Allott from his Lancashire and England cricketing days, which had been provided by his father, John Allott, also an Old Boy of the school. The pictures can be seen adorning the walls of the Sports Hall's foyer.

Professor Simon Barker

Retired English Master, Andy Black, contacted the school recently to make us aware of the recent successes of Simon Barker, who was an A Level English student at AGSB during the 1970s. In December 2008 Simon undertook his inaugural lecture 'Like A Soldier To The Stage': Field Commander Hamlet And The Ends of Tragedy, at the University of Gloucestershire.

Simon has previously published widely on literature and performing arts with early books including Winchester: History & Literature, and more recently his editions of Thomas Delone's "The Gentle Craft", and "War And Nation In The Theatre of Shakespeare and His Contemporaries".

Charlie Pearson: Marathon Man

Former Old Boy Charlie Pearson, now aged 54 has recently completed the London Marathon – a fair feat in itself. However, what made Charlie's efforts extraordinary was that he preceded the marathon with a 206 mile run from his home in Altrincham, commencing 9 days before the start of the marathon. Charlie ran as part of the Daily Telegraph's Brain & Spine Foundation London Marathon Team, a charity he has supported since he and his daughter were involved in a road traffic accident in 1995.

Charlie comments "I was in hospital with a fractured skull for two weeks and my daughter was in a coma for two months. It was a difficult time but we both fought our way back to health and a normal life. The Brain & Spine Foundation has done so much for me and my family so this is my way of saying thank you". You are still able to sponsor Charlie by visiting www.justgiving.com/charliepearson.

Scott Meakin

We were pleased to learn that former pupil, Scott Meakin, who left the School in 1999 has now joined the School staff as part of The PE Department.

RETIRING TEACHERS

Keith Knowles – Biology (and former Head Boy of the School)
Peter Butler – History and Latin.