



The Old Priorian Association

NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2008

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From The President ...

Dear members,

Firstly, please accept our apologies for the Association being somewhat tardy with the publication of this newsletter; those of you on our email distribution list will have received regular monthly updates since the last one (in summer 2007), but it is fair to say that we have had a few "challenges" in putting this one together.

The good news is that Council member Mary Keal (OP 1983) is now at the helm and under her editorship, we're back in business...!

Now, it is always very encouraging to

receive news from overseas – and 2008 was a bumper year. The "Where Are You Now" and "Find A Classmate" pages on our website (theOPA.org) have yielded contact from about 100 former pupils of St Benedict's over the past 12 months, from destinations including Ireland, France, Spain, Belgium, USA, Canada, Singapore, Lithuania, South Africa, Dubai, New Zealand and Australia. I encourage you to keep using the website for updates and to send in photos and news items so that we keep your classmates up to date through emails and newsletters.

Finally, I am looking forward to seeing

many of you at The President's Dinner at The Royal Overseas League, St James's in March. In response to the ever-growing numbers, we've hired an additional room this year for pre-dinner drinks, which means that you can mingle with your classmates in more comfort and – by popular request – have easier access to the bar.

On behalf of The Association, I invite you to stay in touch – and stay involved.

Best regards and happy New Year,

*Paul Fagan (OP 1991)
President, The Old Priorian Association*

Richard Sandys

8th December 1942 –
1st May 2008
R.I.P.

Richard had been part of my life for a long time before I actually got to know him. His father was our doctor who was a client of my bank manager grand-father and our families' paths often crossed. My early memories at school were of the boy who ran the tuck shop and of a solid full back who showed a calm determination as the ball fell out of the sky towards him.

I got to know Richard towards the end of my time at St Benedict's. One of the most considerate of people he was hugelyregarious and always concerned to ensure that everyone was having a good time. Whether it was a rugby match at Twickenham, a trip to the theatre or an evening at The Castle in South Ealing he usually planned it and was unfailing in his efforts to ensure its success. If there were problems Richard was there on the phone with encouragement and support



Richard Sandys 1942-2008

and so many times for friends or family went many 'extra miles' – sometimes literally – to help or comfort or both.

He was an excellent sportsman – a safe pair of hands at rugby and a very gifted racquets player. It was a joy to lose to him at tennis or squash but see his perfect

eye and easy relaxed but devastatingly effective style. This was in sharp contrast to his form on the dancefloor where anyone close to him risked serious injury. He was also a keen thespian and graced many a Guinness am-dram performance.

He left St Benedict's and joined Guinness at Park Royal. He worked in many aspects of marketing where his enthusiasm, people and planning skills got him more hospitality trips to rugby internationals and pints of Guinness than anyone I know. He stayed with Guinness throughout a distinguished career and in the latter years became involved in special data projects which took him all over the world.

He credited one of my parent's Christmas parties for his getting married. At the party he was persuaded to go to Lourdes the following Easter and on that trip met his wife Holly. They married and settled in Ealing and their three sons are now themselves Old Priorians. He was very much a family man and was delighted with, and enjoyed, his 5 grandchildren who arrived in quick succession.

The Old Priorian Newsletter always welcomes contributions from Old Boys and Girls about their experiences at the School, life after School and details of reunions. Please contact the Editor, Mary Keal c/o The Old Priorian Association, St Benedict's School, 54 Eaton Rise, Ealing, London W5 2ES

Richard was always one to be involved and over the years had a close and committed involvement with the School and the OPA of which he was President for a time and latterly a most efficient Secretary. After taking early retirement he threw himself into Ealing Parish activities and served on several committees with his customary enthusiasm.

In his approach to life and those around him Richard was a truly unique person. There was no pretence or artifice. You always knew where you were with him and that was having a good time with a genuine friend. His enthusiasm and concern for people shone through as did his faith, all quite unpretentiously. There must be many OPs who have had the privilege and good fortune to know

Richard Sandys over the years and we will all miss him.

We saw him a few days before he died in May and, although very ill, he was still making plans for foreign trips later in the year – gloriously typical and a great tribute to him and to the love and care of his family.

Mike Davis (OP 1964)

President's Dinner March 2008



Ian Stephen

The President's Dinner, held at the Royal Overseas League in Central London, has become a well established part of the OPA calendar. It has grown from strength to strength and on Thursday 13th March 2008 125 diners enjoyed a wonderful evening, catching up with old friends and acquaintances, meeting new people and hearing the wise, witty and sometime moving words of the Guest Speaker, Mr Ian Stephen. Mr Stephen retired in July 2008 after 38 years at St Benedict's School and the outline of his time there, plus his comments on School life, were fascinating.

The evening started with a sparkling aperitif, went on to a full three course meal and finished with coffee and



Margaret Moore and Chris Cleugh

brandy. The bar was open until midnight and rumour has it that some people carried on partying much later than that. We look forward to an even more successful evening on 19th March 2009.

Catherine de Cintra (Bursar)

Priorian Golf Day – May 2008

The Stableford Competition over 18 holes was held on Monday 19th May 2008 at the Buckinghamshire Golf Club, Denham.

James Stacpoole (OP 1996), taking over from Mike Ainslie (OP 1980), organised this year's well attended Golf Day. This was highlighted by a good dinner and presentation of prizes in the evening.

The Old Priorian Cup was won by Steve Clancy (OP 1995) with a handicap of 22 on 35 points and the overall winner was Joe Chambers with a handicap of 11 on 40 points.

Old Priorian 1958-1963 Year Group Reunion – Sunday 15th June 2008



Fifty Years On

On Sunday 15th June 2008 some 80 persons gathered at the playing fields at Perivale for drinks and lunch for OPs who left the School between 1958 and 1963.

It was great to see such a strong turnout on a sunny day – 50 OPs, their wives and partners, and representatives from the Abbey, School and ex-teachers.

Some of the OPs were still in touch with the School but there were a number who had not visited it since they left around 50 years ago. Certainly many had not previously seen the new Pavilion, and were much impressed

The event started off with drinks and was followed by a super lunch laid on by Concetta from the Parish Centre. A big thank you to her. And many thanks to Catherine de Cintra, the School Bursar,



James Anscomb and the Rev Tony Brunning

and her family, who provided so much help in organising the event and assisting on the day, and also to Richard Baker (OP 1959) for his untiring work in support.

The Headmaster, Chris Cleugh, gave an excellent speech to update OPs on the considerable recent achievements and



And wives came too!

progress of the School, and by his enthusiasm, courtesy and charm, much

endeared himself to everyone who did not already have the privilege of knowing him. It was good to see members of the Monastic Community present, including the Abbot, and others who had taught at the School when the OPs had been pupils – Abbot Francis, Father Dunstan, and Father Gregory. And well done to Cecil Friedlander and his wife Maria who travelled from Wales to be present. Basil Nickerson. Paul Olsen and Neil Moss weren't able to make it but sent nice messages along.

Basically the occasion provided a great opportunity to chat, and to meet up

with friends and renew acquaintances. We remembered departed and absent friends. The time flew by and many people left saying how much they would like to do something similar again.

This was in fact a pilot to see whether offering such OP events for a small cluster of years would prove successful. The day certainly proved that. As a result the OPA will be holding similar cohort reunions, hopefully on a regular basis. Watch this space. If you would like to help organise one, get in touch with the OPA office.

Brian Taylor (OP 1960)

Old Priorian Association AGM, Memorial Mass and Lunch

On Saturday 8th November 2008 the Association met for this important annual event. Thirteen OPs together with a few visitors (non-voting of course!) gathered in the Benet Bar of the Parish Centre under the chairmanship of our President, Paul Fagan (1991) to conduct the Annual General Meeting of the Association and to elect its Officers and Council for the forthcoming year. Reports were presented, by the Secretary (Lewis Hill 1975) on the past year's activities and in the absence of the Council Sports Member, the Sports report for the last year, by the Treasurer (Mike Ainslie 1980) on last year's finances and the proposed budget for the coming year,

and by the Assistant Administrator (Richard Baker 1959) on Membership status and analysis. Elections followed and the current officers (President, Secretary and Treasurer) were all re-elected together with five members of Council (Frank Casali 1984, Mary Keal 1983, David Murphy 1954, Peter Watson 1952 and Emma York 1997). The officers, elected Council Members and eight non-elected ex-officio Council Members (appointed by various bodies associated with the Abbey and School) make up the "Governing Body" of the Association. There was some discussion at the AGM as to how we might encourage and persuade younger OPs (eg 20-30 age range) to come forward and play a much greater part in running the Association.

We do hope that we might be able to welcome more OPs to the AGM – AGMs are traditionally "meant to be boring!", but they do play an important part in the life of any Association or

Club; it is an opportunity for members to have their views listened to and even taken on board for future action. So what about it for next year?

Immediately after the AGM *The Annual Memorial Mass* for Old Priorians who gave their lives in war and for all former pupils, staff, parents and friends who have died was celebrated for us in the New Chapel in the Abbey Church by Dom Thomas Stapleford OSB, the Association Chaplain. We were joined at this Mass but a small contingent of cadets from St Benedict's CCF who formed a Guard of Honour as the President laid a wreath at the foot of the Altar.

Our Annual AGM lunch followed on our return to the Benet Bar; thirty OPs and their guests were well entertained to drinks and lunch to round off a most pleasing occasion.

Richard Baker (OP 1959)

Forthcoming Events

The President's Dinner will be held at The Royal Overseas League, St James's on Thursday, 19th March 2009 at 7.00pm for 8.00pm. Tickets cost £45 each and the price includes a sparkling aperitif, 3-course meal (vegetarian option available), coffee, half a bottle of wine and a digestif – there will be a cash bar open until midnight. Last year's event was a huge success and we hope to build even further on this at the same venue. Dress for the evening is "Black Tie". The venue is strictly limited to 180 places and the event is for Alumni only.

Last year's event was a huge success when we said "farewell" to Ian Stephen; this year it is the "turn" of Robin Nonhebel and Andy Hardman.

For Leavers in the last four years (i.e. 2005-2008 inc) there is a special subsidised price of £25 per ticket; please do avail yourselves of this special offer and do let others of your years know about the Dinner and that you will be attending.

Naturally, we would be delighted if you would join us and perhaps you might consider putting a table of 10 "Old Boys & Girls" together for the evening. The Headmaster, Chris Cleugh will be making the traditional Headmaster's "Toast to the Association" and your President will respond with the "Toast to the School". Robin Nonhebel will be speaking "on retirement".

If you would like to attend, simply download the Ticket Order Form from the internet link below, complete and

return it with a cheque made payable to The Old Priorian Association. Full details and an application form have been sent to all members of the Association.

http://www.theopa.org/annual_events/pr esidents_dinner/

Priorian Golf Day: Thursday 23rd April 2009

After a very successful day's golfing in 2008 we have now confirmed the Old Priorians Golf Day on Thursday 23rd April 2009 at the same venue, The Buckinghamshire Golf Club.

Due to the great numbers achieved in 2008 and those expected in 2009 we are encouraging early bookings. Members of The Buckinghamshire will be priced at £25 and guests at £65 which includes breakfast, 18 holes on the championship

course and dinner in the evening along with prizes.

We have also changed the format slightly, using the 1st and 10th tees from which to start.

Please contact James Stacpoole on 020 7935 0044 or james@stacdene.co.uk for further information or to book an individual or team place.

OPA Reunion Lunch for OPs 85-89 (inclusive)

1.00-3.00pm on Sunday 17 May 2009 at the Pavilion at Perivale; Contact Rob Simmons (rsimmons@stbenedicts.org.uk) if you would like to register interest.

OP Cricket Day: Sunday 5th July 2009

All of our social events need an effective input to manage and run; whilst the

OPA Council and its individual Council Members take on the responsibility for the event, Council feel that the "burden" could well be shared. Many of our members may be more than willing to offer their help and expertise on these occasions, so please – we are asking for your help (manual or otherwise!). If you can help in any way, no matter how small, do contact us and let us have your views – PLEASE DON'T BE SHY ABOUT COMING FORWARD.

SPORT

OPRFC 7s Tournament 2008

As ever the tournament soldiered on in the face of ageing legs and bad hangovers. This year we had five teams playing: The 2005 Leavers, The 2006 Leavers, The Recent Leavers, Jet Set, and Johnston's Giants. The latter team, and indeed the whole tournament, played in memory of Robert Johnston (1997). Sadly, Robert died tragically last December aged 28. The usual flurry of rugby, burgers and beer dominated a sunny day. In the early matches the Recent Leavers (the 2008 Daily Mail Cup Finalists) impressed all with the speed and precision of their play in spite of nearly 5 months off. Jack Dever, James Booth, James Stephenson and company beat all before them going into the eventual final against Johnston's Giants. The final proved to be a somewhat fiesty affair and as physical as 7's can get. The Giants were inspired by James Duggan, Aaron McGarry and the ever impressive Sean Flynn to win the match 25-17. In a fitting end to the tournament, Robert's older brother Danny Johnston collected the shield for the winning team.

The reformation of the OPRFC (as of 3rd October 2008)

Earlier in the summer, news was fast spread that OP Nick Farren was to re-establish the regular OP rugby club. Facebook helped to spread the word and interest has increased rapidly. The announcement that Greg Knights would be the official coach, and Perivale the home ground, further

tied the club back into its St Benedict's roots. The first game showed some rustiness as it took the OPs time to breakdown Uxbridge 2s and record a 32-0 victory. Jack's Dever's two tries and an impressive second half cameo by Sam Codrington got things going, with James Duggan named Man of the Match. The following week the strength of the club came to the fore. On the school First XV pitch the OP Saints side recorded a 74-12 victory over Chiswick 2s. James Stephenson recorded a highly impressive 5 tries, whilst Charlie Allum was incredible in the tight and the loose, being named Man of the Match. At the same time, the OP Twisters side, sporting the new club jerseys, managed a hard fought 20-17 win against Old Isleworthians. Nick Farren led from the front and Sevag Libarikian got the crucial try. The last friendly before the League campaign started took place away at Grasshoppers 2s. The Old Priorians were tested for the first time,

but dominated for most of the match to win 44-20 with most of the opposition's points coming in the last 10 minutes. James Booth scored a contender for try of the season, racing 60 metres and beating numerous opposition players. But the Man of the Match award went to scrum-half Rob Grant who put in a superb performance. In the first league game on 27th September, the OPs blew away Bank of England 3s 104-0 on a sweltering day at Perivale. Colin Stokes and Peter Enright were excellent, the latter scoring 5 tries. Backs Edd Conway, Rasheed Alawiye, Michael Dalton and James Booth all added a brace each too. The club is continuing to grow and aims to put out two sides every Saturday. If you are interested in playing, please register on the website: <http://www.oldpriorianrfc.co.uk>. Training is at St Benedict's Playing Fields, Perivale every Wednesday from approximately 7.30 to 9.15pm.

Edd Conway (OP 2005)



OPRFC 2008

Who has been in touch with us recently...?

John McGrath (OP 1958) wrote: In Strasbourg, towards the end of a touring holiday in the Rhine Valley Peter Hendricks, John McGrath and their wives were walking back together from dinner when, much to their surprise, Peter and John discovered that they had both attended St Benedict's and even been in the same house, Gervase. About a day later, Christopher Coolen asked Peter if he had been at the school and we had a trio of Old Priorians. Between us, we represented one eighth of the male members of the group. The photograph taken at Strasbourg Station at the beginning of the return journey shows, left to right: John McGrath (OP 1958), Gervase; Christopher Coolen (OP 1962), Powell and Peter Hendricks (OP 1963), Gervase.



A Chance Meeting

Interested in organising a reunion...?

Reunions are now more popular than ever and remain a great way to meet up with old friends and rekindle school memories. There is useful advice online about how to make sure that your reunion is a success: http://theopa.org/annual_events/reunions

Births Marriages and Deaths January 2007 – December 2008

Births

2007: To James (1987) and Helen Barrington, a daughter Amelia Helen, a sister to Max (2)

2 Mar 08: To Mark (1992) and Tamsin Sandys, a daughter Sadie Roisin; a sister to Grace (5), Harry (3) and Sean (1)

22 Sep 08: To Edmund (1992) and Louise (1993, née McGill) Brooks, a son Daniel Christopher; a brother to Joseph (4) and Lucy (2)

Marriages

10 Jun 07: Ben Hider (1998) to Amanda Frost in Bronxville New York

23 Feb 08: Oliver Bradley (1992) to Kate Neligan in Notre Dame de la Cambre, Brussels, Belgium

15 Mar 08: Alexander Racicot (2002) to Katherine Buchert in Williamsburg, Virginia, USA

Deaths, RIP

30 May 07: John Castle Woollett (1933) Aged 91; Major General, CBE MC

9 Jun 07: John Frost (Staff 1947-1949) Aged 83; father of Julian (OP)

20 Sep 07: David Delaloye (1960), brother of Peter (1956)

16 Oct 07: (Maurice) Peter Willson (1941) aged 78. President OPA 1974-1976

30 Oct 07: (Donald) Paul Roche (1933) aged 91

2007: Eric Poole (1923) Aged 101 (DoB 7 Aug 1906; SBS 1915-1923)

25 Dec 07: David Stirzaker (Staff 1961-1990), Aged 74; father of Bernard, Roderick and Hugh (all OPs) and brother-in-law of Robin (1963), Neil (1967) and Duncan McNair (1974)

29 Dec 07: Robert Michael Johnston (1997), Aged 28; brother of William and Daniel (both OPs)

30 Dec 07: Francis Joseph O'Connell (1947), Aged 78

6 Jan 08: Lawrence Victor Gottelier (1935), Aged 89

Jan 08: Ryszard Pintscher (1966), Aged 58

14 Feb 08: Peter Francis Green (1968), Aged 58. In Christchurch, New Zealand

28 Feb 08: Edward Denson Kaye (1938), Aged 86

26 Apr 08: David Martindale (1971), Aged 54; brother of Christopher (1969); Junior School Staff 76-81

1 May 08: Richard Sandys (1962), Aged 65; father of Christopher (1991), Mark (1992) and Damian (1998); a Past President and Secretary of the Old Priorian Association

12 Jul 08: Dom Edmund Flood OSB, Monk of Ealing, Aged 77

30 Aug 08: Ian Smart (1952), Aged 73; brother of Brian (1963)

21 Sep 08: Shaun Freeman (1963), Aged 62; brother of Kevin (1957)

Ian Michael Smart 1935-2008 R.I.P. – St Benedict’s School 1942-1952

Ian Smart, diplomat, analyst and scholar on nuclear energy issues and Trustee of the Imperial War Museum died on 30th August 2008 aged 73.

He was born in Caterham, Surrey in 1935 and was educated at St Benedict’s and Balliol College Oxford, where he graduated at the age of 20 with First Class honours in Modern History. After starting a doctorate at Leeds University he spent a year touring the country researching a book on the sociologist Seeborn Rowntree before starting his national service with the Army Intelligence Corps in 1956. He served as GSO3 to the 4th Infantry Division and Staff Intelligence Officer in HQ BAOR, and while stationed in Germany was involved, among other things, in monitoring the building of a nuclear reactor, in what was then East Germany.

This experience was to assist him considerably when in 1958 he transferred to the Foreign Office to become the Third Secretary in the UK Embassy in Tel Aviv. At that time Israel had started building their clandestine plutonium producing reactor at Dimona, and he was instrumental in bringing its existence to the attention of the UK government. He was recalled to London in 1961 and was successively the Private Secretary to the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, to the Minister of State, and finally, the Head of the Foreign Office at the Parliamentary Office. In 1966, he was seconded for a

year from the Foreign Office to the Institute for Strategic Studies as a Research Associate.

Ian’s next, and final, Foreign Office posting was to the UK Embassy in Washington as First Secretary responsible for politico-military affairs from 1966 to 1969. This was a time when there were acute difficulties, but throughout this period, he was one of the main channels of communication between the UK and the US on many issues of UK-US nuclear relations.

In 1969 Smart became Assistant Director of the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London. While there he spent a period in 1972 as a Visiting Professor of Strategic Studies at Carleton University in Ottawa.

In 1973 he moved to the Royal Institute of International Affairs (RIIA) as Director of Studies and Deputy Director, before serving as its Acting Director from 1977-78. One major contribution here was to chair a study group on the future of the UK Foreign and Defence Policy. While at Chatham House with RIIA, Ian’s interests widened as he took up a number of advisory positions covering all aspects of nuclear energy. This was also the period when he started his close involvement in the development of the Imperial War Museum; he served as a Trustee of the Museum (1977-2000) and held many other positions with them.

In 1978 Ian created his own consultancy on international energy economics; in parallel, he took up a number of other advisory positions and in a short period in the first half of the 1980s, he produced four studies which had a considerable impact on both the global nuclear industry and nuclear non-proliferation policies. Ian also published a number of books on nuclear policy and trade.

Ian was always a person with an insatiable curiosity about the world surrounding him, and in his later years this led him variously to train to be a silversmith; to work on developing his large garden and its plants and produce; and to search out interesting antiques and Persian rugs in all the places he visited. He had an outstanding analytical mind, and could always be relied upon to offer new insights into difficult problems, whether in international relations, energy issues or horticulture. His impact on all aspects of nuclear energy policies in the UK and elsewhere was considerable, though impossible to evaluate with certainty. His legacy in terms of bricks and mortar can, however, be seen in the way the Imperial War Museum developed and thrived during his period as a Trustee. He was truly a man of many paths.

He is survived by his wife, Janet, who he married in 1964.

SCHOOL NEWS

The Cloisters’ Opening:

What a wonderful day of celebration this turned out to be. The fact we were able to go ahead as planned was in itself a miracle as the contractors handed over the building with just 48 hours to go! Our outstanding Maintenance and ICT teams then took over to transform the building for the day. The day began with Fr Thomas and Fr Alexander concelebrating Mass for the first time in our new Chapel dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Lord Patten led assemblies for all pupils in both the Junior and Senior Schools before they left for half term. By then many other guests had arrived including his Worship the Mayor, Councillor Ian Green and Stephen Pound MP. The building was formally blessed by Abbot Martin, before Lord Patten unveiled the plaque to commemorate the opening. In his address Lord Patten recalled with great



Lord Patten of Barnes (Chris Patten, OP 1962)

affection his own days as a pupil here from 1955-1962, speaking fondly of the care and support he received from the Monastic Community. He went on to commend our work as a Catholic Independent School and reminded us of our responsibility to continue to promote social inclusion, to teach pupils to work for each other, to build community and to care for those less fortunate. These, of course, are the values which we seek to inculcate through our mission of "Teaching a way of living".

During the assemblies and the blessing service we used prayers especially written for the occasion by pupils. This followed a competition organised by Fr Thomas and Fr Alexander for pupils to compose such a prayer. Three winners were chosen: Junior School - Camena Foote (UPM) Middle Upper School - Xavier Crean (3G) Sixth Form - Jack Belloli (Upper Sixth). All pupils were given a copy of one of the prayers. Jack's was prayed during the blessing service:

"Lord, look upon our School. Teach us the listening that will expand our hearts. Support us in our works for those we see in need. Guide us towards the futures that you have chosen for us. Share in the achievements that give joy to those around us. Forgive us the mistakes that come with learning. Establish the belonging that comes through faith. And help us to build lives of work and prayer So that we may never leave the school of Your service. Amen."

During the half term break the contractors returned to complete the



Upper School Assembly in The Cloisters

final parts of the project - principally external works. They will finally finish within a fortnight and then we will be able to re-open the Marchwood Crescent entrance. We are now using all the new classrooms and are absolutely thrilled with these wonderful new facilities. As the project is now complete, we are focusing on re-decorating much of the rest of the School which took quite a battering over the 16 months of building. At present, our team is refurbishing the old Modern Language rooms in the Horsey Building. These will house the Geography Department and provide the teachers with excellent facilities (including a full ICT suite) for

next term. By next September we should also have completed:

- The re-ordering of the classrooms in the main block
- The opening of our new multi-gymnasium
- Extended and renovated Sixth Form accommodation
- More changing facilities for the girls at Perivale
- Plans for the re-development of the areas vacated by Music, Geography and the old chapel.

Chris Cleugh (Headmaster)

International Benedictine Youth Congress and World Youth Day Sydney, Australia July 2008



The Sydney Group with Abbot Jamison of Worth

In July three Lower Sixth students, Francis Sutherland, Richard Winslett and James Keal, and one teacher, Mr Gayle, began the long journey to Australia for The Third International Benedictine Youth Congress and the World Youth Day, both in Sydney. One of the party, Richard, recounts their memorable trip:

Arriving in Australia two days later, to a winter that was warmer than most English summers, the only concern on everyone's mind was where the nearest shower was and where we could sleep so that we were fully prepared for the packed schedule of the IBYC that began the following day.

The Congress, organised by Sister Mary McDonald and the Sisters of the Good Samaritan, adopted the idea of Dadirri as

the theme for the next four days. Dadirri, a word meaning 'Deep Listening', originates from the language of an Aboriginal tribe from Australia's Northern Territory. The first night of the IBYC was spent meeting dozens of new people from Benedictine communities all over the world: including Chile, USA, Germany, Tanzania, South Africa, Australia and the Philippines to name but a few. St Benedict's School was the only representative from Great Britain at the IBYC. We came to know these people very well as we were to spend the next two weeks with some of them.

The next morning we were woken early by the cackle of the Kookaburras' dawn chorus. This second day at the Collaroy Centre was spent exploring the concept of Dadirri in conjunction with St Benedict's idea of listening with 'the ear of the heart', through sessions such as Bush Meditation, Lecto Divina and Origami. The penultimate day was spent at a zoo where we saw the varied wildlife of Australia, much of which we experienced at close hand, including the opportunity to feed koalas. The final day at Collaroy was spent enjoying the cultural performances from the various schools that were present at the

Congress, some entertaining and some thought provoking and even moving. Unfortunately, the next morning spelt the end of our time at the IBYC, and so ensued many sad farewells. Not only did the Congress provide a unique opportunity to experience various cultures through Masses organised by different groups, but it also displayed that the Benedictine community extends far beyond your own school's community and is something truly universal.

Having made our farewells, we travelled to St Scholastica's boarding school in Glebe, one of Sydney's inner suburbs. The first day of the World Youth Day celebrations began with an opening Mass by the Archbishop of Sydney, George Cardinal Pell, at Barangaroo near Darling Harbour. At the Mass, the Australian Prime Minister addressed the congregation, which amounted to nearly 150,000 people of all races and nationalities. We then went on to spend the next three days enjoying and experiencing the sites of Sydney and some of its more famous suburbs, such as Manly. The Saturday of our second week in Australia saw the Vigil before the Closing Mass began at Randwick Racecourse where we were to spend the

night sleeping under the stars. The arrival of evening saw the entrance of the Pope at the Racecourse and the lighting of candles by over 500,000 people. This breathtaking sight was probably the defining moment of our time in Australia. The next morning, we awoke to the sounds of half a million people getting up for the Closing Mass celebrated by the Pope, the largest Mass ever and a completely unique event. Everyone that partook in these celebrations was left with a special memory, be it the friendships that were created or a deepening of faith. The enthusiasm that was omnipresent at the IBYC was carried on into the events of World Youth Day and beyond. As a result we said our farewells amid hopes that in three years' time we will meet yet again prior to the next World Youth Day in Madrid.

Thanks must be given to Mr Gayle, the Old Priorian Association and also to the Monastic Community of St Benedict's that helped fund our trip. It was truly an amazing experience and I hope that in three years' time St Benedict's will be represented yet again at the 2011 World Youth Day in Madrid.

Richard Winslett

Girls' Netball Tour to Sri Lanka February 2009

We have received the following letter and appeal from Marina Ranger who is Head Girl this year at St Benedicts:

Dear Mr Baker

GIRLS' NETBALL TOUR TO SRI LANKA – FEBRUARY 2009

Further to your conversation with Mrs Simmons (the Headmaster's PA), I believe you have been kind enough to offer to contact Old Priorians on our behalf to try and fundraise for the first ever girls' overseas netball tour. We are all very excited about this groundbreaking trip and are trying to muster as much support as possible, i.e. by organising a Sports' Quiz Night after Christmas, a Christmas Disco for the

younger pupils on December 12th and a host of other things.

I have spoken to Mr Cleugh and he fully supports this letter and the fact that you may send an e-mail to the OPs.

We would be grateful for any help you could offer.

Yours sincerely
Marina Ranger, Head Girl

We are sure that you are fully aware of the many sporting tours and successes that the boys of St Benedicts have enjoyed over the past few years; now that St Benedict's School is fully co-educational it is the turn of the girls to shine and perhaps put St Bs even more

on the sporting map!

We fully endorse this worthy cause and commend it to you; if any of you feel that you can support in any way, please do so. Full details of the fund raising events that Marina and her team will be organising will follow by email and they will also appear in the Headmaster's December Newsletter and appear on the School Website.

If you wish to make a financial contribution then please send a cheque, made payable to St Benedict's School (and marked Netball Tour on the back) to: Mrs D. Simmons, The Headmaster's PA, St Benedict's School, 54 Eaton Rise, Ealing London W5 2ES

Newsletters

The Headmasters' Latest Newsletters contains current School news

http://www.stbenedicts.org.uk/index.php?page_id=6

WAYN – Where are you now?

It would help us to maintain our Database records accurately and it would help the Careers Department of the School, now run by Mrs Deborah Streatfield following the retirement of Mr Ian Stephen, if you would take a few minutes to visit the Website and complete the WAYN Form which can be

accessed from the Button Link on the Portal Page. This applies especially to those of you who have left School in the last few years and are now on the first rungs of the ladder in that great big working-world or still in further education; having said that, don't let that put the rather "Older OPs" off

supplying their information – the occupation "Retired" can be just as useful, providing of course we know what field it is that you have worked in!

All information supplied is treated with the confidentiality you would expect.

<http://www.theopa.org/wayn/index.html>