

The Old Dominicans' Association



Newsletter

450th Anniversary Edition

Summer 2007

FOREWORD

by Mr Neil Foden,
Headmaster of Ysgol Friars



Mr Neil Foden

It is with pleasure and pride that I commend to all Dominicans this 450th anniversary edition of the Old Dominicans' Newsletter.

The foreword to the 400th Anniversary Edition of 'The Dominican' stated: "Above all, the felicity of its naming reminds us of our ancient origins and its successive renewal sometimes once and latterly twice a year emphasise that a school is not merely a community which exists in certain buildings but a continuous fellowship which lives in time". These words are as appropriate now as they were in 1957.

As any Dominicans who have an opportunity to see the article about the school which I have compiled will appreciate, the 21st Century Ysgol Friars is very different in appearance from the 1957 institution with which many old boys will be familiar. It is located in a different part of Bangor, in Eithinog at the end of Lon y Bryn, (although it does now have its own new access road) with the 1899 building in Ffriddoedd Road now forming part of Coleg Menai. However, while buildings may change, the ethos and traditions do not. We have worked hard to create a community within the school which recognises the importance of hard work, civilised standards of behaviour and, we hope, that has a growing appreciation of the value of achievement for the intrinsic satisfaction

that it brings apart from any external reward or sanction for non-compliance. In a number of locations within the school, we have displays of its history and traditions which we hope to expand in the coming year. It is regrettable that CADW did not permit us to remove some of the items from the Ffriddoedd building when we moved entirely onto this site. While I can understand the architectural and technical arguments against removing the stained glass window, it was deeply disappointing that the plaques at the foot of the staircase were not recognised for what they are: part of the school not part of a specific building. We would have dearly loved to have them with us in our 450th year.

I was also interested to note references to perceptions of the school's Welsh ethos that existed in some quarters in 1957 and still do to this day. While it is not always widely recognised, the modern Friars is a bilingual school. The emphasis may be more on English than in Welsh in pupils' written work and in the examinations that they take but there is a strong Welsh element to the school as Dominicans who attended the Pritchard Prize Evening at Theatre Gwynedd will have seen, Welsh traditions are celebrated in the school and the language is used socially and academically by a number of staff. Pupils have a positive attitude towards the language and the huge majority gain qualifications in either Welsh First or Welsh Second Language at GCSE. Many gain qualifications in both.

While I do not have Mr Elis Williams' grasp of Latin, I would wish to echo the sentiment which he so eloquently expressed in the foreword he wrote 50 years ago. This is a memorable year for the school. We hope that you will find the 450th Edition of the Dominican informative and enjoyable to read and that you will take from it, our determination to preserve all that is good in the school's ethos and traditions irrespective of where in the town the buildings are located and how modern their construction. A school is not a collection of buildings; it merely inhabits them. A school is a community, united by staff and pupils collaborating in what we hope is an enjoyable pursuit of knowledge and skills bound together by shared beliefs and value and in the case of Friars, an awareness that we have a history.

Schools exist to help pupils look to the future. They will make better sense of it if they have a good understanding of their past.

Introduction

by R Alun Jones (48-55), Secretary

This special edition of the Newsletter covers the 450th anniversary of the founding of the school in 1557 and the 2007 celebrations. Included too are aspects of the school over the last 50 years or so which do not appear to have been written about in the past. We are grateful to all those who have devoted their time in preparing these articles and to the many others who contributed to them.

We all remember our school days, those formative years during which lifelong friendships are forged and where the foundations of our knowledge are laid down. Some cannot wait to leave school and others have fond memories of it but I think it is fair to say that those of us who have joined together to form the Old Dominicans' Association have very happy memories of their time at Friars and enjoy our get togethers every two years to meet up and reminisce. Some of our members are at an advanced age and others relatively young

but all are bound together by the Friars institution whose roots are so deeply embedded in the City of Bangor.

Things were very different in the mid 16th century - even Shakespeare was not born until 1564, Mary I was on the throne and the Bible was not translated into Welsh until 1588 although I suspect the Welsh language did not play much of a part in school life until long after that time. It was a period in our history that was particularly bloody (she was not called Bloody Mary for nothing) because she had had about 300 Protestants burnt at the stake as was Archbishop Thomas Cranmer, the first Archbishop of Canterbury only one year before Friars' foundation. That was what things were like in Britain in the lead up to 1557.

We begin our recollections with Cliff Jones' historical impressions of the early days.



The History of Friars School

The history of Friars School up to 1957 is well and authoritatively documented in two publications, 'The History of Friars School' by Henry Barber (Solicitor) and Henry Lewis, Chairman of the Governing Body. It was published in October 1901 and covers the period up to that date. This

was added to and updated in the Fourth Centenary edition of 'The Dominican' published in 1957.

In this Special Edition Newsletter we are given a glimpse into what things might have been like on the early days and a short history post 1957.



The Early Days

by Cliff M Jones (45-52)



Cliff Jones

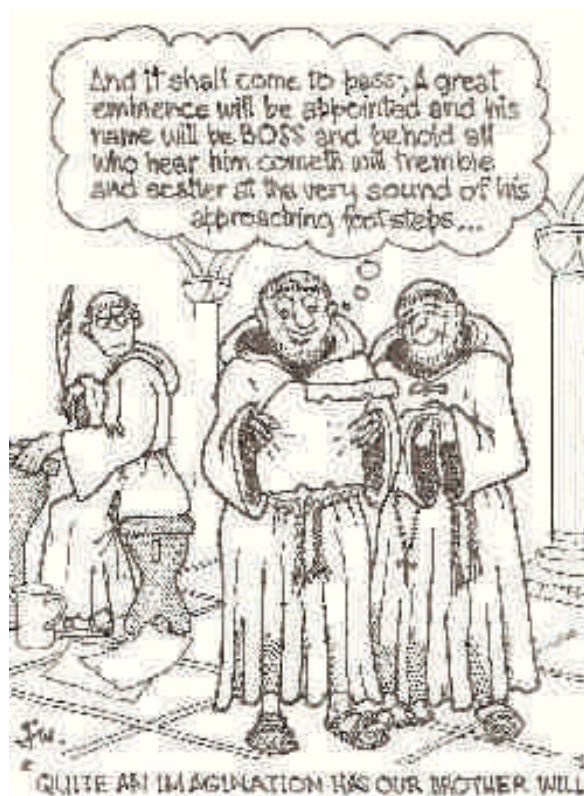
In recent years great exploitation has been made of historical information to provide excitement and profit for certain authors, notably Dan Browne of The Da Vinci Code fame. What chance do we have when we add the history of our school to the booklists? Not a lot, I can hear the chorus reply. Well it all began with a chance meeting of an old school friend. I asked him of his memories of life in general and the shops in a bygone era of his youth. We both agreed to write all we could remember and compare notes on an agreed date. What a fantastic exercise it proved. Many memories that had been overtaken in the mists of time returned. We were able to expand a wealth of information. The tale is only just beginning. If I asked a question... Who invented (if you can use that word) bottled beer?

And in which century? Would you like to phone a friend? What would you say if I told you the sixteenth century, would you be correct? Well this is where our tale led us. At this stage many would say, "All very interesting, but what has it to do with our school?" True, but the principle would apply even if the length of history varied. We are all sitting on a wealth of information that could be researched. These are just beginnings.

In our particular case we knew that our school had been founded in 1557 by a certain Geoffrey Glynn who was a Prebender of Lichfield Cathedral. But our school was in North Wales. From historical records Geoffrey Glynn was a Doctor of Civil Law and an Advocate in the Court of the Arches. At the same time a certain William Glynn was Bishop of Bangor for a relatively short period from 1555 to 1558. He was among a handful of young Welshmen who had been educated at a university and were keen to apply their talents and learning specifically for the benefit of their fellow countrymen in Wales. But how had they been educated before University? It would seem that the Dominicans were, first and foremost, teachers and preachers. It would follow that they must have operated a school of sorts for sons of a certain section of the community, this could have included sons of the clergy. Geoffrey's father, John was a rector in Anglesey. How else would two, bright boys have risen to such positions of pre-eminence in Tudor life? By a statute of February 1549 members of the clergy were now allowed to take wives. In Wales, the custom of clerical "marriages" had been commonplace and at least three Tudor bishops were offspring of such unions. William Glynn, a Catholic, was one of them. But in these times of political and religious revolution and counter revolution, if one played one's cards right, it was possible to find fame and favour. It was quite possible to be rector, sheriff and then MP before receiving a warm recommendation to become a bishop. Cardinal Pole, the Apostolic Delegate's first episcopal appointment, was William Glynn, appointed in 1555 to Bangor. Glynn was a man of zeal and erudition, who had been Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity, though he had been suspended during Edward's reign, and President of Queen's College at Cambridge. While at Queen's he gathered about him prominent young Welshmen including Thomas Yale (Yale University?). So his credentials and motives in establishing Friars Independent Grammar School are without doubt. His was not a pecuniary interest like the local Richard

Bulkeley or Edward Gruffydd (of Penrhyn), but solely altruistic and for the common good of his fellow countrymen. So was this a case of "local lad makes good"? Whatever, both Geoffrey and William certainly had the interests of the common man at heart.

But, apart from the brief facts known about Geoffrey Glynn, who was he and what connection did he have with Bangor? He was the brother of William Glynn or was he from the original family of Glynllifon? One thing is certain, he died before he could establish Friars School in 1557 and left instructions in his will for its founding. The Friars lands had been granted letters of patent in 1553 during the reign of Edward the Sixth on 6th July 1553. Edward died four months later. The original letter patent, which "belongs" to the Bangor Diocese, is in the safe keeping of the University of North Wales Archives in Bangor. Geoffrey Glynn, by his will dated 8th July 1557, bequeathed the Friary and all his property in Wales and England to the Bishops of Rochester and Bangor "shall best devyse to the use of a gramer Schole for the better educacion and bringing upp of poore mens children."



by John Woodgates

With the publication of Geoffrey Glynn's will in which he entrusted its execution to Sir William Petre, Privy Counsellor, Sir William Garrad, Knight citizen and Alderman of the City of London and Simon Lowe, citizen and Merchant

Taylor of London, the establishing of Friars School was set in motion. Seeking the advice of the then Bishop of Bangor, Nicholas and the Dean of St Paul's, Alexander Nowell the statutes were drawn up. Incidentally his other claim to fame, besides education was that he is credited with inventing bottled beer. This was on the 2nd March 1568 (Tenth year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth the First). Geoffrey Glynn had set aside a sum of money, £400, to provide a stipend of £20 "of lawful money of England," that is to say, £14 of ready money for the headmaster. The first head was to be John Pryse MA. The headmaster was to be assisted by an Usher and Robert Morgan was appointed. His stipend was to be £10 of "lawful money of England." In ready money this was £8 per annum. Both were given a dwelling house or tenement with a small parcel of land.

But we are ahead of ourselves! If we look back prior to 1557 we discover that in 1538 Cromwell appointed as visitor-general of the mendicant orders, Richard Ingsworth, suffragan bishop of Dove. Ingsworth, a one time friar, was taxed with completing an audit of property owned by religious orders. On his travels he reached Wales on 17th August 1538. Beginning at Rhuddlan he moved on smartly to Denbigh and then Bangor. He actually completed his journey through Wales by 8th September. (Ibid X111, where his movements can be easily traced). Wherever possible, he took care to summon the Bishop, the Mayor and Aldermen of the town in which the Friary stood. Assuming this was the case in Bangor, he then gave the friars an apparent freedom of choice in the presence of these local dignitaries. "Think not that Yee be suppressed," he was reported to have said disingenuously, "for I have no authority to suppress you but only to reform you." Having thus absolved himself of any hostile intent, he then obligingly offered to accept any voluntary surrender. Pontius Pilate lives on! The friars could either continue to live as religious under the injunction of 1538 or else give up their house to the King. This ingenious formula rarely failed to elicit the desired outcome. By now most friars were in a state of poverty and despair, resigned to their inevitable fate and willing to accept it without further protest. It was then in 1538 that the Dominicans of Bangor were faced with this decision. The Dominican Friary at Bangor, according to the report, was an old building with no lead and little glass and worth just 30 shillings. So for thirty pieces of silver they had been sold down the river. It is said that history repeats itself!

So now we have the beginnings. What of the school and the conditions for the poore men's children? The first headmaster had been appointed. The rules had been laid down. The curriculum was clear and simple. "Nothing was to be taught in the said school but only grammar and such Authors as concern the Latin and Greek tongues." The scholars, however, might not have had a school uniform but they had to comply with certain conditions too. "None of the scholars shall be so hardy to come to school with his head unkempt, his hands or face unwashed, his shoes unclean, his cap, hossen or vesture filthy or rent." But then again the statute is quite adamant that "Poorest men's children shall be received into the said school before others." If you consider the social engineering that concerns the present Labour government in 2006 you can see that Geoffrey Glynn was also concerned about social inequalities. As a further social safeguard, Glynn also ensured that these scholars were housed and fed. "These Scholars were to be boarded and lodged with the Master or Usher and provision made for their maintenance." So here we have the structure of the school programme set up. A total of one hundred children. Although it states 'children' it then qualifies it as "boys." These are to be divided up, presumably by age (or aptitude?) into five year groups or classes. The headmaster shall teach two classes and the other three will be taught by the Usher. The logistics of this are interesting. Can you picture a class of forty pupils and another of sixty pupils? The two classrooms must have been quite crowded. There is another condition to consider. The boys always sat in a regular spot with a partner. Item, "The said scholars before they shall depart home to dinner and supper two and two together as they be placed in their forms." As a rule, boys had to leave school at the end of the fifth year, at most sixth, when they "shall depart either to some university or to learning some printable occupation." And what of Sport? The headmaster shall give permission for sports on a Thursday afternoon. What did they do? The boys when they have "leave to play and sport themselves shall use only shooting in longbows or running at base. In no way shall thy use dice, cards or any such unlawful gaming, upon pain of sharp punishment." Presumably "running at base" might have been an earlier version of rounders or even cricket?

After the graft of teaching the first three years by the usher, the headmaster takes over the delivery of the curriculum for the next two years. And what of the timetable? The boys had to be in school by "6 of the clock in the morning and by one of the

clock in the afternoon.” “They shall go home to Dinner at eleven o’clock and at five o’clock to Supper” There are slight conditions to these times. “Half an hour after six of the clock in the morning the Scholars will be kneeling devoutly, and in their appointed places shall say distinctly and in an audible voice the form of prayer prescribed. They shall do likewise at five of the clock before they depart for Supper. The prayer shall be done in Latin and in English.” So before any school there were prayers. Draw a comparison with the 20th Century. The Office of Education (Ofsted) clearly

states that there should be a “daily corporate act of worship”. So the influences of the Sixteenth century, post Reformation, remain with us today.

This, then, is the start of the trail. There is a postscript. Friars Grammar School, as it became, was the second such school to be established in Wales. The first was Christ College, Brecon. It was a forerunner of Harrow School by some years. The same Alexander Nowell of St Paul’s also wrote their founding articles.



The History of Friars post 1957

by David R Price (59-66)



David Price

In July 1957, Friars School celebrated the four hundredth anniversary of its foundation with a week of special events beginning with a Speech Day at the Prichard-Jones Hall at the University College when the address was given by the Right Reverend G.O. Williams, Bishop of Bangor (later to become Archbishop of Wales). The Old Boys presented a new school flag and a cheque for £430 towards the improvements to the playing fields and also paid for the stained-glass window, designed by old boy H. Douglas Williams. The window was unveiled at the school by old boy Leonard Owen who had had a distinguished career in the Indian Civil Service and was an old school friend of Ivor Williams, the previous headmaster. One

of the guests of honour at the unveiling was Mr William McKie, at 98, the oldest old boy and Bangor’s oldest inhabitant. He had entered Friars in 1872 at the old school in Hirael, and during the Centenary celebrations a commemorative plaque, presented by the Parents Association, was unveiled in Glynne Road. Other events during the week included a Garden Fête, a cricket match with the Old Boys, a Sixth Form Dance, and a Service of Commemoration and Thanksgiving at the Cathedral. Old boys, Canon Tom Woodings and the Reverend Charles Arthur took part in the service and the preacher was the Venerable Carlyle Witton-Davies, Archdeacon of Oxford, an ex-head boy of the school.

Hugh David (David William Hughes), the popular TV and radio actor, and an old boy of the school was the compere of the Celebration Concert at the Prichard-Jones Hall. The school choir, conducted by Cledwyn Jones sang “A Song of Thanksgiving” by Vaughan Williams. There were vocal and instrumental items, and recitations from several pupils, and an impressive performance of the scherzo from a Schubert symphony transcribed for ‘eight hands on two pianos’ played by Ian Llewelyn Evans, James Griffith, Michael Outram and Ian Edwards.

During the 1950s and ‘60s, the life of the school carried on as in previous decades with the rigours of the academic routine lightened by activities on the sports fields and a variety of extra-curricular pastimes. Under the direction of Senior English Master, Donald Dalley, and his successors Alistair Wood (an old boy) and Harry Divall, the school play went from strength to strength. Cledwyn Jones had established a school choir in 1952

and over the years encouraged many boys in the love of choral singing. Even after Mr Jones was appointed a lecturer at St. Mary's College in the early 1960s, his successors at Friars were able to continue the life of the school choir with the traditional Christmas Concert in the school hall and the annual Founders Day Service at the Cathedral which became an annual event after the 1957 Centenary.

Mountain walking was an obvious activity to a school situated so close to Snowdonia, but there are only a few references to this in the Dominican of the 1950s. R.J. Evans who for some years was the form master for first year boys, ensured that all the boys in his care were given the opportunity to walk up Snowdon, introducing many to the joys of mountain walking. A Climbing Club was set up in 1964 by P.G. Martin who was appointed Biology master following the retirement of E.R. Williams. This was for serious climbers who could tackle Tryfan and the Glyders using the 'hard route.'

Mr Martin shared an interest in sailing with headmaster, Myrfin Elis Williams and Physics master, Jack Lowe, so by June 1964 a School Sailing Club was formed. Funds were raised to purchase a dinghy and a 'Cadet' class yacht. These were based at Port Dinorwic Yacht Club and sailing became a very popular school activity.

One of the most unusual innovations was the acquiring of a ciné-camera in 1960, donated by the Parents Association. At first, it was used for filming school sports days, but it was soon put to a more purposeful use. One of the most controversial events in Wales at that time was the flooding of the Tryweryn valley to create a reservoir to supply water to Liverpool. Over a period of four years, Friars boys filmed the construction of the reservoir and the eventual drowning of this Welsh-speaking community. The final days of the primary school were sensitively chronicled on film, as was the last wedding to take place at the village chapel. The 30 minute film is now held at the National Screen Archive of Wales, and is treasured as a vital archival record of one of the most emotive events in modern Welsh history.

During the 1960s there was much discussion locally and nationally about re-organisation of secondary education in the county. At first, staff and parents were suspicious of any changes to the grammar schools, but many pupils were enthusiastic about the prospect of a co-educational comprehensive

system and the abolition of the inequitable eleven-plus examination. Writing in the Dominican, Spring 1964, a sixth former, W.J. Morgan even suggested that there should be a Welsh medium comprehensive school in Bangor.

In 1968, the Caernarvonshire Local Education Authority published its proposals for the re-organisation of secondary schools in Bangor. The three existing establishments, Friars School, the Bangor Girls Grammar School and Deiniol Secondary- Modern School were to be merged into one comprehensive school on a new site at Eithinog. Many members of the Friars School Parents Association were opposed to the loss of grammar school status, but the Bangor branch of the Campaign for the Advancement of State Education (CASE), a group of very articulate parents and educationalists, welcomed the changes as progressive improvements.

Bangor's three secondary schools closed their doors at the end of the summer term in 1971, and in September pupils enrolled in the new comprehensive school. The senior pupils (forms four, five and six) were housed in a new building at Eithinog, whilst the lower forms occupied the old Friars building and the old Bangor Girls Grammar School, renamed Ysgol Tryfan. Pupils who wished to be taught through the medium of Welsh attended Ysgol Tryfan, which did not become a separate school until 1978. Deiniol Secondary-Modern School was sold to the university and was eventually used as the science library.

From the outset, it was planned that Ysgol Friars should eventually be housed on one site, but this did not happen until 1999 when pupils attending the old Friars building moved up to the new site. The 1971 buildings at Eithinog had proved inadequate and were replaced by a newly built multi-million pound building on a single site, providing the present generation of pupils with facilities appropriate to the twenty-first century.



A Century of Heads (1879-1979)

by Dr Tom G Jones (47-55)

A LIST OF THE HEAD TEACHERS OF FRIARS SCHOOL

1568 : John Price, MA (Cantab.)
1613 : John Griffin
1647 : Thomas Meredith, MA Jesus College, Oxford
1665 : John Draycot, MA St. John's College, Cambridge
1667 : Rice Jones, MA
1688 : John Pritchard
1705 : Rice Morgan, MA Jesus College, Oxford
1708 : Owen Lloyd, LL.B.
1713 : David Dolben, MA
1731 : Edward Bennett
1755 : James Vincent, MA Jesus College, Oxford
1760 : Richard Griffith, MA Jesus College, oxford
1775 : John Kyffin, MA Jesus College, Oxford
1789 : Peter Williams, MA Christ Church, Oxford
1803 : Samuel Rice, MA Christ Church, Oxford
1816 : Robert Williams, D.D. Christ Church, Oxford
1827 : Hugh Price, MA Jesus College, Oxford
1838 : William Church Totton, MA Trinity College, Cambridge
1872 : Daniel Lewis Lloyd, MA Jesus College, Oxford
1879 : William Glynn Williams, MA St. John's College, Cambridge
1919 : William St. Bodfan Griffith, MA Trinity College, Cambridge
1935 : Ivor Williams, MA Jesus College, Oxford
1954 : Myrvin Elis-Williams, MA Jesus College, Oxford
1979 : Dafydd Arfon Jones
1997 : Neil Foden



Tom Jones

The names and dates of the Heads of Friars School (the dates are approximate up until the early 18th century) are listed above, and it will be noted that Neil Foden, the present Head, is the 25th. When asked if I would write an article about past Headmasters for this special issue of the Old Dominicans' Association (ODA) Newsletter it seemed to me that, although 25 is not many for a school 450 years old (an average of 18 years) it is nevertheless too many to write about here and, more important, to read about! I realised that I would have to be selective.

Heartened by the Editor's request that as much of the material as possible should be 'living history' I decided to take Mr Glynn Williams as my starting point; there is no-one alive now who can pass on their memories of him but there were plenty able to do so at the time of the 1957 special quatercentenary edition of 'The Dominican'. They did so in a chapter entitled 'The Last Eighty Years

– The School from the Inside’ and in my section on Glynn Williams I have drawn heavily on this. I then decided that I would not attempt to write in any detail about the Heads since Myrvin Elis-Williams; it would have been presumptuous of me to do so as there will be other people with more knowledge of them than I have. As there were exactly 100 years between the arrival at Friars of Glynn Williams in 1879 and the departure of Myrvin Elis-Williams in 1979, the dates of these events seemed neat temporal boundaries for my article, which would also embrace the two Heads that came in between, Bodfan Griffith and Ivor Williams.

It was only as I started writing that I realised that these 100 years were also more or less the only part of the school’s long history during which it was the state boys’ grammar school known and loved by most of the current members of the ODA. Before 1889 it was a small independent fee-paying, part-boarding, boys’ school (admittedly with some endowed free places), of the type that still lives on, for instance, in Ruthin, Brecon, and Llandovery, and in 1971 it became a large co-educational comprehensive school where the Head’s job is inevitably more to manage than to teach. It is therefore probably no coincidence that Glynn Williams was the first Head not to have been ordained in the church, and that Myrvin Elis-Williams was the first to come from a background of educational management.

The 1957 special edition of ‘The Dominican’ has also served me well in respect of memories of Bodfan Griffith; but I also wrote to four ODA members – all of them in their nineties or well on in their eighties – for theirs. They all replied and I am most grateful to them for the vivid picture of this man that I have been able to conceive in the light of their comments.

A number of past editions of ‘The Dominican’ have been of great help in respect of all four Heads and I am grateful to Alun Jones and David Price for directing me to them. In the case of Ivor Williams I sought no further ‘living history’ beyond that which has appeared in almost every edition of the ODA Newsletter since it was initiated in 1979, that which is recounted whenever ODs of my vintage meet, and that which is in my own memory! My own memory has also been helpful when writing about Myrvin Elis-Williams, but David Elis-Williams, the third-born of his children, and Islwyn Roberts-Parry, his one-time Head Boy and subsequent colleague, have been the sources of many of the facts about him that I have been able to include.

Since I completed this article, the present Head, Neil Foden, has provided some notes about his immediate predecessor and about himself. I have therefore, for the sake of completeness, added a short separate article which simply gives the headline facts about these two Heads.

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William Glynn Williams(1879-1919)



W Glyn Williams

William Glynn Williams was Head of Friars for 40 years and steered the school through much change, including a typhoid epidemic, a change from independent to county-controlled status, a move to a brand new building in a different part of town, and the effects of the First World War. For good measure he also superintended the launching of ‘The Dominican’ as the school magazine in 1908!

When he became Head in 1879 Friars was still essentially a fee-paying school, albeit with some generous endowments for providing a Grammar School education for ‘poor boys’. The school had recently gone through a bad period under the long and unhappy headship (1838-1867) of William Totton, who apparently treated the ‘poor boys’ badly and misappropriated their endowments. Numbers dropped so much that on his departure

the school actually had to close. However the Trustees were able to re-open it in 1873, when the new Head was Daniel Lewis Lloyd, a graduate of Lampeter and Jesus College, Oxford and a teacher at Dolgellau Grammar School (and, later, from 1890, Bishop of Bangor). He brought a number of boarders with him from his old school and, although a man of fiery temperament, he knew how to inspire his pupils' enthusiasm. His success as a Headmaster can be measured by the fact that, from 50 day boys and 25 boarders when he started, the number on the roll had gone up to 170 within 5 years. However in November 1878 he announced that he was moving to become Head of Christ College, Brecon, the following January. The Governors had to find a new Head for this still rather vulnerable school within just 6 weeks!

It was by an amazingly good fortune that Glynn Williams applied for - and was appointed to - the post at this short notice. He couldn't have been much more than about 25 years old at the time and was the first Head of Friars not to have been in holy orders, although his father was the vicar of Llanrhyddlad in Anglesey and, incidentally, wrote Welsh poetry as 'Nicander'. Glynn, who had been schooled at Shrewsbury before reading classics at St. John's College, Cambridge, was an assistant master at Tonbridge when appointed. He lost no time in making his mark. Thanks to Lewis Lloyd having taken about 70 boys with him to Brecon, the school roll was again low - about 100 - when he took over, but within 2 years it had gone up to 139, though part of the increase was due to the initiation at about the same time of the North Wales Scholarship Scheme, of which he was a strong supporter.

He was a short, broad-shouldered man of awe-inspiring appearance. He had a melodious voice and it was apparently a great joy to hear him reading poetry. He was married and his wife played a lead role in the care of the boarders, at that time an important part of the school, both numerically and in relation to the overall ethos engendered by their presence. There were two sons, one sadly killed at sea when quite young, and Dennis, the other, who in due course enlisted to serve in the First World War and was mentioned in despatches.

His first major crisis as Head must have been the typhoid epidemic that swept Bangor in 1882. He moved the school for a few months to the healthier climes of Penmaenmawr, but inevitably the number on the roll fell for a while. The poor

quality of the premises and the worries about the insalubrious area in which the school was situated contributed to this fall and it became very clear to the Head that new school buildings were needed and in a healthier part of town.

A further battle, however, had to be fought - and in this case lost - before progress could be made with the building project. This was over whether or not the Welsh Intermediate Education Act of 1889 should apply to Friars, which would then become a 'county' school and lose much of its independence, though without any intended change in the nature or quality of the education provided. Glynn Williams fought hard against any change, but in the end lost the battle, while schools like Ruthin, Brecon and Llandovery continued outside the state sector (and still do). Friars was, however, given special status as a 'first grade classical school', and it was at this time that a separate girls' grammar school was established in the town.

With this matter settled and a newly-constituted Governing Body finally installed, the question of the new buildings could at last be dealt with. The money was raised surprisingly easily, partly through the sale of the old school and partly through public appeal, and in 1900 the new school opened its doors in Ffriddoedd Rd. Glynn Williams must have been a proud man on that first day!

The memories of Friars boys of the Glynn Williams era are dominated by the Head himself and it is clear that the respect they had for him was enormous. Nor was this respect engendered just by the strict discipline he kept. He was indeed a very strict disciplinarian and used the cane liberally - he once caned all 30 boys in a class because they were not good enough at answering his questions! - but he was also respected as both a good educationalist and a good teacher.

As an educationalist he believed that it was just as important to build character in his pupils as it was to look after their intellectual development. Manliness, decency, hard work and discipline were the qualities he set out to instil. He was invariably to be found on the touchline at First Eleven football matches, and indeed had little use for boys who didn't attempt to play that game. But, notwithstanding his severity, he also had a kind and human streak in him, witnessed for instance in the annual dinner he would give for the masters and the first football and cricket elevens.

Interestingly, for the son of a bard, he had little command of the Welsh language, though in 1901 he did publish his father's translation of Aesop's fables into Welsh. In common with many other educationalists in Wales at this time he sought to ban the use of Welsh by his pupils as it was thought it would disadvantage their progress in life. He even wrote a handbook of English pronunciation that would help eliminate aspects of the Welsh accent! However, his command of Latin and Greek was enormous and he inspired great enthusiasm for the classics in his pupils. He also loved English poetry, which to him was 'a sort of annex to the classics', in the words of one old pupil.

Another former pupil recalls a visit Glynn Williams paid him in his undergraduate rooms

at Oxford not long after his retirement. He was impressed by 'how he inspected my bookshelves to see what my interests were.' He also remembers 'how the little tags of Greek and Latin came into his conversation' and that, although now in his seventies, he was still an active scholar and busy preparing an edition of Cicero's 'Letters to his Friends'. 'He really was a survivor from the time when an educated man lived in spirit among the Greeks and Romans'.

Glynn Williams lived for many years after his retirement, dying not until the late 1930s. As late as 1937 he contributed an article on the school to the North Wales Chronicle in which he slated the county schools of Wales as 'factories for the mass production of mediocrities' – he clearly never got over his loss of the battle of 1889, despite the huge success he made of Friars as a county school!



William St. Bodfan Griffith (1919-1934)



Bodfan Griffith

William St. Bodfan Griffith was a native of Aber (and named after the dedicatee of its parish church, Bodfan having reputedly been the son of the owner of the land that was lost in the deluge that gave rise to the Lafan Sands.) He received his

secondary schooling at Christ's Hospital and went on to Aberystwyth, Bangor and, Trinity College, Cambridge. It came as a surprise to his Friars pupils, all of whom were in awe of this strict disciplinarian, to learn that he had apparently been sent down from Aberystwyth for climbing up a drainpipe to gain illicit entry into a women's hostel! (See the 'ODA newsletter' of January 2002, article by the late Rev. Maurice Donaldson). His subject was Science, mainly Physics, and he bought an old army hut and converted it into a Physics laboratory as part of his introduction of science into the Friars curriculum. But he also taught Maths and Latin and indeed ensured that Friars remained as effective as ever at teaching the traditional classical and 'modern' subjects. He was married - there were two children - and his wife initially taught Biology until a full-time specialist had been appointed, but it seems that she continued to take classes on nature study trips to Menai Woods.

At the time of his appointment to Friars he would have been in his early forties and a housemaster at Uppingham school, the educational values and techniques of which he did his best to apply to Friars. Numbers were again at a low ebb due to the war, but they rapidly rose following the peace treaty, and perhaps more so because of the speed with which, under Bodfan's leadership, the school's activities returned to normal, significantly more quickly than in many other local schools.

From 97 boys in 1917 the number had risen to 250 by the mid-1920s, and there were enough boarders by then to form a separate house. In order to keep classes to a manageable size he introduced two forms in each year group, and he decided that the division should be ability-based so that each group could receive its education at the appropriate pace. Space problems in the building became acute and in 1925 the Annex was built as a response.

Known to the boys - like all four subjects of this article - as 'Boss', he was held by them, in the words of one former pupil, in 'parchus ofn' (respected fear). He was of formidable physical appearance, an immense man with his 'bull's head' and thick bristly hair, moving around the school, gown and mortar board in place, with enormous energy and seeming to leave a vacuum as he passed - described by one as a 'human bulldozer'. He was impatient with slackers and with the inefficient, and his discipline was strict - though the mere threat of his cane was sufficient to ensure that it did not have to be used too often! He selected his prefects carefully and gave them individual responsibilities. A cap and a tie were essential wear for all boys, and there were complicated rules that had to be applied to cap-doffing! But beneath his stern exterior he had a dry humour and a heart of gold. He was always sympathetic to 'lame dogs' and particularly the bereaved, and every morning after prayers he would make himself available to any boy who wished to see him with a personal problem. And he would continue to be interested in pupils long after they had left school.

Under his headship the Welsh language began to flourish in the school and he introduced an annual St. David's Day eisteddfod, along with other Welsh drama and literary activities. He was very keen on sport, and a 'regular' on the touchline at first team games. In 1924 he changed the school's winter game from soccer to rugby. He seems to have been quite a rugby enthusiast, and a picture of the Bangor RFC team of 1930-31 shows him with them, presumably as President.

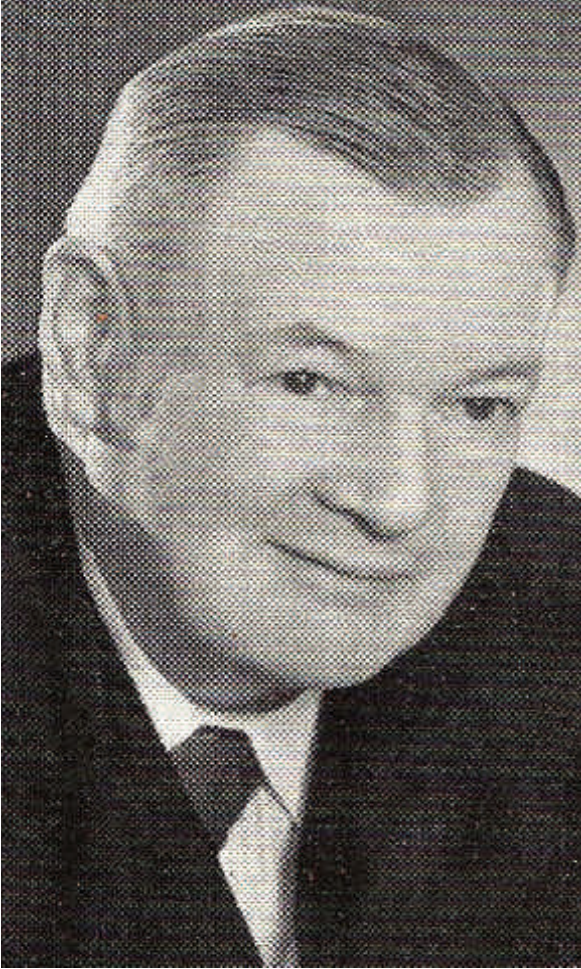
In the early 1930s, due to staff shortages, he was having to work harder than any Head should, putting in thirty out of a possible thirty-six classroom sessions per week in addition to being bursar, administrator, and of course Headmaster. This overwork took its toll on his health, which reached a crisis in the autumn of 1934. A member of that year's intake of new pupils recalls how he met him just once. It was on his first day at

Friars and the whole intake was standing around the quad in different primary school groups, when suddenly a loud voice shouted 'Silence' from the platform half way up the iron staircase. It was Bodfan and his next instruction to the boys was to line up in alphabetical order! Chaos resulted before the desired result was eventually achieved, but the member has often since reflected on what a good way this was of getting strangers to break the ice with each other; he presumes it was something that Bodfan had done every year. But after this, the Head's health became so poor that he had to take a sabbatical cruise to the antipodes in an attempt at cure. Sadly it didn't work and he retired due to ill health at the end of that term, with Mr.J.R Griffiths acting as Head until a new one was able to take up the reins.

Bodfan lived in retirement in Edeyrn, where he had spent many happy holidays. He died in 1946 and was buried in Aber churchyard. Building on Glynn Williams' achievements, he had made Friars into a school that was considered one of the best in Wales.



Ivor Williams(1935-1954)



Ivor Williams

The new Head, Ivor Williams, was born in Bangor in 1889, the son of a stevedore at the Penrhyn slate wharf. He was brought up in the city and was a pupil at Friars (1899-1908) under the headship of Glynn Williams. From there he gained a Welsh classical scholarship to Jesus College, Oxford where he won a gold medal and took a double first in Greats. He also played in the Jesus 1st soccer team and was thought by at least one old Dominican of the 1930s to have been an Oxford cricket 'blue'.

In 1917, while a master at the Royal Masonic School in Bushey, he enlisted for war service in the Royal Artillery and served in Mesopotamia. He was appointed to the staff of Rossall School in Fleetwood in 1920, becoming in due course a housemaster. He actually came, as a distinguished old boy, to speak at one of Bodfan Griffith's Speech Days during the early 1930s. Photographs from his Rossall days show him to have been a tall, slim, handsome man.

He was still at Rossall when, in 1934, he was appointed Head of Friars. It is believed that he applied for the post because of a wish to be near his seriously-ill mother but sadly she died soon after his return to Bangor. A further loss occurred in 1944 with the unexpected death of his younger brother Owen, and this he took very hard.

One of his first jobs at Friars was to supervise a considerable extension to the school buildings to provide a new Assembly Hall, with Physics and Biology laboratories above it, also a new art room and gym in a separate building. In these early days he was known as Lucius to the boys (the designation of 'Boss' presumably only took over with the fading of the memory of 'Boss' Bodfan), and he was not immediately popular with at least some of them. His regular appearance in tweeds, and with his waistcoat bottom button done up (horror of horrors!), was considered boorish. He did wear a gown, but not a mortar board. He continued the tradition of the liberal use of the cane, but now in public at morning assembly rather than in his study! His decision, taken almost at once, to change the school from rugby to soccer (some thought in response to a very heavy defeat at the hands of Rydal!) was not liked, nor was his taking away the teaching of English from the much-loved Mr Charles, producer of some fifteen school plays, who left soon afterwards. It is not clear when the prefect system was disbanded nor when the St. David's Day eisteddfod and the annual Speech Day ceased to be. Were they casualties of the war or did Ivor stop them as a matter of policy? But they were certainly gone by 1947, and so was much of the Welsh language ambience of the school that had developed during Bodfan's time.

When interviewed for the Friars post Ivor was apparently asked if he intended getting married (such a question would never be allowed today!) and is said to have replied 'That depends on the young ladies of Bangor'! In the event they didn't turn up trumps and he lived and died a bachelor, though not without the occasional rumours of 'affairs'. I can testify personally to one of these when, accompanying my parents and me on a theatre trip to Liverpool in about 1952, he brought with him a young lady from Conway, a most pleasant person and a good twenty years his junior. In his retirement, in his totally disorganised home, he admitted to one old pupil 'I should have

married, you know. Then I wouldn't be in this mess.'

He was a great cricket and soccer enthusiast, a totally committed supporter of Gloucestershire and Blackpool, and he certainly did everything he could to encourage the school's performance in both sports – with a fair measure of success too (witness the famous Friars soccer team of 1946-7). Barely a Latin lesson, or a Sixth Form tutor period, went by without his regaling the class with some sporting anecdote or other. After his retirement he organised an annual cricket team of former pupils to play against the school.

He seemed to spend much of his leisure time away from Bangor and was frequently to be seen walking up Convent Lane after emerging from the station – it was always inadvisable for boys - including sixth formers - to go capless on this route to school! (By now blazers were not obligatory but caps certainly were!) Chester was one of his favourite watering holes, but he probably found it just as pleasant to travel as to arrive, for the train was one of his great enthusiasms. On one occasion he was allowed to travel on the footplate from Chester home and his subsequent recounting of this experience was positively childlike in its intensity. He was also a keen fisherman, and one of his boarders at the school in the early 1940s recalls how sometimes in the evenings he would walk a group of them up Hendrewen to a farm where he was known and get them to dig up worms for him from a manure heap!

He was ever erratic and unpredictable. One day a breach of discipline could result in a caning in front of the school, the next day one of similar gravity could meet with uproarious laughter! And fearsome indeed was the familiar sight of him walking relentlessly, with swinging arms, along the main corridor towards a boy who should not have been there, then clutching him by the shoulders and silently but forcibly ejecting him. He could also at times be extremely scathing to boys who did not seem to be using their brains to full capacity, to an extent that would probably trigger his being given official reprimands today!

His teaching of Latin was never less than superb, but unpredictability was at times also a feature of his teaching, though perhaps it was more planned than he wanted us to think! It was not uncommon for him, in the middle of a lesson, to throw a cricket ball at a pupil, saying 'Catch'! (He also



*Boss could have a cruel tongue in his head
With thanks to John Woodgates*

made a regular habit of throwing the free milk in its bottles down a line of boys at break time!) It was not uncommon either for him to eat and drink during lessons, dunking his biscuits in his tea! But his unorthodoxy often proved a good vehicle for his delivery of education. One Friday morning at Assembly I remember him offering, seemingly on impulse, a prize of £1 (quite a lot of money in those days) to the boy who by Monday who could tell him the name of the only historian ever to write without bias. He was generous enough to award ten shillings for 'Whittaker' (author of Whittaker's Almanac), but no-one got the answer he wanted which was the Registrar of Births, Marriages and Deaths! I am still cautioned by this recollection whenever I hear history being used to justify political action – just whose version of history is it?! Another example: we were translating a Latin poem about a rowing race in which one of the oarsmen fell into the water. The text, in describing the state of the oarsman on emerging, used a word that the dictionary said derived from 'to drip'. But Ivor simply roared with laughter when a pupil suggested 'He came out dripping', saying 'No, he didn't go in fat... and come out dripping'! A worthwhile lesson again, to use the best possible English when translating Latin, even if not quite literal. Perhaps he himself had first learned this from Glynn Williams when a boy at Friars.

As boys became more senior they were increasingly exposed to Ivor's bigoted views, particularly in the matter of politics. Mr Churchill, his hero (there was even a visual resemblance!) could do no wrong, but for Mr Attlee and his Labour government he had nothing but contempt! Such imbalance in teaching current affairs would

probably result in disciplinary action today, but I guess it did us no harm, other than perhaps turn us all into little radicals by way of protest! Perhaps another of his educational techniques! The views of his staff about him are not recorded, but it is known that his visits to the staff room were pretty rare, so it is likely that he was not a great team leader! Nevertheless he commanded a crew of splendidly committed masters.

His attitude to Christianity was interesting. He taught scripture as well as classics and always took prayers at Assembly himself, but he would freely admit his religious doubts to the Sixth Form while asking them to choose the hymn to be sung that morning. He would, incidentally, never allow 'And did those feet' or 'Breathe on me breath of God' (too much emphasis on less pleasant bodily parts and functions!) nor 'Jerusalem the Golden' (one of his favourite expletives when given a very wrong answer to a question!) but 'For all the Saints', 'The Church's one Foundation', 'Love Divine' and 'My soul there is a country' were all on his list of favourites.

The most salient happening during his Headship



Two of his crew are depicted above. Karel Lek's satirical recollection of J R Griffiths (Mochyn - Geography) and Edward Darke (Ned - mathematics) walking home along Ffriddoedd Road in the 1940s

was of course the Second World War, and it must have been very difficult guiding the school through this difficult period, with some of his brightest and best staff being conscripted and with all the wartime hardships of food and fuel. By 1942 it was becoming increasingly difficult to care for the 24 boarders then at the school and living in two dormitories above the Dining Hall, and sadly the school had to abandon for ever this aspect of its work, which had been a constant feature since its foundation.

Ivor had serious health problems in the late 1940s, first a skin cancer of the forehead which involved a wide excision – which scarred his appearance permanently – followed by radiotherapy in Manchester, and, later, heart problems which were treated in Birmingham. However he did not retire until the spring of 1954, when his age



Boss with one of his favourite cats

dictated that he should. He moved from the school house to live in Friars Road with his huge and eclectic collection of books - or what was left of it after he had made a very generous donation to the school library on his departure - and one or more of his beloved cats. There he was visited by innumerable former pupils, who at times had to queue up to see him! He spent much time in the summer marking examination papers and would often employ former pupils to help him with the

administrative side of this. He was always very interested in his 'old boys' and kept up as closely as possible with what each of them was doing. He died in July, 1959 - suddenly and, sadly, alone: his body was not discovered for two days. After a service in St. Mary's Church he was buried in Glanadda cemetery.

In contrast to Glynn Williams and Bodfan Griffith, Ivor Williams will have been an important part of the early life of probably the majority of the readers of this article, who will have known him warts and all. They will all have their individual memories of and feelings about him, an interesting mixture of good and bad, laudatory and critical. So please bear this in mind if he seems from this account to have been a less good Head than his two predecessors. I suspect that, in another fifty years, when only written memories will be left to go on, many of the less favourable aspects of his Headship will have been forgotten and his reputation will be as great as that of the others.

But for the moment he remains somewhat of an enigma – and on at least four counts:

1) Why should a former public school housemaster, who was always recalling nostalgically his days at Rossall and quoting his old pupils there as the ideal to which Friars boys should aspire, abolish the well-established prefect system and the annual prizegiving and Speech day, and change from

rugby to the more common North Wales game of soccer?

2) Why did someone who had risen so successfully from humble origins, seem always to devalue the Wales that had nurtured him, its language, and, in particular, its University ('that degree factory'!).

3) Why did a once handsome and eligible bachelor never marry? He was clearly attracted by female beauty and could have really done with a wife to support him in his demanding work.

4) Why has this unpredictable, bigoted, maverick and at times fearsome figure been remembered with such warmth and affection by so many of his former pupils?

I cannot attempt to answer the first three questions, but, as to the fourth, I have no doubt at all that it is because we recognised in Ivor one of life's unforgettable characters. We may have sometimes criticised his political incorrectness (as we would call it today!) but it was part of his somewhat rebellious attitude to authority, an attitude with which we youngsters readily identified. And we loved the warmth of his personality and particularly his huge sense of humour. We also respected his great erudition, which went both deep and wide. Such people are precious, and that is why we hold him in such affection in our memory. 'This was a man'.

❧

Myrvin Elis-Williams (1954-1979)



M Elis Williams

Myrvin Elis-Williams, born in 1918, was, like his predecessor, a Bangor boy. His father was minister of Pendref Welsh Congregational chapel but died not long after the birth of the second of Myrvin's two younger brothers. His mother will be fondly remembered by the '40s and '50s Dominicans who attended Cae Top Primary School as the kind and gentle lady who taught Standard One.

Myrvin attended Friars School and was in the sixth form at the time Ivor Williams took over as Head, and as his classics teacher. He was also at about this time Head Boy, editor of 'The Dominican' and playing leading roles in school plays. He gained three distinctions in his Higher School Certificate and, like Ivor, went on to read classics at Jesus College, Oxford. Also like Ivor, his graduation was followed by war service, this time the Second

World War. The war in fact actually interrupted his time at Oxford, although he was able to take a special 'war degree' before leaving for the RAF. He spent much of the war on air sea rescue vessels in the UK and the Mediterranean, after which he returned to Oxford for a further year to complete his studies.

He then went to Bradford Grammar school, a famous one at that time, to teach classics. He remained there until 1951, when he became director of Further Education for the old Merioneth County Council. From there, at the age of 34, he was appointed Head of Friars. The contrast between him and his predecessor was considerable, and those of us in the Sixth Form at the time of the changeover counted ourselves fortunate indeed to have experienced at close quarters two such different people, each in his own way ably serving our educational needs. As our form master Myrvin knew well how to widen our horizons, most memorably through teaching us philosophy, but also by directing our general reading. This he did by passing around us – with his comments on their contents - a fairly large pile of Pelican and Penguin paperbacks that between them encompassed religion, history, politics, and literary criticism, as well as philosophy and some of the better fiction of the previous 50 years. He would also set us challenging essay subjects on matters of current importance.

In his very first term he re-established the prefect system, appointing a Head Boy from among the seven Foundation prefects; he also created a dozen or so monitors, with lesser powers and responsibilities, to be prefects-in-waiting. This provided welcome and important leadership experience for those of us so appointed – as well as a small room in the Annexe that we could veritably call our own! He also re-started annual Speech Days. Where sport was concerned, rugby had only recently been reintroduced as an option alongside soccer, but, a keen rugby enthusiast himself, he gave full support to its re-establishment; it is perhaps some measure of the success of his support that Friars produced two Welsh international players during the 1950s.

Another of the early changes associated with his headship was an increase in the use of the Welsh language in the school. Although establishing a Welsh ethos was for him less important than maintaining high academic standards, he nevertheless took some important steps

towards enhancing the status of the language. He encouraged the newly-created Welsh Society by becoming its President, started an annual St. David's Day Welsh concert, and would, where appropriate, use Welsh on a day-to-day basis with members of the school. At morning Assembly there would be a Bible reading – by a prefect – in Welsh and English on alternate days. (He was a committed Christian and would also use the Book of Common Prayer at Assembly.)

But tragedy soon struck. In October 1954, just a few weeks into Myrvin's second term at Friars, his lovely young wife, a Yorkshire girl whom he had met when they were fellow-students at Oxford, died of a devastating viral pneumonia at home in the school house after just twenty-four hours of being unwell. The whole school went into mourning and Myrvin was left with two little children and a school of 350 boys to care for all alone. It is an enormous tribute to his strength of character, not to mention his organisational skills, that he not only kept the school - as well as his children - completely on track during this difficult time but also continued to innovate, for instance to start a Parents' Association in 1956.

In 1956 too a happier era in his life began when he remarried. The next year was an important one for the school, being the quatercentenary of its foundation, and the then Head Boy, Islwyn Roberts-Parry, was much impressed by how well Myrvin steered and oversaw the celebrations, consulting him regularly, keeping him abreast of what was happening and involving him in communications with the boys.

In due course he moved out of the school house to live in Llandygai with his new wife, with whom he now had two further children. He was able to pursue his passion for sailing and, with three successive boats, to win many prizes in Straits regattas. He also took great pleasure from intellectual debate and was a member of the Bangor Dialectical Society. The family regularly attended the parish church in Llandygai and he would take pleasure in following the liturgy, whether in Welsh or English, in the Greek New Testament which he would take with him to services!

But major upheavals were ahead. In 1968 his second wife died of cancer. And this time not only did he now have four children under the age of 18 to care for but also had to cope with what was probably the biggest upheaval ever in the school's

history. This was the change in 1971 - throughout Wales - to comprehensive education.

And, a great supporter of the concept of comprehensive education, cope with it he did! With his considerable organisational skills, and despite the sad difficulties in his personal life, he was very much the right man in the right place to superintend the metamorphosis of Friars from a grammar school of some 350 boys on a single site to a mixed comprehensive of about 1000 pupils on three sites, one of them a completely new building! At this stage the old building became the Lower School, with teaching through the medium of English and there was a parallel Welsh-medium Lower School in the buildings of the former girls' grammar school. The Upper School was established in a new building at Eithinog on land that had once been the school playing field. Myrvin never really liked the largely prefabricated new building and warned that it would be gone long before the old one! (This was prophetic as, less than 40 years from its opening, almost all of the original buildings have, in the course of the site's expansion, been replaced, while the old building of course continues in use as part of Coleg Menai.) There was some dispute as to what the name of the new school entity should be. Myrvin was adamant that the name Friars should continue and in the end his will prevailed; this kept the link with the school's long and illustrious past. But perhaps his most important achievement at the time was the extension of the school's outdoor sports options to embrace, very appropriately in view of Bangor's location, mountaineering and sailing.

But the next upheaval was not far away. And this was not one that he wanted, from either a personal point of view (his retirement was only 2 years off) or an educational one. During the 1970s tension was increasing over the place of the Welsh language in education. Many Welsh-speaking parents were dissatisfied with the lack of Welsh-medium teaching in the Upper School at Friars; when some of them moved their children to Ysgol Dyffryn Ogwen, where such teaching was possible, Myrvin responded by extending Welsh-medium courses in History, Geography and RE into the Upper School. This however was not enough for some parents, who wanted a school where there would be total equality between the languages. Myrvin did not want this as in effect it would separate out those children for whose parents the Welsh language was important, and he felt this was against the whole inclusivity ethos

of comprehensive education. But eventually, after much discussion, often bitter, the Education Committee decided to create just such a school in Bangor.

It was a happy fact that the person appointed Head of Ysgol Tryfan - the name of the new 11-18 school to be established in the buildings of the former 'Welsh' Lower School - was none other than Islwyn Roberts-Parry, Myrvin's Head Boy and classics student at the time of the 1957 celebrations. Myrvin was much taken with the sense of apostolic succession engendered by Islwyn's appointment. All classicists, Glynn Williams had begat Ivor, who in turn had begat Myrvin, and now Myrvin would beget Islwyn, as it could be argued that Ysgol Tryfan would be no less a successor to the old Friars than the one continuing under the name of Friars. For the whole of the summer term of 1978 the two Heads worked closely in the tower of the old school to create the new system and Islwyn pays great tribute to the friendship Myrvin showed him at this time. (Very early on, for instance, he invited Islwyn to his home in Menai Bridge where he was now living with his third wife and their young daughter). There was total co-operation between the two men in their work of dividing the school and another major change was achieved smoothly and happily, despite many initial logistic nightmares, not least when it came to time-tabling!

Myrvin retired in 1979 on reaching the age of 60. In his retirement he became rear-commander of the Portdinorwic Sailing Club, but, more significantly, turned to researching and writing on aspects of the history of shipping and ship-building in North Wales. In addition to several articles in the journal 'Maritime Wales' he wrote two books, both of them full of new information that he had unearthed in the archives - 'Packet to Ireland - Porthdinllaen's Challenge to Holyhead' (1984) and 'Bangor, Port of Beaumaris' (1988). This second book was published in the very week of his death at the age of 68 from the cancer with which he had lived for the previous two years. Happily his widow and his five children are all still alive and well and living in North Wales. Myrvin is commemorated in a memorial tablet in Bangor cemetery; at his own request this is small and bears just his name on the inscription - a request which well characterises his modest, self-effacing nature. 'A kindly chap and one who actually really cared about the pupils in his charge', as one old pupil remembers him. And indeed, despite his reputation as a strict and

fair Headmaster and one who became known as ‘Boss’ as soon as the memory of the old ‘Boss’ had faded, Myrvin does not seem to have been remembered as an unforgettable character in the way that his three predecessors were. This fits with his nature, but it also fits with his nature that he is remembered as a superb leader who rose magnificently to a whole series of challenges, both personal and professional – challenges of a magnitude probably unique for any one Friars

Head: in the course of his 25 years at the helm he twice suffered the death of a wife and was Head of three different incarnations of the school. Leadership, resilience and management skills are three of the most valued attributes in today’s state school Headteachers. Myrvin possessed all these in spades and perhaps it was his appointment in 1954 that marked the biggest watershed ever in the history of Friars School Heads, and one that was prophetic of what would happen elsewhere in the course of the next 20 years....

Sources and acknowledgements:

For all sections:

‘The Dominican’, Fourth Centenary number, 1957

- ♦ ‘From 1789 to 1957’ by Aled Eames
- ♦ ‘The Last Eighty Years – The School from the Inside’ by various former pupils and staff
- ♦ Selected other past issues of ‘The Dominican’
- ♦ ‘A History of Friars School’ by David R. Price
(ed. S.I. White, in ‘Bangor: from a Cell to a City’, 1994)

Additional for Mr Glynn Williams:

- ♦ ‘North Wales Chronicle’ 3 December, 1937

Additional for Mr St. Bodfan Griffith:

- ♦ ODA Newsletter, January, 2002, ‘Friars in the Thirties’ by Rev. Maurice Donaldson
- ♦ ODA Newsletter, Summer, 2002, ‘Recollections’ by Iorwerth Wynn Jones
- ♦ Personal communications from Cledwyn Aneurin Evans, Iorwerth Wynn Jones, Cyril Malyon, Islwyn Roberts-Parry and T. Llew Williams,

Additional for Mr Ivor Williams:

Various recollections written in ODA Newsletters, in particular

- ♦ ‘Ivor Williams – A brief journey of re-discovery’ by Gareth W. Griffiths, December 2000
- ♦ ‘Correspondence with Boss’ by David B. Ll. George, July and December 2000, Summer 2001 and January 2002

Additional for Mr Elis-Williams:

- ♦ ‘Y Goriad’, Mehefin 1988 – Myrvin Elis-Williams’ gan Aled Eames (Obituary)
- ♦ Contribution to a History of the School by Patrick Hemphill
- ♦ Personal communications from David Elis-Williams, Islwyn Roberts-Parry, David R. Price and Roderick Hird



FRIARS HEADS POST 1979

In my article above on ‘A Century of Friars Heads’ I have drawn on a number of sources to present as complete pictures as possible of the four Heads of the school during the 100 years between 1879 and 1979. Since then there have been two further Heads, both of whom are still alive. It would be neither possible nor appropriate for me to attempt

to present any attempt at an assessment of their contributions to the life and development of the school, but a few simple facts about them will undoubtedly be of interest to the readers of this publication. I am most grateful to the present head, Neil Foden, for providing the information on which I have drawn in what follows:

Dafydd Arfon Jones (1979-1997)

Dafydd Arfon Jones, like his two predecessors as Head of Friars, was a local boy and old pupil of the school. Prior to coming to Friars as Head he worked in Holywell. He was also an ordained nonconformist minister and indeed undertook a certain amount of preaching during his headship. He retired as Head in 1997 and, after a subsequent

short period of employment by the UCNW, moved to live in Northern Cyprus where he did some teaching in the British Education Centre.

(Note: It may be that there will be readers will have further information about this Head. If so the Editor would be pleased to receive it, perhaps for publication in a future edition of this Newsletter.)



Neil Foden (1997 -)

The present Head, born in Bangor and brought up in Dwygyfylchi, could also have been a former Friars pupil, but his parents chose the eastward route for his schooling and sent him to John Bright School, Llandudno! From there he went on to the UCNW, where he graduated BA (Hons.) in English and took the PGCE in Bangor. For the next 10 years he taught English, and a little Drama, at Ysgol Dyffryn Ogwen, Bethesda, before being appointed Deputy Head of Friars in 1989. Four years later he became Head of the Lower School, and then Head of the whole school in April 1997.

He has held office in the National Union of Teachers (NUT) since 1986 and is currently on the national executive and is Chair of the National

Advisory Committee of NUT Heads and Deputies. He is also Chair of the Joint Standing Committee for Wales, a committee made up of representatives of all the teaching unions and professional organisations. He was the 2006-7 president of the Welsh secondary Schools' Association and has served on several national curriculum working parties.

Neil is a keen sportsman – soccer, hockey, cricket, hill walking – and enjoys reading, television and popular music. He has two teenage sons.

It was of course during his Headship – in 1999 – that Friars finally said goodbye to its Ffriddoedd Rd. building when it passed to Coleg Menai.



A Brief History of Walking & Climbing at Friars School.

Together with some notes on James Merriman Archer Thompson MA gleaned from
“The Mountain Men” by Alan Hankinson.



Phil in civvies but he is never happier than when in walking gear up the mountains

The most famous Mountaineer associated with Friars was James Merriman Archer Thompson, son of a Clergyman, was born in 1863, he gained his MA in Clare Collage Canterbury and came to Friars as a Master in 1884. He was a rock climber of note; during his time in Friars he extensively explored the cliffs of Lliwedd, Tryfan and the Glyders.

Together with his friend A W Andrews he produced the first official climbing guidebook to Lliwedd and he later authored the second guide to the Ogwen District.

While in Bangor two of his climbing companions were Henry Hughes, an Architect and Henry Edwards, both of Bangor and who may have been ex. Dominicans. Together they climbed extensively on Tryfan and the Glyder Fawr Cliffs, making many first assents. Two other Bangor men who climbed with them were the brothers A E Elias and W P Elias, who may also have been Old Friars Boys. Together they explored and made many first assents in the mountains of North Wales.

In March 1895 Thomson and Hughes made the first assent of Twll Du (the notorious Devil's Kitchen), it was coated with ice, a giant frozen

waterfall, they had with them a hatchet which in Thomson's own words they had “surreptitiously removed from the worthy Mrs Jones' coal-cellar at Ogwen. This implement proved of the utmost utility until the head took leave of the haft, and, glissading the snow slopes, vanished from sight. The head was recovered, and the hatchet, ingeniously repaired with string, continued to render us valuable service”. It was after 7 pm when they completed the climb - dark and bitterly cold. They decided to follow the longer but safer path down to Nant Perris and arrived at the Dolbadarn Inn at 10.30 pm their clothes in tatters and one of Archer Thomson's hands so badly frost-bitten that he was unable to use it for several weeks.

Over the next 17 years he was to dominate the progress of Welsh climbing. Together with his friends he was out most weekends and their increasingly bold activity marks the true beginning of rock climbing in North Wales. His example brought climbing out of the gullies and onto the ridges and buttresses where the holds were as small as the sense of exposure was great.

In 1896 he left Friars to become Headmaster of John Bright School in Llandudno where he stayed until his sad and untimely death in 1913. He had never married and it seems had no close friends, he had a nervous breakdown in 1908, and again at the end of the summer term of 1912. The following summer he went to stay with his brother in Surrey, on his way to the Alps. One evening while his brother was out he succumbed to his depressions and took his own life. A sad end to the man who had done more than anyone else to develop rock climbing in Snowdonia.

That famous climber Geoffrey Winthrop Young wrote shortly after Archer Thomson's death. “He evolved the somewhat specialised type of climbing which has been principally responsible for the extraordinary advance made in the standard of difficulty during recent years; the slow controlled movement, depending on fine balance rather than grip, and identical in pace and security upon easy crags or on the hardest passages”. He also wrote: - “For a number of us the cliffs of Snowdonia, and more especially the incomparable precipices of Lliwedd, of which he knew every ledge and cranny, will be haunted, and almost consecrated,

by the memory of a figure, solitary and smoking, crouched on some picturesque and inaccessible shelf, or moving with extraordinary lightness of foot among the screes”.

There is no evidence to show that, during his time in Friars, Archer Thomson ever encouraged climbing amongst the pupils, he may have done, but the impression one gets is that he climbed at such an extreme level of difficulty that he would not have had time for novices.

In the first half of the 20th Century I could find no records of hill walking or climbing by any members of the school, until an article in the Autumn 1938 edition of “The Dominican” by EH where he reports on the “Eighth Climber Badge camp” held the previous August in “Nant Gwynant Valley at the very foot of Snowdon. This camp is held every year in the heart of the mountains to train Boy Scouts for the Climber Badge. Before he is granted the badge a Scout must pass a very difficult test. He must have a thorough knowledge of, and have climbed most of the principal peaks of at least twenty-five square miles of mountainous country (in this case Snowdonia)”. He goes on to detail the navigation skills required and the emergency procedures that had to be learned.

“When a Scout has passed the badge he is made a member of the 1st Eryri Climbing Troop, whose colours are silver and gold. The origin of these colours is the gold of the sunset upon the silver of the snow on Snowdon in winter.” EH (Edmund Humphreys - French Master) goes on to describe the camp itself, which was attended by Scouts from all parts of England and Wales and including two Czechoslovaks, a French Scout and another from Austria. He describes their climbs, their theoretical lessons and their entertainment. He concludes, “If ever you want to see International good-will and good fellowship come and visit a Boy Scout Climber Badge Camp”. It would appear that there were a number at school who were interested in climbing at this time, even if it was confined to members of the Scouts.

I was then fortunate to meet Iorwerth Wyn Jones who attended Friars from 1924 until 1930. He had been a Cub Scout but did not continue into Scouting until some friends in Friars persuaded him to rejoin. He explained that there was a strong contingent of Friars Boys in the Bangor Scout Troop, led by a Mr N Woodhead, a lecturer at the University. Mr Woodhead was a keen hill

walker and climber who encouraged the Scouts to take to the hills. Their summer camps started at Dolwyddelan but after a while moved down to Nant Gwynant. Iorwerth recalled one memorable climbing camp in Switzerland. The Climber Badge Camps evolved from the summer camps at Hafod y Llan, in Nant Gwynant. Iorwerth continued to assist with these camps even after he had left school and moved away from Bangor. Taking the train to Roman Bridge he would walk across the 1100 ft. ridge and down to Nant Gwynant, a distance of about 12 miles, carrying all his gear and food for the week. Iorwerth assured me that a substantial number of Friars boys always attended these camps, which had started in the late 1920's and continued into the 1940's. He explained that the two Czechoslovaks mentioned by EH were refugees driven out of Czechoslovakia by Hitler.

In 1939 we were at war and “The Dominican” was not published again until the spring of 1947 when I wrote an article on Mountaineering. This was re-published in the January 2002 edition of the ODA Newsletter. The article was originally written to raise awareness in the school about mountaineering in order to gain support for the Dominican Rucksack Club, which a few like-minded Friars Boys had recently started. Mr H. A. Coulter, affectionately known by us all as Joe Soap, was a keen hill walker and an excellent photographer; he encouraged and helped us in the formation of the Club. A number of us had been climbing for about three years, having started with “Navigation” exercises as members of 1557 Flight, Air Training Corps. In the summer 1947 edition of “The Dominican”, Jack Renshaw wrote a report on the activities of the Club to date. In this edition there is also an interesting article by the Rucksack Club's Chairman, J. A. Lewis entitled “My first rock climb”, again with the intention of gaining support for the Club.

There is a report in “The Dominican” of Spring 1949, by R. L. Hughes, IIIB, that the Rucksack Club had visited Puffin Island, but the weather prevented them from landing. Later, on a trip to Tryfan, they were rewarded on the summit by their first glimpse of the “Brocken Spectre” their shadows cast upon the cloud below them each with circular rainbow around their shadow. Thanks were expressed to Mr Coulter who had arranged and escorted these excursions.

In the early 50's the School's ATC Cadets were still making expeditions into the hills, and two Cadet Sergeants went on an RAF mountaineering course.

Colin Fielding produced this photograph taken by Mr Coulter, and reproduced below. I hope that if you were there you can recognise everyone, it was taken at Marchlyn Mawr, on a Rucksack Club walk, in the summer of 1947.



Marchlyn Mawr, on a Rucksack Club walk, in the summer of 1947.

In the summer of 1954 there is a report by Nigel Williams IIA, of a trip over the two Glyders, in mist, where they were soaked, partly lost, but ended up, happy that they had spent such a good day in the mountains.

The summer of the following year a new rambling club had been formed, “Clwb Crwydro Cymru” complete with a badge, illustrated below.



This new Club was divided into climbers and cyclists. Mr R. H. Pritchard-Jones was asked to be the Honorary President, the Chairman was R. Dilwyn Jones; D. Prydderch Williams was Treasurer, the climbing Secretary was Islwyn R. Parry and the cycling Secretary was Norman W. Roberts, although he was leaving for College at the end of the year. The article, by the Chairman, went on to thank various members for their work in establishing the Club, and for photographs received.

Islwyn R. Parry VI described the first expedition of the new club in the preceding April, when they had taken a number of photographs with which to remember this first journey. Starting from Llyn Ogwen they found that part of Llyn Bochlwyd was frozen over, they continued up and enjoyed their lunch at “the feet of Adam & Eve” on the summit of Tryfan. They descended to Bwlch Tryfan and then crossed the two Glyders and returned via Twll Du to Ogwen, slipping and sliding in the snow at

times. Once they were down, looking back at the waterfalls and the dark cliffs above that they had just descended they recalled the words of the bard when he said.

“y panig di-frys, di-fref”
y rhuthr pendramwnwgl, stond.”

Dafydd Prydderch Williams VI.R. then described a cycling expedition around Anglesey, which turned out to be quite strenuous, it was quite late when they arrived back in Bangor quoting Goronwy Owen. “Bellach f’ysbryd a ballawdd”.

In the Christmas, 1955, edition, J. M. Hughes VI reported on an expedition over “Four Mountains” in the previous October. Three members of the Club had taken the bus to Mynydd Llandegai and followed the quarry road towards the hills. They first ascended Carnedd y Filiast, 2694 ft. high. From there they saw Mynydd Llandegai far below them, with Bangor in the distance and Anglesey spread out further still. They continued over Mynydd Perfedd, followed by a hard climb onto Foel Goch. Below they saw that they had a steep climb ahead from the col. There was some snow on Y Garn; they could see Y Wyddfa, and the sea down by Pwllheli.

The clouds now engulfed them, they headed for Glyder Fach and it was some time before they could see down to Llyn Idwal and Llyn Ogwen. There was no sign of a bus when they reached the main road, so they walked to Bethesda, and arrived there before the bus, having enjoyed their day out.

I could find no further reports of climbing or rambling, over the next ten years, but the interest must still have continued in Friars, since, in the Spring 1966 edition of The Dominican we find an article by D. G. Crompton and R. G. Roberts, entitled, “Climbing Club”. In which they are “pleased to be able to report an extremely full and active year for the school Mountaineering Club.” The club held meets on most weekends and Wednesday afternoons, transport to the mountains was being subsidised to the extent of thirty shillings by the school Sports Fund, the hire of a minibus however proved rather expensive, and transport was mainly by Masters or Students’ motor cars. Rock climbing was popular on Tryfan, and they went skiing on the artificial slope at Plas y Brenin.

A number of good hill walks were accomplished.

In March there was good snow on the Glyders and “thanks to Mr Martin, obtaining the appropriate number of ice-axes a group was given its first experience of snow climbing”. They conclude by thanking all the Masters who had assisted the club’s activities and in particular “our warmest thanks to Mr Martin (the most familiar sight on a Wednesday afternoon was innumerable boys crowding themselves and masses of gear into his long suffering car).” It seems that in the 60’s the Climbing Club was still well supported.

In the first copy of the Dominican, after the amalgamation of the three schools in 1972, it appears, from a report by A. G. Jones of the Upper VI, that membership of the Mountaineering Club had been boosted by the amalgamation, “with many members of the fairer sex joining for the first time (although none of them has yet attempted the hazards of climbing).” He continues; “The season has been quite busy, with its usual ups and downs. This year, we have been joined by Miss. Lawford, who the girls will know, is a very enthusiastic hill walker. It is thanks to her that the Club’s meetings during Wednesday afternoons games periods began in September, instead of, as was usual, in January. These meetings were held to prepare the members for the outdoor meetings by teaching map reading and hill walking theory, there were also slide lectures and discussions”.

The report shows that the Club had a very successful year’s activities, including snow climbing, skiing on the artificial ski slope at Plas-y-Brenin and an annual camp at Llyn Cader, when Cader Idris was climbed. Mr Martin was still very active together with Mr Lewis and Miss. Lawford.

There is also a report in the same issue of the Dominican, of a Fourth Form Hill Walking Group. (Which appears to be a junior part of the Mountaineering Club). R. Sadler reported that; “This activity offered for the first time this year has proved very popular, attracting 25 members who were after a short instruction period considered knowledgeable enough to organise their own walks – a concession we have greatly appreciated.

Our thanks to Mrs Siviter who has instructed us over the past eight months; to Mr Siviter, a qualified mountaineer, who has led us on a god number of expeditions on the higher peaks of Snowdonia and to Cader Idris, and to Mr Martin who has taken us on some interesting walks.

During the Summer Term, it is hoped to extend our activities to Orienteering”.

I can find no further mention of Mountaineering in later editions of the Dominican. In the late 70’s however the Mountain Leadership Certificate became a requirement for Masters to take boys on expeditions. To gain this qualification took a great deal of time and money, so it is possible that this curtailed any organised mountaineering expeditions within the school, later the Health & Safety at Work Act would make it even more difficult.

Some hill-walking expeditions continue today, however, for the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award Scheme is, I understand, well supported.

Life was so much simpler before the EU and Political Correctness; still the members of the Old Dominican Rucksack Club stagger on and reminisce about times gone by. Most are of the late 40s early 50’s vintage. There should however be many more Old Dominicans who walked and climbed with the school in later years. Where are they now? They would be very welcome to walk with us.



The Great Fire of the 50s

by R Alun Jones (48-54)

The connection between President Kennedy and Friars may be a bit tenuous but we have to make the most of our heritage, however tenuous. Just like the assassination of the late President most of us who were at Friars on Friday 17 April 1953 will surely remember where they were when they heard that there had been a great fire at the school. It happened during the preceding night and most of us would have learned about it on the way to school. I was walking along Deiniol Road with Hefin Jones of Seiriol Road (who died at a tragically young age) and it was a passing postman

near the GPO who told us. Our first thoughts were ‘Yippee, no school today!’ and we speeded up our walk up Glanrafon Hill to get there as quickly as possible to find out what had happened. There was great excitement outside the school with the road full of fire engines and milling boys. But it was not a heap of smouldering rubble we found but a school which appeared at first view to be reasonably intact. We could not go in and were told to go home and await instructions.

The ‘Daily Post’ ran the story next morning as follows:



Work of 30 years gone, says master

FRIARS SCHOOL, Bangor, a school with a direct link with the Black Friars of the Middle Ages, was partially destroyed by fire early yesterday.

The fire broke out in a lecture room on the first floor and had gained a good hold when it was discovered by Mr Selwyn Jones, a passing postman.

Mr Jones woke the headmaster, Mr Ivor Williams, whose house adjoins the school.

While the postman gave the alarm, the headmaster entered the building in an attempt to save books and other valuables. He was driven back by smoke.

Fire fighting units from Bangor and Caernarvon were on the scene by 7.15 a.m., and they were later joined by units from Menai Bridge and Llanfairfechan.

Roof collapsed

They found the fire raging in the lecture room and in a nearby physics preparation room, and it was making its way along three roof ridges which joined near the lecture room.

To confine it as much as possible, tiles were ripped from the roof and roof timbers were cut.

Water percolated through most of the building, causing considerable damage to the fabric.

The fire was brought under control within an hour, but not before it had completely destroyed the lecture room, the physics preparation room, and the intervening corridor.

The roof of the lecture room collapsed while firemen were underneath.

Thousands of pounds worth of physics and other experimental apparatus were destroyed.

"The work of thirty years has gone," said Mr James Fielding, who has been physics master at the school for that period.

He added that the heat from the fire had made salvage of the articles impossible.

Firemen used turntable equipment—it is believed for the first time in Bangor district.

Masters and senior boys helped to remove books and equipment from the threatened portion of the school. Junior boys who arrived at 8.50 a.m. were sent back home.

Cause unknown

"I have no real idea of the extent of the damage as yet, but it is serious," Mr Ivor Williams said.

Last night it was stated that the cause of the fire was still unknown.

The building in which the fire occurred has housed the school for about half a century, but the history of Friars extends over many centuries.

The Black Friars—the Dominicans—had been teaching boys in a house in Lower Bangor for many years when the dissolution of the monasteries robbed them of their wealth and power.

The building used by them was acquired in 1557 by Geoffrey Glynn, a doctor of law and an advocate in the Court of Arches in London, and it was granted a Charter by Queen Elizabeth in 1561.

A copy of this Charter was discovered in the offices of a firm of London solicitors two years ago and sent to Bangor to be kept in the Chapter Library at the cathedral.

Apart from this, the old records of the school were lost some years ago.

At one time Friars occupied a place in education in Wales shared only by Llandovery College. For many years regarded as a public school, it acquired the status of a grammar school under the Welsh Education Act of 1884, when, in the absence of a foundation of its own, it became dependent on State grants.

Y Tân Mawr gan J Bryan Jones (48-55)



J Bryan Jones

Mae'r blynyddoedd yn hedfan i ni sydd yn heneiddio!!! Dyma ni yn y seithfed flwyddyn o'r unfed ganrif ar hugain. Mae'n siwr ein bod wedi anghofio llawer o bethau ddigwyddodd yn ein hamser yn ystod diwedd pedwar degau a dechrau pumdegau y ganrif ddiwethaf. Faint ohonoch oedd yn ddisgyblion yn Ysgol Friars yr adeg honno sydd yn cofio dydd Gwener 16 Ebrill 1953?

Mi gofiai y bore hwnnw yn iawn. Ar ôl codi y bore hwnnw cofiai fy nhad yn dweud wrthyf na fyddai dim ysgol y diwrnod hwnnw. Yr oedd tân wedi dinistrio rhywfaint o'r ysgol. A fedrwch ddychmygu sut yr oedd "Boss" yn teimlo pan gafodd gnoc ar ei ddrws tua 7 o'r gloch y bore gan y postman i ddweud wrtho bod yr ysgol ar dân.

The above are Bryan Jones' personal recollections of the day. Time flies especially when one gets older!!!. We are now in the seventh year of the 21st Century. How many of you were at Friars in the late forties early fifties and remember Friday 16th April 1953. Yes that was the day of the fire which destroyed part of the physics laboratory and destroyed 30 years of Mr Fielding's work. I had been informed by my father that the school

Cofiai fy nhad yn dweud wrthyf mae'n debyg y buasai disgyblion y chweched dosbarth yn cael y gwaith o symud llyfrau a pheiriannau i rywle sych.

Ar ôl dringo allt Coed Mawr cerddais ar hyd Lon Penrhos hyd at ben rallt Penchwintan, cwrdd â'r bechgyn oddiar y bws o Benrhos hefyd Y Felinheli. Ar y bws yr oedd un o'n athrawon sef Mr Cledwyn Jones. Pan welodd fi heb fy mhethau ysgol dyma fo'n gofyn lle roedd fy mag gyda fy ngwaith cartref. Minnau'n dweud wrtho bod tân wedi dinistrio darn o'r labordy ffiseg ac na fyddai yna wersi y diwrnod hwnnw. Wrth gwrs nid oedd yn fy nghoelio. Dywedais wrtho bod tua wyth o beiriannau tân y buasai yn eu gweld ar ôl y tro ar Lôn Tremelidir. Cynigiais "fet" bach iddo. Dyma ni'n cyrraedd y tro ac roedd ei wyneb yn bictiwr. Yna cofiodd yn sydyn bod fy nhad yn aelod o'r Brigad Dân.

Galwyd y disgyblion at ei gilydd ychydig wedi naw o'r gloch yn y "quad" er mwyn i'r Prifathro ddweud wrthym am beth oedd wedi digwydd tua saith y bore hwnnw, bod disgyblion dosbarth un hyd pedwar yn cael mynd adref ac yn gofyn i dosbarth pump a chwech aros i helpu symud llyfrau a pheiriannau o lle oedd y tân i rywle mwy addas.

Yr oedd y wasg ym mhobman yn siarad gyda'r Prifathro, ac oherwydd hyn hefyd amryw o'r Athrawon. Mr Fielding, Dirprwy Brifathro yn dweud bod gwaith 30 o flynyddoedd wedi i ddinistrio. Siaradodd y wasg hefyd gydag amryw o'r disgyblion am eu teimladau yn enwedig y rhai oedd yn paratoi am yr arholiadau allanol i'r Brifysgol. Siomedig bod peth fel hyn wedi digwydd.

Achos y tân oedd bod llygoden fach "newynog" wedi achosi "short circuit".

had been partly destroyed by fire and that there would not be any lessons that day. Having reached Penchwintan Hill the bus from Penrhos and Portdinorwic arrived with the pupils from that area. Also Mr Cledwyn Jones was on that bus. Seeing me with no bag he asked me where my homework was. I told him that part of the school had been destroyed by fire. He would not believe me so I offered him a little "bet". I told him that

there were some 8 fire appliances in and around the school and that after going around the corner by the tuck shop he would see them. He still doubted my story until we got around the corner. His face was a picture and he suddenly remembered that my father was a member of the Fire Brigade.

Here are Mr Cledwyn Jones' version of events:

I have no recollection of meeting Bryan Jones on Penchwintan Hill, but his account need not be a figment of his imagination, because in 1953 I used to travel daily from Penygroes by bus and was disgorged at the bottom of Penchwintan Hill before walking (or running) up the donkey path to Friars.

On this particular day I had no idea that a fire had taken place in the school because, like so many other teachers, I could not afford a telephone, but I do remember arriving at the top of the donkey path to be greeted by a view I had not witnessed since the days of the blitz. There were fire appliances everywhere, and hosepipes trailing inside and outside the school.

I remember my old friend E P Jones was terribly upset, because part of his chemistry lab and the physics lab plus the roof had been destroyed. When E P was upset he used to lash out at anyone and everyone in sight and this was the case that day - all the boys kept clear of him. I did not see Mr Fielding but Jack Lowe was also very upset at the loss of his lab and all the experiments that were being prepared.

Many boys travelled to school from outlying districts and quite a number came by train and bus - and fair play to the dinner ladies, they made sure that all the boys received their usual 'nosh'. This WW2 spirit prevailed until the school returned to normal in a comparatively short time. I cannot remember the exact number of days the school was out of bounds but I do remember that the door bell rang quite early one morning at our house in Penygroes and there stood the Headmaster, Ivor Williams, in all his glory. Basically, you know he was a shy person and on that particular morning he was rather reluctant to come in. However I had no intention of standing on the doorstep in my pyjamas talking to him. I could not understand why he had turned up so early until it dawned on me that there was only one train from Bangor to Afon Wen in the morning. He loved that journey, not because of the scenery, but the engine driver and fireman always allowed him to travel in the cab all the way from Bangor to Afon Wen! He had called to tell me that the school was closed until further notice but it was not long before normality returned and lessons continued as usual. The mouse or mice, which had been responsible for the catastrophe in the first place by biting through the electric cables in the roof were forgiven, especially by the pupils - if they were still in the land of the living (the mice I mean!).

And so life returned to relative normality in due course, the damage was repaired and a nice new prep room etc was the result.



Friars School 1952-57 - my personal recollections

by Mr Cledwyn Jones



Mr Cledwyn Jones

In March 1952 my old friend Llew Rees, Head of PE at the Normal college here in Bangor and a great friend of Mr Ivor Williams, Headmaster of Friars School, informed me that the Head and Governors were seeking a teacher to be responsible for Religious Education up to and including 'A' level. At the time I was teaching the subject at my old school in Penygroes and I was quite happy there but Friars school beckoned. Many of my co-pilots in the RAF during the war had been products of Residential Schools or Grammar Schools and I had a great deal of respect for them, they were fine friends and companions. Friars School had a good reputation in Caernarfonshire for academic and sporting excellence.

I applied for the post and was invited to meet the Headmaster and the Chairman of Governors, Prof DWT Jenkins, in May that year and much to my delight was offered the post. I accepted, of course, and my future looked rosy until the Professor mentioned that the post also involved a certain amount of music. This request had not appeared in the advertisement but he assured me that it only involved a certain amount of teaching up to the fourth form. As many of you know, I have been interested in music all my life and had been involved with teaching choirs in Penygroes, but they were mainly girls' choirs and I had never stood in front of a boys' choir in my life. But I

accepted the responsibility and when I asked the Headmaster what had happened to the previous music master he just looked at me and said, "Jones, this school is 395 years old and it has never had a full time music master!" I am convinced that he genuinely believed that music should only be taught to girls - and he didn't know a great deal about girls either!

I had three months in which to cogitate but the more I cogitated the less confident I became until I finally decided after some sleepless nights and after listening to Choral Evensong from Salisbury Cathedral on the radio that I would concentrate on vocal music mainly of a religious nature. If the boys did not like it - tough! I intended to follow my instinct.

My interview in 1952 was not my first visit to Friars School and I had vowed then that I would never visit the place again. The year was 1938 and I was a regular member of the Penygroes Grammar School football team. We had not lost a match for two seasons. Grammar schools like Caernarfon, Pwllheli and Porthmadog had been soundly beaten. We played against Botwnnog Grammar School, which was nearly as old as Friars but the game was usually so one-sided that my fellow fullback and I had time to chase wild rabbits behind our goal! We needed stronger opposition and someone had the bright idea of inviting Friars School to play against us. They accepted our invitation and arrived at Penygroes on a drizzly afternoon in November. It was a good game and we left the field with a 3-3 drawn game. These posh boys from Bangor were no better than the boys from the hills!

A return match was arranged to be played on the Friars School field on April 1939 (I think) and I must admit we were slightly overawed when we arrived at this school we had heard so much about with boys only walking about in their black and gold school uniform. Before we left Penygroes, our Headmaster had already informed us that Friars was a very old school, 16th century in fact and that we should respect its tradition on and off the field.

When the two teams faced each other that afternoon I think every Friars schoolboy must have been present including their formidable looking

Headmaster. Even before the kick-off we were rather upset when we saw the size of their giant centre-forward, he reminded us of that biblical giant Goliath, the hero of the Philistines; but David had beaten Goliath had he not, therefore, full of optimism off we went. Before we had settled down, Goliath had scored five goals; he obviously knew a thing or two about playing football. There was no stopping the boy. I mentioned earlier how my fellow fullback and I chased rabbits when we played against Botwnnog but here the situation was reversed; we spent 98% of the match in our own half and I think the Friars School goalkeeper and his two fullbacks spent the afternoon on their goal line playing pontoon. Goliath went on to score twelve goals!

When the score had reached 17-0 even with the best will in the world we would never draw level with them but we did have a consolation prize. I believe the Friars goalkeeper wore glasses because he was short sighted and when our left half belted the ball in the direction of the Friars goal, the goalkeeper did not see it until it was too late and the ball bounced over his head into the net. What a game! What a disgrace!!

Perhaps some of you reading this little article may remember that historic occasion - you may even have been one of the players involved but I am sure you can understand why I never wished to see Friars School again.

I travelled every day from my home in Penygroes catching the 7.45 bus to Caernarfon and then on to Bangor, stopping at the bottom of Penchwintan. I can assure you at that time of morning it was quite a feat belting up the path to Maestryfan to be at school by 9 am. On my first day in September 1952 I arrived in the staff room where I met the finest group of men it was possible to meet. They were friendly, welcoming, helpful and kind. Out of respect I must include their names here: Mr J R Griffith, Geography and Second Master Mr E R Williams, Biology, Mr Park Jones, Welsh (whose son was killed in the war), Mr Coulter, Art (a machine gunner in the first World War), Mr Fielding, Physics, Mr Darke, Mathematics, Mr EP. Jones, Chemistry (rear gunner Bomber Command), Mr EW Jones, Latin (ex Army officer), Mr J C Lowe, Physics (ex Army officer), Mr R. Davies, History (ex Army officer) and Mr J Howarth, English, Mr Dobson, English and Drama (a first class drama producer), Mr E. Humphreys, French, Mr Harry Lloyd, PE and Games, Mr RJ

Evans, general subjects (the lower forms but with a degree in Classics) and lastly, but by no means least, Mr Perris Roberts, a fine gentleman and great lover of cricket. (Severely wounded and gassed in the First World War). They were fine men and excellent and dedicated teachers who were very proud of Friars School. All have departed this life - except me.

In order to place music on the map, as it were, I decided to form a school choir and I was very pleasantly surprised by the boys' response. In 1953 we were invited to sing at a concert in the old County Theatre, in order to commemorate the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. The boys were very well received by the very large audience, especially the ladies who doted on the fresh faced young boys who looked so vulnerable on the stage but whose behaviour back stage left a great deal to be desired - within reason of course.

My old friend Mr Sam Jones, Head of BBC in North Wales invited us to sing a Welsh song to commemorate St. David's Day; forms one and two were involved, 120 treble voices. It was a very pleasant sound indeed.

In 1959 we were invited to sing in Siloh chapel in Caernarfon to welcome the National Eisteddfod to the town. I shall always remember that night, because we decided to sing the Hallelujah Chorus, which was very much appreciated by the very large audience. On the night we were supported by some members of staff and fathers and we could just about fit onto the 'Sêt Fawr'. James Griffiths, our accompanist sat perilously close to the edge of the stage and if it had not been for the quick thinking of a member of the audience he would have somersaulted backward onto the floor and the Hallelujah would have been sung unaccompanied, if at all.

One of our grown up singers that night was Mr Roberts the school caretaker. He always wore his cap and I asked him once if he wore it to go to bed, but on the night, as the choir assembled in a disciplined manner on the stage, Mr Roberts arrived - with his cap on as usual. I had great difficulty trying to convince him that wearing a cap in the Sêt Fawr would cause a riot among the Presbyterians. However, we compromised. He would take his cap off if he was allowed to sit on a chair at the back of the choir so that no one would see him. The fact that he would be unable to see the conductor was quite irrelevant.

That same fateful night one of the trebles, who lived in Llanfairfechan, somehow or other missed the last bus from Bangor - and spent the night in Bangor Police Station. Today I would have been imprisoned for neglect.

On one occasion I showed the choir my appreciation for their hard work by taking them to 'Bobby Bob's' café in Bangor for tea and cakes - and a good time was had by all.

On another occasion and another year I took them down to the Menai Straits under the Britannia Bridge to fish. We spent a considerable amount of time digging for bait, lug worms and rag worms. At the end of the afternoon we all returned home tired and empty handed. No one had fallen into the water and as some of you may know, when the tide is on the turn, it is very dangerous indeed. It never occurred to me that it might have been dangerous and as far as I know it never occurred to the boys either. The Nanny state today does not allow anyone to dig for bait by the Britannia Bridge and I would certainly not have received permission from any Headmaster to take young boys on such a perilous mission.

In 1955 or 1956, the Bangor Grammar School for Girls was celebrating its 50th anniversary and our new Headmaster, Mr Elis Williams and I were invited to a special concert in the school hall. My old friend Mrs Megan Morris was the Head of Music; she was a fine musician and a good teacher and we listened to an excellent concert with a well rehearsed and disciplined choir. On the way out, Mr Williams reminded me that it would be our turn next to celebrate our fourth centenary.

When the time came the Headmaster decided that there would be two main events, namely, a Grand Concert and a full Evensong Service in the Cathedral. I did not think that the Assembly Hall was the best place for such a concert and I suggested the Pritchard-Jones Hall at the University and he agreed. Again I was fortunate because I knew the Prof of Music at Bangor University. Professor Parry Williams was more than willing to assist and when I asked him if we could use one of his department's pianos he promptly provided us with two.

The choice of music for the two occasions had to be chosen very carefully. Ralph Vaughan Williams had composed a work at the end of the 40s to commemorate the end of the Second World War and which lasted about 25 minutes. It had been composed mainly for three voices, Trebles, Altos and Basses. Tenors, even in those days, were few and far between. It wasn't easy, but I had tremendous faith in the ability and dedication of Friars boys to learn and perform it - and they did. I cannot remember the exact numbers of choristers, but they were quite numerous and we used to practice after lunch and during lesson time. It was hard work; it was tiring work and I can say without any shadow of a doubt that if it had not been for the enthusiasm and co-operation of the boys from Form 1 to Form VI for a year and more I would never have succeeded in achieving a successful conclusion.

I have the concert programme in front of me at the moment and I am including it in this article in order to emphasise the tremendous contribution made by the boys from the beginning of 1956 until July 1957.



**Friars School Celebration Concert at the Pritchard -Jones Hall
University College of North Wales, Bangor at 7 p.m. on
Tuesday, July 9th 1957**

Chairman: Mansel Williams Esq B Sc
Director of Education for Caernarfonshire

Programme

Hen Wlad fy Nhadau			God Save the Queen
1 A Song of Thanksgiving	The School Choir.	R.Vaughan Williams	
2 Recitations (a) "Ode on the Intimations of Immortality" (b) "Tarantella"		Wordsworth Form VI	
3 Solo Gwanwyn Du" "Berwyn" (Huw became a Choral Scholar at Cambridge University)	Huw Lewis	Osbourne Roberts Vaughan Thomas	
4 Folk Songs:	(a) "Im valdt und auf der Heide" (b) "Y Ddau Farch" (c) "Lisa Lan" (d) "El Ole"		German Welsh Trad. Welsh Trad Spanish Trad
5 Recitations:	(a) "Ras" (b) Detholiad o "Nedw"	Bryn Lewis	T.Rowland Hughes E.Tegla Davies
6 Duet on Two Pianos (Mr Dally was a first class pianist and taught English)	Mr C. Dally and M. Griffiths		Cesar Frank
7 Eight hands on Two Pianos I.Ll.Evans and James Griffiths M. Outram and I.F. Edwards	Scherzo		Schubert
8 Madrigal	"Fair and Ugly, False and True"		John Wardle
9 Parti Cyd - Adrodd	"Barti Ddu"		I.D.Hooson
10 Solo: (A remarkably mature tenor voice for a fifth form pupil)	(a) "Pistyll y Llan" (b) "Hiraeth"	Elwyn Jones Trad.piano arr. Grace Davies	Osbourne Roberts
11 Parti Cyd - Adrodd Forms 111a and 111b	Cywydd	"Molawd Mon" (an 18thC ex-pupil)	Goronwy Owen
12 "Sound the Trumpet" "Cydganed Pawb" Forms 1 and 2		Purcell J.Morgan Nicholas	



The Service in the Cathedral was the highlight of the week for me; from the orderly marching to the church and the magnificent singing at the service. Dr Leslie Paul, the Organist and Choirmaster was very impressed and as an ex-pupil of the school he looked forward to each one of these annual Services. He used to visit the school, usually with a colleague from the Royal School of Church Music, on a Friday afternoon when Forms 1 and 2 used to assemble to sing during the last period. In those days, many Friars boys were choristers in the Cathedral Choir.

That Cathedral Service in 1957 will remain with me for the rest of my life; it is a great shame that the annual services were discontinued.

Four years later, in 1961, after another four years, I said farewell to Friars School and I can assure you with very mixed feelings indeed. A rumour had been circulating not only in the school but outside as well that Friars was to become a mixed comprehensive school and although I am a believer in comprehensive education, big is not always beautiful. I knew that if the rumours were verified, the Friars I knew would cease to exist. I could not imagine myself teaching in a school where I was not in close touch with the pupils. I would lose that personal touch that is so essential in a pupil-teacher relationship.

Without any doubt, this was one of the happiest periods of my life, the hardest working and the most productive. Thank you all and I wish you health and happiness in the future.

Cledwyn Jones. (Cled. behind my back!)

Hoffwn ddiolch hefyd yn ddiffuant iawn i'r Cymry Cymraeg hynny a oedd yn Ysgol Friars rhwng 1952-61. Fel y gwyddoch, Cymraeg yw fy iaith gyntaf, a'r diwylliant Cymreig sydd agosaf at fy nghalon. Mwynheais hy fawr iawn sgwrsio a chwi yn ein mamiaith.

Ni chefais gyfle I gydweithio yn hir iawn a Mr Park Jones; ymddeolodd ef ar ddiwedd fy mlwyddyn gyntaf, ond bu'n bennaeth brwdfrydig ar yr Adran Gymraeg am lawer blwyddyn. Ar ei ol ef, daeth Mr Emyr Jones, athro cydwbybodol gyda diddordeb arbennig mewn drama, fel y gwyr rhai ohonoch. Nid anghofiaf byth ei gynhyrchiad o ddrama John Masefield yn yr Eglwys Gadeiriol. "The Coming of Christ" yn Gymraeg "Ei Ddyfod Ef." Cafwyd tri phermoriad proffesiynol iawn gan yr actorion a Chor yr Ysgol. Gorymdeithiodd y Cor o'r drws Gorllewinol i'r Gangell gan ganu, "Hodie, Christus Natus est" gan Benjamin Britten. Gwisgai pob aelod o'r Cor ei wenwisg. Hefyd, cafwyd datganiad o eiriau Y per Ganiedydd, "Iesu, Iesu, 'rwyf Ti'n ddigon" ar 'gerddoriaeth ach, Jesu, Joy of Man's desiring. Dr Paul oedd y cyfeilydd, ac fel y disgwylicch, yn wych.

Cofiaf yn dda hefyd, rai o gyfarfodydd y Gymdeithas Gymraeg, dan arweiniad Mr Pritchard Jones. Hoffwn ddiolch i'r Adran Gymraeg am y cyfraniad sylweddol a wnaethant i'r Cyngerdd a gynhaliwyd yn Neuadd Pritchard-Jones ym 1957

Diolch yn fawr i chwi i gyd am eich cydweithrediad a'ch cymorth ar hyd a blynnyddoedd, a dymunaf bob dymuniad da i bob un ohonoch yn y dyffodol.

Cledwyn Jones (Cled)



The School Today

by Mr Neil Foden, Head Teacher

Ysgol Friars is a co-educational comprehensive school with 1285 pupils aged between 11 and 18. There has been a school bearing the name of Friars in the City of Bangor since 1557. We are proud of our tradition, as we are equally proud of our more recent achievements.

Work started on remodelling the school onto a single site in 1997 and was largely complete by May 1999. The old Friars building on Ffriddoedd Road, which used to house years 7 and 8 was sold by Gwynedd Council to Coleg Menai.



Friars 1899



Friars 1999

We have won several awards recently. We have also just been awarded the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark.

Upon admission to the school the children are placed in groups, with two or three groups, depending on numbers, consisting mainly of fluent Welsh learners. In most year groups only a handful of pupils speak Welsh as their family language at home, but we have large numbers of good Welsh learners. The year group is divided into two bands in a number of subject areas to enable us to deliver the timetable. These groups form Personal and Social Education (PSE) Groups and Registration Groups, each one with a Tutor. The children remain in the same groups for lessons in a number of the subjects offered. The subjects offered are Welsh, English, Mathematics, French, Information Technology, Art, Music, Geography, History, Religious Education, Science, Design Technology, Physical Education and Games; Personal and Social Education (PSE) e.g. Drama, Dance, Health Education and Citizenship.

We do not currently teach any foreign languages other than French and German.

There is a range of support for pupils with additional learning needs. The “Success Maker” programme is time-tabled for three periods as part of a package of new initiatives which have recently been introduced in order to improve literacy e.g. the Fast Forward Group and the Breakfast Club. Parents are consulted before any decision is taken. While the numbers are still relatively small (5%-6% of the school’s population) we have the highest number of pupils in Gwynedd for whom neither English nor Welsh is the language of the home. The same pattern is followed in Year 8 except that children are in sets for a number of subjects.

The pattern is similar in year 9 but at the end of the year pupils choose options for GCSE. The school has one of the widest range of choices in the area with pupils able to choose subjects from four columns. We also offer a range of work-related courses, both at school (vehicle maintenance) or at Coleg Menai, the local further education college, where pupils can follow courses such as construction and hair and beauty therapy.



Motorcyclists

Results are consistently good. We are regularly ahead of national averages at GCSE and ahead of other schools with whom our performance is compared. At A level a 100% pass rate is not uncommon. The school has no immediate plans to introduce the Baccalaureate.

In our 2005 inspection the report described the school as "... a good school in which pupils enjoy their learning experiences. It is a school that has developed a good ethos for the education of all its pupils. Since the last inspection, the school has worked hard in introducing a number of measures designed to raise standards and improve the quality of the learning experience of the pupils. It has also worked hard at creating a suitable climate and environment for successful teaching and learning....Achievement is generally good across the school, with good progress being made by pupils of all abilities. Overall, standards in the sixth form are good, with a significant amount of outstanding work in all subjects observed."

It went on to say: "The vast majority of pupils behave responsibly and demonstrate outstanding

behaviour in and around the school with the emphasis being placed firmly on the classroom as a place in which learning best takes place in an orderly atmosphere."

One of the main reasons parents often cite for choosing the school is the high standard of discipline.

Pupils are encouraged to become involved in the community and its traditions. We ensure that saints' days, harvest festival and Remembrance Day are appropriately marked. Sixth formers undertake community activities, such as the organisation of the senior citizens' Christmas party, and all pupils have to take at least one period of work experience.

We organise a range of trips and activities and recently pupils have been as far afield as Barcelona, Normandy and Belgium and a trip is being organised to Poland as part of the history curriculum. The most ambitious activity was an expedition to Ecuador.



Lord Atkin of Aberdovey - 'one of the wisest judges ever'

**by the Right Reverend Anthony Crockett,
MA BD Bishop of Bangor**

There have been many Friars boys who have achieved prominence in public life and arguably one of most distinguished is Richard James Atkin, later Lord Atkin of Aberdovey. We are fortunate in having an authority on Lord Atkin on our doorstep in Bangor. The Bishop of Bangor, The Right Rev Anthony Crockett, has been kind enough to make available to us the text of the fourth Lord Atkin Lecture he gave at Christ College, Brecon on 10th November, 2006. Here is the full lecture.

I should like to begin by thanking those responsible for this series, for doing me the honour of inviting me to deliver the fourth Lord Atkin Lecture. It is not only a privilege for me, but also a pleasure, since I have developed an enormous affection for Richard James Atkin, or dickie Atkin, as he was when he was pupil at this school from 1878 until he won a scholarship to Madgalen College, Oxford in 1885. In his autobiographical fragment, he says of this school: 'Brecon I can only write of with the glowing heart of a grateful old pupil.' (Lewis, P191) I am glad to note that he had also been a

pupil at Friars School, Bangor (another product of the Elizabethan settlement, like this school) for two years, before he followed his headmaster, the Revd D Lewis Lloyd, here to Christ College. Daniel Lewis Lloyd returned to Bangor in 1890 to become the 70th Bishop.

Since 1997, when I first came across him, I have been an admirer of Lord Atkin. From what I have learned of him, his rather fine brass memorial in Aberdyfi (Aberdovey) Parish Church, in my Diocese, is very apt. It quotes the First Epistle of Peter: 'Finally be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous', and the Epistle of James: 'The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.' I should like to share with you this evening my reasons for my admiration of him. I have chosen as my title: Lord Atkin of Aberdovey; one of the wisest judges ever, not because I am qualified to make that assessment of him, but because that was how he has been described by Professor Dafydd Jenkins, Professor

of the History of Law at the University of Wales, Aberystwyth (Y Llan, March 1998: “un o’r barnwyr doethaf erioed”).

Richard James Atkin was born in Brisbane in 1867, the son of an Irish gentleman and his Welsh wife. His father was a member of the Queensland Legislature, but he died at the age of thirty, and the children were brought up by the mother and the ‘Nain’, their grandmother, at the family home in Aberdyfi. I have already spoken of his schooldays. After leaving Oxford, he was called to the Bar in 1891 at Gray’s Inn. He became a King’s Counsel in 1906, and was appointed a Judge of the King’s Bench Division in 1913. In 1919, he was promoted to the Court of Appeal, and in 1928 was made a Lord of Appeal in Ordinary. He was also chairman of the Legal sub-committee of the Church in Wales during the disestablishment period, and remained a leading layman in the Church in Wales until his death from bronchitis in 1944.

In legal circles, he is remembered especially as the judge who is responsible for the modern law on negligence and duty of care, following the case of *Donoghue v Stephenson* 1932, a case which involved the purchase of a bottle of pop with a snail in it. The case revolved around the nature of the duty owed by the pop manufacturer to the purchaser to ensure that the product was saleable, drinkable even. In his biography of Atkin (p57), Geoffrey Lewis tells of him sitting in his home discussing the parable of the Good Samaritan with his children (see Luke’s Gospel, chapter 10)> As he discussed this parable, which begins with the question: ‘And who is my neighbour?’, he began to form his monumental judgement in the case of *Donoghue v. Stephenson*, that the manufacturer had a duty of care to the purchaser of his product. It may seem trivial, but the consequences of this judgement have been enormous for our society.

He deserves also to be remembered for his courage in his minority dissenting judgement in the case of *Liversidge v Anderson* 1942. This concerned a Mr Jack Perlzweig who had been imprisoned, without knowing the evidence against him, in Brixton in May 1940 under Defence (General) Regulation 18, which said: “If the Secretary of State has reasonable cause to believe any person to be of hostile origin or associations...and that by reason thereof it is necessary to exercise control over him, he may make an order against that person directing that he be detained.” Perlzweig, who had by now changed his name to Robert Liversidge, was released in

January 1942, but he had challenged the actions of the Home Secretary, and the case reached the House of Lords. In his dissenting speech, Lord Atkin attacked his fellow judges for being “more executive-minded than the executive”. He argued for what these days would be called the human rights of Jack Perlzweig, aka Robert Liversidge. He added: “I protest, even if I do it alone, against a strained construction put on words with the effect of giving an uncontrolled power of imprisonment to the minister.” (1942AC206) As a result, Atkin was snubbed by his colleagues and vilified, in much the same way as Americans who criticise the Bush administration’s actions in Guantanamo Bay have been smeared as unpatriotic. I could also refer to our own Government’s attitude to criticism from those wishing to protect the rights of foreign nationals deemed, on evidence kept from them, to be a threat to the country. The parallels are obvious, and Lord Atkin was ahead of his time.

I should have loved to have known Dick Atkin for he seems to have been, as well as a great judge, a person of great insight, with a great sense of our common humanity and, therefore, of our common interest. I came across reference to him first some years ago when I was Secretary of the Board of Ministry of the Church in Wales, concerned with the practice, rights and duties of the clergy. I was charged by the Bench of Bishops of the Church in Wales with researching earlier instructions of the bishops regarding divorce and marriage in church during the lifetime of a former spouse. I spent a week in the summer of 1997 in the National Library. There, I uncovered the hitherto forgotten - forgotten, that is, by the bishops - public row in 1938 between Lord Atkin and the man whom I find to be my predecessor, the 73rd Bishop of Bangor (and Archbishop of Wales), Charles Alfred Howell Green, Doctor of Civil Law and Doctor of Canon Law (both of them *honoris causa*, it should be noted). If you’ll stay with me, I’ll share the bare bones of the story with you, for it is a tale worth telling - a tale, as Atkin clearly saw, of episcopal arrogance and the abuse of power, which in some ways prefigured Atkin’s judgement in the case of *Liversidge v Anderson* in 1942.

Let us look at the history first. In 1914, as every schoolboy knows, the Welsh Church Act disestablished the Church of England in Wales. This means that the Anglican Church in Wales is no longer part of the ‘Establishment’. Amongst other things, its bishops are no longer appointed

by the Queen, and they do not sit in the House of Lords. Those who know their legal history may remember that the implementation of the 1914 Act was postponed for a year or until the end of the hostilities, which began in the month before it received the royal assent.

Section XXIII of the 1914 Act said that “the law relating to marriage in the churches of the Church of England....shall cease to be in force in Wales.” The result was that the disestablished church was to become just another denomination, with no special privileges regarding the law of marriage, and no duty to marry parishioners who are not members. However, the delay in enacting the new law gave the opponents of disestablishment their opportunity. Foremost among them was Charles Green, then Archdeacon of Monmouth, and several lawyers, including Richard Atkin. Their efforts succeeded, to a certain extent at least, in lessening the effects of the 1914 Act, by the passing of the Welsh Church (Temporalities) Act 1919. Section VI of that Act provided that “another in this Act or in the Welsh Church Act 1914 shall affect... the law with respect to marriages in Wales or Monmouthshire and Section XXIII of the Welsh Church Act 1914 is hereby repealed.” Disestablishment finally happened on March 1st 1920, but, to quote the present Professor of Law at Bangor, Thomas Watkin, this section relating to the law of marriage was a true “vestige of establishment.”(Essays in Canon Law, ed N Doe, Cardiff, 1992,p24) And to this day, the law relating to marriage in churches of the Church of England and of the Church in Wales has remained the same, which is what Green and his allies had worked hard to achieve.

Let us fast-forward now to 1938. Archdeacon Green was by now Archbishop Green and Bishop of Bangor. He was described to me earlier this year by a rather refined elderly lady, who was confirmed by him, as *dyn ffiائد*, a loathsome man, for he was legendarily arrogant and overbearing. Like him, I was Curate of Aberdare where he had been both Curate and Vicar until he left to become Archdeacon of Monmouth in 1914. When I was there in the early 1970s, elderly parishioners would tell tales of Mr Green, and his extraordinary vanities. When he became a bishop, he loved being driven around his diocese - and, as Archbishop, around the Province of Wales - in his yellow Rolls Royce, which was regarded as haughtily vulgar even in those days. There is a story of him summoning a cleric to see him. The

poor priest had no car, so came on his bike, all thirteen miles from his Vicarage to the Bishop's Palace. He arrived five minutes late, only to be told by the Bishop's Chaplain that since he had missed his appointment, the Bishop would not see him.

Dick Atkin, a prominent layman in the Church in Wales as he had always been, was now a Lord of Appeal in Ordinary. He never had a Rolls Royce, and would take the bus from his London home to the House of Lords. He was fond of the music hall, especially Marie Lloyd and George Robey, of Bridge and he had a penchant for what his children described as ‘low-brow’ books, like the thrillers of Edgar Allan Poe. Although he was a real member of the House of Lords, he had no need to lord it over others, for he was a genial man with a common touch. One would love to know what he made of Archbishop Green, his one time contemporary at Oxford, with his yellow Rolls Royce, and his reputation for arrogance.

The mid-to late-1930s was a strange time. In 1936, you remember, King Edward VIII abdicated; in the words of the music hall song, “Mrs Simpson pinched our king”. In 1937, the Matrimonial Causes Act was passed, extending the availability of divorce, and, amongst other things, giving clergy the discretion as to whether they married divorced persons or even allowed their churches to be used for such purposes. Lord Atkin, in the House of Lords, ensured that the wording of the Act referred to Wales as well as England.

By January 1938, Archbishop Green had led the Welsh bishops into issuing instructions that clergy must refuse to marry divorcees and refuse to let their churches be used for such marriages. The bishops were also preparing to excommunicate any communicants of the Church in Wales who married after divorce under the provisions of the civil law. This Atkin regarded as an “unlawful intrusion upon the rights of the laity” (see Crockett, *A no'r barnwyr doethaf erioed*”, in the Journal of the Welsh Legal History Society, Vol 1, p108). The Western Mail of the time, and Geoffrey Lewis' biography, record the strength of Atkin's rebuke to the bishops and especially to his diocesan bishop, Archbishop Green, for issuing what Atkin called illegal instructions. Let me explain what this means. All Anglican clergy take an oath of canonical obedience to their diocesan bishop “in all things legal and honest”. Atkin, who knew how he himself, Green and others had worked to

amend the original disestablishment Act of 1914, perceived that Green and his fellow bishops were trying to have the penny and the bun. They had wanted the Church to retain its legal privileges regarding marriage under the law of the land, but were now purporting to act as if it was the bishops who could decide what was legal and what was not. Atkin said that the Church “has no power in this matter, for the discretion is granted solely to clergy as individuals as a convenience to tender consciences” (op cit, p.106). The row was so fierce that Atkin, Sir Henry Mather Jackson and St John Micklethwaite, Chancellor of the Diocese of Monmouth, resigned all their church offices bar one, to show their disapproval of the bishops’ abuse of power, as they saw it. The three of them kept on their membership of the Governing Body of the Church in Wales - the church’s parliament, if you like - in order to propose a motion that the bishops’ instructions regarding the excommunication of remarried divorcees to be considered with a view to their being withdrawn.” (Op cit, p 110) The motion was down for debate on September 28, 1938 - it was going to be a momentous day in the Church in Wales, a battle of the titans from the Diocese of Bangor, Green and Atkin.

But September 28, 1938 was a momentous day in other ways too, for in the morning the British Navy was mobilised; Chamberlain then made his address to the nation about the threat to world peace from “quarrel in a faraway country between people of whom we know nothing.” He then announced he would be going to a four-power conference in Munich the next day. Lord Sankey, another Welsh layman and Law Lord, was recalled from the Governing Body to the House of Lords, and all motions of the Governing Body were withdrawn. Atkin himself seconded the proposal that “in view of the grave international crises, it is highly expedient that the discussions of this body should be curtailed.” He argued for “peace in the Church in Wales, even if there was little prospect of it in Europe”. (op cit, p 111)

The war came along in 1939, Archbishop Green died in May 1944 and Lord Atkin in June of the same year. There the matter ended until 1998, sixty years later, when the Welsh bishops decided that Archbishop Green was wrong and Lord Atkin was right all along, and now they leave the matter of remarriage of divorced persons to the discretion of individual clerics, and people are not excommunicated for contracting such marriages.

Now why do I tell you this Because I think I perceive in Atkin an appreciation that the curtailing of the abuse of power is always in the interests of all. And I suppose that it was his insight, following his conversation with his children on the parable of the Good Samaritan, that led him to declare that we all have a duty to treat others as we would wish to be treated. This is the Golden Rule - “whatever you would that men should do to you, you should do the same to them - this is the law and the prophets.” (St. Matthew’s Gospel, 7, 12) In 1938, it was Atkin’s detestation of Green’s arrogant special pleading that led him to champion the rights of individual clergy and lay people against his perception of the bishops’ abuse of power. Later, in 1942, it was his detestation of the abuse of executive power that led him to dissent in the case of *Liversidge v Anderson*, in a way that prefigured much modern concern about the over-riding importance of human rights.

And, of course, the struggle goes on, not just in church life but also in our national life. You may remember that in 2004 nine Law Lords - only once before since WWI have nine judges heard a case together - sat to hear a case about what my newspaper called one of the most important human rights cases to come before Britain’s highest court. It concerned the human rights of a group of foreign nationals held without charge or trial for almost three years under the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001. On December 16, 2004, eight of the nine Law Lords ruled that the detention of foreign suspects without trial breaches the European Convention on Human Rights. Lord Hoffman even claimed in his judgement that “The real threat to the life of the nation... comes not from terrorism, but from laws such as these” (The Independent, December 17, 2004). As someone who knows what the Old Testament prophets say about our duties towards the sojourner, the stranger in our midst, and as a member of Amnesty International, I know where my convictions lie, but it was for those nine Law Lords to grapple with the essentially moral questions raised by the case, particularly the question that so fascinated Atkin - “And who is my neighbour?” And it is good to see that the spirit of Lord Atkin lives on in the judiciary.

The basis of all morality, from Aristotle’s notion that equals should be treated equally, to Kant’s categorical imperative, and the modern concept of the universalisability of moral prescriptions, is the notion that we should do to others as we would

they should do to us, if the tables were turned. It is, indeed, the Golden Rule, which Jesus applies not just to members of our own tribal group or nationality, but to all who need our help. In our society, it is often to the judges that we look to see that the standards applied in our public life are based on that rule. And in this regard, I can see why Professor Jenkins called Atkin “un o’r barnwyr doethaf erioed” - one of the wisest judges

ever.

“And who is my neighbour?” said the lawyer to Jesus. In thinking about the parable of the Good Samaritan, Atkin replied that it is anyone to whom I have a duty of care, anyone who is being abused by the misuse of power and authority, and that applies not only in the secular world, but even in the world of bishops and archbishops.



Old Dominican Welsh Internationals

By T Glyn Jones (44-52)



T Glyn Jones

We start way back 1868 and it is with soccer, the sport which the majority of Friars boys continued to play after leaving school. In fact between 1868 and 1958 football seems to have been the dominating sport and even though rugby raised its head a few times, it was not until the 1950s that it seriously challenged soccer’s dominance over the years.

Added to the school football programme, on the arrival of Harry Lloyd in 1947, athletics with all its various branches of track and field events, swallowed up the majority of the rest of the school with practically everyone involved in summer alongside cricket.

It is surprising that of all the good cricketers that the school produced over a number of years, only

a few can be traced to have successfully carried on playing and these were playing locally. The majority when they left school were never to be heard of again outside of North Wales.

A look back through numerous Dominicans which our secretary kindly sent to me, I was surprised to find that the number of international sportsmen which Friars produced was less perhaps than I had envisaged. My friend John Cowell collected for me a list of ex Friars boys who played football for Wales and listed the celebrated teams for whom they played in the English League and of course ‘local’ North Wales football clubs. We start in 1868 and end this list in 1947.

I have written the name, date and club of each player which was as much as the library list showed. Should anyone find that they could add to this list, or perhaps even know more about these ex Friars boys who played for their country, then please write to our Secretary so that the picture may perhaps be completed.

William Pierce Owen (1860-1937) had twelve caps whilst playing for Ruthin

Fred Jones had three caps in 1885/6 playing for Bangor

Humphrey Jones (1862-1946) had fourteen caps whilst playing for Bangor and Queen’s Park. He went to Cambridge and became a Classics master in Scotland

Richard Parry Williams (1863-1934) had one cap, against Scotland in 1886 whilst playing for Caernarfon.

Tommy Thomas (1877-1957) had two caps whilst with Bangor in 1898. He partnered the great Billy Meredith on the right flank for Wales.

Percy Hughes (1868-1941) had three caps: was Captain of Bangor F.C. when they won the Welsh Cup in 1889 and he became a Solicitor in London playing his soccer then for London Welsh, Corinthians and finally Everton.

Price Foulkes White (1873-1952) had one cap against Ireland whilst playing for London Welsh. He also played for Spurs and Sheffield United and was the father of David Price White.

Jack (J.V.) Humphries (1920-1954) had one cap against Northern Ireland whilst with Everton in 1947 and for whom he made 53 Division 1 appearances.

Carrying on pre-WWI and up to 1936 are the additional names of:-

Mills Roberts (1888/9) ex Corinthian and Preston N.E. who won the F.A. Cup that year.

Smart Arridge A famous Evertonian who it is said 'delighted the thousands who attended Goodison Park.

There was no indication of the date regarding these two names. I wonder if a member of their families can be of assistance. I feel also that many 'old boys' will know of someone who I have missed, if so, please put the matter right and add your 'International' to the list.

After the first World War there is a distinct lack of names available of any sporting attributes in soccer and for that matter, cricket and rugby. Track and field athletics it would appear had to wait until after WW1 to make a name for themselves.

1946-47 Soccer Team



(Back Row l to r) J L Evans, Iorys Griffiths, Alun Jones, John B Cowell, Gwynfor Lewis, Charles Jones, Tom Bernard (Front Row) A Leslie Jones, Seth Edwards Ken Lewis, Mervyn Price-Roberts, Gordon Lyon, John Merfyn Jones, Edmund Humphreys.

It was interesting and rather moving I must admit to see Mr A R Davies (History) Mr E W Jones (Latin) with the cricket team photo and Mr Edmund Humphreys (French) with the football teams of 1939/40. Young men at that time and destined to leave Friars to go to war. Many of the boys in the teams were also due to join up and possibly miss-out on their sporting ambitions?

Onwards after WW2 Friars had to wait until 1946/47 for a settling down period to end, and for the school to galvanise itself once again to end with probably the best football team that it ever had. Mr Humphreys agreed that it was the best he had seen; Mr Harry Lloyd could remember all their names many years later and Boss 'complimented their performances which I have enjoyed so much.' Mr Humphreys thanked each player and suggested that one look at the season's tally would prove that "surrounding the immaculate Iorys Griffiths at centre half and John Cowell in goal, the defence gave away just five goals whilst the forwards scored fifty seven."

For a home game on a Saturday morning this team would have 150 -200 spectators: if there was no game at Farrar Road then there would be 300 on a Saturday afternoon.

By this time the school had its Under XV team and a 2nd XI and in the period I recall at school and onwards, the standard of play in most grammar schools was much improved.

Internationals? Two only. Maldwyn Evans had his Welsh Amateur International cap and Eifion Wyn Williams a young Under XV star had his Wales Schools cap too. Eifion was another Hiraef boy following in the footsteps of his near neighbours Ken and Gwynfor Lewis (Everton) John Merfyn Jones (Liverpool FC) John Cowell (Pwllheli and Caernarfon), Iroys Griffiths (Bangor City for 22 years). Alas, no international caps for any of these professional and semi-professional players but most certainly a part of Friars best-ever football team.

By the mid 1950's rugby had been introduced again and had replaced football as the 'premier' game. There are really but two names which dominate the rugby scene at this time and after they had left school to College, Club and 'Cardiff Arms Park.' They were Dewi Bebb and Tony Gray. Dewi played thirty four times for Wales. The third time that a North Wales schools youngster played

and became a full international for Wales.

Tony Gray, like Dewi Bebb was a great athlete. A fine footballer, but rugby took the lead for Tony. College in Cardiff, where he was to learn a little more about the game no doubt, and when he was teaching in London he was to be a regular in the London Welsh Club which at that time was one of the top teams in the U.K. He was chosen to play for Wales and on his retirement from the game itself he was in charge as coach/manager of the Wales team with whom they won a Triple Crown.

"How did this lad from Maesgeirchen in Bangor become the coach of the Wales RU side: it seems unbelievable." Tony's own words when he told me of his thoughts as he travelled in his car down from Bangor to South Wales. Tony Gray was the fourth player from a North Wales school to play rugby for Wales.

One other name that comes to mind is John Berwyn Morris. If ever comparison were made and discussed about players of his time his name automatically was mentioned. A brilliant rugby player, a very fine cricketer whilst at school and afterwards with Bangor CC He should have become an international: a statement I suppose one could make about only a great talented player. John Berwyn I guess went his own way.

Onwards next to Cricket and much to my astonishment, unless someone can confirm that I am wrong, only two Friars old boys have played cricket for the WCA. (Wales Cricket Association). The WCA did not play many games during the season. When they did play in North Wales then the opportunity arose for a few players from one or two clubs in the North would be selected and the two international cricketers, ex Friars School and both of Bangor Cricket Club were John Cowell, opening batsman and T G Jones, wicket keeper. John was Captain and a prolific run scorer for Bangor CC Caernarfonshire CC, and the North Wales Cricket Association. He was also a very calm and accurate medium/slow bowler and the best captain that I had the pleasure of playing with for a number of years. He encouraged me to concentrate a little more on my batting and I gradually climbed up the batting order at Bangor CC until I was able to open the batting with John. Thus I was chosen to play for Wales, wicket keeper first and a respectable number six batsman. It was always difficult for North Wales Club players to play for Wales, a pity that arrangements were not

made for an even distribution of fixtures North and South. Alas, it was not to be.

And now to Athletics. In a remarkably short period of time the school fields, in addition to football and cricket had a one hundred grid course running diagonally across the field, a six lane track running in a large circle around the extremities, long jump/high jump pits, javelin, discuss free areas and throwing the cricket ball line, an event which was scrapped immediately by Harry Lloyd when Geoff Illing, a 'left armer' threw the ball from the middle of the football field all the way into the 'quad'! Harry Lloyd, PE master and woodwork teacher, quickly set up a championship between the school Houses - Ffrancon, Arfon, Glyder and Quellyn. The following summer it involved the 'County Sports' Caernarfonshire Schools at the UCNW field in Ffriddoedd and ending finally with the Welsh National Schools Championship.

Athletics developed quickly; cross-country running had Senior, Middle and Junior sections and this meant that about 80% of the school were involved in collecting points for each house. Most of the teachers were also involved and it was just as exciting for them I feel, as for the competitors. Thanks to Harry Lloyd everything was perfectly organised and the games and events went like clockwork every year.

After all the hard work and energy, the athletes of school time found very little outside of the

school sports in North Wales. It had to mean that a prospective athlete had to join a club to continue training etc.

The main attractions as far as athletics in North Wales was concerned was the nearest or best English club and try to make ones mark with such a club.

One athlete who did this and who was to become the only international that I know who had his introductions at Friars is Tony Pumfrey (44-49). Here again we had a talented footballer, a long striding elegant right half whose game improved with each one he played because he covered the ground so quickly and easily. He was a slow left arm bowler who played for school and took a seasonable stock of wickets, but he saved his best for the athletics track and the cross-country courses.

I arranged to meet Tony one evening to discuss his achievements in athletics and his information was not only very interesting but inspiring considering all that he had achieved had been done virtually on his own - all the travelling and hours of training for which he felt he owed a debt of gratitude to all the people who had supported him. He mentioned particularly Harry Lloyd, the Friars School PE master who would do anything to help a budding sportsman; his father who he thanked very sincerely for all that he had been able to do to help through all the exciting years and his club coach at Coventry Godiva, Jim Alford, who was such a great help and gave Tony sound advice.

Here is Tony's sporting story from schooldays and onwards until he retired.

Whilst at Friars	1949	Reserve for Wales ATC soccer
	1949	Two Welsh caps. Wales ATC
Athletics	1948	Represented Wales ATC
	1949	Represented Wales ATC
Cricket	1949	Captain of Wales ATC Team against Devon and Cornwall
After National Service		
Athletics	1953-1959	Represented Wales every year on track, usually 1 mile
	1956	Had serious achilles tendon injury
	1958-1959	Represented Great Britain
	1954-1960	Cross Country. Represented Wales every year except 1956 (injured) and had the honour of being selected captain.

At school Tony confessed that he never wanted to run more than 880 yards on the track! He preferred team games. A record for any sportsman to be proud of and Tony insists that Friars most certainly set him off on his quest.

The 1939-1945 War Years

by John Cowell (42-47)



John Cowell

Friars, like all schools, was badly affected by the war, and within days of the announcement on 3rd September that war had been declared against Germany, school life changed completely. Fearing an immediate and devastating series of air raids, the Government made emergency plans for the evacuation of children from all major cities to areas thought safe from bombing. As Merseyside was an obvious danger zone, North Wales became its main reception area, and during the first week of the war a total of 2,466 evacuees arrived in Bangor from Liverpool. This figure included 450 boys from the Liverpool Collegiate School who were taught by their own staff at Friars on a two-shift system under which the 300 Friars boys attended in the morning and the evacuees in the afternoon. Lessons for the Friars sixth formers were taken by staff in their own homes after lunch.

By May 1940 the bulk of the Collegiate boys had returned to Liverpool as no bombs had fallen on British soil during the edgy seven-month period of the 'phoney war'. Those who remained were taught at the University College and in the Railway Institute, so Friars returned to all-day working during the summer term. The same shift system was also adopted at the County School for Girls, whose building was shared with boys of the Liverpool Institute, much to the delight of both parties, until they too returned home during the third term.

Although Bangor was not considered to be in the immediate danger area, preparations against impending attacks from the air were undertaken

quickly at Friars. A trench was dug around the perimeter of the cricket square and a shallower one for smaller boys in front of the main school building. Air raid warning drills were held regularly during the early months of the war, and when the alert was sounded the boys evacuated the building and dived into the trenches, lying head to toe with their hands clasped over their heads in order to shield them from the blast.

As a precaution against the danger of flying glass, classroom windows were pasted with criss-cross strips of brown paper. It was assumed that poison gas would be used sooner or later. Its devastating effects during the First World War were still fresh in people's minds so gas masks were issued to all civilians during the first week of the war. For months afterwards they were carried everywhere in their buff-coloured cardboard cases, and many a boy was disciplined in school for leaving his mask at home. After the terror of gas subsided in 1940 the habit declined rapidly.

Most members of staff enrolled in part-time Civil Defence work – as ARP wardens or as volunteers in the Royal Observer Corps and the Home Guard. Harold Coulter, for example, having served in the trenches in the Great War, became a Captain in the Home Guard and spent much of his leisure time training the men in his platoon to combat possible landings of enemy paratroops.

Every staff member, whether committed to other Civil Defence duties or not, had to perform fire-watching duties at night on a rota basis. This involved keeping vigil for air raids from the second-floor staff room so that incendiary bombs and minor fires could be quickly extinguished with a hand-operated stirrup pump by someone on the spot. As a subsistence allowance of 2/6d (15p) a night was payable for fire duty, there was no shortage of volunteers among the fifth and sixth formers, but their request was always rejected by Boss. Duties were, however, relaxed in December 1943 when the threat of air raids subsided, and staff were summoned for duty only on the sounding of an alert warning (which never came).

The school bell, situated in the 'quad', was rung by one of the boarders to signify the start and end of both morning and afternoon sessions as well as

the mid-morning break. But from the first days of the war the Government imposed a total ban on all forms of bell-ringing, save as a warning of parachute landings. Instead, a whistle was used, blown on rotation by the member of staff on duty. Then in 1943, with the threat of invasion having receded, bell-ringing resumed in the 'quad'.

One of the most troublesome restrictions imposed during the war was the blackout which plunged the country into darkness. Streets were unlit at night, and all windows had to be completely screened so as not to show the slightest chink of light that might be seen by enemy bombers as they followed the safer western coastline from bases in north west France and passed over Bangor at night en route for Liverpool. No allowance was made for the difficulty or cost of blacking out large buildings so all windows in the east wing of the school, covering Boss's living quarters, the dining room and the boarders' dormitories, were blacked out every night.

In an attempt to ease the inconvenience of the blackout the hours of daylight were extended in the evening by retaining summer time all the year round. This resulted in darker mornings so most of Bangor's primary schools delayed opening until 9.30 during the winter months. Friars, however, continued to start at 9 o'clock, and most boys who walked to school were armed with torches – if they were lucky enough to find batteries which were in scarce supply. Light evenings were lengthened still further in 1941 when double-summer time was introduced which put the clocks forward for a second hour from May to mid-August.

Another hardship that affected everyone was food rationing. It was introduced by gradual stages from January 1940 until it covered everything except bread, fish and vegetables. In order to ensure that children were adequately nourished, schools were encouraged by the Ministry of Food to provide subsidized mid-day meals 'off the ration', and Friars responded by offering a hot lunch for 6d, prepared by the matron and her lady helpers. This was eaten in the dining room under the supervision of Boss who did 'dinner duty' on his own to ensure that nothing was ever left on one's plate, however unpalatable the fare. By the end of 1943, as rationing was extended and shortages became more acute, the mid-day meal was discontinued. Many train boys, along with others unable to return home for lunch, then frequented the British Restaurant in Deiniol Road

where a three-course meal could be had for 10d 'without coupons'. Others brought sandwiches, followed by a 'cacan bwldin' in the tuck shop – a wartime delicacy fondly known as 'shit cake'.

Another measure designed to overcome deficiencies in the wartime diet of children was the introduction of the National Milk Scheme which was later extended to secondary schools. This provided a third of a pint of free milk a day, and one can recall having to wash bottles and tumblers in a huge tin bath under the tap in the 'quad' as punishment for some minor misdemeanour.

One shortage which really affected children was that of sweets and chocolate, rationed in July 1942 to an appallingly meagre two ounces a week, and one was constantly juggling with ways to make the ration go furthest. 'Gob stoppers' were a favourite buy as one could be sucked for half-an-hour or more, while a packet of chewing gum, when available, could last for days. Pocket money was also spent on 'Zubes' and 'Victory V' lozenges, and although somewhat unappetising, were a popular buy as they were unrationed.

Clothes and shoes were rationed in June 1941, but outsize children were given supplementary coupons. Boys who were larger than normal for their age were weighed and measured in school, and were issued with extra coupons on production of a certificate signed by Boss. Despite the austerity of clothes rationing, the traditional school uniform was still compulsorily worn at Friars until 1944 when Vallance Bros, the School outfitter, was unable to supply blazers with a school badge on the breast pocket. Dress rules were then relaxed and sports jackets were allowed, but school ties still had to be worn along with the new 'utility' cap bearing a single thick yellow band which replaced the original one with five concentric rings. And in order to save clothing coupons, boys wore short trousers until they reached the third, or even the fourth form.

Paper was another commodity in short supply, especially after the occupation of Norway in the summer of 1940. James Fielding was in charge of the stationery cupboard, and one clearly remembers that every single inch of space had to be filled in before a replacement exercise book could be issued. Because of the paper crisis the school magazine, *The Dominican*, which started in 1908, ceased publication after the spring issue of 1941, and did not reappear until the summer

of 1947. In a brave attempt to fill the gap a new magazine under the title of *The Forum* made a brief appearance in 1943. This was followed in 1945 by *The Dominican Herald*, edited and crudely printed by members of Form 4A but this, like *The Forum*, was discontinued after only two issues.

Wartime education was interrupted in other ways. Five masters had been called up (Edmund Humphreys, EW Jones, AR Davies, CE Gregory and Jack Lowe) and were replaced by elderly or medically unfit men. One can recall an eccentric Chemistry master by the name of Robinson who had spent most of his teaching career in Rhodesia, and who at best can be remembered for his cruelty, for brewing tea in a beaker over a Bunsen burner and for experiments that always seemed to go wrong, one of which almost blew off the roof of the lab. Trevor Thomas, a South Walian who frothed at the mouth when angry (which was several times each lesson), arrived to teach Latin but did not remain long after Boss's backing for a boy who called Thomas a 'conchie'.

One who returned to Friars after retirement was the Rev WG Roberts ('Frenchie'), an old boy of the school, who had first joined the staff in 1919. He sometimes wore a clerical collar, sometimes not, and had a vicious temper. When roused he would leave his desk and charge at his unfortunate victim like a man demented, raining blows upon head, arms and shoulders. At other times he would grip one's face between thumb and fingers until both cheeks touched and eyes watered. He was once asked what his academic gown was for. He made no reply but merely removed it and wiped the blackboard with it.

Another who was brought out of retirement to teach RI and history was the Rev EJ Lloyd ('Bingo'), a former missionary in Argentina, who lived with 'Frenchie' in a cottage opposite Pendref Chapel. Others included RJ Owen ('Stumpy'), a former pupil, and an Art master by the name of Webster whose face turned crimson when roused (which was often). Nicknamed 'Spider', he had a sadistic streak and seemed to enjoy inflicting pain with the edge of a ruler on those who could neither draw nor paint.

Perhaps the most incapable replacement was George Albert Hewson, a Yorkshireman from Pontefract, who was recruited to teach English. Clearly ill-equipped to deal with boys cunning

enough to exploit the slightest hint of weakness, he was subjected to constant ragging by boys of all ages. His classroom discipline was non-existent and lessons frequently ended in turmoil, and only on the intervention of Peris Roberts and 'Ned' Darke from the adjoining Annexe classrooms would the uproar subside. Hewson's pride and joy was his bicycle which he kept at the rear of the classroom, and one can clearly recall that on a number of occasions it was completely dismantled while his attention was distracted. Hewson's obvious incompetence must have given Boss many sleepless nights. Fortunately, six regular members of staff remained to give the School some stability during the war years – JR Griffith, James Fielding, Park Jones, Harold Coulter, ER Williams and 'Ned' Darke. A seventh master, 'Dickie' Ward, left in 1943.

To the delight of many boys, women teachers made an appearance at various times from September 1941 – Miss Jean Porter (English), Mrs Ann Richards (Art), Mrs Jones-Henry (English) and Mrs Marian Roberts (History) who later became Lady Roberts as the wife of Lord Goronwy Roberts, the former MP for Caernarfon.

Although there was an equipped woodwork room available, there did not appear to be anyone to teach the subject until 'Roberts the porter' was persuaded to take some classes, and from all accounts he was well-liked and respected. In spite of staffing difficulties, Friars boys continued to receive a good education, and results in the Central Welsh Board examinations were as pleasing as ever. There were some strange subject choices, probably influenced by staff shortages: Welsh or French, and at the end of the first year it was Latin or Geography.

Wartime regulations, in addition to other upheavals, posed particular problems for Boss, as indicated in his annual report to the School Governors in 1942:

"Forms descend on me in a kind of snowstorm from the Board of Education, the Ministry of Health, the Director of Education and from all branches of the Services. The liberty to teach is being threatened. By the time a boy has had his gas mask tested, received his milk, had been weighed and measured for his supplementary clothing coupons, there is barely time to collect his War Savings before he goes to catch his bus or train home. I can then settle down to collect the milk

bottles, add up the accounts, fill in innumerable forms, answer correspondence and correct the boys' work".

This, of course was somewhat exaggerated. Gas masks had long ceased to be carried, and one cannot imagine Boss weighing and measuring boys or collecting milk bottles! He did, however, undertake a heavy teaching programme. In addition to taking the upper and lower sixth in Classics, he taught Latin to the fourth and fifth forms during the later years of the war, and in the weeks leading up to the CWB School Certificate examinations Saturday morning classes became compulsory. These were held in the dining room where Roberts the porter would supply him with coffee and a large plate of biscuits to be shared with Scot, his dog, sitting patiently at his feet.

Every day began with morning assembly which followed the usual pattern: prayers for those serving in the Armed Forces and the singing of a popular hymn, accompanied on the piano by Arnold Lewis and others. Boys of other denominations (whom Boss referred to as 'ODs', and when in a less charitable mood, as 'left footers') were then ushered in to hear about the progress of the war and the debt owed to Prime Minister Winston Churchill. Boss was captivated by Churchill, and every November boys were dragooned into subscribing 6d each towards the gift of a large box of trademark cigars for the great man's birthday. One morning a stunned silence descended on the assembly when 'Chuck' Marlow of the upper sixth had the audacity (or folly) to stand up and suggest that the money should be donated to a more deserving war charity. He was told to report to Boss's study, but history does not record what followed.

Much to everyone's delight, a half-day holiday was declared during morning assembly each time an Old Dominican had been decorated for gallantry, but joy turned to sadness whenever it was announced that a former pupil had been taken prisoner, wounded or killed in action.

Boys were repeatedly warned about the procedure to be adopted when discarded shells and hand-grenades were found in areas used by troops on exercise. Despite warning posters on the school notice boards and regular talks by army officers on the danger of playing with live ammunition, a tragic accident occurred in Bangor on 12th March 1945. In an alley-way off Sackville Road

a fourteen-year old Friars boy was examining a two-inch mortar with a screwdriver, one of seven shells found on Aber mountain the previous day, when it exploded, killing himself and two younger boys aged ten and six.

School discipline was harsh by modern standards and the cane was an ever present threat. It was used extensively by Boss even for minor infringements of school rules such as not wearing a Friars cap in public, with flogging sessions often taking place on the stage at the conclusion of morning assembly. School announcements were sometimes made in the 'quad', with Boss standing on the iron staircase clad in gown and mortarboard. Occasional haircut inspections were made there too, and offenders were hastily dispatched to Sam Brunt in Upper Bangor for a 'short back and sides'.

Despite the many sacrifices and hardships endured, especially when family life was disrupted with wives separated from husbands, and children from fathers, the war was an exciting time to be at Friars. There were talks by former pupils serving in the Armed Forces, and by others encouraging boys to help the war effort by collecting waste paper and scrap metal during the National Salvage campaigns, and to invest one's pocket money in National Savings stamps. And there was also the futile misery of being forced to listen to a recital by the College Trio to look forward to, an event which hardly received rapt attention!

For senior boys there was the added thrill of joining the School ATC Squadron, established in 1941. Uniforms were supplied free, and the prospect of marching proudly through the streets of Bangor during many of the wartime parades was an obvious attraction, as was the annual camp on a real airfield. Boys favouring one of the other branches of the Armed Services could also join the Army Cadet Force or the Sea Cadet Corps, both formed in the town in 1943.

Despite a shortage of equipment, football and cricket continued to flourish at Friars. A double period of 'games' featured on the time-table each week as well as one for 'PT' in the gym, the latter taken mostly by students from the Normal College. The School football team's matches were confined to local opposition because travelling any distance was made difficult by petrol rationing and by a sharp reduction in bus services. Home games were refereed by James Fielding as he was reputed to have kept goal for Bolton Wanderers. The

cricket team, however, enjoyed more interesting fixtures – against factory sides and RAF teams from Bodorgan and Valley, as well as against other schools.

For boys with no liking or aptitude for sport, there were other ways of spending their leisure time. Many indulged in their favourite amusement of ‘aircraft recognition’, and the sixpenny Penguin book of Aircraft Silhouettes was one of the best-sellers of the war. Making model aeroplanes from balsa wood kits was another enjoyable pastime which helped to identify British and enemy aircraft. Stamp collecting was also a popular hobby, and almost every other Friars boy carried a booklet of ‘swaps’ in his satchel. And, of course, there was ‘shove ha’penny’. It was played everywhere, especially on the window sills in the corridor leading to the Biology lab, where competitions were arranged with an entry fee and a prize for the eventual champion. For senior boys there was also the County School dance to look forward to, even though very few of them could actually dance.

Friars had been a boarding school ever since its foundation in 1557 but the number of boarders had slowly diminished over the years. In 1939 they numbered 14, and during each of the next three years they averaged 10. At the beginning of Boss’s reign in 1935 annual boarding fees were £55 for full board and £50 for weekly board, plus laundry fees of £4.10s. By the outbreak of war these had been increased by 15 per cent – to £63.5s, £57.10s and £5.3s.6d respectively. In addition, books had to be purchased, tuition fees paid and ration books surrendered.

Sleeping accommodation was provided in two dormitories situated above the dining room, accessed from the top of the main staircase. The boys were cared for by the matron, a Miss Maloney, who was succeeded by a kindly Mrs Rees. Meals were taken in the dining room, accompanied by Boss, and after supper at 6 o’clock the boys were expected to do their homework in the ‘prep room’ near the front stairs. Ifan Bowen, who was a boarder with his brother Ifor, recalls in the Summer 2003 issue of the ODA Newsletter of the silence being broken by Boss yelling “Abyssinians”, a signal for the boys to follow him across the ‘quad’ in pursuit of youths from the nearby Maestryfan Estate who were playing in the ‘plantation’ behind the Annexe.

During the spring and summer evenings, boarders were cajoled into cultivating Boss’s kitchen garden, a large plot behind the bicycle shed, under the direction of Roberts the porter. This was part of the much-publicized propaganda campaign to ‘Dig for Victory’ in an attempt to make Britain as self-sufficient as possible in food. Boarders were occasionally invited to Boss’s living room to listen to the 9 o’clock news on the ‘wireless’ while he tucked into his supper of cheese and biscuits and a glass of beer. But the boys were never offered any! Ifor Bowen recalls hearing the news there of the sinking of HMS Hood and the Prince of Wales in May 1941. Two years later, as rationing became more severe, boarders were no longer accommodated in the school.

Friars was still a fee-paying school during the war years, and the dreaded scholarship examination (later replaced by the 11-plus) was then in force. Those who failed went to the Central School in Deiniol Road, but all was not lost. A limited number of Friars places were available by way of an entrance examination and the payment of tuition fees in full - £8 per annum, payable at £2.13s.4d a term. In 1940 over 45% of the scholarship boys on the roll were exempt from the payment of fees because parental income was below the minimum level of £3 a week. As the war intensified and more fathers were called for military service, the number of free places increased sharply. Under the provisions of the 1944 Education Act, fees were abolished altogether in April 1945. The school-leaving age was then fourteen, and it was not until 1947 that it was raised to fifteen.

The long years of war in Europe were brought to a close with Germany’s unconditional surrender on 7th May 1945, but celebrations were somewhat muted as the war against Japan continued to rage in the Far East for another three months. It was only after the Japanese surrender on 14th August that total peace was achieved. But a high price had been paid. Friars had lost 43 of its bravest old boys. Their names are now recorded for posterity on a plaque in the present school building.

I wish to acknowledge with thanks the contributions made by the following, each of whom sent me some personal reminiscences of life in Friars during the war years: Ifor Bowen, Geoff Coulter, Gil Eastham, Gwyn Jones, Jack Renshaw, Frank Roberts, David Williams and Philip Williams-Jones.

A Brief History of 1557 (Friars) Squadron, Air Training Corps.

By Bill Lovelock (47-52)



ATC Badge

It all began in the dark days of war, in 1941, when our calamitous losses in the air were near their peak and it was realised that it was necessary to train the youth of Britain prior to their entry into the services in order to accelerate their usefulness in actual combat. Hence the formation of the Air Training Corps on 1st February 1941.



Work and Scope of the Air Training Corps

By Alfred Gordon Bennet, FRSA

The North Wales Chronicle of August 22nd 1941.



Bill Lovelock

The title of the present article is culled from the official crest of the recently formed Air Training Corps—the words “Venture Adventure” constituting the motto of the organisation, which appears on a golden scroll underneath the strikingly symbolic falcon emblem.

There can be very few persons in this country who are not familiar with the famous motto of the Royal Air Force itself “Per ardua ad astra” – “Through difficulties to the stars”; and I believe it may not be very long before the motto of the Air Training Corps becomes almost as widely known as that of the older, parental Service, as an adjunct to which the ATC has been created.

As mottos go, those words “Venture Adventure” could not well be bettered, for they sound a clarion call to youth which only the most mentally hard-of-hearing could resist, and at the same time, briefly and happily epitomise the aims and purposes of a country-wide movement which may prove to be of the utmost importance to the war effort, both present and future.

The Air Training Corps came into being on the 1st of February this year, and it has been aptly described as the “younger brother” of the Air Force proper; “the youngest member of the Services family and moulded from the same clay.”

His Majesty the King is the Air Commodore-in-Chief; and the Commandant is Air Commodore J. A. Chamier who is assisted by the Director of Pre-Entry Training Mr J. F. Wolfenden and a staff of RAF Officers. The special function of the Corps has been summed up by Sir Archibald Sinclair, the Secretary of State for Air, as providing “a broad highway” which, again in the words

of Sir Archibald Sinclair, affords “equality of opportunity for all.”

Telford Hughes was a founder member of The Air Training Corps Flight formed in Friars School on the 28th. April 1941 and numbered after the year of the founding of the school “1557 Flight”. He recalls that they were not issued with uniforms until the 19th September 1941, in time for them to be inspected by Air Commodore Chamier, the Air Officer Commanding the Air Training Corps. The visit of the Air Commodore was reported in the North Wales Chronicle of 31st October 1941, as follows: -



Air Training Corps

VISIT OF AIR COMMODORE CHAMIER OLD FRIARS STATUTE RECALLED

On Wednesday a visit was paid to Friars School, Bangor, where the movement has been taken up enthusiastically, in Charge of Flight Commander Owen, one of the masters, the boys smartly went through a number of movements including marching in the school grounds. Air Commodore Chamier had a chat with several of the boys. Noticing that some of them were not in uniform, he ascertained that they were too tall—one was 6ft 2in- for the sizes served out and theirs will come along later. The Air Commodore then saw another detachment showing their alertness in physical exercises.

The whole school mustered in the Hall to hear an address from the Air Commodore close to whom on the platform was an ATC shield bearing the inscription “Venture-Adventure”.

The Headmaster (Mr Ivor Williams), in a few introductory remarks, mentioned that in the Statutes of the Friars, framed in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, appeared the following: - “Every boy must make himself proficient in the use of the bow and arrow.” That was the conception of duty, even in those far off days, which devolved upon every boy of the school. The boys of the school who had now joined the ATC were carrying out a tradition founded in Elizabethan days. He hoped many more boys would join because these were critical days.

Air Commodore Chamier, in his address, stressed the potential value of the ATC Quite apart from the war. When the war was over there was sure

to be great development in civil aviation, and the boys now in the ATC would be presented with great opportunities.

Telford goes on to recollect that training included navigation, signalling, meteorology and aircraft recognition, which included various tests and examinations and he passed Part 1 of the Aircrew Proficiency Certificate.

On the 16th November 1941, 1557 Flight was involved in a “Wings for Victory” Week, and took part in a Parade in Llandudno to encourage the public to help pay collectively for an aircraft, i.e. £5,000 for a Spitfire or £20,000 for a Lancaster Bomber. The following photograph shows the Flight marching past the saluting base. Flying Officer R J Owen the CO is leading, Telford cannot recall the name of the Warrant Officer, but he is on the right of the front file with John Alun Hughes on his right and Sgt. Peter Jory next to him. The Flight Sergeant, Roy Plumber is the tall figure at the rear of the column. (Roy Plumber’s Brother, Benjy Plumber was Flight Sergeant in 1945/46).
Marching in Bangor



Marching in Bangor

Telford continues, the Flight visited RAF Mona, which at that time was an air gunnery school, the air firing was done from a Botha aircraft off the North Coast of Anglesey, the ground observation posts were still on site between Dulas and Moelfre up to a few years ago. The Cadets also fired on the rifle range. It was early days and the RAF did not seem to know what to do with the ATC Cadets. Tea and sandwiches were served to them in the Officers Mess. Telford said that they never made that mistake again.

They also visited RAF Valley which was a fully operational airfield, with a Squadron of Spitfires for day operations and a night fighter squadron of Beaufighters, for operations against the Luftwaffe who at that time were very active over the Irish Sea at night, on their way to Liverpool, Glasgow,

Belfast and other large towns on the western coastal areas.

He went on to say that by now the RAF was becoming better organised at entertaining the ATC. As RAF Valley was fully operational the only aircraft available was a Walrus Amphibian from the Air Sea Rescue Unit. It was basically a Fleet Air Arm aircraft designed for catapulting off warships. The two Sergeants, Roy Plumber and Peter Jory together with Telford were chosen for a flight. They were shown around the aircraft and then told to sit on the metal deck during take off and landing without any safety harness. Peter Jory asked about parachutes and was told that they were unnecessary, as the plane would not fly high enough and as the propeller was behind the cockpit it was impossible to bale out. They took off from the runway and flew out over the sea; they landed and took off three times on the sea. The plane bounced quite a lot as they hung on as best they could each time. Nevertheless the half hour flight was quite an experience. So much so that Telford joined the Royal Navy in 1943 and ended up as a Lieutenant in 1947, after seeing action in North West Europe and two and a half years in the Mediterranean, he resigned to start an engineering course at UCNW.

Geoff Coulter, (son of the Chemistry Master Mr H A Coulter) recalls the period from 1942 to 1945: *"I don't know who started the ATC at Friars, but whoever it was had a sense of the School's history and managed to pull weight at the Air Ministry in getting the cherished number 1557 assigned to our Flight. Being restricted to Friars boys, it gave us great pride to have 'Flight 1557' on our shoulder badges. The ATC was formed during the darkest days of the Second World War, so that by the time we were old enough to join the RAF proper, we would be at least partly trained as airmen.*

Most of us actually joined to skip classes on Friday afternoon, which were instead devoted to drill and Air Training matters. Another reason was to get the uniform, which we wore for school all day each Friday (i.e. for posing). For me personally it was my first pair of long trousers, and I can still remember how scratchy they were.

Some members of staff (the teachers) were appointed as RAFVR officers and others taught what they were good at. I recall a Flying Officer Mitchell helped by Pilot Officer E. (Ned) Darke and P/O E R Williams (Sharkey). Earlier we were led by F/O Owen (Stumpy). He had great charisma

and leadership qualities. I think he must have had a military background because- though short and rotund - he was very smart. One Saturday we went by Tom Jones' coach to Bethesda to take part in a "Wings for Victory" parade. Stumpy urged us to '...march as if you own the place - you bought it for tuppence-halfpenny!' He was a born comedian, and could have us in stitches demonstrating how to wear the forage cap (one inch above the right eyebrow) and how not to.

We were taught simple navigation by J R Griffiths (Deputy Head and Geography teacher) - how to allow for wind speed and direction in calculating course and track (triangles came into it). Great Circles and Rhumb Lines were explained. He taught us the stars so we could get fixes by astro-navigation: the Great Bear with Polaris, Arcturus and Spica; Orion with its belt and red star Betelgeuse, plus Sirius, Castor and Pollux (that always caused a laugh); and the Square of Pegasus.

E R Williams was an expert in morse code. Using a key and buzzer he taught us the rhythms - di di di dah dit (VE), di dah di dah dit (AR) etc. To those who couldn't do it he would say "Na-En! Boy, have you no music in your veins?" Sharkey also taught us Aircraft Recognition, though here he was not so far ahead of us. We became dab hands at recognising British, German and American planes from cards bearing their silhouettes.

We learned theory of flight - aerofoils, control surfaces, joystick etc., and the internal combustion engine. (By now the RAF had installed a radial engine in the school entrance hall). At that time most planes had propellers, as the jet engine had not yet become common.

All this training led up to proficiency tests, and success meant the award of a 4-bladed propeller badge, worn on the lower sleeve. In addition, the more senior members became non-commissioned officers - Flight Sergeant, Sergeant and Corporal. From time to time there would be a big inspection by a high-ranking RAF officer, who would stop in front of a few unfortunates and ask '...and how long have you been in the Corps, my boy?' The most famous visitor was W. W. Wakefield, who I think was top man in the ATC, and may have started it.

Every summer we spent a whole week at an RAF aerodrome for Camp (or Ciamp as Stumpy

called it). Here the great hope was to get a flight. My first Camp 1943 was at Llanbedr (near Harlech) and the weather was so bad that very little flying took place. The CO must have sensed our disappointment because on our last day he summoned up a De Havilland Dominie (military version of the classic twin-engine Rapide biplane). Despite poor visibility, they gave us all a ten-minute flip, seven at a time: what a thrill!

The next summer was much sunnier, and we had a fine week at Towyn, a grass aerodrome on the coast just north of Aberdovey. Flying this time was in 2-seater Tiger Moths, in open cockpits so we had to wear leather-flying helmets like Biggles. We each had a chance to hold the joy-stick and put our feet on the rudder pedals as the Tigers were dual-control trainers, cruising speed 60 mph and stalling speed 45 mph. After my lesson the pilot wrote in my logbook 'Does well for a beginner'. I kept that logbook for years!

My last Camp was a bit disappointing because it took place at Hawarden, near Chester. The war in Europe had ended in May with VE - Day, and in the middle of our Camp we had VJ- Day - Victory over Japan. Everything came to a standstill - certainly no one got a flight.

However by now we had become quite familiar with aerodromes and flying because there had been frequent Saturday visits to local bases such as Mona (near Gwalchmai) and Llandwrog (near Dinas Dinlle). Mona was a navigation training base, using Avro Ansons. These sometimes had a spare seat, and if we were lucky we would be fitted with parachute and harness and taken on a training mission. I had several flights to Northern Ireland. Once returning over the Irish Sea there was a flash and loud bang inside the plane and the radio stopped working. On landing, the ground crew pointed out that our trailing aerial (normally perhaps 50 yards of thick steel cable) had largely disappeared. We must have been struck by lightning, which went down the trailing aerial and fused it! Looking back these flights must have been a bit risky because the Ansons were unarmed and enemy planes could have seen us. Our trusting parents had signed a 'blood chit' accepting any blame."

Late in 1943 No. 3 Air Gunnery School had left RAF Mona and been replaced by No. 8 (Observers) Advanced Flying Unit. This was of immense benefit to 1557 Flight, this new RAF

school taught Navigation, radio operation, air gunnery and bomb dropping. They flew Avro Ansons, and there were plenty of opportunities for the Cadets to benefit. From sitting in on lessons, firing the four Browning machine guns fitted in a Frazer-Nash gun turret at targets in the sea off Lligwy Bay and more important to get flying experience. So Mona became the weekend choice of the Cadets and they went there as often as they could.

However, flying could at times, like the Corps motto, be quite adventurous, as mentioned by Geoff Coulter. On another occasion Cpl. Fred Coles and Cdt. Merfyn Price-Roberts were flying in an Avro Anson from Mona. They were on a night navigation detail over the Irish Sea. Near the Isle of Man, the aircraft's door was accidentally jettisoned and damaged the tail plane and rudder. The pilot fortunately managed to land at RAF Jurby, on the Isle of Man. Fred and Merfyn returned to Mona in time for lunch the next day, in the Jurby Station Commanders Airspeed Oxford.

Phil Williams-Jones also remembers. "I was in Avro Anson No 44, on a navigation detail on the night of the 3rd/4th March 1945. Our first leg was Mona to Grassholm Island off the tip of Pembrokeshire, then across country to Oxford, as we approached Oxford I noticed searchlights and anti aircraft fire to the south over the London area. We later learned that this was the last Luftwaffe raid on London of the war. However we turned North West on the third leg of our flight, heading for Rhyl. Just before we arrived over Rhyl the port engine caught fire, it was quickly extinguished but would not restart. The Pilot, Flt Lt A Vannah, succeeded in trimming the aircraft and regaining some height, he then headed out to sea until he picked up the signal from the Standard Beam Approach beacon at Mona, he turned on this heading and in a long steady glide returned us safely to the airfield. To a fourteen-year-old Cadet it was most exciting. We had a large breakfast of bacon, eggs and beans. Later that morning I was in another Anson which was practising Standard Beam Approaches over Anglesey, for nearly two hours."

It wasn't all about flying however; Phil also remembers that "on 4th November 1944, our Flt Sgt Benjy Plumber decreed that five of us, all train boys, would do a navigation exercise in the hills South of Aber. The weather was bad that day and due to the thick cloud, which covered the

hills, navigation was difficult, we had to use a map and compass the whole way, we were using a large heavy astro-compass, the box of which also had to be carried. We were not really equipped for the horrendous weather and I shudder to think, now, what could have happened. We had lunch on Carnedd Llewellyn and then returned to Penmaenmawr. The five were, in addition to Benjy, Cpl. Fred Coles, Cdts Dennis Harbird, John Reynolds and myself. The last three still walk the hills as often as possible with the Old Dominican Rucksack Club.

I left school in April 1947 to do National Service as a Royal Marine Commando and found that the training I had in the ATC stood me in good stead on very many occasions. But that is another story”.



By a strange coincidence four of the contributors to this article happened to be standing together in the Flight Photograph in the summer of 1944. From the left Cpl. Geoff Coulter, Cdts. P. Williams-Jones, D. H. Williams & M. Price-Roberts

David H. Williams, who was Flight Sergeant in 1947, recalls: “I forget when I joined the ATC. I believe the qualifying age was fourteen and if I’m right then I must have been in the third form. The year must have been 1942. I’m not sure whom the flight sergeant was when I joined but I’m sure that at one time it was a boy named Plummer. An English teacher named C. R. R. Mitchell was the CO, who was so slim that when in uniform his chest went in (concave) rather than the other way. He was a decent teacher however getting most of 5a through their school cert and/or matric. Mr Edward Darke was 2i/c and took over as CO shortly afterwards. Mr James Fielding taught us about stars and their constellations, Mr J R Griffiths about clouds and their portents and Mr E R Williams (Sharkey) the Morse Code. I became very good at sending morse but hopeless at receiving it but fortunately airfield ‘pundits’ flashed their two-letter codes at a comfortable rate of wpm to comfort learner pilots flying solo night cross-country sorties in Tiger Moths. NCOs of the RAF Regiment came to the school to drill us in marching, turning, dressing and saluting. A

great benefit for boys with some athletic ability was the regional ATC games because nothing was organised at school. I competed in the long jump and high jump at Abergele, I think, and qualified to compete later that year in Newport where I was completely outclassed by boys from south Wales. Socially too the ATC was very good. I remember a Christmas party held in Humphries’s café in Upper Bangor. Plummer and another boy named Coles entertained us by singing ‘The two Gendarmes’ with actions! Plummer was a good distance runner.

Possibly the most memorable event for the Flight was when King George VI and Queen Elizabeth visited Bangor. It’s only my bolshie mind that suggests that Councillor Ned Darke thought he had a better chance of meeting their Majesties as a member of the City Council than in front of his ATC Flight but as the photo proves. I was the lucky one.

I remember also an inspection by an air marshal. I happened to be in the front rank of the flight drawn up outside the assembly hall. The AM stopped in front of me and stated rather than asked ‘You want to be a pilot!’ ‘Yessir’ I replied. ‘How old are you?’ ‘I’m fourteen, Sir’ I stuttered and then coming partly to my senses, I continued, ‘I mean fifteen, Sir. No! No! I mean sixteen, Sir’. I imagined the air marshal thinking, ‘Oh yes! He’ll make a fine pilot, I don’t think!’ Speaking personally it was purely by chance that I read a notice outside the flight office inviting cadets to apply for training at the Royal Air Force College, Cranwell, which prompted my career in the RAF. I have much to thank the ATC for”.

David joined the RAF shortly after this event and qualified as a pilot on Coastal Command where he flew Maritime reconnaissance Shackleton aircraft, later becoming ADC to Air Vice Marshal Spencer and subsequently Air Vice Marshal Traill”.

David became popularly known as Dai and had a varied and interesting RAF career before retiring to take up a teaching appointment in Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk, where he now lives.



Royal Visit



Members of 1557 Flight stand smartly to attention while H.M. the Queen speaks to Flt. Sgt. David H. Williams.

Also in the picture from left to right are John Cowell, Arthur Parry, Selwyn Evans, Vivian Lewis (rear rank) & Wynn Lunt.

As the need for Air Crew was not now so urgent the type of training changed slightly, and sport, athletics, and shooting came more to the fore. 1948 saw the first Area competition for the Wales and North West England Group, which was held at Cosford. 1557 Flight produced the Welsh PT Team and gained third place. Welsh Wing was also represented by members of the Flight in Navigation, Aircraft Recognition, Signals and Musketry. The Flight also did well in 63 Group Full bore rifle competition in Sealand, winning the "Henson" trophy, and came second in the .22 competition.

In 1950 the Flight was upgraded to Squadron and became 1557 (Friars) Squadron ATC, they continued to excel at shooting and in 1950 they were represented at Bisley. Throughout the 50's the Squadron continued to do well at sports and military training. Wing Commander Hodgeson, CO of Welsh Wing stated, "1557 Squadron again proves itself to be one of the most reliable and progressive in the Wing". Annual Camps were well attended and gliding and powered flying continued. In 1951 the Squadron had acquired a Link Trainer, which proved very popular with the Cadets.

From reports in the Dominican, 1557 Squadron continues in like manor forward through the 60's and 70's.

Nothing much really changes, as the following

notes by Robert Lovelock on the Squadron between 1978/79 shows. Robert entitled his reminiscences "Happy Days"

"My first memories are about learning to march. We had one member of the squadron that could not manage this without "Paddy" marching. On one camp this caused the whole squadron to be awakened by the drill sergeant for extra tuition on the parade ground at 6am. We marched for an hour up and down the ground until he was satisfied that our squadron could march correctly.

I recall a Corporal Evans; a slight lad with a particularly high-pitched voice taking marching drills on our meeting night. This was always quite amusing to me.

All the marching practice was in readiness for the annual meeting of all the local squadrons for a Commanding Officers inspection. All the boys were dressed in their Number 1 Tunics. At one of these events on a particularly hot day, all 10 squadrons had been called to attention in readiness for the CO's arrival and inspection. He was late in arriving for whatever reason, we never found out, and suddenly boys began to faint from various squadrons! We were not allowed to move; the corporals and sergeants appeared in pairs and removed the lads, an arm each, whilst we shuffled ranks to fill the gaps. The CO eventually passed the parade and we were able to dismiss and remove our Number 1's

The number 1's were known as 'Hairy Marys', a particularly itchy material. We were taught by older boys to turn them inside out and iron them with the temperature set to its highest. This made the inside shiny and smooth.

Several of the older boys brought in model aircraft with fuel powered motors, Cadet Warrant Officer Simon Duckworth or Duckers? was particularly good at these as I recall. Cadet Warrant Officer David Sunderland was a particularly good friend of mine who went on to join the RAF as a pilot and was sadly killed whilst carrying out low level manoeuvres, he used to give me a lift home in his Austin Cambridge

We also used to study for badges. The most memorable of these for me was the cloud recognition (nimbo stratus and cumulo nimbus) and aircraft silhouette recognition badges. The good thing I recall was that I was always able

to know when it was going to rain. Our CO was affectionately known as "Snowy" due to his shock of white hair. Flight Lieutenant Williams was his correct name I believe.

As part of our development we were taken onto RAF camps. At your first camp you were involved in the initiation ceremony by the older boys. This meant having to run the gauntlet whilst being hit with pillows and rolled up blankets. You started on your side of the billet ran across the landing and through the opposite billet to the other end of the building running past your friends and boys from the other squadron. If you fell to the floor you were jumped on and given dead legs and arms; the threat of worse things like boot polish and toothpaste on your privates if you stopped were enough to keep you moving.

At the camp for my initiation we were housed on the first floor of a double-floored billet. What we did not realize was that downstairs were some RAF recruits trying to get some rest. Because we had woke them they became involved in the initiation process and suggested a cold shower for me and the other boy on our first camp. We were stripped to our shorts and thrown in cold running showers. Being resourceful I turned my showerhead up so it pointed over the curtain and soaked the RAF boys. At this they became angry and started running a freezing cold bath in which they continued to dunk me. At some point during the process I started to suffer from mild hypothermia. Normality quickly resumed when one of the lookouts shouted a warning that the CO was on his way. Everyone returned to their bunks and we all tried to act as if nothing had happened. I recovered and went back to bed.

We were introduced to night exercise, where we were mini-bussed as groups onto a deserted airfield and had to make our way to the base camp. Some of the boys from other squadrons defended the camp and we attacked it. You had a piece of Sellotape around your wrist to represent your life. If caught you had a struggle with your captors to defend your "life" and were unceremoniously beaten and frog marched back to the camp. I recall hiding in a shallow hollow and being stamped on as a group of enemy defenders ran past, it was pitch black and I lay still without making a noise. When they had passed I carefully stood up and continued on my way only to be jumped on from a tree by defenders I had not noticed hiding there.

At camp we got to fire all sorts of weapons on the firing range. I remember getting my RAF marksman twice over with a 303 rifle. The other weapons I remember using are the SLR rifle, Bren Gun, SMG (sub machine gun) and the Browning 9mm pistol. The same corporal Evans I recalled earlier had a memorable incident with one of these pistols. You will recall his slight build. The recoil on the Browning caused his arms to fly up in the air over his head! The range Sergeant had a fit as we all dived for cover! Another amusing incident was when one of the boys complained that the recoil of the 303 was hurting his shoulder. "Take your beret off son and put it under your jumper behind the stock" barked the range sergeant. The lad duly complied and later that afternoon showed us his shoulder. He had managed to get the badge securing pins facing his skin and had left several deep impressions.

Whilst attending RAF Conningsby I recall that at that time we had little sleep due to the continual take off and landings of the Phantoms, every 40 minutes, throughout the night doing night practice manoeuvres. Lights out at camps was 11pm. On one RAF station they had a particularly nice NAAFI club with vending machines. I recall sneaking out of the billet by using the side window and dodging the dog guard patrols to get some sweets for a night time feast.

The good thing about going to camp or travelling with the squadron was the singsong on the coach or train. The songs we learnt were rude and everyone took part adding a verse as necessary. The songs I recall are: - "The hairs on my dicky dido", "The Quarter Masters stores" and the ship song about "The figurehead was a nude in bed" as well as the Welsh cry of "Oggy, Oggy, Oggy".

We also attended local events at RAF Valley. At one of these shows I was detailed to demonstrate the 30mm Aden Cannon used in aircraft. I recall being totally worn out as I manually shifted the dummy round through the weapon over and over again for the junior audience and ex-servicemen.

Finally, we also got to go flying. I was allowed to take control of a "Bulldog" and a "Chipmunk" and got several hours flying time in a glider.

The ATC was a very enjoyable experience which I recall with fondness, I still shine my shoes with spit and polish and a cloth".

One of the biggest changes the older ex Cadet will notice today, apart from the uniform, is that the Squadron is now "mixed"; there are Girl Cadets as well as Boys.

Bangor teacher breaks new ground in ATC

Flying high among masculine company

A Bangor teacher has become the first woman in North Wales to be commissioned as an officer in the RAF Air Training Corps as part of a trial scheme to allow women to join the cadet force for the first time.

Twenty-five year old Miss Morfudd Williams, who teaches maths at Ysgol Friars in Bangor, became Pilot Officer Williams WRAF VR (T) in May this year.

And she became the first woman to be fully commissioned in North Wales in July after taking a special course at RAF Newton in Nottingham.

Miss Williams, a former pupil at Friars, became involved in the 1557 (Friars) Squadron ATC when she returned

to the school as a teacher two and a half years ago.

"I had done some youth work in a club in Deiniolen before and was interested in the cadet corps" she explained.

"When I was at the school myself, the cadet corps was very much a male thing — only men were allowed into the ATC hut and there was an air of mystery about it. I wanted to find out what was going on."

She soon broke down the mystique by becoming a civilian instructor with the 1557 Squadron, a cadet force that was formed at the school during the Second World War and numbered after the founding year of the first Friars school in Bangor.

Now, two years later, there are 12 girls in the squadron which has a total of 50 cadets.

The girls have only been allowed in as part of a trial scheme by the RAF to allow females in to the Air Training Corps for the first time.



The following year brought another important milestone in the history of the Squadron. In the early days the Flight had its offices and storerooms in the old dressing rooms on either side of the stage in the Assembly Hall, with meetings in the Assembly Hall or any available Class Room. In the 50's an old wooden hut was provided in the School grounds as Squadron HQ, However, on the 11th. October 1983, Flt Lt David Sunderland RAF opened a new HQ in Upper Friars; an old boy of the Squadron and one time Flt Sgt unveiled a plaque to commemorate the event. Shortly after this David was presented with his wings at RAF Valley. Later David was unfortunately killed carrying out his duties as a pilot.



Flt Lt Sunderland

The squadron now goes from strength to strength, like the RAF, it has changed much over the past sixty-six years, but the spirit of the Cadets remains the same and no doubt will continue to do so into the future.

Created initially as a 1557 'Flight' at its inception on 28th April 1941, then becoming known as '1557 Squadron' in 1950. The Squadron has thrived continuously for the past 66 years.

The next most significant date in its history, many would agree, was in 1982, when 24 Year old Miss Morfudd Williams became the first woman in North Wales to be commissioned as part of a successful trial scheme to allow women to join the cadets first for the first time.

The Squadron has continued to go from strength to strength since then, and has had been ably led up to the present time by both Flt Lt Pat Roberts and in succession by her daughter Flt Lt Nina (now Nina Thomas), who is presently the CO. Both Pat and Nina work as closely together with the Squadron as ever.

The many ongoing achievements of the Squadron are a testament to the success of the decision in 1982 to permit women to join the cadet force.

Another milestone passed at the opening of the new ATC Headquarters at Upper Friars on 11th October 1983. This well appointed facility has been a modernising influence and has proved a huge incentive for the cadets to achieve.

**1557 Friars Squadron ATC
Commanding Officers 1941 - 2007**

Flt Lt J R. Owen	1941 - 1942
Flt Lt Mitchell	1942 - 1944
Acting CO cadet	
Flt Sgt W T Owen	1944 (Temporary)
Flt Lt Edward Darke	1944 - 1955
Flt Lt Jack Lowe	1955 - 1972
Acting CO Cadet	
Flt Sgt Brian Coomber	1972 - 1973 (Temporary)
P/O Steve Dunkerley	1973 - 1974
Flt Lt Roy Thomas	1974 - 1984
Flt Lt Gordon Owen	1984 - 1991
Flt Lt G Rutter	1991
Flt Lt H Davidson	1991 - 1992
Flt Lt Guy Brook	1992 - 1994
Flt Lt G Weild	1995 - 1996
Flt Lt G C Owen	1996 - 1998
Flt Lt Pat Roberts	1998 - 2006
Flt Lt Nina Thomas	2006 -

**1557 Friars ATC Cadets
who later qualified as RAF Pilots**

- David H Williams
- David Ives
- Gordon Lyon
- A H Evans
- Michael Doherty
- Andrew Hinchcliffe
- David Sunderland
- Andrew Lewis

From the above, Gordon Lyon, Andrew Hinchcliffe and David Sunderland were unfortunately killed carrying out their duties as pilots.

Other ex-Friars boys' known to have qualified as

pilots are A B Jones and B David Lowe

Bill Lovelock has compiled a very full history of the Squadron, of which the foregoing article forms only part. This is available on a CD and contains this full history including many extracts from old Dominicans, photographs, reminiscences and

obituaries, which will be of particular interest to many old 1557 Cadets. Please contact Bill if you would like a copy. The Squadron today meets every Tuesday and Friday evening at the school and full details can be obtained from the current CO, Nina Thomas, on “ninathomas3@btinternet.com”.



THE SCHOOL HOUSES

by Tom Bernard (41-49)



Tom as captain of the first football XI 1948-49



Tom in 2007

While I was at Friars during the years of World War II , I had no awareness of the fact that historically the school body had been divided into four “Houses”. It wasn’t until the war was over and the masters had returned from their various armed services that the tradition was reactivated. Trying to delve back into the history of Houses has not been easy, and I’ve failed to discover many research sources that could shed light on the topic. I did, however, come across three interesting accounts as to how the new boys were selected to join one of the four traditional Houses. Regrettably, I have been unable to locate or identify the names of these three authors. As my own interpretation or paraphrasing of their remarks would, I feel, not do justice to their eloquent descriptions of what took place, I am herewith quoting them verbatim: “My first recollection of 1916 at Friars is the ceremony known as House Picking. The venue of this Smithfield or Hiring Fair, or what you will, was Top Schools .There the new boys were assembled, and the early Christian Martyrs were no more apprehensive in making their first, and last, salute to Caesar than were we in the presence of the brawny House Captains who appraised our physical proportions and potential value to their respective Houses. Outside, along the iron staircase were the “lions”, armed with books, bags, and boots. As each innocent was released, he ran the gauntlet of the yelling mob and ended up with a thorough ducking under the quadrangle tap. This rough welcome instilled in the newcomer a sense of pride in his survival, and a firm ambition to implant replicas of his own honourable bruises upon the lambs of the following year .”

The foregoing is corroborated by an anonymous pupil who arrived at Friars in 1919.

“One day during the first few weeks the new boys were assembled in “Top Schools”, where the

House Captains of Arvon, Ffrancon, Glyder and Quellyn picked them into houses. As each boy was ascertained he left by way of the iron steps at the back of the hall, trying to remember which captain had picked him, what house he was in and thinking of the fame he was going to bring to that house. The reception committee awaited him, lining the steps and overflowing into the quadrangle. Before he could voice his thanks at their interest in him he was piloted down the steps and beyond by a series of buffets and blows reinforced by heavy books and boots which these older boys had thoughtfully provided for themselves. Such was "house-picking". A third rather succinct historical commentary from 1931 informs us that, "One memory is of the house-selection, when boys were selected to a process reminiscent of an eastern slave market".

No such events took place during my time at Friars (41- 49), but when the powers that be decided that we should again have Houses, to the best of my recollection we were all assigned by a staff committee on a random basis to one of the four Houses. As previously, these were Arvon (later Arfon), Ffrancon, Glyder and Quellyn (later Cwellyn). Typically there were four House Masters assigned to each House as well as designated House Captains, Vice-Captains and House Secretaries who were usually sixth formers. I had not known that traditionally each House had its own distinctive colours; these were: Arvon - red and white; Ffrancon - royal blue and white; Glyder - black and white; and Quellyn - black and red. The only House that seems to have had a motto was Glyder which sought inspiration in: "'Tis better to have played and lost, Than never to have played at all". It is worthy of note that Quellyn (in 1955) instituted weekly "House Prayers" with the goal of fostering House spirit and enhancing the general atmosphere of friendship and understanding. Up Ffriddoedd Road at the Girls' Grammar School in those days they also had Houses - five in fact: Dewi, Glyndwr, Llewellyn, Powys and Tryfan. Reliable sources inform me that at the present time Ysgol Friars has four Houses: Arfon, Deiniol, Menai and Penrhyn. Throughout the academic year it was typical that house members would be keenly involved in Inter-House rivalries aimed at achieving "points" that could lead to winning the House Championship Shield. Over the years these activities have included football, rugby, cricket, swimming, cross-country and athletics; also at times chess, Eisteddfodau and debating. During my time competition was based

on a pure meritocracy with no age consideration. The victors were the fastest, strongest and fittest - which meant that they were usually the biggest and oldest. In later years I notice that a fairer and more participatory system was introduced that established junior, middle and senior sections.

It became standard practice for the House Secretaries to provide a House Report for each issue of *The Dominican*, in which they would congratulate their winners, commiserate with their losers, urge greater enthusiasm and effort towards future victories, and thank the various House Masters for their interest, support and encouragement.

If readers will bear with me, let me indulge in two vivid reminiscences regarding Inter-House competitions. Personally, I ended up in Quellyn where later on as a sixth-former I became House Captain. The major event that I remember was the annual Sports Day. Pupils assembled hoping to excel or at least to enthusiastically cheer on their fellow House members. This was a special occasion for proud parents, family members and friends to show up to vociferously applaud their favourites. The occasion had something of a carnival atmosphere. As well as the usual events associated with track and field, in my day there was speed walking, shot put, discus, javelin and the cricketball throw - all of which were inclined to put both competitors and spectators at considerable risk !

I have to applaud the spirit of P B Newing's call to arms as stated in *The Dominican* (Summer 1954), that "The last inter-house competition for this school year will be swimming . We hope that as many Arfon boys as possible who have not yet learnt to swim will do so before the swimming sports as there is a point waiting for every boy who can swim five yards, and we also hope that every boy who can swim 25 yards will try to do something ".

An indelible memory I have is of those swimming competitions in the chilly waters of Siliwen Baths. I can't help smiling as I remember that participants were actually in three groups: accomplished swimmers, poor swimmers and non-swimmers! The latter group, imbued with House enthusiasm were volunteers who had courageously 'volunteered' to enter the diving competitions - perhaps having seen too many Tarzan films. In consequence it behoved us to have

a "Rescue Squad" on hand for these brave souls. Though by no means an expert swimmer I was recruited as a member of this squad. To be honest our 'rescue' skills were basic to the point of being rudimentary, and often consisted of grabbing the unfortunate individual by the hair and dragging him to the concrete wall of the baths where he could get a handhold. No doubt in the present era there would be severe legal prohibitions on such procedures. In concluding this article I think it would be appropriate to paraphrase remarks from two former pupils which together epitomise the true Friars spirit:

"The boys have represented their Houses in the finest tradition of Friars sportsmanship - and have given of their utmost". (MV Doherty, Glyder Captain, The Dominican 1954).

And finally:"We appeal to our members, in every sphere of House life, to do their very best. Then, whether we win or lose, we can rest satisfied". (S Critchley, Secretary of Quellyn House, The Dominican 1935). (*The three anonymous authors are quoted from The Dominican - Fourth Centenary Number, 1957).



The 2007 Celebrations

And so we come to week commencing 16 April 2007 and our 450th Anniversary celebrations. We were blessed with excellent weather throughout the week which made such a difference to everyone's enjoyment - in fact it had been the finest spring weather for many decades. Five 'events' had been laid on : a walk in Snowdonia, a golf day, a Memorial Service in the Cathedral, a tour of the old school building preceding the AGM and, to

complete the week, a celebratory dinner.

The 1557 Walk On Wednesday 18 April 26 members and friends gathered at the Forestry Commission car park at Llyn Crafnant high above Trefriw in the Conway Valley. Our intrepid and dedicated leader, Phil Williams-Jones, had identified a minor peak (Crimpiu) which was 1557 ft high to which it was felt most appropriate for us to make a pilgrimage. The group made its



The group on the Summit of 'Friars Crag'

leisurely way along the north shore of the lake and then upward to the peak - in an ever lengthening chain! Once at the top wonderful views were revealed towards the Snowdon group to the south west, Tryfan dominant in the west, Conway Bay and the great Orme in the distant north and the

vast open expanses towards the Denbigh Moors to the east.

A leisurely lunch was enjoyed at the summit during which Crimpiu was renamed 'Friars Crag'. The afternoon was spent descending in bright sunshine to Llyn Crafnant.



The view to Nant Ffrancon with Tryfan on the left



The view towards the Snowdon Group

A Golf match on Thursday 19 April saw 12 ODA members keenly contesting a 'tournament' at the rather challenging St Deiniol Golf Club, Bangor - again in fine weather. The contestants had travelled

from as far afield as London to take part and for the record the winners were brothers Gareth and Trefor Griffiths. At the 19th hole everyone enjoyed a lunch and refreshments and were joined by other members who had come in support.



The Golfers



Bill Cunningham



Eifion Rees Jones

The Cathedral Service

Friday 20 April 2007 commencing 11.00am.



The Very Rev Alun Hawkins

The Service was taken by the Dean of Bangor, the Very Rev Alun Hawkins, and was attended by over 200 members and friends.

In 1957 the address was given by Carl Witton-Davies but regrettably we do not have the text to look at. He would undoubtedly have been a hard act to follow but we were again blessed with a virtuoso performance by Old Dominican the Rev Michael Outram, Vicar of Penmaenmawr. His address ranged from the serious to the amusing and the content was laced with items that only an old boy could do.



Academic procession into the Cathedral

Here is the full text of his address:

Words from the book Ecclesiastes in the Old Testament, chapter 12: 1ff

Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth.

I'm going to use that verse almost as something of a Greek chorus and the rest of the quotation will emerge as the address proceeds. So I hope you will not be surprised when you hear it again.



Rev Michael Outram

Bangor County School for Girls - happy memories! Those long Friars lunch times, an hour and a half in those days, when, by Vardre, we could talk to the girls, through the bars of the fence. Girls in the long grass where we longed also to be! Yes, we do have a tendency to look backwards - but that's because it's our past and our past is important. There's nothing wrong with looking back; we might do so with pleasure, some might prefer to forget. We all probably regret some things in the past. The past cannot be erased. The past of our school cannot be swept aside. Some of us here were at the 1957 Fourth Centenary celebrations. Some here knew the school in earlier times. We are the present as well as the past, and the new present, that is, the pupils of Friars now at their desks - this present which does not yet have a past - has

much to learn from us. And we can start by telling the present that apparently, well, according to a survey last year, we were all happier in 1957!

At least in 1957 pupils were as naughty as ever. What of the story about Jack Lowe? (He taught Physics and Maths). Sensing that he had a bit of a reputation for being a disciplinarian, he decided one day to set up a court of boys in the class of a boy he wanted to punish – one boy as judge, 12 as the jury and so on. In this way they would see that they had to agree with him. He left the room and left them to it. They wasted the whole lesson trying their friend, and at the end of it Jack Lowe asked for the verdict. Announced the foreman of the jury, 'Guilty'. 'Ah ha' Jack must have thought, 'I've won' . . . 'Guilty Sir' said the foreman. . . . 'but insane!'

Just how many additions has that and so many other school stories had over the years? That's it isn't it? We remember, often with a touch of colour and exaggeration. It was ever thus and it will be just the same in 50 years.

Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth.

There is a book with the title, 'When Was Wales?' In it the author argues that there is no way that we can absolutely define what Wales is – its character, its attitudes and so on. It is always on the move. Whether or not we agree with that premise, it could be applied to Friars – Friars School, Ysgol Friars. When was Friars?

It was a former Friars pupil, Carl Witton-Davies, who suggested that in the celebrations in 1957, there should be a service in this cathedral as the cathedral had very long links with the school. He was Archdeacon of Oxford and was therefore invited to preach. My guess is that he would have been in his late forties – to me at age 14 in 1957 he looked like something from the Ark.

Who should have preached on that occasion? Someone who had been in the school when it was in Hirael? Someone from the 1930s? Or even the head boy? When, exactly was Friars? No-one, surely, could possibly adequately represent its shifting history and development.

But we are here to commemorate and remember. Firstly to commemorate Geoffrey Glynne and those who were Benefactors (I always used to

anticipate the commemoration of Dr Archer's plot 'to be kept for ever green'!) There are also those who have gone before as pupils and teachers and headmasters – they must be commemorated - this 'cloud of witnesses', as the author of the Letter to the Hebrews in the New Testament says. They are the stuff of which the present is made. How foolish we would be not to acknowledge that the present rests on the shoulders of the past. We are also here to remember.

Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth.



....in full flow at the Cathedral

The Bible has many instances of remembrance but, as Archdeacon Witton Davies said in his sermon fifty years ago, 'nearly all the Biblical writers realise that remembrance alone can be of little permanent value. On the contrary it can very easily become sentimentality, or even worse a form of morbid introspection, vengeful brooding, or inverted pride.' The Archdeacon went on to say, 'In order that remembrance may be of practical worth it must be coupled with resolution.'

Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth

Before the days of trouble come and the years approach when you will say 'I find no pleasure in them'.

In his first Charge to the clergy of the Diocese of Bangor, John Warren who became Bishop of Bangor in 1783 said, 'He that would reform the world effectively must begin with the young part of it, and train them in the ways of virtue and piety.' Continuing, he added, '... and if that season of our age should happen to be neglected, little progress will be made afterwards in anything which is good and praiseworthy'.

Remember now your Creator.

Remember him - before the silver cord is severed.

Even so, Bishop Warren fell foul of the Earl of Uxbridge who claimed that the Bishop was allowing expenditure on the school and charging fees of its pupils, thereby, said the Earl, keeping out 'boys of all descriptions'.

Today's Friars doesn't have such an issue and pupils 'of all descriptions' attend the school. For any former pupil the sight of the board at the gate is reassuring. The Friars crest: the two eagles, the familiar colour, the words Foedere Fraterno which we were taught meant 'in brotherly love' but with the coming of co-ed must now mean that all pupils will care for each other. Perhaps it should be 'with caring fellowship'. Yes, a rather loose translation and one Ivor Williams would have disapproved of no doubt. (Is it really true that he was known to amble in - late - to teach, still in his dressing gown and carrying part of his breakfast?!) I failed to ask on my visit to the school if the Headmaster is still called Boss!

My visit (not to my old school building of course, but to my old school nevertheless) started in the reception area with cheerful and unselfconsciously easy to talk to pupils who were helpful and used to being sensibly relaxed with adults. I'd like to have said that that is typical of Bangor children but the school has such a fine reputation that it is heavily over subscribed and pupils opt to come from Anglesey in their hundreds - as far away as Holyhead - who knows, could there be another Goronwy Owen among them?

Pupils also come from as far as Porthmadog, Pwllheli and even Criccieth, and modern transport has done away with the need for the boarding accommodation which the school had until the 1940s and some will still recall.

Remember now your Creator in the days of

your youth, before the pitcher is shattered at the spring.

The atmosphere on my visit was, for a school of 1,300, a quiet one, low key with a very obvious work ethic and the sound only of the buzz of work. I do not exaggerate!

I quoted the Archdeacon as saying, 'In order that remembrance may be of practical worth it must be coupled with resolution.' Take heart, and take pride in the resolution in the Friars of 2007. Because what also struck me was the very clear priorities of school policy - a good education of course, the need to develop a sense of respect and care for others (with caring fellowship as our interpretation of Foedere Fraterno might now be), the encouragement of initiative and enterprise, the need for discipline which gives the assurance of parameters of behaviour.

There is too the acceptance that Christian principles do still have something to give to our young and to society. We know well enough that so much of what we have inherited in the way we think and run our affairs is based on Christian teaching - whether we like it or not.

It may truly be said that what Bishop Warren said at the end of the C18th is part of the ethos of the school today: 'He that would reform the world effectively must begin with the young part of it, and train them in the ways of virtue and piety'. There is nothing to be ashamed of in heeding the words of the prophet Micah when he says, 'What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?' I challenge anyone to say that this is not relevant.

Remember now your Creator.

'How things have changed' we are inclined to say. A school is one of the most potent examples of change; it happens completely in Friars every seventh year while every September brings its own change. Our memories - whenever we were at the school - are fixed in time, the school is not. That is why this service is at the beginning of the school's celebration of 450 years. This service has been driven by the Old Dominican Association as it also was involved in the celebrations of 1957. In 2057 former pupils will, we may hope, have the same initiative - an initiative born of happy memories and gratitude that 'that season of their age was not neglected'.

The continuing celebration this year will be school driven. It will encourage pupils to know more about what went before; to acknowledge that the changes of the past thirty or so years have given the school a new and exciting future; and to hopefully know that they are part of an enormous and united group of present and past pupils who would agree with Bishop Warren that ‘. . . if that season of our age should happen to be neglected, little progress will be made afterwards in anything which is good and praiseworthy.’

And what is good and praiseworthy is summed up by the prophet Micah:

‘What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?’ And, we might add as we think of those 450 years of Friars: in Foedere Fraterno - in brotherly love; with caring fellowship.

As in 1957 the music was arranged by ODA Hon member, Mr Cledwyn Jones who also took the baton to conduct the singing. We subsequently had numerous letters saying how much they enjoyed both sermon and singing. Typical is one from Derek Pritchard, now living in Canada who wrote “..... I will always remember the service in Bangor Cathedral and the outstanding singing by all, added to an excellent sermon, and sense of humour.....”



Mr Cledwyn Jones in charge





Gareth Williams, Mr Cledwyn Jones, Mervyn Price-Roberts and David George



Gwilym and Merfyn Price-Roberts and T Llew Williams



L-R: Prof Tom Cornes, Mayor Douglas Madge, Mrs Madge, Rev Michael Outram, Mr Neil Foden, Reuben Elliott (Head Boy), Cross Bearer Geoff Owen, Rebecca Hobbs (Head Girl), Dean Alun Hawkins and Verger Mrs Helen Lincoln.



Warren Martin and Phil Williams-Jones



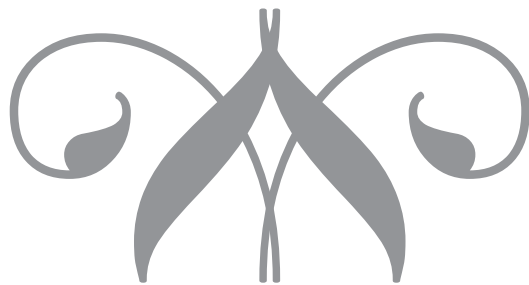
Gwynfor Williams, John Cowell, Tommy Glyn Jones and Bill Cunningham



Betty and David Fielding



John Lazarus and Harold Owen



Y ddau ddathliad

gan James Griffiths (53-59)



Organist James Griffiths

Yn y flwyddyn 1557, sefydlwyd un o ysgolion hynaf Cymru, sef Ysgol Ramadeg Friars, Bangor. Yn 1957, a minnau'n fachgen 16 oed, yr oeddwn yn yr ysgol pan ddathlwyd 400 mlynedd bodolaeth Ysgol Friars. Dadorchuddiwyd cofeb ar wal hen Neuadd Eglwys y Santes Fair, Bangor, yn Ffordd Glynne I goffáu mai yn agos i'r hen adeilad hwnnw yr oedd yr ysgol gyntaf, ar dir yr hen Briordy a ddaeth yn eiddo i w'r o'r enw Geoffrey Glynne. Yn ei ewyllys, gadawodd Glynne y tir a'r t i sefydlu ysgol ramadeg i fechgyn ym Mangor.

Cerddoriaeth Ar ôl dadorchuddio'r gofeb, cerddodd y bechgyn i gyd fesul dosbarth i wasanaeth arbennig yn Eglwys Gadeiriol Bangor - y prifathro, Mervin Elis-Williams, a'i athrawon yn cerdded ar y blaen. Ymysg yr athrawon yr oedd Mr Cledwyn Jones. Mr Jones oedd wedi darparu trefn y gwasanaeth a pha beth i'w ganu. Nid oed traddodiad cerddorol yn Friars, ond llwyddodd Cledwyn Jones i gael y bechgyn i gyd i ddysgu cryn dipyn o gerddoriaeth gymhleth, megis trefniant C H H Parry o'r Te Deum a threfniant Vaughan Williams o'r Hen Ganfed i enwi dim ond dau. Y diweddar Dr Leslie Paul, ei hun yn gyn-ddisgybl, ac Organydd Cadeirlan Bangor bryd hynny, oedd wrth yr organ.

Eleni Ychydig iawn oeddwn i'n meddwl yr adeg honno y buaswn i yn organydd yn nathliad 450

Ysgol Friars, a go brin y meddyliodd Cledwyn Jones y buasai yntau yn arwain hanner can mlynedd yn ddiweddarach! Ar fore Gwener braf, ar 20 Ebrill daeth nifer fawr o gyn-ddisgyblion i Gadeirlan Bangor i ddathlu unwaith y rhagor. Cafwyd o leiaf un darn o gerddoriaeth o wasanaeth 1957, sef trefniant o'r hen Ganfed, yn ogystal ag emynau pwrpasol a salm 150. Yr oedd y canu'n wresog iawn, a chymerodd Deon Bangor, y Tra Pharchedig Alun Hawkins, ran yn y gwasanaeth. Darllenwyd rhestr hir o noddwyr yr Ysgol ar draws y blynyddoedd gan Dr Gareth Griffiths, cyd-gadeirydd Cymdeithas y Cyn-ddisgyblion, a darllenwyd llithoedd addas gan ddau o ddisgyblion presennol Ysgol Friars. Cafwyd pregeth gan y Parchedig Michael Outram, Ficer Penmaenmawr, yntau hefyd yn gyn-ddisgybl.

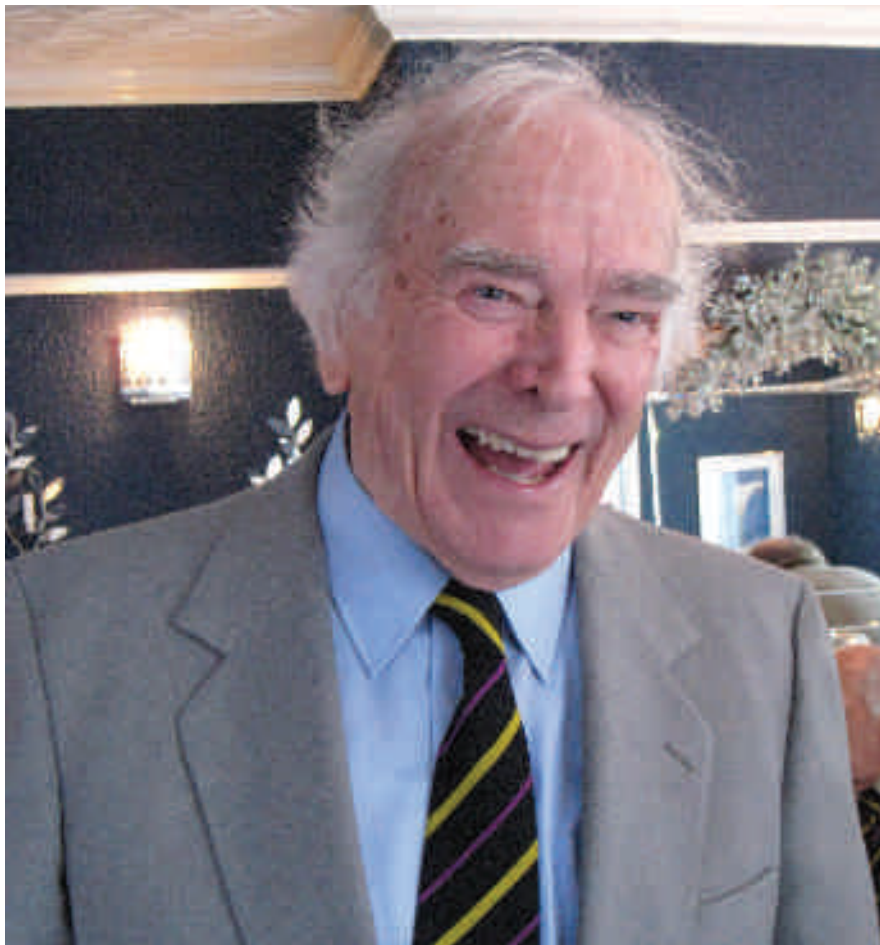
Er bob pawb oedd yno wedi newid cryn dipyn o ran edrychiad dros y blynyddoedd, cafwyd cyfarfod â hen ffrindiau ysgol a hefyd y fraint o gael gweld siarter wreiddiol 1557, pan sefydlwyd yr ysgol. Un o'r emynau a ganwyd oedd 'Am Rif y Saint' - ni fentrwyd canu 'Pwy fydd yma 'mhen can mlynedd'!

In the above article, which appeared in 'Y Llan', the Church in Wales magazine, Jim tells of the 1957 and 2007 celebrations as he was present at both. Little had he thought that in 1957 he would be the organist in 2007 nor indeed did Mr Cledwyn Jones think that he would be preparing the service, the music and conducting again 50 years later! He concludes by telling us that one of the hymns that was sung was 'For all the Saints', as in 1957, but we did not venture to sing 'Who will be here in 100 years.' (Words taken from a Welsh hymn by the Rev E. LLwyd Williams.).

Following the service there was a general gathering in the grounds and much discussion among old friends - some of whom had not seen each other for over half a century. A BBC camera crew was there and interviewed two of the members who had come from afar, Tom Bernard from Massachusetts and Derek Pritchard from Vancouver. Members and friends then repaired to the Regency Hotel where a buffet lunch awaited.



David Bellis and Arnold Lewis



William Jones

The AGM
and tour of the old school building
Saturday 21 April 2007



Early arrivals at the old school

We were fortunate in having the use of the old school building on Ffriddoedd Road for our AGM but before that Coleg Menai had been kind enough to give us an illustrated talk in the hall on all the work that had been carried out to sensitively convert the buildings to their particular needs and this was followed by a tour of the building. Some of the rooms have remained surprisingly

unchanged for a century or more. Many others are still easily recognisable. Perhaps the major changes have been the provision of modern kitchens and a dining room from the cloakrooms and woodwork room and the conversion of Boss' hallowed domain of the old dining hall into a hair and beauty salon. An excellent buffet lunch followed.



The Old Dining Hall, now a Hair and Beauty Salon



The College Kitchen



The Dining Room



Phil Williams-Jones putting the finishing touches to a hair do for John Bagley.



The entrance hall - note the lift.



*David Fielding and Geoff Coulter
admire the stained glass window*



*David George, Gwyn Buckland,
Cliff Jones and Warren Martin*



Tom Jones and Merfyn Williams



Dennis Jones, Elfyn Edwards and Bobby Howes



A body on the table, with Hefin Williams, David Meredith, Dennis Jones and John Aneuryn Jones attempting a revival



The top corridor with Tom Bernard leading the way



The AGM in full swing



It was not all serious business



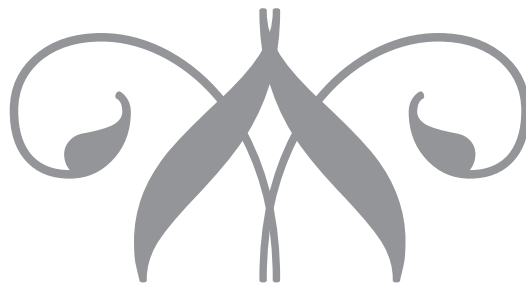
Norman Roberts makes a presentation to Alun Jones with Colin Dixon looking on

The AGM in the old school hall started at 13.30 and was well attended by 60 members. At the conclusion of business Colin Dixon, who was retiring as Treasurer, and Alun Jones, Secretary, were presented with prints of local scenes by Gareth

Griffiths and Norman Roberts in recognition of the work they had done in organising the reunion celebrations. The afternoon ended with a photograph of all those present taken in the quad.



The group photograph in the quad



The Evening Dinner

held at The Bulkeley Hotel, Beaumaris
Saturday 21 April 2007 at 6.30 for 7.00pm

It was a full house of 116 members, guests and friends that gathered at the Bulkeley for a first class meal and entertaining after dinner speeches. Our guests were Professor Tom Corns, Pro Vice-Chancellor for Teaching and Learning, Bangor University, and Mrs Pat Corns, The Dean of Bangor, The Very Rev Alun Hawkins, The Head Teacher of Ysgol Friars, Mr Neil Foden and Ms Nicki Walker, The Rev Michael Outram, Vicar of Penmaenmawr and Mrs Carol Outram, The Chair of Governors Ysgol Friars, Mr John R Jones and Mrs Myfanwy Jones and The Mayor of Bangor, His Worship Douglas Madge and Mrs Doreen Madge. Unfortunately the Bishop of Bangor, the Right Rev Anthony Crockett, was indisposed and unable to be with us. Mr Cledwyn Jones proposed the toast to the school, recalling his own time at the 'old' school. Mr Neil Foden the Headteacher, responded as follows: *"Your Worship, distinguished guests, Old Dominicans, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you for the invitation to be part of tonight's celebrations.*

You will be pleased to know that the pupils are aware of the existence of old boys. Several were waiting to meet me for detention one day and were looking at the whole school photos on the corridor wall. One boy looked at me and asked in all seriousness, "Are you on this photo, Sir?" The photo was from 1948.

I had the opportunity of meeting Cliff Jones at the end of the service on Friday. As I am sure you will know, Cliff, as well as being an Old Dominican, is writing a history of the school. I look forward to seeing the finished article because my knowledge of parts of the school's history is sketchy and I am sure that this is also true of many in the community that the school serves.

It would be a tragedy if the school's history depended on a disparate collection of documents and artefacts held by a range of people and bodies and in the memories of its former pupils. Cliff's work has the opportunity to unify these sources, to inform and, I am sure, to entertain.

Talking of unifying, I was struck during the sermon on Friday by the number of times the school has moved. When I was first appointed as Deputy Head at Friars in 1989, we were on

two sites, Ffriddoedd Road and Eithinog. Most Old Dominicans here tonight will associate the school with the building on Ffriddoedd Road. The Eithinog site which we now occupy will be unfamiliar to many.

So does it really matter that the school has been sited at different times in Hiraal, Glynne Road, Ffriddoedd and Eithinog. I do not believe it does. While the buildings are a physical manifestation of the school, a school is much more than the buildings it inhabits; it is made by what it stands for and not what it stands in; by the values and principles it espouses and seeks to inculcate into its pupils and the way in which it shapes them and the community they will form.

We live in a rapidly changing world. In 2057, much will be different from 2007. Advancement in technology and commerce and changes in politics and climate have already made our world much altered from that of 1957.

Young people today have far more material benefits, better access to information, better health and nutrition than many of us would have enjoyed in our childhood. Yet a significant minority do not know how to treat their parents or family, interact with each other, behave appropriately in social gatherings or respect authority or their communities.

We will increasingly need to teach young people how to cope with the rapidly changing world; to develop in them the skills of flexibility and adaptability. We are already changing the way we teach at Friars to encourage pupils to think about how they learn and to give them the skills to learn independently.

But there are some things that will not change. Children still need high quality teaching. All the technological hardware and research skills will be of no use to them, if they have not been given a sufficient foundation of knowledge.

The other things that should not change are the values we try to send them into the world sharing. I was again struck during the sermon with the importance that had been attached to ensuring that the school was open to the many and not

just the few and particularly, to boys from poorer families. Many Dominicans also talk of the emphasis placed on good manners, awareness of one's responsibility to others, respect for authority and a sense of community. These things should not change.

The pace of change in education in the last twenty years has been remarkable. We have had a National Curriculum imposed upon us where we are now told what to teach children in every year group of compulsory education. We have National Conditions of Service and as part of these we lost five days of our holidays which were turned into training days or Baker Days, as they were known then, after Kenneth Baker, the Conservative Secretary of State. Many teachers began calling them 'B' Days because everybody had seen one but nobody really knew what to do with it.

We have a Government view of education that is becoming increasingly functional. There is an apocryphal story of the Secretary of State who visits a school where the Headteacher is inordinately proud of one of his colleagues and he invites the Secretary of State for Education to come and see what the man can do. There is a small pond at the bottom of the school playing field and at the Headteacher's invitation, the PE teacher walks across it and walks back. The Secretary of State whispers to one of his advisors who informs the Head that the Secretary of State is minded to see it again. The PE teacher performs the feat once more. The beaming Headteacher turns to the Secretary of State and says, "There, what do you think of that?" The Secretary of State replies, "I think it is disgusting that you have a PE teacher who cannot swim."

And finally, we have a subject close to our hearts at Friars, the ESTYN School Inspection System where evaluating school progress has been commercialised and roving teams of the often superannuated and incompetent operating for gain are parachuted into schools to tell them how badly they are doing.

What would Boss have made of all of these?

On the other hand, to be fair, what would have an ESTYN Inspector have made of a teacher who taught in his dressing gown, of breakfast being taken in class or of lessons turned into courtrooms? I am sure Old Dominicans could think of plenty of other examples.

So if another dinner is held in April 2057, what will the dinner be looking back on. First of all, can I say that as I will be approaching my 100th birthday, I will do my best to be there but cannot make any promises. The dinner of 2057 should have a legacy to look back on. It should have a published history of the school by then. There should I hope be a well established Old Dominicans' website which can make available to all the wealth of stories and anecdotes which many of you have been swapping tonight which are too numerous (and in some cases probably too crude) to feature in Cliff's book. It will be an opportunity to bring together those who memories unite but Geography divides.

Also as I look around the room, I think it is fair to say that I am probably at the junior end of the age profile. The diners in 2057, if there are to be enough of them to have a dinner at all, will have to encompass a much broader range of Old Boys and Girls particularly those who were pupils from the 1960s onwards.

This will not be an easy task. In the late 1960s and 70s something in schools changed. Pupils became less proud of the institutions of which they were a part and became less interested and took less pride in representing their school or community. Some people blame the comprehensivisation of secondary education for this, others say it's simply changes in society while others assert that young people, as they became more affluent, simply had more and in their view better things to do. I do not know whether any or all of these are true. Nevertheless, with one or two exceptions, several decades of Friars pupils have few if any links or contact with the school since leaving and this will be a difficult gap for the Association to fill.

And what of the school itself. I believe it is still likely to be on the Eithinog site. If for no other reason than the fact that Gwynedd is now so short of money and that there are such swingeing cuts talked of for the coming financial years that it is unlikely to be able to afford to move it anywhere else. I trust that the school in 2057 will not be under corporate control in the way that some Trust Schools are in England. Somehow celebrating an anniversary of the Shanghai Motor Mower and Small Arms Corporation City Technology College will not have quite the same ring to it. I trust that the school will still be open to all pupils irrespective of their background and that it will continue to set high standards without

being turned into an examination factory. I also hope that it will be recognised as broadening young peoples' horizons and giving them a better understanding and tolerance of other races and cultures. Its pupils should continue to recognise the importance of courtesy, respect and a sense of justice and also that any society from which they are absent will be corroded from within and I hope it is a school that its former pupils will look back on and say it gave us opportunities that we would otherwise never have enjoyed.

None of us should be satisfied with just being a footprint in the sand, enduring only until the tide comes in and washes all traces away. Only a few are able to leave a mark that is remembered for generations and some of them would have been better forgotten.

But a school: a school is different. We hope that all the young people we send out into the world will leave a mark and that no matter how small each will be a symbol of a positive impact made on their communities. We should recognise and be recognised for not just a number of footprints but also for how many lead back to our door and as such, as an institution we should leave a permanent mark for all to remember.

The length of our tradition makes us distinct, not just in Gwynedd but in the whole of Wales. As society has changed, Governments have come and gone and our landscape shifted and altered, we have endured and so have the principles we have stood for and so should they still.

So let us ensure that our history is known to many, that the fellowship embodied in this Association continues, that we champion our successes and that our principles remain firm and that in fifty years time, people can say what we say: this is my school and I am proud of it"

ODA member David George proposed the toast to 'our guests' to which the Rev Michael Outram responded. Michael had agreed to stand in for The Bishop at short notice and we were very grateful to him for carrying out this duty so ably. Finally Alun Jones proposed a toast to 'Absent Friends.'

The evening ended with a short musical tribute to our Honorary member, Mr Cledwyn Jones for all his hard work on the musical side of the Cathedral Service. Mr Jones had, of course, been the Music Teacher at Friars in 1957 and had become well known throughout Wales as one of the 'Triawd y Coleg' and it was a medley of three of their songs that the OD sextet performed.



Ms Nicki Walker and Mr Neil Foden



Mayor Douglas Madge, Mrs Doreen Madge and Mr J Bryan Jones'





Prof Tom Corns and Mrs Pat Corns



Stan Foulkes with his daughter Mrs Pauline Desch



Bryan Blamey and Eddie Longden



Gwyn Roberts, dedicated ODA member and official photographer



Maldwyn Evans and Geoff Owen



Members and guests at dinner

Appendix 1

Staff of Ysgol Friars 2007

Mr Neil Foden	Headteacher
Mr Martin J Wise	Deputy Headteacher
Mrs Glenda M Jones	Deputy Headteacher
Mr Emyr Hughes	Assistant Headteacher
Mrs Beryl R Jones	Assistant Headteacher
Dr Keith Varty	Assistant Headteacher
Mrs Margaret Ankers	Assistant Teacher of Psychology and Health and Social Care
Mrs Anita Butler	Assistant Teacher RE and History
Miss Abigail Blackham	Assistant Teacher of Mathematics
Mr Aaron Evans	Assistant Teacher Social and Environmental Faculty
Dr Amy C Wells	Head of Mathematics
Mrs Pauline Desch	Teacher of French and German
Dr R G Griffiths	Assistant Teacher of Science (Physics)
Mrs Ann Coleman	Assistant Teacher of Mathematics
Mrs Ann Haines	Assistant Teacher
Ms Anna Hickson-Baker	Assistant Teacher of English and Drama
Mrs Avril Lloyd	Assistant Teacher of Design Technology and Health and Social Care
Miss Ann L Thomas	Head of Music
Mrs Margaret Cooke	Careers/PSE/Work Experience
Mrs Alex T Brain	KS3 Modern Languages Co-ordinator
Mr Brian C Dunt	Head of Design and Technology
Mr Barry M Picton	Head of Physical Education
Mrs Caroline Barlow	Teacher in charge of Health Education
Mr Chris D Parry	KS3 Mathematics Co-ordinator
Ms Cathleen J Larmour	Assistant Teacher of Art
Miss Catrin M Jones	Assistant Teacher of Design Technology
Mrs Catrin P Thomas	Head of Welsh Department
Mrs Carys D Richings	SENCO
Mrs Chris Rogers	Vocational Educational and Key Skills Curriculum Leader
Mr Andrew Parry	Year Team Leader
Mr David Belsey	Teacher in charge of Single Award Science and Double Award Applied Science
Mr David J Healey	Head of Physics
Mrs Donna M Jones	Assistant Teacher of Physical Education
Mrs Rachel A Hanney	Assistant Teacher of English and Law
Mr D R Williams	Information and Communication Technology Curriculum Leader
Mr David S Varty	Assistant Teacher of Science (Chemistry)
Mrs Emma Dickinson	Assistant Teacher of Modern Languages
Mrs Eirian Davies	Teacher in charge of Religious Education
Miss E.J. Griffiths	Assistant Teacher in the Social and Environmental Faculty
Mrs Edwina Morgan	Welsh Language Policy Leader

Mr Elandre Snyman	Assistant Teacher of Design and Technology
Mrs Fiona J Rennie	Head of Social and Environmental Faculty
Mrs G C Shacklady	KS3 Science Co-ordinator
Miss Gwenlli M Pugh	Assistant Teacher of Mathematics
Mrs Gwenda Parry	Teacher in Charge of Sociology
Mr Geoff P Bennett	Assistant Teacher in the Social and And Environmental Faculty
Mr Geraint Rowlands	Assistant Welsh Teacher
Mrs Heather Durham	KS3 English Co-ordinator
Mrs Helen M. Owen	Assistant Teacher – Welsh and Music
Mr Hamish P Healy	Assistant Teacher in the Social and Environmental Faculty
Miss Heidi R. Jenkins	Assistant Teacher in the English Department
Dr Ian S Thorpe	Teacher of Science
Mr Joseph Mathews	Assistant Teacher of Mathematics
Mr John N Whittaker	Assessment Co-ordinator
Mrs J Roberts	Assistant Teacher – English and Music
Miss Kaye E. Owen	Assistant Teacher of Geography
Ms Karen Hughes	Teacher of Science
Miss Kelly Vickers	Assistant Teacher of Physical Education
Mrs L C Parry	Assistant Teacher of Design and Technology
Mrs Michelle A Hanlon	Teacher in charge of GCSE and A/AS Level Business Studies
Mrs M E Lewis	Assistant SENCO
Miss Morfudd E Mill	Assistant Teacher of Mathematics
Mrs M S Owen	Assistant Teacher of Design and Technology
Mrs Nancy H Brown	Head of English
Mr Nigel Marshall	Teacher of Science
Mr Neil R Worthington	Year Team Leader
Mrs Pam B Boardman	Assistant Teacher of Geography
Mr Peter C Jones	Assistant Teacher of Technology/IT
Mr Peter G Jones	Assistant Teacher of Physical Education
Mrs Pat Lewis	Head of Modern Foreign Languages
Mr Rhodri Hughes	Head of History
Mrs S Roberts	Assistant Welsh Teacher
Miss Sara Pepper	Assistant Teacher of English
Miss S K Hilton	Head of Drama
Mr Shaun K. Holdsworth	Teacher of Design Technology
Miss S Lewis	Assistant Teacher of ICT
Mrs Renee M Evans	Assistant Teacher in the English Department
Mrs R M Davies	Head of Biology
Miss S Williams	Assistant Welsh Teacher
Miss S W Griffiths	Assistant Welsh Teacher
Mr Sion W Wheldon	Assistant Teacher of Art
Mr John E Williams	Head of Art
Mrs Janet Borer	English Teacher
Mrs V Gould	French Teacher
Mr Andrew E Smith	Support Teacher

Appendix 2

**The Committee of the Old Dominicans' Association
elected at the 2007 General Meeting**



*Gareth Griffiths
Joint Chairman*



*Norman W Roberts
Joint Chairman*



*Trefor E Griffiths
Treasurer*



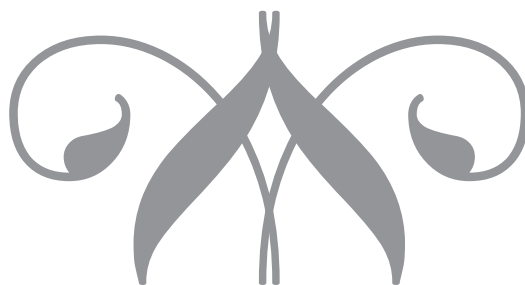
*Alun Jones
Secretary*



*J Bryan Jones
Welsh Affairs*



Colin LL Dixon



Appendix 3

Members of the Association

as at 30 April 2007 with the year they entered Friars

NB The dates shown are the dates they came to Friars

which may not necessarily have been into the first form.

1924 Iorwerth Wynn Jones	John Hamilton Roberts
	Alan Edward Smith
1928 Cyril F Malyon	Philip Williams-Jones
1931 William Donaldson	1941 Thomas L Bernard
	William John Fedrick
1932 William Jones	Evan Wyn Bowen
	Gilbert Eastham
1933 Cledwyn Aneurin Evans	Seth R Edwards
George Norman Roberts	James David Fielding
Walter Barnet Woodgates	Charles Dalby Fisher
	Richard Griffiths
1934 Gwilym Lewis Owen	Dennis Edward Harbird
Thomas Llewellyn Williams	Karel Lek
	William H R Lewis
1935 Stanley Foulkes	Robert Arwyn Owen
Merfyn Gray Moss	Derek Wynne Pritchard
Glynn M Owen	Elwyn Roberts
Thomas Joseph Humphrey Parr	John Glyn Woodgates
1936 Charles Edgar Davies	1942 Cowell, John B
Evans Maldwyn	Davies, John Arthur
James Lucknow Howie	John Foulkes
Mark William Francis Radley	Iorys Griffiths
	John Aled Griffiths
1937 Wyn Davies	Richard Spencer Hughes
Raymond Griffiths	Trefor Lloyd Hughes
David Arfon Jones	John Merfyn
Dewi Edward Roberts	William Gwynfor Wyn Pritchard
Richard Emrys Williams	John Jeffries Reynolds
	Albert Roberts
1938 Geoffrey Lionel Coulter	Douglas Thomas
Donald Henderson	Gwilym Ritchie Williams
Tomos L ap Rhys	John Deulyn Williams
Gwilym Wyn Roberts	Trevor WynneWilliams
Graham John Roberts	
1939 Thomas Gareth Lewis Bellis	1943 David Owen Bellis
Gwyn Achille Jones	William P Cunningham
Michael Mallett Jones	John Elwyn Davies
John Arnold Lewis	John Colin Fielding
	Alun Hughes
	Albert Bryan Jones
	Glyn Jones
	Idwal Wyn Jones
1940 Ifor William Bowen	T Gareth Pritchard
Ronald Ellis Edwards	Edgar Owen Roberts
John Owen Lazarus	Edward Elfyn Roberts
Mervyn Price-Roberts	Frank James Roberts

- Eric Thomas
David Wynn Williams
Elfyn Williams
- 1944 W R John Bagley
Michael E K Foulkes
Thomas Glyn Jones
Tony Pumfrey
Raymond Gordon Tucker
Gareth Woodfine
- 1945 Bryan Blamey
Ron Cowell
Louis Victor Dupuy
Fred Elmore
Arfon Hughes Evans
Aelwyn Jones
David Lloyd Jones
H Clifford Michael Jones
W Gwyn Rees Jones
William Edward Longden
Harold Owen
John Eifion Owen
John Renshaw
Gwyn Roberts
John Ifor Roberts
Gwynfor Williams
- 1946 William Emyr Buckland
Michael Vere Doherty
Rob Laugharne Llewellyn
Alun Owen
John Merfyn Owen
Leslie Owen
Meirion Lloyd Owen
Eifion Lloyd Roberts
Elwyn Owen Thomas
Gareth Meredyth Williams
Ronald Wynne Williams
- 1947 William Aerwyn Evans
Gareth W Griffiths
Peter Morris Hughes
Hugh Eifion Rees Jones
John Aneuryn Jones
Tom Glyn Jones
William Henry Lovelock
Warren Dean Martin
Robertt John Pilling
Hugh Roderick Roberts
Norman W Roberts
Clive Francis Williams
W Gareth Williams
- 1948 Colin Lloyd Dixon
John Ellison
John Bryan Jones
Robert Alun Jones
Gerallt Lloyd Owen
Barry Sanderson
David Roy Thomas
David Ithel Williams
Gareth Vaughan Williams
John Meredyth Williams
W Merfyn Williams
- 1949 Kenneth David Banes
Gareth Davies
Dennis Jones
Kenneth Vaughan Owen
Arthur Hugh Thomas
Dafydd Prytherch Williams
- 1950 Elfyn Morris Edwards
Robert James a Ellis
Robert Edward James Howes
John Meirion Hughes
David P Meredith
Clifford Iorwerth Smith
Hefin Williams
- 1951 Hamish A K Currie
David B Lloyd George
Dewi Wyn James
Douglass Ian Knowles
Elwyn Williams
Barry A Wynne
- 1952 Timothy Bryan Akrill
Leonard Vaughan Hughes
Brian Randall
- 1953 Edwin V Hughes
John Wyn Owen
- 1954 John David Bennett-Williams
Neville Hortop
Glyn Watkin Jones
Gwynfryn Roberts
David Alwyn Rowlands
Howard Sanderson
R Brinley Williams
- 1955 Derek Applegate-Rees
Trefor E Griffiths
Richard Hewitt
William Lewis
Albert Mervyn Picton
Eric Roberts

1956 Ian Walter Cliff
Brian W Davies
Arthur Wyn Hughes
John Anthony Hughes
Brian Rigby
Bennie Wynn Williams

1957 Roger Brownsword
Roderick John Hird
Gareth Lewis
Peter John Roberts

1958 Alwyn Pritchard
Elfed Wynn Roberts

1959 Robert Gwyn Hughes
Howard W Jones
Michael Kevin Llewellyn-Evans
David R Price
Allan Wynne Roberts

1960 D Keith Davies
Gareth Thomas

1961 Glyn Charles Groundsell
James Stephan Frank Johnson
Ian Idris Thomas

1963 Bryn Jones

1966 Paul David Smith

1968 David Paul Ap Huw Jones

1969 Patrick Robert Hemphill

1970 David Raymond Hilton
Andrew William Lewis

1973 Christine Rose Owen

1980 Bethan Lloyd Dixon

Honorary member: Mr Cledwyn Jones - Music
and Religious Knowledge teacher 1952-61

