



*Blaisdon Reunion
and Newsletter*

2009



Great to have Pat Young with us after his heart scare



Has anyone seen my walking stick ?



There's that stick again!



Charlie, on his feet still, after 12 great years as our President!

Our Heartfelt thanks to Charlie for a superbly arranged Reunion Lunch.

Another excellent Reunion was attended by almost 50 Blaisdon Old Boys and their families and friends. Some had used the Bank Holiday weekend to gather in Blaisdon and surrounds to enjoy more time and renew acquaintances in this beautiful place. It was so great to see so many of the regulars who always welcome each other and any newcomers with genuine friendship.



A familiar site to us all

We started by sharing Mass with the Blaisdon Parish community in the Blaisdon Village Hall. We thank Father Aidan Murray SDB for his warm welcome to the Mass which was concelebrated by Father Sean Murray SDB, Chaplain to the Blaisdon Old Boys. Deacon Jim Richards, CEO of the Catholic Children’s Society (Westminster), also joined the celebrants and read the Gospel. Fr Aidan preached a wonderful Homily on the readings.



Irene & Nora in the background, for whom this is particularly poignant

Straight after Mass most of us moved up to the Churchyard outside St. Michaels Church to visit and pray together at the Salesian grave. Father Sean read out all the names and gave a brief and sometimes amusing anecdotes, with occasional ripostes from Liam Duggan. Father Sean also led prayers.



Wayne Howe and his family with little Grace in the pink at the back. Good to have you with us Wayne. Do come again

As usual it takes time for people to walk up from the Village Hall so we stood around enjoying the, as Mike O’Brien would call it *“the bucolic view”*. (See Recollections of Blaisdon Hall pages 95 and 96). Mike, you could not have put it better. As usual, Charlie and a few stayed behind to arrange the tables after the Mass, in readiness for Reunion luncheon, much though he would have liked to visit the grave.



Unusually, for our Blaisdon Reunions, the weather was not as good as it might have been, but just a little light rain fell during our time at the grave. However this did not stop us from singing the *Salve Regina*, as is our, and a Salesian, usual custom.

When we returned from the graveside visit the room was not yet ready so we stayed and chatted outside the Village Hall and then some made their way down to The Village Pub, "*The Red Hart*". The ladies from the Blaisdon *Women's Institute*, came to Charlie's aid this year, to provide our buffet lunch. It was excellent and our thanks go to the WI Ladies for a very tasty buffet, the making of our Reunion celebration.



*Deacon Jim and his wife Diane,
in red, in the foreground.
You're always welcome Jim and Diane*

There follows a series of photos of all the Old Boys and their families and friends enjoying the Repast. There are so many of them that have been regulars for years, that I will refrain from adding names, just to save my embarrassment in getting some of them wrong. My excuse, as always is that it is down to my age. The truth really is that I have always been inadequate in this respect. However do enjoy the photos.



*Tony Brady, holding a bag, on his first visit for many years.
Great to have you with us Tony.*

This is so typical of our Reunion days together, no one is in any hurry to say their goodbyes to their friends, some of whom would have been together at Blaisdon and the Crusade of Rescue since the age of five right up to the age of sixteen or seventeen.



Can't resist this one. That is Eric Nutcher holding a wonderful book that he has just recently had printed. This is a most interesting, at times humorous, at times sad, story of his life. Isn't that a super picture of Eric in his Military uniform as the front cover. Me thinks he is trying to outdo our Book of Recollections. Only joking Eric.

Here's some of the evidence, still chatting in the Village Hall or in the parking space outside the Hall:



I wonder if Len is planning to offer those flowers, he has just nicked from the tables, to his hosts Roger and Corrine! My guess is that they will know well where he got them. However I know that, with or without flowers, Len and Sylvia will be hosted royally.

When all is said and done we all had a most enjoyable day together. Thanks to all those who helped in any way on the day. Various changes took place at the AGM and these will be communicated separately. Prepared by: **John Ward, Web Manager** (01 September 2009)

REGISTER OF APOLOGIES/THOSE PRESENT AT SALESIAN SCHOOL, PAST PUPILS & OLD BOY'S ANNUAL MEETING: 30th August 2009 10.00 –10.30am

Apologies received from: Michael McKenna, Barney Grace (RIP), Alastair Bourne, Vincent Shaw, Charlie Calder, Norman Taylor, Peter Landsborough, Mike Turnbull,

John Plevvey, Pat O’Sullivan, Billy Udell, Sammy Hayes, Danny Hayes.

Present:

ALLEN Roger - BRADY Anthony - DRUMMEY David
DUGGAN Liam - FERRY Alan - HOWE Wayne - JAY Martin
METCALFE David - METCALFE Pearl - NUTCHER Eric
CHARLES SPRINGETT - SMITH Nicola - STANTON Lawrence
WARD John - WHELEHAN Donald - YOUNG Pat
DRUMMOND Tony and three guests.

***GUESTS, OLD BOYS, FAMILY & FRIENDS AT MASS, THE SALESIAN GRAVE
- ST. MICHAEL’S CHURCHYARD, LUNCH:***

Parish Mass Celebrants: Father Aidan Murray SDB, Father Sean Murray SDB, Deacon Jim Richards. Corinne Allen, Sylvia & Len Carter, Diane Richards, Tony & Wendy Wadsworth, Wayne, Matilda & Grace Howe, Pat Young Jnr., George Robb, Brother Joe Adams SDB. Chris Little & Andrew Little, Tony Drummond and three Guests.

Message from Fr. Sean

Dear Past Pupils (Old Boys), Friends, Supporters, Associates and Salesian family members, this edition of the Association Newsletter marks several significant changes and events, which I am sure you will read of with great interest.

I record my personal thanks to Charlie Springett for his many years of work and dedication to the advancement and progress of the Association. I welcome his successor, Tony Brady, on his election as President. I particularly pay tribute to John Ward for his enthusiastic commitment to maintaining the www.blaisdonbrotherhood.info Website. I congratulate Wayne Howe for offering his service as Association Secretary.

There are costs and benefits in these changes and the resignation of Terry O’Neill is one cost the Association has had to bear. I echo the calls by concerned members that he will reconsider his decision and return to renewed Membership. The regular renewal of our Salesian bonds unites us in friendship and fraternity.

I welcome keeping in contact with everyone involved in our Association. Every year we say farewell to devoted Members whose lives come to an end in our supportive fraternity. They are never forgotten neither are their family members. Each Reunion comes and we unite in solidarity, sincerity and love in our gathering of remembrance around the Salesian plot close to St. Michael’s Church, in sight of the former Blaisdon Hall, Salesian School, the Stud Farm and Blaisdon village. Our prayers perpetuate our past attachments, console us in our loss, reconcile our separation across countries and continents and confirm our acceptance of the unifying Faith imbued in us in our Blaisdon years.

So, I look forward to the 2010 Reunion and being in regular touch. God Bless.

**Father Sean Murray SDB
Chaplain.**



1935-1995

Salesian Past Pupils Of Don Bosco Blaisdon Association

KEEPING OUR POSTAL COSTS TO A MINIMUM LEVEL

Access to Broadband and the Internet compels us to communicate as cost effectively as possible with two distinct groups in our Association. I make a special request to you, if you are not able to contact us via these modern media, because you are just as precious to our Association as those who can.

I would ask, that when you receive this Newsletter, to reply by post as soon as conveniently possible, indicating your wish to continue receiving posted Newsletters or, that you now have email and would prefer that method of communication. If so, could you contact us with your email address. It will be secure and remain confidential.*

For those who wish to continue to receive posted Newsletters, I would appreciate that you could express your preference in writing and confirm that your address details are correct. I have not enclosed a SAE, as in the past this method has not proved to be effective. For those who do not respond, no further posting will go out to them, unless they write in and request that they wish to continue in touch by post with the Association.

* **Confidentiality Protocol:** Whenever a request is made by an Association Member via the Secretary, President or Committee for another Member's home address, telephone number or email, an approach is made to the Member whose details are sought. Only with their express permission are the personal details passed on. If permission is denied the enquiring Member is informed accordingly.

I look forward to a continuing contact with all Members via the most convenient method they choose - by Royal Mail post or www.blaisdonbrotherhood.info

Wayne Howe.
Secretary

President: Anthony J Brady 145 Glengesh Road, Brockagh, Co. Fermanagh , N.Ireland, BT94 3GX Treasurer: Anthony J Brady As above Secretary: Wayne Howe, 26 Gadebridge Road, Hemel Hempstead, Herts, HP1 3DX. Chaplain: Fr S Murray SDB, St. James, Chestnut Grove, Marsh Lane, Bootle, Merseyside L20 4LX

BLAISDON SALESIAN SCHOOL PAST PUPILS ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE MEETING
- DRAFT MINUTES

Sunday 39th August 2009 at 10.00am. Blaisdon Village Community Hall

Those Present: ALLEN Roger, BRADY Anthony, DRUMMEY David, DUGGAN Liam, FERRY Alan, HOWE Wayne, JAY Martin, METCALFE David, METCALFE Pearl, NUTCHER Eric, CHARLES SPRINGETT, SMITH Nicola, STANTON Lawrence, WARD John - WHELEHAN Donald, YOUNG Pat

Apologies: Terry O'Neill **MINUTE TAKER:** Tony Brady

AGENDA

1. Fraternal Welcome & Report from Our President
2. Response to President & Introductory Prayer from Father Sean Murray SDB
3. Report from Hon. Treasurer
4. President's Invitation to Membership for Hon. Secretary - Nominations
5. Election of New Officers or Endorsement of those presently serving
6. Any Other Business
7. Date of next Committee Meeting

David Drummey, as Chair, opened the Meeting. Father Sean not being in attendance, David moved straight to **Item 1:**

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: - Tabled

Dear Blaisdon Old Boy's Welcome once again to our Informal Annual Reunion/Get-together. Welcome also to all our guests, and our new Treasurer Tony Brady. It is good that we are still able to meet up in Blaisdon and use the Village Hall as a meeting place and its facilities to enable us to hold a Reunion Buffet, also thanks to the local W.I. for their help today to make the day a success. As regards Membership Contributions, at present, I see no need for any this year as our present funds are more than adequate to cope, (see latest Bank Balance Statement,) this also applies to the costs of the Buffet etc; at this Re-union. However, it is for the Members present to decide on this issue. Please remember all of our Blaisdon Old Boy's who cannot manage to attend due to ill health and keep them in your prayers. We all look forward to you keeping in contact and up to date with any news or items of interest either by Phone, Email or Letter.

I wish you all the best of health and a great year ahead. Charles W Springett.

The suggestion to dispense with set charges was not accepted. Unanimous.

The Chairman moved to Agenda **Item 3:**

TREASURER'S REPORT: - Tabled

On the invitation of The Association's President, I effectively became Treasurer in September 2008. My account of how I have managed the Association's funds is specific to the Statements numbered 3 4 & 5. For Member's convenience, I have set them out in flow order in an easily followed format. As can be seen, few calls have been made on our funds. Payments set out in the Five Statements have been made against Invoices retained on file.

Statement 1. Payments = £108.90 for Outlay on Recollections Book

Statement 2. Payments = £440.00 for Catering Annual Re-Union 2008

Statement 3. Payments = £79.15 Beverages for Annual Re-Union 2008 Receipts =
£50.00 Member's Subscriptions

Statement 4. Payments = NIL

Receipts = £50.00 2008 Re-Union Auction Takings

Statement 5. Payments = NIL.

Total Expenditure: 10th April 2008 - 5th August 2009 - £728.05

Current Balance: £3,871.41 as at 5/8/2009

As interim Treasurer, I thank the previous Treasurer - John Plevy - for his stewardship and am willing to continue to serve the Association in the position of Treasurer, provided I am voted to it, and would ask for a Proposer and Seconder from Members. I thank Claire Lewis (Personal Customer Services) Barclay's, Gloucester Southgate Street Branch.

Member's attention is drawn to the need that personal cheques, for the Federation's Mission work, to be personal cheques made out to "Salesians of Don Bosco", to attract additional and valuable 28% Gift Aid. See details on Blaisdon Website, or copy and paste it onto your form so those without access to www. can comply, if they wish.

The Treasurer sought clarification on whether cost of Lunch & Subscriptions were compulsory?

The Chairman moved to Agenda **Items 4 & 5** (combined):

There being no nominations, John Ward volunteered to serve as Acting Secretary.

Proposed: Tony Brady. **Seconded:** Roger Allen. Vote: Unanimous.

Tony Brady agreed to continue as Treasurer.

Proposed: Lawrence Stanton. **Seconded:** Alan Ferry. Vote: Unanimous.

The President having expressed his wish to stand down after 13 years of service, Tony Brady proposed himself. **Seconded:** John Ward. Vote: Unanimous. A further vote was taken on whether the role of President could be combined with that of Treasurer?

Proposed: Roger Allen. **Seconded:** John Ward. Vote: 15 In Favour. 1 Abstention.

Item 6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

1. President to consult with Committee Officers before spending funds: Vote: Unanimous

2. Lunch cost and Subs to be voluntary and not compulsory: Vote: Unanimous

3. A copy of The Association's Constitution to be sent to all those who attended the Meeting.
4. Pat Young tabled resignation of Terry O'Neill.
5. Liam Duggan proposed a Vote of Thanks for Terry. This was unanimously endorsed. Liam added that an acknowledgement of all Terry's work for the Association over many years be Minuted. Agreed unanimously.

Item 7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Sunday 31st August 2010

The Chairman thanked everyone present for participating in a very business-like Meeting and invited them to visit the Salesian Commemorative Grave after the Parish Mass.

President's REPORT BACK ON BLAISDON RE-UNION 2009

Saturday: Roger Allen, with whom and his wife Corinne I stayed in their Lydbrooke home, The Forest of Dean, visited George & Beryl Austin - mid-morning - in the nearby village of Yorkley. George was the Blaisdon Hall, landscape gardener from the 1940s-1970s. I am the godfather of their daughter Susan: Bidy Skeffington nee Keating is her Godmother. We moved on to Gloucester to visit the dying Bernard Grace. When we got to his house we spotted Charles Springett and Eric Nutter leaving. I hailed them: Charlie Springett who I had never previously met but recognised from 'photos, agreed to meet up and talk later in Blaisdon.

While we were visiting Barney Grace, Father Sean Murray arrived. I had earlier apologised for failing to bring a promised 1978 Old Boy's Group 'photo including Barney. I echoed this disappointment to Father Sean who by good fortune had it in his car and produced it. He stayed on with the gathered family group and we left. Roger and I then did a "Memory Lane" round the Barton Street area where he lodged during his years as an engineering apprentice.

Later we moved on to the Blaisdon village 2.00/4.00 pm for informal gathering. In the Old School House/Community Hall light refreshment - biscuits and tea/coffee were set by. Across the way, 10 were people sitting on The Red Hart Pub seats - 4 of whom turned out to be Old Boys. One of whom was CWS. We joined the others who, it transpired, were related to the OB's. Dave Drummey - OB who lives in Bream near Chepstow - agreed to Chair the planned Sunday morning Meeting. CWS was stressed but we explained that it would be easier for him on the day, and we wanted him to participate in rather than control the Meeting and stick to the Agenda, as time was limited to half an hour. CWS said he had prepared a written Report and would table it.

I explained to CWS that BOB's Assc. official Meeting would be Minuted by me and on open record. We established the starting time of the proposed Sunday Meeting (10am) and Roger Allen and me offered to arrive early to set up the side room and arrange the main hall for the Mass. CWS told us to be there at ten to ten. We then drove Eric Nutter to visit a farmer friend near Huntley - he has kept in touch with his friend Rees since the 1940s. Following that most pleasant visit we dropped Eric off by The Old Mill, Blaisdon, his B&B stop-over with CWS.

Sunday: To his great credit, Dave Drummey started the Meeting dead on time. The early ten minutes were used to set a layout, according to John Ward, of the temporary chapel and various non-OB arrivals, including parishioners, completed the seating arranging and everything required for the priest's arrival. The Meeting's business was completed and the WI's advance catering party arrived to shoo us out of our side-room.

Most people stood out in the yard for a breather while the parishioners arrived. Mass was then celebrated

in the presence of about 150 souls by Fathers Sean, Aidan & Deacon Jim Richards. After Mass, 16 OBs and relatives of the deceased walked up to and gathered round the Salesian plot in St. Michael's churchyard and Fr. Sean Murray SDB completed his inimitable remembrances. He had not attended the earlier BOB's Assc., Meeting. Other followers went down to The Red Hart for a pre-prandial or talked in groups al fresco. About 50 to sixty people dined. Speeches on the usual themes were made.

In my speech, I compared and contrasted the BOB's Assc, with the past and the present. The old informal approach relating to use of the Association's funds no longer applied, particularly in the light of how the great top financial institutions had behaved and now the smallest constituted Associations must comply, with strict governance, on how income and expenditure are accounted for. This new approach was not an intended slight on our Association's past practice but it is now the best time to place it on a Constitutional and Business footing. I said that my knowledge of the 1930s and 1940s Old Boy's connection was scanty, but evidence as readable in Eric Natcher's new book and contributions to Blaisdon Re-Collections - Norman Taylor, Mike McKenna - and by others of those generations, showed that Old Boys were helped by the Salesians in an ad hoc way.

What I was qualified to speak with authority on was the work of the greatly loved Father George Hilton SDB MBE RIP. Sometime in 1957, he came into the Blaisdon Hall OB's/Gardens/Grounds/Farm-worker's Refectory and related how some Old Boys were experiencing financial hardship due to unemployment and family problems. He could not break confidences but proposed a "whip round." George Austin, Mike Turnbull, John Dunbar, Lawrence Stanton, Alan Ferry, Vincent (Faulkenbridge) Shaw, Roger Allen gave money. From then on a cash call was repeated by Fr. George whenever necessary. As time went on, visiting Old Boys using the hospitality of Blaisdon Hall contributed to the "Old Boy's Fund." The Blaisdon Old Boy's Association flourished.

Because of the trust and goodwill that marked that time, it would have been considered impertinent to question Fr. Hilton aka "The Bishop" about the Income & Expenditure of The Association at its yearly Re-Unions. Fr. George would briefly refer to welfare calls on The Fund and acknowledge donations, ending with the conclusion that all was sound for another year. There was never any charge for the Salesian hospitality provided in Blaisdon Hall: voluntary contribution was the norm. This was the custom and practice that continued virtually to recent times. The new Treasurer had during his inaugural year devised a simple formula for accounting The Association's funds and this had been accepted and endorsed at a Meeting held that morning.

Turning to the need to acknowledge the past work of the retiring President Charles Springett, I asked Len Carter to do the honours, knowing that he would convey the sincerest sentiments. This was accomplished by Len in his customary style. It was then proposed by John Ward that a suitable retiring gift, to mark CWS's many years of work for The Association, be purchased from funds and presented at a convenient time. This was agreed by all present.

Finally, I mentioned the need to clarify the role of Father Sean Murray SDB who, for whatever reasons, has been less involved in recent times. I asked that he become once again central to the Association's continuing existence. I related that I had within the past 24 hrs, witnessed his comforting role at the death-bed of one of our original members - Barney Grace - and a source of solace to Barney's wife and family. That was an example of the pastoral golden thread that unites our Salesian Association and binds it to Blaisdon. He should be, from now on, clearly defined as the BOB's Assc., official Chaplain and I was now asking that he accept that position. This was supported in acclamation from all present. Father Sean then spoke on his love for the past pupils and his long attachment to The BOB's Assc., and that he was honoured to accept the designation. I welcomed this reponse and promised to work closely with him for the advancement of The Blaisdon Salesian School Old Boy's Association.

BLAISDON ASSOCIATION REPORT TO NATIONAL COUNCIL

The most significant event of 2009 was the retirement of our President after 13 years service. Charles Springett (BH.1945-47) had lately coped with poor health and a sight-threatening condition. As a mark of thanks, the Past Pupils who attended the Annual Reunion and AGM at Blaisdon in late August, voted to present Charles with a commemorative gift. This was made to Charles together with a Citation created by John Ward. The occasion was combined with the celebration of the life of Bernard "Barney" Grace RIP (BH.1945-46) who was a continuous contributing Association Member and annual attendee at Reunions since the 1950s.

At the Association's Annual General Meeting, Tony Brady (BH.1952-55) was elected President to serve for 3 years. He will continue to act as Treasurer, having taken up that position in September 2007. Wayne Howe (BH.1978-84) has volunteered his services as Secretary to take over in due course from John Ward (BH.1946-48) who was elected Acting Secretary.

Tony's main objective is to consolidate and continue the work of Charles among the widely dispersed Membership and maintain the warm affection and respect of the Blaisdon village community. These aspects are fostered in no small measure by Father Aidan Murray SDB, Newent & Blaisdon Parish Priest.

The Association is in good heart with loyal representation across the generations stretching from the 1930's to the 1990's. Unlike our National Brotherhood, which welcomes yearly school leavers into its respective Associations, Blaisdon's declines each year. However, a strong tradition of reaching out to surviving relatives and maintaining Salesian links with them, ensures our family continues to be sustained.

The Association funds are healthy with a sound residuary base and a strength that is nurtured by a core of donors. They faithfully bolster the fluctuating flow of funds from a Membership that prefers to make voluntary contributions while always ready to respond to a cash call when appropriate.

In that regard, my Christmas Message will allude to the £5.000 shortfall in the National Federation's Target of £16.000 and attempt to rally support for the Salesian African Education Scholarship Appeal. My special thanks are extended to our Friends in Blaisdon, to John Ward for his enthusiastic work in running our blaisdonbrotherhood.info website and Father Sean Murray SDB, Blaisdon Association Chaplain.

Lastly, renewed condolences to the family members and friends of Blaisdon, Salesian School Priests, lay-Brothers and Past Pupils who have died during the past year. In our hearts we cherish them. We recall their Blaisdon service and those with whom we shared our youth. Each precious remembrance is the channel of our love.

"By Time Endeared the More."

Tony Brady - President October 2009

Blaisdon Hall up for Sale



Extract from TIMES on line.. By Marcus Binney 5th September 2009

“Against the odds the grandiose Victorian country house is back in fashion. By the 1950s, indeed the 1930s, most of these mighty piles of masonry were deemed ugly and uncomfortable to live in. High ceilings and vast draughty staircase halls made them impossible to heat. Schools and institutions were the only takers.



Blaisdon Hall, in Gloucestershire, for sale for £4.75 million, represents the reverse of this trend. Type in Blaisdon on the web and you find happy memories of its day as a school run by the Salesian Fathers. Now it is back on offer as a single giant des. res. of 33,000sq ft and 68 rooms, with great hall, morning room, music room, ballroom and 11 bedrooms.



It comes with 85 acres of parkland and wood, approached through a gabled gate lodge. The half-mile-long drive delivers you to a terrace with a stunning panorama over the Severn Valley. The huge carriage arch over the front door, topped by a four-storey tower, is a Cotswold-style counterpart of Prince Albert's Osborne House on the Isle of Wight.



The gabled garden front has a trio of splendid bay windows, ending in best Victorian fashion with a handsome conservatory, with pairs of arched windows surmounted by glazed roundels. Around the windows are delicate carved stone details.

The man who has nursed Blaisdon back to life is Tony Haynes. With a fine art gallery in Broadway, the most fashionable village in the Cotswolds, he knew how to find good craftsmen. For the stained glass windows he called in Michelle Butler, who was working on the medieval glass in Gloucester Cathedral. Every missing chink has been replaced with matching glass, and new coloured glass introduced in the tower. Stonework repairs were done by one of the masons at the cathedral. Ornamental ceilings, which proved to be papier mâché, have been repaired, and missing pendants put back on the stairs.



As you walk along the terrace you can see no trace of institutional use, and the classroom block that stood on the main lawn has been replaced by a water garden. It's only on the raised terrace behind the house that you find, along with the Edwardian stables, a run of modern school buildings.

On the first floor the grand stair opens through a pair of stone arches on to an 86ft-long ballroom. The main bedrooms all have dressing rooms as well as spacious bathrooms. The attic storey has an 80ft-long entertainment hall over the ballroom, in addition to the 30ft-long games room.

Blaisdon Hall was built in the 1870s by a Gloucester architect, F.S. Waller, for Edwin Crawshay. Crawshay had to sell after buying an ironworks just as the industry went into decline. The purchasers, the Stubs family, added the spectacular conservatory to Waller's design and threw out a still larger service wing in 1906-09, which provided a boot room, laundry and ironing room. There is now also a sauna, steam room and gym.



In continental Europe a house of this size would be called a palace. What Blaisdon needs is a Midlands business magnate with an empire to run, who likes large parties and wants to work from home.”

To enjoy a stunning video tour of Blaisdon Hall's magnificent interiors and spectacular gardens log on to the selling Agents, Knight Frank, and follow the links.

Sourced by Tony Brady 10/10/2009

Hi! John,

My thanks to you and Tony Brady for the article and photographs relating to the sale of Blaisdon Hall. I am sure your readers will, like ourselves have experienced a deep feeling of nostalgia and sorrow to learn that once again, the ownership of our 'Alma Mater' is about to change. My sadness seems to increase with each change of owner; not that it has anything to do with the owner per se; but I fear that with each such transaction, the marvellous work done within its walls by the Salesian Fathers will be forgotten by the local community. What is certain of course, is that the affectionate memories held by our members will never fade; neither will our gratitude to St. John Bosco be forgotten.

PS Tony & John - Please keep going on our behalf.

Mike McKenna

Dear Michael,

On Tony's behalf and myself, I thank you for your kind words. They are really appreciated. We will continue to do our very best for the Blaisdon Association.

Best wishes,

John



Charles Springett's Retirement Gift from Blaisdon Association

In recognition of Charlie's 12 years as President of the Blaisdon Association of Salesian Old Boys, it was agreed at the Reunion in August 2009, to purchase a suitable gift and to present this at a convenient date, as soon as practical. This has now been accomplished and a Tom-Tom Go 530 Sat-Nav was presented to Charlie, after Barney Grace's Funeral, together with a gold framed Certificate. Below is a copy of the Certificate and a photo of the presentation:



Photo of Presentation group: Charles Springett, Alan Ferry, pat Young, John Ward, Norman Murray, Fr. Sean Murray SDB and Len Carter