

Seamus Burke RIP - Seamus was four years older than me, so whilst at Clapham College, our paths rarely crossed although I clearly remember him whilst he was in the sixth form. I also recall his close group of friends from his year: John Hickey, Chris Kavanagh and Ray Gately friendships that endured all his life. His contemporaries were Harry Hickland, Paul West, Gerry Taggart, Matthew Murtagh, Tom O'Dee and Jim Cronin.

When I joined the Old Boys in 1976, Seamus was current the 1st XI goalkeeper (under the captaincy of Mick McGrath) and I got to know Seamus over the many training sessions on Tuesday evenings at the College. He was one a rare breed of Clapham goalies that actually went of the training run. (The charge that started at the College, along Nightingale Lane, Wandsworth Common, Broomwood Rd and back to the College). He always wore a yellow collared jersey, both for training and matches. I'm sure that was the only jersey he ever possessed and it lasted his entire playing career. Seamus was a fearless goalkeeper; never afraid of being injured (although he frequently was). He was always dependable, although his time keeping left much to be desired. For team departures at Balham Station, invariably Seamus would always arrive half an hour late, despite living closest to the station. His rationale was that it saved him time hanging around for the last person to turn up!

Seamus was in the side that won the LOB Novets Cup in 1983 against Old Aloysians captained by Eamonn Kearns.

Seamus was also an excellent cricketer. He regularly played both on Saturday and Sunday. His goalkeeping agility enabled him to become a specialist gully fielder. I can still recall those spectacular one handed catches, which often took my breath away. He would consider these catches to be just routine! He later became cricket 2nd XI Captain which, under his leadership, was the most enjoyable social cricket I ever played. (The team included Lev Myatt, Mick Butler, Ted Hayter, John McGuire, Gary Knight, Graham Hudson, Trevor Jones and Eric Skiggs)

Off the field Seamus made a major contribution to the running of the Association and the Sports Sections. In the late 1970s and 80s, on Monday evenings, under the direction of Derek Rowe, the football teamsheets were produced and due to Seamus' often late arrivals he was charged with operating the 'Banda machine' (spirit duplicator); one of the last processes of the evening before "enveloping". He was also Cricket Secretary for several years. He served on the Association's Committee for 35 years. His attendance only to be interrupted by Tottenham's home fixtures (he became a season ticket holder after he had finished playing football) His most important role was as Association Treasurer; a post he held for 13 years.

Seamus will be sorely missed. He had a remarkable memory, eye for detail, and was an eternal optimist. He contributed so much to the sound financial position of the Association and was a part of its very fabric. He was an expert on military history and, on the centenary of the First World War. He never lived to see the new plaque, now erected in the College Chapel, which would have given him great satisfaction.

Seamus never forgot who he was or where he was from. He was loyal to the Association and its members. We loved him and we will miss him. Please keep him in your prayers.

May he rest in Peace. Eddie O'Brien