

Cecil Pocock (History) very much into local politics in Chiswick as I recall--drove a blue ford prefect circa '56

John Gibb (English) Had a very Edinburgh "dourness" called us "boy" and hit us with our own gym shoe !

Brother Joseph (ead) went off to join the missions in what was then Nyasaland and got struck dead by a bolt of lightning !

Replaced by Brother Peter (Latin) Enjoyed caning and practicing his sarcasm on little boys!

Gerald Smith (music) organist and choirmaster Dominics Priory in Hampstead.very thin –focus on Speech Day Concert

Mr Barrier(Physics) used to apply his punishments and lines at a minimum Of 200 a time.

Brother Nicholas complained about the decadence brought on by the 'welfare state' and all other ills to the Labour Government of the time.

School Silver Jubilee

Was celebrated by a fete at which I and some of my classmates took part in a Gymnastics display.

Brother Damian (Latin) Used to split the class in half and award each side 100 points. he would then ask questions 1 point added for correct answer and 1 point deducted for incorrect answer. the object of the exercise was to score as many points as possible to win the period competition. We of course tried to lose points as quickly as possibly by always giving incorrect answers much to Bro Damien's dismay - he never caught on as to what was actually happening !!

Bro Dunstan

(who was about 200 years old when I started in 1960)had 2 fingers missing on one hand. According to my Father, who also went to Clapham College, this was the result of an 'illegal' experiment during the last few weeks of my Father's attendance. I suffered a clip round the head on my first day from Bro Dunstan who had waited all those years to get his own back -
1 Alpha Sept 1970

A Few more for the Alpha Register.....John Kelly,Pat Travers & Paul McCormack...who left in the 3rd/4th yr?

I once bumped into Paul Butler (definitely Alpha) in a pub who much to my surprise could recite the entire Alpha register in the correct sequence. At that time in my life and especially that night in the pub I wasn't entirely sure what schools I had been to never mind who was in my bloody class! By the way I am pretty sure I was an 'A'.

Class Register. Form 1A .

Form Master: Br Christopher (Gumley)

Please forgive any omissions and spellings but, as far as I can remember, the daily roll call went like this:

(John) Alleppo, (Brian) Baker, (Wilson) Bowers , (Greg 'Jeff') Byrne, (Kevin) Cassandro, (Michael) Daley, (Aidan) Downing, (Danny) Doyle, (Charlie) Efford, (Jimmy) Gavigan, (Kevin) Gleeson, (Jimmy) Harris, (Jimmy) Hay, (?) Hierinkevich (sp?), (Michael) Higgins, (Michael 'Ada') Larkin, (Richard) Lipinski, (?) McCarthy, (John) McCarthy, (Kevin) McNamara, (Edward) Madden, (Edward) Mason, (Brendan) Milligan, (?) Morris, (John) O'Leary, (Andrew) Pink, (Peter) Rayer, (Jimmy) Stokes, (Edward) Urbanski, (Peter) White, (Bobby) Wise, (Stefan) Witowski, (Peter) Wood.

Eric Tope (Maths) Eric's famous weapon was the ruler.... On a cold day very painful.

Brother Peter must have ended up with arthritis with the canings he dished out.

I was an Alpha and remember many of the funny names that we gave some of the Masters and lay teachers.

One in particular was **Bro Cajetan** who went under the nick name of **Sanatogen**, because of his nervous propensity. There was **Mr Atkinson (slimey)**, **Mr Begley (Moon Man)**, **Bro Christopher (Gumley)**. There was **Mr Stursaker** who had Ginger hair, hence Bick, as in ginger biscuit. He was quite fierce and used to give the ruler across the knuckles. Ouch! especially in the cold weather. **Bro Peter** was also handy with the cane. **Bill Blight** would ask algebraic questions such as $a^2+b^2+a^2+b^2$. If you didn't know the answer, then that meant a wallop around the buttocks with a slipper and the phrase Bosh Tosh as the slipper descended in a direct path across the backside. It is little wonder that I ended up useless at Maths and allied subjects. Deep impressions indeed. All I can say that I was glad to leave when the time came.

Arthur Williams' brother played a mean electric guitar and drowned half of us out but it was great fun!

6th Form

Great fun - no work done but great fun! Playing pool down The George at lunchtime making 2 halves last 3 hours, The Nightingale for a few pints of Youngs Bitter,

Garvey's A Level History class-can anyone remember the 2 shows we put on? The first was 'Chocs Away' a WWII epic 'written' by egomaniac director Dave Wheeler with additional material by anyone else who could be bothered. The teachers were arguing over who would play guest planes ie charging around arms extended pretending to shoot down other planes - **Davo** was particularly good.

The 2nd show was 'Davo-This Is Your Life'- enough said! They both played to packed houses in the 6th form common room so does anyone else remember them or was i taking acid at the time! Hazy. As for the teachers I find to it hard to bear any of them any malice whatsoever.

Mr Terry Clegg – possibly the craziest of them all. As most know he taught Physics – a subject the most of us did not understand. Cleggy referred to us as “That lad etc etc” and is credited with the statement “Gentlemen perspire, and plebs sweat”. To this day I still have no idea what that really means or why Cleggy said it. But he was pretty fair on the whole but mad as a March Hare!!!

Mr Colin Garvey – History! Most famous for dying his hair dark and leaving his sideburns ginger. I remember him on my very first day attempting to scare us all by saying “I am the boss and no one had better mess me around”. I was convinced but as time went on Garvey turned out to be a good teacher and a fair/nice bloke.

Mr Begley (Smelly). Famous for his pungent odour of sweat and tobacco. I think he taught Latin but can't be sure. The pupils gave him a terrible time. I had many a laugh at the poor man's expense.

Mr Eric Tope (Maths) Fearsome teacher who seemed to have a considerable dislike of First, Second- and Third-year students. No one dared mess with him as he was prone to anger. Good teacher but did not suffer fools at all.

Mr James (PE). Short Welsh rugby player. I remember many a time getting slipped by him for having a speck of dirt on my white plimsolls. Many a backside was saved when we use to steal chalk to whiten our shoes.

Mr Scanlon (Geography) Also called Flappers because of his large ears and Jock because he use to pronounce Geography “Jockraphy”!

Mr “Johnny” Gibb (English). He had quite a fearsome reputation. Good friend of the Head Cecil Pocock. Johnny was also the assistant head. Very authoritative but fair.

Jake the Art Teacher – Not sure what his second name was! A hairy hippy art type and very laid back but not someone to take advantage off. He has a chair with a broken wooden arm that he would remove and threaten us with. Not sure I remember him ever hitting anyone with it.

Father Hung – I think he taught French. The only real thing I remember about him is that John Kelly clobbered him with a wastepaper bin. Kelly had placed it above the door meaning for some other pupil to open the door and the bin to fall on him. Unlucky for Kelly, Father Hung came through the door first. Johnny Gibb just said “Kelly- go home” and he was suspended.

Mr Burnham – French! He was a young trendy guy and seemed quite a good bloke. Only had him for the first year I think and possibly the third.

Mr Casserly – Chemistry. He would sometimes say “Come ere you” and when you did you got suffered. I think he once got in trouble with Mr Burnham when they both got a bit drunk at a school event one evening.

Gobbo – Music! I have no idea what his real name was. Tall, skinny, large Adams Apple, nose and ears! He taught us music in some old shed at the back of the school. I have a vague memory of having to buy a recorder from him for 69p. I never could play it.

Chinhead AKA Mr Webster – Latin. He His life was made a misery by the pupils. Very unusual body shape and highly likely mad. Apparently, he was an extremely clever man but even his colleagues took the mick out of him too.

Mr Kevin Glyn (Religion). A small quite serious man. I don’t remember him that well but he was pretty OK I think.

Mr Casey (Maths). He only took us for Maths for a couple of years. “KC” was very serious and did not appear to have any sense of humour.

Cecil Pocock!!!

A weird and wonderful man. A staunch Tory and a JP, took over as Head from Brother Peter He taught History to some and British Constitution to others. I have far too many stories about him to list here. My favourite one is when he took us for Religion one school year. For some strange reason he strode into the class on the first day and then proceeded to tell us all about sex and the facts of life. Not sure what connection to Religious Instruction this had but he told “it was important to get this out of the way once and for all”. Many of my peers sniggered when he mentioned erect penises and sperm – me included! Cecil’s bark was not as bad as his bite but I still respect the man to this day. Cecil bellowing at me “YOU AGAIN” will always stay with me.

1970 Alpha

As for whom ever use to take Paul Kitson's sarnies, it may have been the same people who took mine on a regular basis. They were McGarahan, Finnerty, Hurly and Moloski. A fearsome quartet - well, just the first two to be honest.

As for the addition of Paul McCormack (or was it McCormill) he did leave in the 3rd to go live in Ireland.

1952 Alpha Register

Some more names to add are **Milburn Murphy Parkes and Smythe**

I remember **Bro. Nicholas**, Head of Clapham College evacuated to E.Grinstead where he and some 20 of us lived in a grand Lutyens house, Barton St Mary. We re-evacuated to Taunton when the Doodle-bugs got to be too much.

Back at Clapham after the War I remember he somehow found an excuse to play 78 records to us in class, of the Paganini Violin Concertos. I heard later he left the Brotherhood and married. In E.Grinstead also,

Bro. Dunstan smoked a pipe and encouraged us to collect various plants which he somehow made into a 'herb tobacco'. We 13 yr olds thought we could do the same and made roll-up ciggies from it. I have never smoked since, and I am eternally grateful to Bro Dunstan for that!

Mr Barrier, We had an amazing ex-army Sgt Major type PE teacher with a waxed moustache with long points,

Mr Bambridge. Special treat was 'Pirates'. With the school for 25 years, he retired in 1949.

Mr Escott, Geog. gave me a letter of introduction to Hammersmith School of Art, and I left Clapham after O levels

Dr McNamara always wore an academic gown, as did most of the lay staff. The sleeves of his were weighted with fir cones and could be quite a weapon when swung at the back of your head!

But the happiest memories were of **Bro. Joseph**. Tall and swarthy, taught French, became Headmaster after the war. Marked homework in a beautiful hand in green ink. Took a party of boys to Switzerland in 1947. Sadly, he was 'posted' to a Mission in Nyasaland, where he was killed by lightning.

Great characters too, were Bro. Damian and Bro. Alphonsus, affectionately known as 'Doggy'. And before Bro. Joseph I was taught French by Bro. Xavier, known as 'Zavvy', which I always took to be from 'Savez-vous' as much as his name. Headmaster in Manchester at one time. ah so many memories ... some good, others not so!

I particularly remember:

Bro Peter, six of the best for me for turning round in assembly when someone whispered "Ryan" - and I never said a word! –

Terry Clegg as you could always get him to demonstrate his fitness by doing one-arm pushups in the Physics room (a rumour he'd been an Olympian contestant - anyone know the truth?);

Tony Warr - and my love of Latin, despite not being able to demonstrate it in the form required at O level (he was very occasionally good for a fag too!);

Bro Gumley and crown bowling on the back green;

The Brothers Tope - both scary i

Oh and **Mr Begley** the English teacher, who insisted on our calling Ralph (Lord of the Flies) "Rafe", would occasionally wear two ties, and fall asleep during student recitations of some work or other, at which point the story-telling would get rather salacious!

1952

Bro. Joseph:

Headmaster when I was in 1 alpha, went to Africa. Got struck by lightning, found in rondavel still sitting in chair with fag in-hand. Or so it is told?

Bro. Peter:

Headmaster after above. Caned me for firing a retort-stand-tube cannon out of physics lab window. Never found the ball-bearing load? Also threatened expulsion when someone took lightbulbs out of train compartment on way to sports. (Wasn't me!) Taught RI and sex-education. (Latter going very red and looking at ceiling.) Some in 4 alpha didn't know such stuff!

Billy Blight: Maths. Had conker in gown, would point at you saying, "x," you had to say, "x-squared," or get hit on head. Made Parkes dress backwards as he was always turning to the rear. Made us remove shoes in Detention, mixed them up and left for us to sort-out the pile, as soon as he entered 'Hollywood.'

Joe Church:

Maths. Chris Pullen put a condom in a matchbox on his desk when in 2 alpha. Joe looked at it throughout two periods then opened it. Chris owned-up and said it was 'a balloon!'

Bro Xavier:

Latin. Back was covered in 'stuff' the 'rotten-ones' flicked on it.

Alex Begley: English. Nicknamed 'Moonman' due to early acne. Lost his briefcase in 5 alpha. (Pullen threw it out of window)

Cecil Pocock:

History. Very scary when angry!

Ron Clover:

French. When in 5 alpha Chris Pullen tipped his form-cupboard forward so when Ron opened it everything fell out. Never seen such a ruddy complexion before!

Mr. Yockney:

Latin, but didn't last long as he had no control over class.

Harold Escott:

Geography. Didn't teach a lot.

Bro Dunstan (Retired):

Blew the top of his thumb off (and destroyed the bench) when I was in 2 Alpha. He applied the pestle to a mix of phosphorous, aluminium, potassium chlorate, and carbon that Dangolitis had prepared in the mortar! Ran the greenhouse where I helped for many years. Went to see him at Mayfield when he was over 80 and corresponded with him until his death.

Can still remember, however, the alpha register!

Auger;Bon throne;Bouchard;Bunce;Callaghan;Conduct;Creech;Curtis;Faron;Ford;Hogan;Howie;Lovelock;Mead;Mellor;Moody;Murphy;Peacock;Pullen;Shwenk;Smith;Whitehouse;Whyte.

What about your man **Kuligowski**? History, I believe - think he started and finished the same time I did. Northerner, had a penchant for big ties

Charles Cocks

At one time we thought he had trained at Stalag Luft 3, but it turned out to be a less good centre of excellence. I last saw him 5 or so years ago in Yorkshire enjoying a gentle happy retirement at 75 years or so

I remember Mr Morris very well but it was only after leaving and having piano lessons from a professional piano tutor, He could play only in one key, C major, and even in that key most of the notes were wrong. In hindsight I would call him a Les Dawson, not a Liberace.

Curtin: remember when I slapped him with a lump of grass after cross country...! calling me over the tannoy everyday!!!

Tope - Maths, my god he was scarey

Br. Christopher, 'Gumley' Geography and RE.

Br. Ambrose - History , I can still remember the Etruscans.

Webster, 'Chinhead', Latin

Begley, pleasant aroma abounds, English

Brennan - 'Shea',English

Clegg - Terry, Physics

Casserly - Chemistry

Female Latin teacher, the stuff of young boys dreams, wasn't there long , can't remember her name

Nebesnuik 'Nesquick' History ..Good god - I can still remember !!

Mr.Hudson

A very approachable teacher, would talk about anything. Is still teaching on the site of the old school, which is now a six form college. I met him this year when I was taking my daughter round on an open evening. Two things that surprised me, one he actually remembered me and secondly, apart from a little less hair he does not look any different.

Colin Garvey

Firm but fair, Garvey was a great teacher and probably still is. At least a third of each lesson during the more senior years were taken up with recitals from the latest Private Eye and he would wet himself with that wonderfully infectious laugh.

Coming back from Richardson Evans playing fields one Wednesday afternoon, Colin spotted **Begley (latin)** leaving the school and attempting to negotiate the traffic in Nightingale Lane on his push bike. He enthusiastically joined the 30+ boy chorus of abuse out of the coach windows which almost caused the unfortunate man's demise under a lorry. Shameful but fun!

Having said he was a great teacher, my A level history colleagues and I turned up for the exam one sweaty morning in June 78 to be greeted by Colin, who had to somehow explain to spotty youths seeing their futures flash before them, that the syllabus had been changed the previous year and it must have gone unnoticed in the Clapham/St Gerards amalgamation! "Sorry lads but none of the stuff you've got written up your sleeves will help. Just bluff it, no problem" "Bluff a completely different syllabus Garv?" Well, I think most of us managed to follow his last minute instruction and get through.

Colin has also been a wonderful mainstay of The Old Boys Association, a body that has done so much to keep friendships and that precious school spirit alive and very well. Cheers Col!

Anthony Warr Latin - Superb teacher.

Mr Clover...A very apprehensive French Teacher, I recall his first day when he stood in front of class and announced "Je m'appelle Clover" I remember thinking "Jimappel ! What a funny name ?? Speaks volumes for the level of my French capability !!

I was at Clapham College from autumn 1957 until the summer of 1963, I was in the lower sixth, when I left to go to Kingston Art School.

Teachers I remember:

Bill Blight, in his last years when I arrived but very funny. He used to have lessons when I was in the first year when he would just sit down and talk to you about Maths and tell you, "You may not understand it to start with, but eventually, the penny will drop." All I can say is, you were quite right Bill, it took me 30 years and being involved in computer programming before I even grasped what algebra was about, but good on you, you gave me a reference point.

His big trick, was taking out his glass eye and giving it a polish whilst he was talking to you !

Cecil Pocock. On the surface, a typical Tory local councillor of Chiswick and, rather appropriately, very pompous. But in reality, a really great History teacher with a genuine love of his subject and a subject I have always held dear. His trick to help you through exams was a simple one, he would tell you an anecdote about a person from those times, nothing that would appear in the exam, and you would remember it and as a result, be able to answer the question. Way decent dude !

Fat Nat – **Nathaniel Barrier.** Yep, he did have a baseball bat and true, I never understood Physics either. However, under all of that, he was a way decent man. As I remember, he drove a Ford Classic, which was like the Ford Anglia of those days, complete with a rather odd ‘cut back’ window. He happened to pass the bus stop where my elder brother Michael (who left in 1961), and I waited for the bus. If he saw us, he would always stop and give us a lift to school.

Gerald Smith – aka Gobo. I cannot say that I ever knew the man; to me he was someone with an over-slicked single strand of hair, who slavered (hence the name), when he wanted to get something he believed in across to his class. For those who remember, the status of Music and Art as part of the curriculum can be best measured by the fact that the shared facility was upstairs over the bike shed in the bit between the main building and Holyrood where the sixth form was housed.

Brother Peter – Headmaster, called everyone ‘Johnny’ – “Where’s me cap Johnny ?” and so forth. During my time, I had several canings from him but also, because my rather odd life started at an early age, several other and rather different one’s also. Six foot odd, with no chin, a Masters Degree in English from Cambridge, though he wouldn’t tell you that, I got the information about the degree from someone else. He was a genuine man, many things he didn’t understand, but he knew that, he tried to be the best that he could be and often found it rather difficult but never stopped trying his best. Overall and yes, it is based on personal experience, he was a decent man.

Basil Rathbone and yes, I kept this one to last. Basil was married to a most delightful French lady, the daughter of a French Admiral, if memory serves me right. An elfin creature who was always around as we prepared for the Christmas School play, full of encouragement and a positive joy to have on your side. The only thing that I could ever do from a very small child, was paint and draw – well, I never ever did ‘matchstick’ men. This was not an advantage to Basil who wanted to train and encourage people who didn’t realise their ‘potential’, probably before I had realised it, we were in for a 6 year war, the details of which, are far too boring to retell. If I remember rightly, when I first started at CC, Basil had a Saab car which he later traded for a VW, much to Fat Nat’s disgust, possibly being Jewish, and the 14 or so years in the past.

I took and passed my Art GCE in the Fourth Year, my A Level in the Fifth and my only ambition was to move on to Art School. Unfortunately, they changed the rules so that I had to spend a year in the Lower Sixth before I could move on to achieve my goal. For reasons that I cannot remember now, Basil and I had a falling out, the consequence of which was that I was banished from the 6th Form Art Room to a ‘cell’ underneath Holyrood. It was laterally a dungeon; brick walls the lot, bloody cold and very damp.

Ever resourceful and with the help of friends such as Alan Brickwood (still a close friend to this day), we turned it into something. I obtained an Aladdin stove which served as both heat and the ability to turn free school milk into boiling coffee, and soon we had a 'club house' going for all the disaffected.

I must disclaim all responsibility for the 'Card School' that grew up and in particular, the aborted effort to import girls from the school across the Common. Inevitably, one day, Brother Peter turned up having been informed by some snitch of a Prefect and I was left holding the baby.

My punishment (fortuitously, I had already been accepted for Art School), was a letter to my Parents and banishment to the Sixth Form Art Room. However and in the light of events, Basil had totally lost the plot by then and I didn't give up on him until the day I left.

I have no hard feelings towards him (Basil), he taught me a lot so that as I was bringing up my four children, I always attended Parents Evenings and always considered the relationship between the teacher and my child - children, very carefully with the view, of making changes, as appropriate.

Foxy

I remember Foxy (Mr King's nickname from class 1KG etc..not the Mr Fox who joined later. This was St Gerards before the emalgamation) would pick on somebody in the class from time to time and send them down to the Staff room to collect a tin of Elbow Grease.

Mr Greene

Sean O'Connell wrote: What was the name of our PE teacher?

In 64-65 that was Mr Greene. Welsh bloke. Quite pleasant in retrospect. "Astride together, astride together" among other energetic epithets.

Brian Saunders

What a great guy! Thoroughly enjoyed learning le français with him. Please give him my best wishes if you come across him. Brian is now teaching German? Is that right? We could have done with that instead of pointless Latin, IMHO. (Discuss)

John Kelly - Alpha

hi anybody i started in 1951 and left in 1955. i can remember cecil pocock,bit of a tartar in my day 51 years ago! I got into a Grammar School. It was Clapham College in SW London. I am not sure if that is considered posh but considering I lived in New Cross SE London I suppose it must have been. It was originally a boarding school not long before I started there in 1970. I think I only got in there because my older brother went there first.

The teachers there were a mixture of a few Christian Brothers left over from the old days - they were vicious buggers -and your bog standard teachers.

I have memories of Latin, British Constitution, Royal Blue blazer & cap and having the crap beaten out of me which most of the time I probably deserved. At the time I use to hate it mainly because I was bullied for a year or two. It is only now I realise it was not as bad as it I thought it was at the time.

There are some ridiculously funny things I remember. Cecil Pocock the Tory Headmaster, Jake the Hippy Art Master and Eric Tope Maths teacher (who was pretty ok to be honest) Miss Reeble (young, sexy lady who taught German and something else). Used to sit on the teachers desk at the front of the class in her short skirt !

Mrs Reeves. Do you remember coming back to school after a summer break to find that she had induced new life into herself/looks and looked a million dollars. I think her marriage had broken up.

Mr Khum. Taught Design & Technology.

Mr Price. Was he Head of Science ?

From Frank Fahey: Head of Year 77 - 80

I can remember well Cecil Pocock's incessant use of the tannoy. I used to have a Year assembly once a week and inevitably at the end Cecil would interrupt the prayer reading or such like. I encouraged him to press the Mike button 10 seconds before he was going to speak. that worked well. there was also a wonderful Pocock tannoy quote at the end of one day. Colin Garvey, Paul Davidson and I broke up with laughter. Quote" Would Miss smith please come to my office, I am ready for you!!"

Miss Hribal. Was my ex Form teacher in the 5th year - I guess she was in her early /mid twenties, then, she used to go out with the drummer from Haircut 100, yes really!! Very fond memories, of a really lovely woman. Now a happily married mother of three.

Mr Sanders. Taught French and German, had three son's at the school, is now a leading light in Coxa, the old boy's assoc, and has only just discovered his nickname.. apparently!!

Mr Price. was Ex Deputy head, and homework form collector!!

Mr Murrillo was The Italian teacher who used to teach French

Mr Casey was the Scottish PE teacher who had come out of the Army/RAF... 'You address me as Sir' ..., really nice bloke.. With the benefit of hindsight even his PE lessons weren't all that hard, it's just that we were all really unfit kids. (I recently ran all the bridges on the dreaded Richardson/Evans river run, took me about 20 minutes and was a piece of cake!!

Mr Fountain (Also passed on) and Mr Coppins, now selling insurance in Belgium, I hear.

Mr Power - yes I do remember the "H Block prank" as you describe it and the resultant assembly/inquiry that followed. Pocock "interviewed" everyone in the Gym and ended up asking me to stay behind.

With Frank Fahey and Davo in tow (they knew what Cecil was about to do), he then claimed that two boys had grassed me up and that I had trashed the room. I was absolutely raging as I knew I DID NOT do it - I knew who did. He threatened to expel me UNLESS the person(s) did come forward. Luckily, with a bit of persuasion, two people, who were leaving anyhow, rightly took the rap after I had negotiated with **Fahey and Davo** that they would not be expelled but only suffer a short suspension.