

## ONGOING UK XAVERIAN ACTIVITY BY FORMER ALUMNI

September and October 2025 marked the end of two significant parts of Xaverian history with the death of the last ~~Belgium~~ Belgian (Bro. Adelbert) and English (Bro. Philip) Xaverians. The work of our ~~Belgium~~ Belgian and English brothers continues in different ways by dedicated lay people. Unlike Belgium, however, there is no formal UK Xaverian presence. It closed years ago. Xaverian UK ministries concluded but Xaverian history has not ended. It continues with Xaverian College in Manchester and St. Francis Xavier Catholic Sixth Form College (Clapham College's successor) in south London. Alumni originally associated with this school remain part of the current SFX school and are known as the Clapham Old Xaverians' Association—COXA. They are assisting the Congregation rehabilitate, maintain and put in place an ongoing maintenance plan for the Mayfield College Xaverian Cemetery, which is over 100 years old. Past plans for the cemetery's maintenance failed and it fell into a sad state—grave markers and grounds.

In recent years there has been a major turnaround that was mentioned before in bulletins but now is an appropriate time to provide some historical context on Clapham and Mayfield Colleges and how the changes occurred. What was almost an out of sight and out of mind issue was brought to the Congregation's attention by COXA. Several COXA members visited Mayfield to pay their respects to former teachers and were saddened by what they saw. They contacted the Generalate offering assistance. This has been ongoing for ten years. A lot of regular work by some of the alumni themselves and contactors they selected and monitored for the Congregation has come to the point that the current property owners—the Mayfield Grange—can easily include the cemetery with the Grange's own ground's maintenance.

### Clapham College

Clapham College was in south London and from there to Mayfield College today is about a 90-minute drive mostly on country roads once you are away from London. These two former Xaverian schools have a very old and illustrious history that predates the existence of most of the current Xaverian schools in the US, and all in Kenya and the DRC.

The Xaverian Brothers came to Clapham College in 1897 and continued directing the school until ~~1989~~ 1970 when the brothers withdrew. The ~~local~~ Archdiocese of Southwark continued the school renaming it St. Francis Xavier Catholic Sixth Form College. Today it is a thriving large school, and the former Clapham College Alumni (COXA) continue their connection with the school. In 2026 COXA marks its 100<sup>th</sup> Year anniversary. Besides keeping Xaverian in their title, they named their regular booklet publication Concordia.

To come full circle with Xaverian connections, the school recently added a display of relics in their chapel that were given to a graduate for safekeeping when the Xaverian Generalate moved from the UK to the US. The display has descriptions with it to make the connection

to the Xaverian Brothers. The relics were part of the Generalate's chapel in Belgium then Rome, and finally in London. Prior to the US move, the Generalate served as offices and residence. The US site has only offices. Now the relics have a proper display and description in a chapel that also memorializes other Xaverian connections.



The current school's front entrance. Today's campus is much expanded but includes the original parts around an inside courtyard including the chapel below.



The relics are inside the three cases which themselves are beautiful. The cases were designed by a prominent Belgium craftsman when the Xaverian Generalate was in Bruges. They are now displayed in a safe

wall cabinet with a description of what they are and their Xaverian relationship. The display joins several others that highlight parts of the school's past especially in memory of those who died in WW I and WW II.

### **Mayfield College and Cemetery**



The original Mayfield College buildings. The cemetery is to the right and there are several additional new apartments buildings back to the left. Former school-related facilities and the brothers' house have been removed.



The inside of the former Mayfield chapel is now remodeled into a beautiful apartment. To make it practical for living space a balcony was added for a bedroom and out of the picture and what had been the back of the chapel are a new kitchen and bathrooms. Note the stain glass windows. They remain and must stay as part of an historical listed English property.

Mayfield College was founded for boys by a wealthy American woman who had married into English nobility in 1865. She turned the school over to the Xaverian Brothers in 1868. While the original school interiors have been remodeled into apartments, the buildings' exterior are as they were in 1868 and are protected historical sites. The Mayfield name comes from its rural location about 60 miles south of London. Years ago, Mayfield was served by regular trains but no longer and is best accessed by car. It is a popular weekend area for Londoners who own second homes in the area. The school's location was an identifying landmark in WW II used by German bombers heading to London. The skies around Mayfield also saw many aerial dogfights as the RAF tried to protect London. The school escaped any damage or bombings in the war but mourned the loss of 29 former students, mostly RAF pilots.







Two views of the current restored Mayfield Cemetery. The house on the back left in the first picture was the former school's infirmary and today is a residence. It shows what you see as you enter the cemetery. The second view would be to your left as you enter the cemetery. Mayfield was first used for a Xaverian burial in 1890 and continued in use up to 2000 with 82 Xaverians being buried there.



The COXA members added this stone inside the cemetery entrance. They went to Wales to select the stone and transported it to the cemetery as well as having the plaque made and installed. It ties together the brothers, Clapham and Mayfield Colleges.