



# National Newsletter

- Salesian Past Pupils (Great Britain)  
- National President: Patrick Morrissey



Issue No 5

February 2004

This, our fifth issue of a National Newsletter, is a compilation of the Reports made by the Local Associations at our last National Council meeting, which took place at Battersea in November 2003. Our next National Council meeting will be on 22 February 2004 at the Salesian House in Bootle.

National President, Patrick Morrissey, advised the meeting of the forthcoming World Assembly to take place in Rome in April 2004 at which a new World President will be elected and a revision of the World Statutes will be voted on.

National President also tabled his report on the 1Xth Eurobosco held in Rome in OCT/NOV 2003, which had attended with some other members of National Council. This report came to four main conclusions

National President thanked and complimented the Local Associations for their fine response to the first National Mission project, to fund a water project in Liberia, as reported in our previous issue of the Newsletter.. At the meeting it seemed certain that we have made our target amount of £5,000.00. Subsequent to the meeting this has been definitely conformed. Thanks are due to all the Past Pupils and friends who have so generously contributed to this fine result.

## National Council Meeting at Battersea



Patrick Morrissey, National President, was delighted to be able to welcome the School Captain and Vice Captain to the

meeting. This was made possible by Nicholas Potter, Battersea President, who arranged for these two young people to join our meeting, something he has been encouraging for some time now.



**APPEAL** - If you have any small or large Salesian Past Pupil events that you would like included in our newsletter, if you email me ([j.ward@virgin.net](mailto:j.ward@virgin.net)) a short description together with colour photos, I will happily include them in future issues, to give news of your events wider distribution and hopefully result in greater interest and involvement in your efforts.

## BATTERSEA ASSOCIATION



President: Nicholas Potter  
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## Battersea Report to National Council

- 1) Membership numbers circa 150 on the main list. Following publication of the most recent Newsletter we had an increase of about 5%.
- 2) We are trying to establish a small group from each year of school leavers to provide us with a link to

recent Past Pupils. This has been in force for the past three years or so and we were delighted to see two such lads at our November Mass. We will ask them to attend a Committee Meeting from time to time and ensure they are invited to form their own group at the Re-Union as they did so successfully last year.

- 3) Our main activities consist of an annual Re-Union and Remembrance Day Mass.
- 4) We have established a new editorial board with the objective of producing a high quality Newsletter at least once a year although twice would be ideal. It has certainly proved effective in recruiting new memberships.
- 5) We published the Mission Appeal in our recent newsletter and results are awaited.

## BLAISDON ASSOCIATION



President: Charles Springett  
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Greetings to all Salesian Past Pupils

Once again, over the August Bank Holiday weekend, Blaisdon was the venue for the Old Boys reunion with their families and friends, with around 70 attending. It is always a pleasure to see so many friends together. There is always an open invitation for Salesian Past Pupils, Salesians, Staff and villagers to join us, and some manage to do so. This year we invited Mr. Jim Richards Director of the Catholic Children's Society (Westminster) to

join us and were pleased that he and his wife were able to do so and thereby witness the Blaisdon Brotherhood feeling for himself. Many of us Senior Old Boys had been in homes run by the 'Crusade of Rescue (C of R)', (now the C.C.S.) before we arrived at Blaisdon Hall into the care of the Salesians, where they carried out true Don Bosco's work. None of these boys ever had a silver spoon in their mouths but were unfortunately deprived of a family upbringing, and looked at Blaisdon as a bright light on the horizon.

We also invited members of the Anthonian's Association, these being Ex Girls, (now Ladies) formally from the C. of R. home in Feltham, some of which had brothers in other C. of C. homes. We were pleased that some ladies managed to attend over both days. I can report that many, many stories were remembered and exchanged over the weekend. We also had other Old Boys who had not been back since leaving Blaisdon, or indeed had not been to a reunion before, but, by their remarks and letters, were clearly so glad not to have missed it and to be part of a great day.

On the Saturday evening we held a Bar-B-Q, enjoyed by everyone, outside the Village Hall, with many finishing the evening down at the local - having a great time.

During November/December I found myself so busy attending funerals, around the country, including that of a family member, that I did not have time to devote to myself. I was also involved with moving house in last week of November, but the bungalow was not ready as it had to be completely rewired and new front and back doors fitted. As I was committed to move from my previous house I had to pack everything and put it into storage for three weeks, and, as I had arranged for the telephone line to be moved, it resulted that I also had communication problems. Furthermore, in November my computer caught a nasty virus that managed to wipe out all my records - Emails, addresses and programmes as I logged on into the system - and I had not done a back up! I now know that I should have shut down the computer to get rid of the virus, but I have learned a hard lesson.

Another reason that I was busy over the run-up to Christmas was that I had committed myself to carry out Santa Claus duties for my Grandchildren's School in Essex as I have done in past years, more travelling and time involved. Then it was on to Bootle to help out with the preparations for the Parish Christmas dinner, unfortunately Fr Sean was taken rather ill so had to



**Special guests, Jim Richards, Director of the Catholic Children's Society (Westminster), writing, and his wife.**

retire to bed. (How did I ever find time to go to work). Then on returning to Stoke I was roped in to help out on the Santa Specials run by the local Steam railway society. Great to see the children's faces when they see Santa and get a present.

Good news is I am now back on-line, my telephone, fax and computer working after a lot of problems, and receiving Emails. What price progress?

Going back to October, I had suggested at the summer reunion that a number of us might wish to visit Rome and visit the Vatican and other special places of interest, also to meet up with Fr Sean, John Ward and others attending EuroBosco. It started with two requests to go, I looked up and booked cheap flights, then the word spread and two more wished to do so. This involved more internet searches, booking etc, a further three requested to join us, more booking etc, again more requests including two ladies from the Anthonian's Assn, making a total of twelve, to meet up with those out there for EuroBosco. I was lucky enough to be able to arrange for them all to be on the same flights, including on Fr Sean's return flight. BA had quoted him a cost of over £300 from Heathrow to Rome, I booked him a flight from Stanstead for under £30. Accommodation was arranged, with the Salesian Seminary, for everyone. They visited all the usual

places of interest in Rome and enjoyed their days and evenings. One of the highlights I had managed to arrange, by applying to the Vatican well in advance of our visit, and which I did not disclose until we were on our way. This was a privileged visit to the Scavi (excavations) below St Peters, where the bones of the Saint were found after 1939, and kept quite all during the war.

Another treat, and the icing on the cake, was on the Sunday. Fr Sean had arranged a visit to the Sacro Cuore (the last church Don Bosco built at the express request of Pope Pius IX), and we attended Mass celebrated by Fr Sean and concelebrated by the Netherlands National Delegate, in the Don Bosco Rooms, where so many relics of that great Saint are held and on display, (many a tear was shed during that time). A true Salesian Past Pupil feeling. Please read the remarks and extracts from letters received by some of the party regarding the visit.

We are hoping to send out our Newsletter early January as I was not able to find the time to compile it during December owing to all my other commitments.

We have at present about 250 plus on our mailing list, I have requested that all those with or access to a computer send us their email details in order to reduce mail costs, paper, printing, envelopes, labels, stamps and time.

Our members, friends and families did fantastic to raise the £500 towards the National Council 'Liberian Water Project', and hope to see a report from there as to its progress.

Our next Mini Reunion / Get Together is after Easter over the weekend of 17th/18th April. There is always an open invitation for Past Pupils from other Schools to join us. Just let me know if you are coming, so I can ensure adequate catering, etc.

We send our greetings to all Ex Blaisdon Salesians and Staff, wishing them well for 2004

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## **BOOTLE ASSOCIATION**

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*President: Terry Rimmer  
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rimmers@giddygate.freemove.co.uk*



**Father Sean's 70 Birthday event at Bootle, with the inevitable Blaisdon crowd on hand.**

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## **BURWASH ASSOCIATION**

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*Not yet established. Any takers?*

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## **CHERTSEY ASSOCIATION**

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*President: Sue Gregson?  
Tel: ? Email: ?*

The football club continues to be a very valuable facility for the Chertsey Past Pupils. Some photos of matches and results would be interesting for our readers.

Good to see some Chertsey people are using the Guestbook in our Website, especially as some are the ladies trying to meet up.

Contact - Mike Quinlan

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## **COWLEY ASSOCIATION**

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*President: Richard Blake  
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### **Cowley Report to National Council**

The Cowley Association returned to its 'homeland' for its 2003 Reunion and AGM on Sunday, 19 October at The

Four Pillars Hotel, Sandford-on-Thames, Oxon. Some 33 members gathered from 0930 to enjoy coffee and tea prior to the commencement of the first part of the AGM before we retired to Our Lady Help of Christians for Mass at 1130.

Frs. Sean Murray SDB, Joe Merriman SDB, and Austen Malloy SDB, Concelebrated Mass. Fr Sean commanding the rapturous attention of all with his usual inspiring sermon. (so engrossed was I that I have forgotten what the theme was!). We particularly remembered Michael Stanley Painter, a Past Pupil of the 1950's vintage, who died on June 18 2003, Edward, the father of Fr Gerry O'Shaughnessy SDB and Nicholas Ward, son of the National Vice-President, both of whom died that week.

Returning to the Hotel the AGM was finalised with decisions relating to our financial assistance to Salesian causes. An excellent buffet lunch completed what was by agreement a most enjoyable occasion.



Thirty three members, clergy and invited guests from Blaisdon attended. Particularly welcome were two newly joined Past Pupils, Chris Hooker and John Dennis. 29 sent their apologies.

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## **FARNBOROUGH ASSOCIATION**

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*President: John Clenshaw  
Tel: 01276 65690 (Home)  
01252 783574 (Bus)  
No Email*

### **Report to the National Council of Salesian Past Pupils – November 2003**

Our Committee activity has, during the autumn, been somewhat limited, particularly due to other pressures on members' time. However we have been able maintain our links with the College especially our support to the College Prize Day Fund culminating in the presentation of several OSA prizes at the distribution of prizes on the day itself, Friday the 14 November.

At this event our headmaster, Mr Patrick Wilson MA, was again able to report great academic success in the summer public exams at both GCSE and A levels. We were able to congratulate many of this year's school leavers who had returned to the College for Prize Day.

Also in November on Remembrance Sunday, we held our annual Mass for Deceased Old Boys in the College Chapel. This was followed by the Ceremony of Remembrance in the College Assembly Hall including the reading of the Roll of Honour of the many Farnborough Past pupils who gave their lives in the Second World War. Our thanks to Fr Francis Sutherland SDB who celebrated Mass and for his help with the Ceremony of Remembrance. This may be the last annual Remembrance to be held in its present form owing to the very limited numbers of SDBs in the Farnborough Salesian Community, and the pressure of their presence needed on supply to other parishes, but we are consoled by the alternative, namely that our loyal group of Past Pupils, families & friends can attend the annual Remembrance ceremony held by the College itself, usually on Armistice day the 11th.

With the sterling work by Fr Joe Brown our new enlarged database of Farnborough Old Boys & printed sheets of names & addresses continues to grow and with support should assist our Committee to improve its efforts to link with our past pupils.

We are continuing to have Past Pupils organizing 'Year Group' Reunions. On the 3rd of October last the group known as the 'Fortyniners' again held their annual Dinner at the Queens Hotel with over 20 Past Pupils present accompanied by their wives. On this occasion they extended a particular welcome to one of their number Charles McDevitt who this year is chair of the Grand Water Rats Association - the national variety charity. In the

coming year we hope to re-double efforts to improve the link with our Past Pupils.



Sunnier days! The Farnborough reunion on 4th May 2003

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## SHRIGLEY ASSOCIATION

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President: Joe Lomax  
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### SHRIGLEY ASSOCIATION - Report to National Council

We are pleased to be able to say that once again we enjoyed a very successful Reunion at Savio House where the food was scrumptious, the company second to none and we were bathed in God's sunshine yet again. We thank Peter Roebuck who saw that the AGM ran smoothly and all necessary points were considered and decided upon. Ideas conceived at the meeting developed so well that many after thoughts came to life and much progress was made in the two days after the meeting. We thank Martin Flynn and his family for the very enjoyable RACE NITE on the Friday, which raised a sum of £340 gratefully received by Fr Michael Winstanley. We thank Paul Barnes for his masterly organizing and compering of the concert on the Saturday and the maestro himself, Kevin Dean, for his accompanying any musical item in his inimitably professional way. The weekend was attended by about 60, a number a little less than usual but we think that people are saving up for next year — the BIG ONE.

During the latter part of the year we lost Fr Martin Daly, Fr Pierce Kearns and

Fr Michael McGovern. Brendan Murphy's wife passed away as did the mothers of Fr Gerry O'Shaughnessy and Mrs. Monica Mehers, Mike's wife. Fr Eric Darwell, Fr Chris McMahan and Fr Sean O'Loughlin and Tony Prince are being supported by our prayers, as are the wives of Frank Allen and Tom McPake. John Burke is now being well supported with a new knee. George Clayton seems to be doing very well. We did on the other hand recruit a few more members. The membership now stands at 391 with 258 having Email addresses and so in contact and receiving items of news.

Apart from those who actively get together for Reunions, we have now a committee of about twenty of whom about 10 meet, to decide progress and policy.

As above, money is raised for Savio House and also about £2600 for the 75th celebrations next August. It was therefore a grateful relief when the Broughton Catholic Charitable Society gave a donation of £2000, part of which will supply our contribution to the Past Pupils named projects for the next two years at £500 per year, the other part being Thornleigh's contribution.

Our next thoughts are for the Don Bosco Masses organised for January and February. Sunday January 25th is the one in Glasgow, the home of our generous members who have promised £500 to cater for Salesians at the 75th. On Don Bosco's day itself we have been invited to celebrate the day at Farnborough by Fr Hugh Preston and already about 11 have indicated they would be present together with wives this could provide a good number. Then on February 8th we go to Thornleigh for a celebration there to which we have also invited the Thornleigh Past Pupils.

Then we have the Socializing Weekend at Savio House, Saturday March 6th and Sunday March 7th. Fr John Dixon will be speaking on "The Salesians in England and the present position". The weekend also sees the launch of the second of Mike Kilduffs projects, "A Photographic Impression of Shrigley", a collection of 200 photographs (Priced at a minimum of £10 with an extra donation hoped for). His first, a Shrigley calendar for 2004 is already on sale at £2.50 (postage 0.34 in the UK) and is going well. This year is also

earmarked for the publishing of Peter Roebuck's book on Shrigley. There is a lot of Shrigley literature buzzing round if we couple these with Peter Hunter's book on his Salesian Journey.

Finally, we have on offer to the highest bidder/s, a weekend Pilgrimage for two donated by Mancunia Travel to raise funds for the 75th, its normal price from Mancunia is £395 per person. P.S. The publications are also available to National Council at no extra cost. Annual Reunion 2003.



2003 Reunion Group: included are Fr. Albert Carette (1932-37) and Peter Hunter (1979-82), the oldest and youngest Shrigley Old Boys at the meeting. Can we beat that fifty year spread at next year's 75th Anniversary meeting?



### Message from Paul Barnes

For our 75th anniversary we will be having the best concert so far and you could be the key to its success!

Would you like to have a slot on the programme? It is meant to be an informal concert but it will help if I knew in advance what you might like to do. I have been asked to MC the concert again so it will save me having to chase around on the day looking for items.

If you are able and willing, please give me details of your item. You can contact me at:

7 Bedruthan Avenue  
TRURO  
Cornwall TR1 1RW

Tel: 01872 242018

## Shrigley Past Pupils - Class of 75

Michael Cox organised a get together of some of the Past Pupils who left Shrigley about 1975.

Following the sad death of Phillip Marshall (Winnie) he decided it would be nice to catch up with a few old friends from Shrigley. He set up a Yahoo web site called "Shrigley Class of 75ish" to help this and he has collected the details of about 25 old boys who left circa 73 to 77.

The get together took place over the first weekend of August 2003, and a great time was had by all!



Left to Right we have Steve Watson (AKA Winker, now resident in Australia), Pete Tohill (AKA - PJ), Chris Dargue (AKA - CD), Michael Cox (AKA - Mick or Coxy), Martin Donachy (AKA - Big Mart), Keiran Ruttledge (AKA - KR), Tony Reilly (AKA - Joe), Gerry Lyng (AKA - GL), and last but not least Jon Kempsey (AKA - JK, now resident in Baha, California)

[Sadly, Peter Tohill passed away on Thursday January 29th. May he rest in peace!]

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## THORNLEIGH ASSOCIATION

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### Acting Secretary's Reports To National Council

Sunday November 9th saw the first of our two annual activities. It is a very worthwhile one, being the Memorial Mass for those who have passed away. It was a great pity that only five Past Pupils could manage to get to the lovely chapel at Thornleigh built by

Father F J McCabe SDB when there was such a flourishing Association. Providentially we arrange this each year to coincide with the Annual Catenian Memorial Mass so that with the twelve of us who would have been there anyway as we are Catenians, that brought the numbers up. Ally this to Frs. Michael Cunningham and Fr David O'Malley on the altar the total number who attended Thornleigh was nineteen. Of that number, for the statisticians, none were female and the youngest was Fr David O'Malley SDB.

Sadly, when one of the five was thanked, he came back with the remark "Well who knew"? After a deep breath had been drawn, it was explained to him that on the main list there were 276 names. That of these, 181 had Email addresses (and had been informed by Email a fortnight or so before), that at the side of all those with Email addresses there was a telephone number of some one who did not have such a luxury. He was then told that this hot line was supposed to be used, as unlimited funds were not available, for disseminating information such as the date of the memorial Mass. He was then given the name of his contact - which so happened to be a member of staff — who was not present himself. He was sent a copy of all this by post, including the latest Directory of members and list of email addresses.

There are other lists of Years 11, 12 and 13, compiled when the talks were given to the school. The Email addresses of most of these are now out of date as they were school based.

On November 16th, Fr Joe Brown SDB and Brother Donald MacDonald SDB, collected a cheque for two thousand pounds at St Joseph's, Chorley, from the Broughton Catholic Charitable Society for the National Past Pupils project in Liberia. The photographs of the presentation are to appear in the local paper and the Catholic Press. This amount will provide, providentially, the Thornleigh portion (£500 per year) of the appeals for this year and next as there is no other way that it can be provided unless one of the five active members wins the lottery.

The next activity is the Don Bosco Mass, arranged for Sunday February 8th at Thornleigh at 11.00 a.m. This is a joint Mass with Shrigley.

Sadly, during the recent past Fr Michael McGovern, who worked tirelessly giving a musical foundation to the lives of so many pupils, passed away after a tremendous fight against cancer. Fr Eric Darwell is also suffering from this disease. [He passed away on 19th January 2004.] Fr Chris McMahan has recently had chemotherapy. Another lay member of the Association has also passed away and we ask that these be remembered in your prayers

Joe Lomax, Acting Secretary

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## EUROGEX – The European youth part of the Past Pupils Federation

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Peter has now passed the age at which he can strictly remain our Eurogex representative on National Council and at European and World Congresses. He will of course remain a member of National Council.

This means we are looking for a new Eurogex representative, a Past Pupil male or female who would be prepared to undertake this stimulating role. If you don't believe me, just ask Peter what he gave and, more importantly, what he got from this role. Just get in touch with anyone on your Local Association or on National Council to find out more.

**???ANY TAKERS???**

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## Global Past Pupils Activities

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### EUROBOSCO

The 9th Eurobosco Congress of Salesian Past Pupils throughout Europe took place in Rome at the end of October 2003. This was a meeting of National Presidents and National Delegates and others. We were represented at this Congress by Patrick Morrissey, National President, Fr Sean Murray SDB, National Delegate, John Ward, National Vice President, Richard Blake, National Treasurer and Peter Hunter, National Eurogex Representative.



As part of the socializing evening, where each National Federation puts on some sort of entertainment, the GB representatives, supported by Diane Morrissey, Marion Blake and their daughter Helen gave a performance of Beatles songs. This went down extremely well as, thanks to our President's wife Diane we were beautifully equipped with inflatable guitars and black wigs. Diane also had an inflatable keyboard hung from her neck. Anyone seen Father Sean in a black wig and with an inflatable guitar before?




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***Past Pupils activity all over the world, compiled by Alex Dockers, World Vice President.***

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Information about Past Pupils activities throughout the world is also available and continually refreshed on the Internet and is created by Alex Dockers, World Vice President. This can be found under [www.donbosco-pp.info](http://www.donbosco-pp.info) There is a direct link to this website from our Links page under "Follow Don Bosco".

National Council (GB) records its grateful thanks to Alex for his tireless

work to keep the worldwide PP-Info up to date and topical.

In Apr 2004 there will be the 3rd World Congress of Salesian Past Pupils to be held in Rome. At this Congress a New World President and World Council will be elected and a revision of some important changes to the World Statutes will be discussed and potentially voted upon. GB Federation thanks the outgoing President, Antonio Pires, and his World Council for their work on behalf of Salesian Past Pupils all over the world. This has involved much worldwide travel, which is much appreciated.

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### ***LIBERIA***

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We are delighted in reporting that we have achieved the objective for a first National project for the worldwide Salesian Mission. Thanks to the generosity of our Past Pupils in all our Local Associations, and their friends, we reached our goal of providing £5,000.00 to cover the cost of a water tank to capture clean water at the Salesian Polytechnic in Monrovia, Liberia. We look forward to publishing photos of the finished project in due course.

Our thanks go to all our generous contributors. It should be recognized that each Local Association also has its own adopted Mission project(s)

We will be determining our 2004 National project, hopefully, at our next National Council meeting which will be at Bootle on 22nd February 2004.

For 25 years Liberia has been part of the Great Britain Salesian Province (GBR). The new West African Province (AFW) has now been set up, including Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ghana and Nigeria, but there will be continued support from the 'founding' provinces, including, of course, GBR.

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### ***NEW PROVINCIAL FOR BRITAIN***

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**Fr Michael Winstanley**

We welcome and pledge our support for our New Provincial, Father Michael Winstanley SDB as the new Provincial, who will be taking over from Father Francis. This will be Father Michael's second six-year term as GB Provincial, so we know we will have a good and supportive friend in Father Michael.



**Fr Francis Preston**

Father Francis Preston SDB, Provincial of our GB Province for the last six years, will be relinquishing this post later this year. We would like record our thanks to Father Francis for the support and interest he has shown in our part of the Salesian GB mission. We wish him well in whatever he will be undertaking in the future.

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### ***NEW SALESIAN BISHOP***

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On Sunday 1st February Fr Luc Van Looy SDB was installed as Bishop of Ghent in Belgium.



The crucifix on Bishop Luc's chest was presented by Don Bosco himself to the very first Salesian Bishop, later Cardinal, John Cagliero. You can imagine how emotional Bishop Luc was to be loaned this treasure for the period of his Bishopric, as it will return to the protection of the Rector Major thereafter.

Bishop Luc also proudly wore this crucifix at the evening Mass on 31st Jan for the Feastday Mass, which is when I got the chance of a photo with him. He told the story of this special Salesian relic both at the Feastday Mass and again at his Consecration as Bishop in the Ghent Cathedral. He clearly was

enormously happy and humbled to have received such an honour.



**John Ward, Alex Dockers and Kees Staats (Netherlands President) at the reception after the ceremony.**

For information of future Events and News of past events for all GB Local Associations; see our Website:  
<http://www.donbosco.co.uk/pp>



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