

Report of Society of Old Framlinghamian Dinner

Sydney, Tuesday March 20th 2018

Organised by Col and Lexie Lipman, written up by Chris Shaw

This dinner was designed as a Dinner of Welcome, and to quote Kate Jackson's words, 'Our aim was to make everyone feel part of the Framlingham Family.' More of this later.

We were to meet to welcome **Martin Pearse (K59-63)** to our shores. Martin has an astonishing CV, but in Australia he was here to play in the over-70's UK Cricket Team, who had ventured in to enemy territory to win their coveted version of the Ashes in a five match test series against Australia.

The dinner was held in a bar and restaurant on Circular Quay, which is adjacent to both the Harbour Bridge, the scene of the first, and arguably the best firework display in the world at midnight on New Year's Day; and the Opera House, which needs no introduction either. The object of the dinner was to welcome Martin Pearse to Australia, and give him a taste of Australian hospitality, which few survive!

First to arrive was Chris Shaw and his wife Rebecca from Cairns, closely followed by Col and Lexie, our hosts for the evening. Ian and Julia Richardson were kind enough to look in on us, to welcome Martin and catch up with other OFs, since they had pre-booked another event at the Opera House. It was great to see them. Then came Mike Allport carrying an umbrella, and Bunny, his wife; maybe Mike has mellowed in his ex-RAF Wing Commander role, and they are always happy and in good form. Robert Ritchie of the Ritchie brothers arrived, followed soon afterwards by brother Bruce. They are funny, sunny, and bright, and always good value.

Then Martin arrived with introductions all round. Then his son, Jack, arrived. Jack works in Sydney, went to Gresham's School in North Norfolk, and by general acclaim was made an Honorary OF for the evening.

Last, but by no means least, Jim Coe and his lovely wife Karen arrived. Here's where it gets a tad weird. Jim farms near Wagga Wagga. (Yes, you can refer to it as 'Wagga,' but you can't call Woy Woy, 'Woy;' that's just Australian protocol).

Jim and Karen have the Leaning Cow Winery, and produce both red and white wine, which they market, beautifully presented, in the same way that Interflora markets their flowers. Jim is the brother of our SOF Coordinator at Fram, Kate Jackson, and both are grandchildren of Martin Irving, who taught most of us attending this dinner, 'Le language de France' at Fram. That, my friends, is the essence of networking – connecting circles.

Chris Shaw had made prior contact with Jim by phone and e-mail, had received a bottle of wine from him – eminently acceptable – and in turn sent a couple of books. Chris promised to keep writing if Jim keeps supplying the wine!

We had a very fine meal indeed, and people moved around and chatted. Chris Shaw had bought a replica Ashes Urn, purchased in Cairns from a master woodworker. He, Chris, had made a facsimile label, so it looked the real deal. It was put in front of Martin, who had apparently not had a good



tour – Oh, Dear! – and he kissed it – presumably as a gesture of saying, ‘Goodbye.’

Then Chris presented both Martin and Jim Coe with the last of the books of the Commemorative Dinner in the Hunter Valley in 2015, with a letter of welcome, which he read out.

Thanks to everyone who took part, and to Colin and Lexie for arranging the whole thing.

This dinner was an inspiring statement that the Framlingham Family is alive and well, and in very good spirits.

The fact that this event was held on the same day as the Hong Kong Dinner, organised by Moira Theulier; *and* the marriage of Chris Essex’s daughter Samantha, organised by the Bride and Groom, seems to indicate that OFs are in no danger of running out of steam; only days of the year in which to celebrate!



From bottom left: Rebecca Shaw, Chris Shaw, Colin Lipman, Martin Pearse, Bruce Ritchie, Robert Ritchie

From bottom right: Jack Pearse, Lexie Lipman, Mike Allport, Bunny Allport, Jim Cow, Karen Coe.