



SOAKS Old Boys Newsletter Number 1 2022

Welcome to the first **SOAKS Old Boys** Newsletter for 2022 and Happy New Year to all. In this edition there is a tribute to Greg Dodd; a reflection on **SOAKS Old Boys'** farewell to Ron Ward; and the special pre-Xmas drinks with Dave Standish are highlighted. Two of **SOAKS** outstanding forwards from the 1970's are featured in **SOAKS Blokes Profiles**. Our upcoming social events calendar is included and 'From the Vault' recalls familiar names from season 1985 through the lens of **SOAKS** balladeer Leigh Sealy. I hope that you enjoy all the news, humour and nostalgia.

Owing to the general unease about the COVID situation, it has been decided to postpone the February **SOAKS Day at the Beach** at Opossum Bay to a new date to be announced.



This year marks the 50th anniversary of **SOAKS** 1972 Senior Premiership winning side (below). The team's triumph (defeating Harlequins 24-3) marked the Club's hat-trick of Senior Premierships 1970-1972 and for that accomplishment they hold a special place in **SOAKS** history. I invite recollections of the year and the team so appropriate tribute to their achievement can be made throughout the course of the year.



Front (left to right): Ray Lavender, Peter Cooper, Richard Hamlyn-Harris, John Donaldson (Captain), Mark Lawler, Joe Donovan, Steve Harris
Back (left to right): Barry Nazer, Alan Welch, Peter Itchins, John Duncan, Wolf Martinick, John Pullen, Peter Smith, Paul Wicks

SOAKS Old Boys Calendar of upcoming Events

Friday 4 February 2022

(SOAKS monthly drinks with special guests **Chief and Susan Hawker plus Viv Chopping** from 5pm @ Tom McHugo's)

Friday 4 March 2022

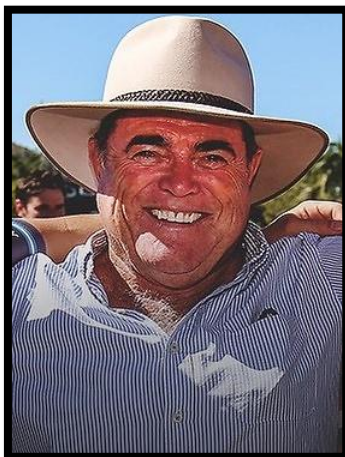
(SOAKS monthly drinks from 5 pm @ Tom McHugo's)

Vale Greg Dodd:

SOAKS champion Greg (Doddy) Dodd passed away suddenly in January this year.

Greg came to Tassie from South Australia, played with SOAKS from 1984-1986 and featured prominently in SOAKS Premiership success in 1984. He also helped steer the club into the 1986 Grand Final as well. He represented Tasmania on a number of occasions and proved himself to be peerless at Prop for both Club and State teams.

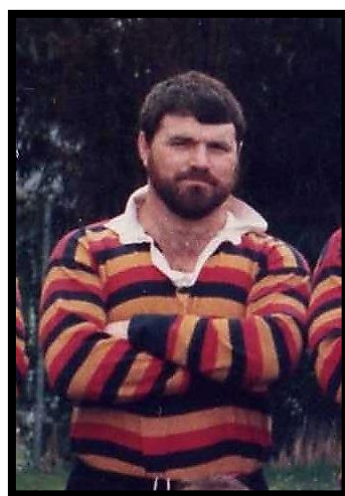
After leaving Tassie, he continued to be heavily involved with Rugby in Qld as long time President and Secretary of the Noosa Dolphins RFC along with stints as Director of the Sunshine Coast RU and Vice President of Queensland Country RU.



Terrible news. He was a great number 3 and a bloke you knew you could depend on. RIP Doddy. (George Melit)

I remember the day Greg Dodd turned up at SOAKS from Adelaide. A prized pick up at the time. Bevan Eathorne was coaching by then and the smile on his face was a mile wide. Rest in Peace. (Dave Collidge)

Very sad news. Greg was a tremendous prop (extremely strong and strategic). Off the field he loved to party and had a great sense of humour. Greg will be sorely missed. (Dave Morris)



This is an extract (below) from an article written for *Rugby Review South Australia* in 1986 where Doddy is nominated in the state's best XV.

Greg Dodd was the best prop I ever played with. I can still picture him going through about 6 opposition props in one game against Uni at Rugby Park. He could adjust the height of the scrum on request in increments from 6 inches to banging the opposition prop's nose on the ground and bringing the scrum back up before the ref noticed anything! Greg was also larger than life off the field and we had some memorable trips to state training in his Jag going a million miles an hour up the Midlands. None of us who were there on the 1985 State team trip to Melbourne will forget him in a big Ford LTD smashing into the other rent-a-wrecks that the rest of the Tassie team had.

Vale Greg. A champion indeed. (Herbie)

THE BEST SOUTH AUSTRALIAN XV?

by JOHN DAVIES
Old Collegians' First Grade Coach,
former South Australian Rugby Union Coach at Schoolboys, Colts and Senior State levels.

PROP FORWARDS

These players must be technically sound and powerful scrummagers who can provide good support in the lineout and around the field. There have been many good props including Gino Cavvoto, Warren Bund, Tim Campion, Greg Dodd, George Justice, Warren Brown, Mike Severn and Peter Hirle. I would be happy

Severn. My choices are **Greg Dodd** and **Peter Hirle**.



I'm mighty glad that Doddy came to play with SOAKS. I remember at a training session before our first game in 1984, coach Bevan Eathorne got a number of us backs to stand on the scrum machine to give it some more weight whilst the forward pack went through some scrummaging practice. As the ball was fed into one scrum, Doddy just basically stood up and lifted his whole side of the scrum machine. Of course, all us backs just fell off, but we knew from that moment we had someone special up there in the front row. And as our 1984 season progressed to its successful conclusion, the one constant for our team was the dominance of our scrum led by Doddy, Herb and Seals in the front row ... they were peerless over the course of the whole season and continually gave us backs good clean ball to run with. (Dave Standish)

Remembering Doddy:

In 1985, Doddy & I (along with SOAKS players Andrew Herbert, Mick McCarthy, Brian Fitzpatrick, Wayne Cole & Stefan Alteruthemeyer, plus coach Greg Hill and manager Peter Tucker) were in the Tassie State team for the Southern States Carnival in Melbourne. Many Doddy related memories come from that, none of which have anything to do with rugby, but all of which involve cars.

After one of our matches in Melbourne, we found ourselves down at the Powerhouse Rugby Club on Albert Park Lake. After a few beers and when leaving, we noticed a Rolls Royce neatly parked there in the carpark, and at Doddy's suggestion we lifted it up and turned it 90 degrees so it was then sort of wedged between two other cars that were facing the right way. Naturally the rest of us wouldn't have been able to lift a Roller without Doddy! (Dave Standish)



The SOAKS connection in the 1985 Tasmanian state team



In the three match images below from the 1984 Grand Final Greg Dodd can be seen in the thick of the action along with his front row partners: Andrew Herbert and Leigh Sealy. Together the trio were the foundation for SOAKS' success.



Doddy's third and final season with SOAKS was in 1986. As a team, we didn't quite dominate like we had in 1984, but we still managed to fight our way into the Southern Grand Final against Taroona. As we all know, we didn't quite win the chocolates that day losing 9-6 after extra time, but one memory of that match for me was Doddy tip toeing down the side line and scoring a try in the corner. The ref promptly disallowed the try saying he'd stepped into touch. The touch judge said no he hadn't. So, then the ref found a second reason to disallow it, saying Doddy hadn't grounded the ball properly and had in fact knocked it on. Now Doddy had been around for a few years by this stage, and he was 110% adamant after the game that he had scored a fair try. I know who I believed.

In 1986, SOAKS were sponsored by, and drank, at Hadley's Hotel. At one stage after the disappointment of losing the GF, me (captain), Greg Hill (coach), plus Tim Nash & Greg Dodd (both ending their playing careers that day) snuck out of the bar and went off by ourselves for an hour or so. I think between the two Gregs, they bought the best bottle of champers and best bottle of red that Hadley's had, and the 4 of us sat round reminiscing and talking rubbish. Nothing particularly special, but it's just a nice memory I have.

Playing out in the backs, I never quite knew what was going on up there in the scrum, and certainly not in the front row. But without a shadow of a doubt, Doddy was the best prop I ever played with. It was really sad to hear the news of Doddy's sudden passing. It was only a few weeks ago that Greg O'Keefe & I were talking about the need for some sort of reunion in 2024 to celebrate our 1984 triumph. We talked about the members of that team living interstate, and Doddy was one we felt certain would have made the effort to come to Hobart to join the celebration. Greg Dodd was a champion player, a champion bloke, and will be missed. (Dave Standish)

Remembering Dobby:



Dobby can be seen lining up with Townsville City RFC (left); together with great mate and SOAKS legend Tim Nash trying his hand at clay target shooting and some motorcycle road touring in Qld. The final images (below) come from his SOAKS farewell event held at the Victoria Tavern in 1986 with none other than the late Michael Hodgman (alongside 'Her Majesty') saying a few words in salute.



Greg Dodd is seen lined up with SOAKS 1984 State Premiers (left) and 1986 Grand Finalists (below).



SOAKS Special Drinks with Dave Standish



December 2021

An expanded 'SOAKS Corner' was filled with the visiting Standish family of Dave, Ann, Will, George and Jessica along with: Andrew Herbert, Dave Morris, Mal Riley, Nigel Shepherd, Barry and Julie Gathercole.



Members of the 1984 SOAKS backline pose for a 'team' photo! Mark Dwyer, Barry Gathercole, Greg O'Keefe and Dave Standish together once again.



January 2022

Despite a covid cancellation and a vicious afternoon storm, January drinks proceeded with these three absolute SOAKS champions (Andrew Herbert, Nigel Shepherd and Blair Jepson) who formed a committed quorum at Tom McHugo's.

SOAKS Old Boys farewell the 'Sword'



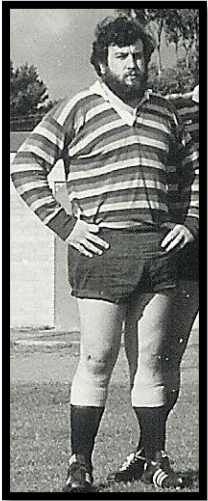
A large gathering of SOAKS Old Boys and other Rugby identities were on hand at the Church of St Barnabas and later on at the RSL Club at South Arm to farewell much loved SOAKS legend Ron Ward. Those who could attend included: Lynton Foster, Tim Mitchell, Steve Harris, Mark Lawler, Tim Oxley, Paul Oxley, Greg O'Keefe, Mark Dwyer, Leigh and Liz Sealy, Barry Woods, Harry Cox, Geoff Eddington, Damian Kerin, Stephen King, Mike Keating, Barry Hamilton, Simon Himson, Peter Tucker, Fred Morey, Dave Morris and Viv Chopping
From Uni RFC: Bob Groom, Phil Kimber, Merv Simmons, and Tony Kube:
From Harlequins RFC: Tony Hale and Easts RFC: Rev. Jamie Bester.



A SOAKS Bloke Profile



[Editor's note: SOAKS Drinks in February will feature both Chief Hawker and Viv Chopping as our guests. Make sure that you note Friday 4 February in your social calendars!]



Name and Nickname (if any)? Stephen “Chief” Hawker. A long standing nickname.

When did you play for SOAKS? My involvement with SOAKS started in 1972. As far as I can recall I started playing Senior Grade in 1974 – John Donaldson was captain.

Why did you decide to play for SOAKS?

I knew quite a few ‘SOAKS blokes’ and was sure I would fit in with a club known as ‘SOAKS’!

Did you play rugby with other clubs? (Name of Club/s and Year/s)

I went to Friends’ School in Hobart and after a couple of miserable efforts at Aussie Rules (I couldn’t get it – there was no offside and the opposition kept objecting to being tackled to the ground!) A teacher at Friends’ - Lloyd Mulcahy - started a Rugby Union team – he was a great motivator and I joined up with gusto around 1966 - the local Commonwealth Bank Manager, Ron Johnson, was our coach, which seemed very prestigious. There was a healthy competition between Friends/Hutchins/St Virgil’s and Taroona, although we considered many

of the SVC players as a bit ‘sus’.

I then went to play with Harlequins, and was one of the youngest players. The club was largely made up of blow ins from other states doing a working stint in Tas, and there was some real talent in the team, like Paddy Montgomery, Mike Logan, Peter Willshire and Tony Molloy. They were great mentors.

‘Quins home ground was Clare St oval in New Town, which was built on a former tip. The contractor obviously took some short cuts when the tip was turned into a rugby pitch, and after rain the mud stank and occasionally a tackle or a vigorous scrum would result in the surfacing of rusty old couches and tin cans!

What position/s did you play? I never ventured from the scrum. No going home with clean shorts for me!

What are your 3 fondest memories of your time with SOAKS?

Playing some good rugby with a great bunch of blokes. Being part of the Senior Grade Grand Final in 1980 was a real high spot. The post-match celebrations at the Telegraph pub were something to behold. A highlight of the evening was when an irate fisherman in the bar ripped the SOAKS bell off the wall after repeated over enthusiastic ringing by Dave “Pal” Collidge.

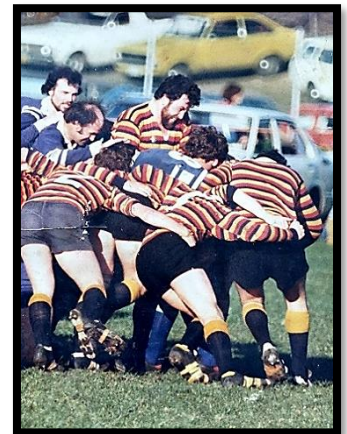
Other memories include:



1. Singing rugby songs around the piano at the Goulburn Pub (“The Burn”) as Don Glover played and Tim (‘Ocker’) Oxley led the vocals – it was hilarious - the publican Ron Muggleston (‘Mungo’) got as drunk/drunken as the rest of us. Doing ‘A Small Town in Germany’ was a riot and my “I love my Cointreau, it’s great in the front row” was a well-received impromptu chorus line during ‘My sister Belinda’

2. At the ‘Good Woman Inn’, on Saturday nights half a dozen pints would be poured for the best players, but by the time Peter ‘Calvs’ Calvert handed them out they were mysteriously half empty – the froth on his ample moustache, however, was a giveaway. Wayne “Circus” Jenkins was then coach and he certainly earned his nickname as the night wore on!

3. Soaks hired the front part of the then Naval and Military Club building in Davey St as our Clubhouse, aka “The Yabba”. We ran our own bar in the front of the building,



and it was a popular post-match venue with other clubs as well. Our profit was maintained by shoving Fred Morey through a service hatch to the closed Naval and Military Bar in the back of the building in order to replenish our bar stock!

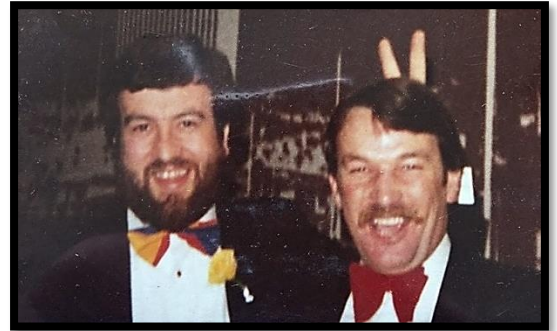
4.

Who was your most respected local rival? (Name and club)

I hate to admit it, but I found that tough, scary bastard Richard Onn from Glenorchy one of the hardest and best motivated players in the competition. His sidekick Paul Soldatenko at breakaway specialised in beating up our younger players, but became somewhat dissuaded when I landed a right hook hard between his eyes as a scrum went down. Propping against Tony Hale in his Quins days was always a challenge, and not only because of his beer breath and stubble! Roger Drummond and Ollie Wilson at Uni were good company and very committed players.

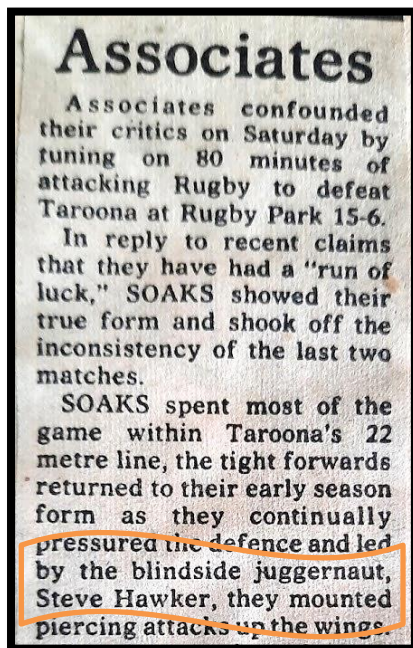
In your time with SOAKS who had the most influence on you and why?

With Steve "Shelby" Harris as Captain, we became a much more cohesive team, despite the fact he always wore horrible shorts that didn't match the club's standard outfits. Greg Hill and Bevan Eathorne were dedicated and switched-on coaches as well as great social organisers – there was in particular, a memorable 'hangi'. Ron "Sword" Ward was a stalwart (and had the team's best moustache). When Geoff Galloway arrived, he was a great influence on the team – we even forgave him for being a Kiwi!



What other non-playing role/s did you take on with SOAKS (if any)?

- SOAKS President in 1979, 1980, 1981 and 1985. Obviously, no one else wanted the job.
- Represented Southern Tasmania in 1979 and 1980 and represented the State in 1980 against Southern States Combined Services and Victoria. Great experience, but hard work against some very good players! It was handy having Ron "Sword" Ward and big Viv Chopping around.



What was the funniest thing you remember from your time with SOAKS?

There are many, but to list a few:

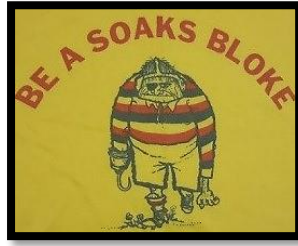
- During a Soaks Sydney trip, we were partying in our hotel, and as the night wore on, I went back to my room, shaved my beard off and changed clothes. When I returned, I was introduced to coach "Circus" Jenkins as a cousin of then Wallaby player Michael Hawker. A hoodwinked and fawning 'Circus' then endeavoured to recruit me to SOAKS. As we all fell about laughing, I was a bit taken aback when he went on loudly to renounce my distant cousin Chief Hawker as a drunken, useless sot!
- At a memorable SOAKS Annual Dinner, then Referee John Donaldson was droning on at the microphone, yet again telling his 'Venusian Joke' in a completely unintelligible Scottish brogue. One flying bread roll towards the podium led to a flurry, and the now esteemed member of the Danish Royal Court departed in high dudgeon, never to return.

- On a trip to Launceston to play Glen Dhu, after the game the team went to a local Italian restaurant. It was BYO, but there was a handy bottle shop in the pub right next door. Everyone chucked money in, and we duly ordered our grog next door. It was too much to carry, so the publican obligingly lent us a trolley, which was wheeled backwards into the restaurant. As the night progressed, no food appeared. In due course the police arrived and turfed us out, stating that the owner – who was cowering in the kitchen - was too scared to serve us. He was definitely a candidate for the 'Book of Italian War Heroes'!

Any other comments?

I would like to thank Greg O'Keefe for his tireless efforts in keeping the memory of the (sadly) now defunct SOAKS alive. At least it is alive in spirit! The dropping of the SOAKS monthly email Newsletter into the inbox is now anxiously awaited!

A SOAKS Bloke Profile



Name and Nick name (if any)? **Viv Chopping....no nickname because when you're a bloke with a name like VIV you don't need one!**

When did you play for SOAKS? **I started with SOAKS in 1972...I think! I played until 1979.**

Did you play rugby with other clubs? (Name of Club/s and Year/s) **I took up rugby when I was in second year Matric at Elizabeth Matric College. I had played hockey at a high level previously, but there was no affinity with my fellow players so being dissatisfied I was coaxed into playing Rugby. It wasn't a hard choice as Eliz Matric had no Aussie Rules team so the team for all the school (read girls) to follow was the rugby one. Simple eh!**

What position/s did you play? **At school under the coaching of Nev Moane I played second row because that's where you put the ones who don't know better or don't know the rules. I was both!**

When I went to SOAKS, I started in the second row, but John Donaldson soon moved me to prop. This was much better, but I still didn't know many rules (I still don't!) but I seemed to work out ok there. In my second year I got a pewter for being the best young forward, but it was all down to Allan Welch the forward leader.... I just did what I was told and listened to wiser heads.

What are some fond memories of your time with SOAKS? **I had a year away from rugby in, I think, 1975 or '76 and I returned to SOAKS after being asked, pressured or press ganged by Dr Crawford Thompson who Sue, my wife, had started to work with. I played until 1979 when during a State game in Perth in a Southern States Carnival I wrecked a knee by crashing through (my words) a 'huge' Victorian pack to score a try, landing with a monster Fijian/Victorian on my leg with my knee facing the wrong way. I was carted off in front of the biggest crowd I'd ever played in front of so I felt it was a fitting swansong! Even all Crawford's ice and ultrasound could not get me back on the field!**

Who was your most respected local rival? **NONE! although blokes like Col 'Brick' Noble at Taroona and JP (John Pullen) when he went to Easts deserved and got respect.**

In your time with SOAKS who had the most influence on you and why? **After 75/76? When I had come back to rugby There was a new bloke at the club who I had clashed with in his Harlequin days...The Chief Hawker! My days of ever playing loose head were over. The Chief said I play LOOSE HEAD! So Chief, Freddy Morey as hooker and me at tight head played for the next several years with the Sword as the biggest and fastest breakaway in the game. We went ok!**

What was the funniest thing you remember from your time with SOAKS? **The bus trip down the Southern Vales on our SA trip about 1977 or '78 was hilarious. Just ask anyone who went! Also, the plane trip to Sydney a year or so later! On field... one time against Glenorchy one of their players screamed loudly that he had had his finger almost bitten off by Second Rower Rob Cartmel. He was indignant and upset to say the least. The Chief told him it couldn't be correct because Rob was vegetarian. I think everyone on both sides, other than the victim, just about wet their shorts.... Gold!**



Any other comments? **I played other sports outside of rugby over the years before and after my times at SOAKS but it is my time and the people at SOAKS that I remember most fondly and count as my best and enduring friends. Thank You all!**

Song of Associates (Season 1985) by SeaLeigh

In the course of human history
There is every now and then
Every reason to suppose
That men can still be men.

There're grounds for still believing
Though to some it seems absurd
That the mighty men of rugby Park
Will play on undeterred.

And when one thinks of heroes
Or the great Beelzebub
On also thinks of Rugby
And Associates Rugby Club.

From the dizzy heights of Premiership
To economic ruin
In one fell swoop this luckless troop
Began its own undoin'.

Their mentor gone, they struggled on
As dark clouds filled the heavens
Until at last the storm clouds passed
And in walked Alan Evans.

Some said that he had once played league
Though few thought that was true
As any Public Servant knows
He's 'Union' through and through.

At first, he worked his charges hard
Despite their loud complaining
But even he could plainly see
They weren't that fond of training.

So, Captain Nash, the orator
Tried to call the tune
But never quite got over his
Tibetan honeymoon.

Only Alby thrived on pain
And gave the strong impression
That he'd rather have his hair fall out
Than miss a training session.

And second-rower Colles
Seemed also to like training
As a member of the froward pack
This requires some explaining.

As for all the rest of them
Their attitude was galling
And if that wasn't bad enough
Their conduct was appalling.

Brave Greg Dodd, the tight head prop
Displayed his awesome power
And tried to drive to Devonport
In less than half an hour.

And Stefan Alteruthemeyer's
Reputation grows
From Derwent Bridge to Williamsford
They can't resist his nose.

Chris Collins went to Williamsford
And found an empty flat
He told us he was talking
But he really chewed the fat.

And young Wayne Cole the human mole
This time went too far
And ruined the suspension
In the back of Tucker's car.

And what of Andrew Herbert
And David 'drop goal' Standish
Whose antics up in Burnie
Were really quite outlandish

It's still a thorny issue
And therefore, one supposes
That's why they're called up Burnie way
The Pricks between two roses.

McCarthy spent a year or two
Getting back to health
But now he's worse than ever
It's 'Physician heal thyself'.

The wondrous Mr Mitchell
Now is broken-hearted
He tried to make a comeback
But got rubbed out before he started.

'Bubbles' Bailey shocked the Club
The memories still linger
He's used to fancy sausages
But now prefers fish fingers.

And old Mark Dwyer the ageing tryer
Has finally found his rhythm
He used to leave the ball behind
But now he takes it with him.

And half-back Richie Davies
Has made a good impression
By giving opposition scrums
Elocution lessons.

And young John Keen, the Mean Machine
Has struggled with his fitness
His glassy eyes and shaky thighs
Bear sufficient witness.

And what of our new President
The cheery 'Chalky' Tucker
Who soon is getting married
And will no doubt want to...bring the Club together.

So, there it is, the year just gone
Immortalised in verse
I s'pose the best part of it was
That things can't get much worse.

Watch out for the monthly drinks email reminders and the periodic **SOAKS Old Boys** email newsletters in future. You can also keep in touch by viewing or joining **Hobart Convicts Rugby and SOAKS** Facebook site at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/68764449606/>

