



SOAKS Old Boys Newsletter Number 7 2021

Welcome to the seventh **SOAKS Old Boys** Newsletter for 2021. In this edition, **SOAKS** Anniversary celebration at Buckingham Bowls Club is featured; '**SOAKS Old Boys profiles**' reflect on Garth Barnbaum and Phil Eldridge; and the Reserves of 1977 receive the spotlight. There are some more interesting '**Heard and Noted**' items; and as well, '**From the Vault**' recalls season 1982 through the lens of **SOAKS** balladeer Leigh Sealy. I hope that you enjoy the news, humour and nostalgia.



SOAKS Monthly Drinks

SOAKS Drinks September attracted another match hardened team of **Old Boys**!



September 2021

'**SOAKS Corner**' at Tom McHugo's Hotel was again populated with hardy veterans including: Nigel Shepherd, Andrew Herbert, Dave Kilpatrick, John Gillon, Harry Cox, Lynton Foster, Garth Barnbaum, Richard Boulton, Greg O'Keefe and Mal Riley.

SOAKS Old Boys Profile

Name and Nick name (if any)? Garth Barnbaum (nickname hopefully has been forgotten)



When did you play for SOAKS? 1990- '94 when I needed a break to sort out my knee.

Why did you decide to play for SOAKS? Always wanted to play, and got dragged in by Peter Dynan after a summer playing Touch for Uni. We were both new to Tassie and looking to meet people outside work; that is, different faces to drink with. I think Pete played a year at Uni then defected in 1990, dragging me along in the process.

Did you play rugby with other clubs? No. I went to a league school in Qld, but we didn't have a team 'cos our best players were ineligible for schoolboys, due to being paid to play grade footy. When I went to Uni (in Queensland) I signed up for trials, but there were only two grades, so when I sat on the bench for a trial game while our reserves halfback Jason Hetherington, (Canberra Raiders & Kangaroos) led the reserves to a narrow win over GPS (captain/coached by an aging but still mercurial Brendan Moon), I realised I wasn't going to make the cut.

What position/s did you play? Wing, flyhalf and fullback i.e., wherever I could get away with tackling the least...

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

- Upsy downsy skulls at the Telegraph and all the rest of the partying, win or lose.
- The 7's competition at Queenstown in 1990? We booked late and had to stay out at Zeehan. We basically took over the Central Hotel. Raided the wine cellar (wine was still at original 1970's prices), danced on the bar, and partied 'til all hours. Owner of the pub (female) was South African and loved rugby, so seemed completely unconcerned at all the antics, including the early morning fire extinguisher incident (Ted Dunne of course).
- The year after we had lost to Glenorchy by over 100-0 (or it felt like it) in reserve grade and 90 something to not much in seniors at Eady St... we turned it around and won both grades against Glenorchy, we could hear Richard Onn yelling at his team from the other change rooms for ages: 'You lost the fight, the game and your dignity....'

Who was your most respected local rival? Respected? Does this mean most cautious of? Steve Maxwell (then playing for Glenorchy) stuck both thumbs in my eyes in one ruck, and with arms pinned and his knee on my head, there was not much I could do about it. Then I heard a sound, a bit like a grapefruit dropped from a height, and the pressure released. I got up, and when I could see again, Steve was staggering a bit and facing up to Ted Dunne. He (in the end) shook his head and said: 'Good punch Ted' and ran off shaking his head. After the game I had to drive Ted to emergency... with a broken foot.

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

Ted Dunne. Nothing about the Rugby, but all about the crack. Ended up sharing a flat with Ted... but that's a hundred other stories....

Greg Schmidt. The ultimate clubman. Always 1000% put on the line for **SOAKS**.

What other non-playing role/s did you take on with SOAKS?

Secretary for a couple of years.



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

It has been said before, but anything to do with Ted. I will recount this one though. It was my first year, and Dave Kilpatrick had newly arrived as the coach. In pre-season (yes there was one), Dave was trying to lay the law down, and enforce some commitment to pre-season fitness, commitment, and a culture change including motivational posters on the changeroom walls and everything. Come the first pre-season trial against Taroona, and Dave addressed the team before the game ... 'and remember this might be a trial game but if anyone is not giving 110%, I'll pull them off at half time...' In a millisecond fellow club newbie Pete Dynan (later club captain) quipped... 'jeez this is good, at my last club we only got oranges.' The tone was set.

Any other comments?

In my relatively few years with SOAKS, we had limited success. Teams announced Thursday had changed by Saturday, but we made the best of it, backed each other, and put in the best performance we could. We might not have won that often, but we had a ball in the process, and it gave me fond memories to last a lifetime.



Can you identify all the **SOAKS** players and faces in the 1985 State team?

SOAKS Anniversary Function: a wonderful success

A super **SOAKS** anniversary gathering was enjoyed by all at the very comfortable Buckingham Bowls Club on Sunday 12 September. We gathered to mark the 50th and 40th anniversaries of three **SOAKS** premierships winning teams from the past: the 1971 Seniors, triumphant over Tarooma 16-15; the 1971 Colts who defeated Brothers 22-9; and the 1981 Reserves who put the cleaners through Glenorchy by 19-4.

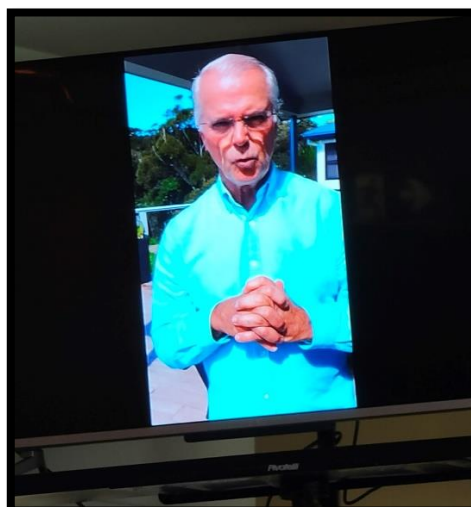
A large group of Old Boys and partners attended and were more than pleased with the warm hospitality and food provided by the Bowls Club. There were some fun and games on the bowls rink with stubbies of beer won and lucky door prizes collected by Phil Eldridge (Galway Pipe Port) and Steve Harris (\$100 gift voucher from Allgoods courtesy of Rob Luck).

SOAKS Old Boy Gordon Bray (himself a member of the wider **SOAKS** 1981 Reserves squad) delivered a highly anticipated and most entertaining video message to begin proceedings after lunch before players from the three anniversary teams captivated us all by sharing some candid and treasured memories from 1971 and 1981 respectively. Many thanks also go to Dave Dyer (**SOAKS** Old Boy and BBC member) for encouraging us to consider using the Buckingham Bowls Club as the venue and to Pat Zapotocky (BBC President) and her team for making us welcome.



Back row: Rob Kerstan, Phil Eldridge, Paul Oxley, Tim Oxley, Tim Nash, Barry Woods, Nigel Shepherd, Barry Hamilton, Mark Lawler, Lynton Foster, Dave Morris, Andrew Herbert, Peter Tucker, John Pullen, Doug Doust, Dave Dyer, Rob Luck, Damian Kerin

Front row: Clyde Eastaugh, Leigh Sealy, Geoff Eddington, Steve Harris, Stephen King, John Harry, John Donald, Mark Dwyer, Harry Cox, Greg O'Keefe



Lunch is served (above left) and many thanks go to Gordon Bray for his ongoing generosity and his support for all things **SOAKS**. If you missed Gordon's address you can view it on the Hobart Convicts and **SOAKS** Facebook page.



Above left: Sandy Herbert, Peter Tucker, Tim Nash, Andrew Herbert and Dave Morris enjoy the chance to catch up with one another. Paul Oxley (above right) was a very welcome face at the **SOAKS** Anniversary function and he brought with him some fantastic and much treasured photographic memorabilia.

SOAKS in Time

Reserves 1977 before a match Vs Glenorchy at Glenorchy's Eady Street ground (a much-treasured team photo courtesy of Paul Oxley)



Back row (L-R): Allan Welch (Coach), Geoff Eddington, Mark Kadziolka, Barry Hamilton, Damian Kerin, Dave Collidge, Rex Beamish, Martin Gibbons, Jim Oakham, Leigh Sealy
Front row (L-R): Konrad Plachta, Justin Cook, Paul Cook, Simon Salter, Neil Schmidt, Peter Tucker, Paul Oxley

Some candid comments from members of the 1977 Reserves team:

'Leigh Sealy had approached me in no uncertain terms about my responsibility to give back to the club the good times I enjoyed as a player 1972-1974. I tried to model my coaching on the best that I had experienced in the past e.g., former Wallaby Alan Morton at Hurlstone Agricultural High School in NSW 1957-1959 and John Donaldson at **SOAKS**. Morton maintained that if you could jog off the field at full time you hadn't played hard enough; at the final whistle you should collapse onto the ground in an exhausted heap. He also insisted that we run to form up restarts of play such as scrums and line-outs and associated back line positions so as to give the opposition the impression that we were fit and enthusiastic players and could cope easily with anything they dished up.' (Coach Allan Welch)

Alan Welch was and still is a modest and quiet man, so one might think him not a good fit for a rowdy and naughty bunch of reserve rugby players. But he had a knack of instilling much *esprit de corp* amongst his motley crew – look! our shorts and jumpers all match; we look so fresh and smart.

1977 was my third year at SOAKS. I was 22 years old and probably around the median age for the team. Barry Hamilton, Damian Kerin, Konrad Plachta, Neil Schmidt and a few others must have been younger than me, while Dave Collidge, Jim Oakham, Rex Beamish and Paul Oxley fell on the older side of things. Geoff Eddington was in an epoch of his own. This year also marked the recruitment of the two Cook brothers from the Uni club, Paul and Justin.

So Welch had his work cut out. We had a good time and trained reasonably well [for a SOAKS team]. (Peter Tucker)

Not sure how or why, looking around at the surrounding talent in the photo, but ended up the 77 B&F and captain. (Konrad Plachta)

I always made a point of turning up for the Glenorchy games as there were always a few “unavailable” for their games. (Geoff Eddington)

Playing at Eady Street was always tough, but always fun. One certainly earned a beer, which after all was the primary motivation for reserve grade rugby in those days. I'm saying nothing about that haircut. I must have thought it a good idea at the time. Just another bad call to add to the many I made in the 70's.

Allan Welch looks as apprehensive as he should have been. A great man, with considerable patience, who gave so much of his time to ensure we could all get together for a beer on Saturday nights. I have never forgotten the effort Allan put into getting something resembling rugby out of this rag tag bunch.

Seals: Poetry, Prose, and Propping. What more could one want from a man? Was also an inspiration (only second to Paul Okker) behind Don Glover's piano at the old Goulburn Hotel. Paul Oxley: Best singer in the club and, unlike most others, didn't need to be sauced up to do so. Another bloke who seemed to always be smiling. (Dave Collidge)

I think that match against Glenorchy was a draw, something like 18 all, with the clearly superior Associates team being robbed by the very technical referee: Colin D..... who dismissed a try by myself because after I grounded the ball with downward pressure, the ball bounced up. No try for the constantly offside breakaway... just a little bit of payback. (Rex Beamish)

Feedback



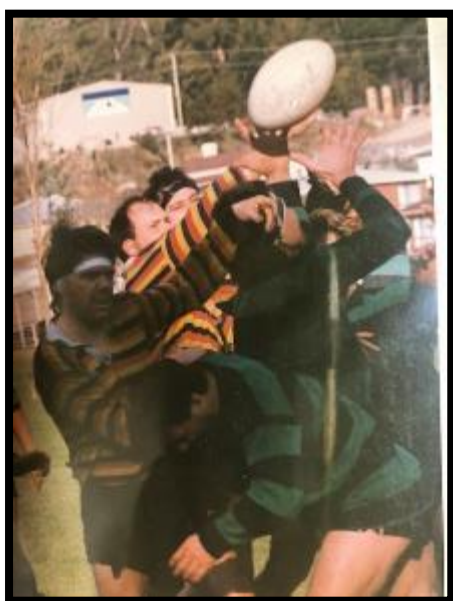
Bob Glade-Wright (above left) writes:

Hi Greg

Been a while, going by the hair! I played with Uni (with Wongie) from '68 to '71. His full name is Yong Wong Chen. Everyone called him Wongie. He was quite sporty - on Saturdays he'd play badminton first thing then soccer midday with the Malaysian Tigers, then rugby with us in the afternoon. The ref behind Mark is Peter Tracey. The Uni player (above right) is our winger David (Diesel) McDonald.

[Editor's note: The **SOAKS** players from left to right are: Mark Lawler, Peter Riley and the late Ewen Cummins.]

SOAKS Vs Devonport 1990 revisited



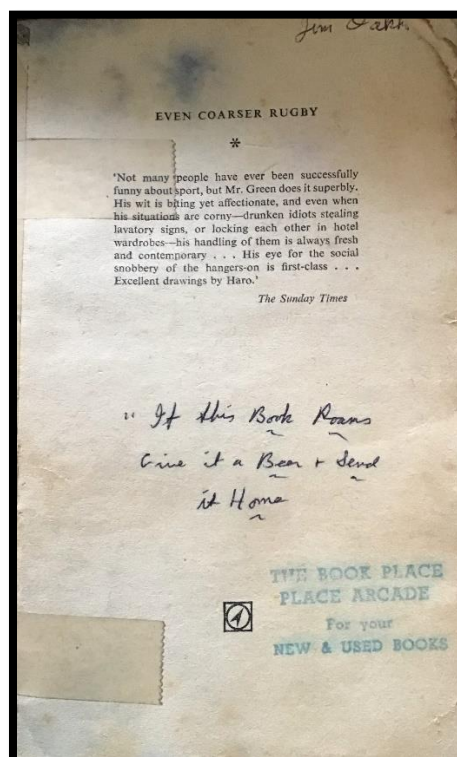
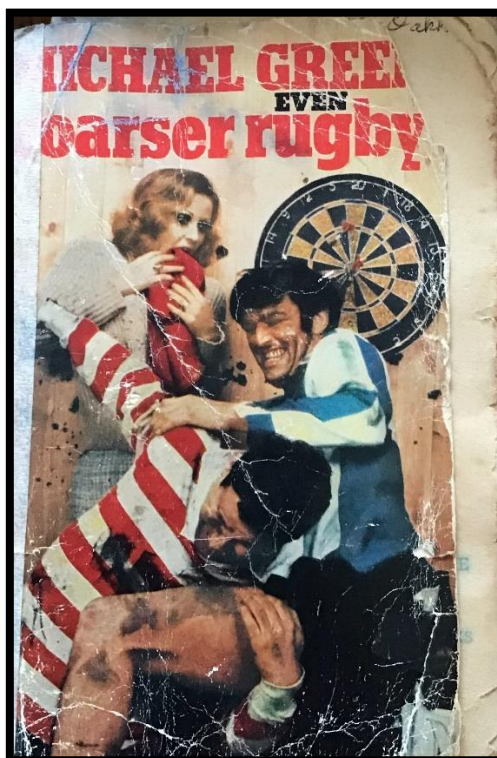
Here are two more great images courtesy of Ian Scutt from the 1990 **SOAKS** vs Devonport thriller! Check out Steve Colles, Lynton Foster and Nigel Shepherd trying to disrupt the Devonport lineout. In the photo below the **SOAKS** cover defence is in full swing with Ben Cox, Mark Hancock and Ian Scutt confronting the Bulls' backline followed by a posse of **SOAKS** in pursuit.



Heard and Noted



Proud Grandfather **Dave Collidge** writes: The never-ending joys and rewards that one can gain from this great game were visited upon me again last Saturday. My grandson Harry played Tight Head in the Maroochy Swans U/14 grand final against Noosa. Scored the first try, kicked the last conversion, and played in a premiership team in his first year of Union. And a bloody good kid to boot!



Found long ago, this book has travelled with me to many places. Found inspiration on every page and it perhaps explains my playing and training ethic, as put to me one day in court by Mr Sealy. He will of course either deny or forget.

Still giving it a Beer as per instructions from Jim Oakham. (Konrad Plachta)

Nick Farr-Jones...**SOAKS** star recruit!
Who remembers the 1992 Rugby event of the year?

Thanks to Ian Scutt for providing these images from a memorable day for NJF as he got to rub shoulders with some real Rugby talents!



SOAKS Old Boys Profile

Name: PHILIP ELDRIDGE



When did you play for SOAKS?

1965-67. Occasional invites after that.

Why did you decide to play for SOAKS?

Soon after my arrival in Tasmania from UK in 1964. Obvious choice. Recommended to me by George Wilson, then Master of Hytten Hall, where I stayed two weeks on arrival.

Did you play rugby with other clubs?

Learned the game at Harrow School: 1948-1953. (See 'Song of the Forwards')

*Harrow RFC (suburb not school) intermittently between 1954 and 1962, whenever located locally.

Birmingham Moseley RFC 1958-59.

** Old Thamesians RFC (1962-64)

What position/s did you play?

Back-row of the scrum for my whole playing years until my last year with **SOAKS** when moved to the second row.

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

(1) Reserves Grand Final 6-3 win in 1965 v Army at Clare Street. Broke through the lineout and, as I was tackled, passed to Ward Doe, who scored the winning (and only) try.

(2) Lively weekend away trip v Burnie RFC (1965).

(3) Happy hours at St Ives Hotel after games.

Who was your most respected local rival?

Peter Wiltshire of Harlequins and also **SOAKS**. Old friend and team mate from UK.

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

Dennis Gee: reserves captain, and good friend, who also gave me a wider perspective on Australia; John Donaldson: who set high standards as a player, referee and academic colleague. George Wilson: an academic colleague with whom I shared common interest and experience of India. He was a passionate lover of the game, who pointed me in the direction of **SOAKS**, helping with our formation to give the students a better chance to play for Uni.

What other non-playing role/s did you take on with SOAKS?

I later took up refereeing, which sometimes involved **SOAKS** games.

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

An old **SOAKS** invitation game divided into four quarters, with alcoholic drinks served at each break by Harry (or was it Orrie?) Cox. Don't know how I got through the game!

Any other comments?

*The intermittent nature of my rugby playing experience, is explained by (1) National Service from 1953-55 in the RAF, including 14 months in Germany; (2) Oxford Uni studies 1955-58; (3) work location, postgraduate studies and teaching 1958-64.

** I was Economics subject head at Thames Valley Grammar School, Twickenham, Middlesex from 1961-64, filling my timetable with several classes assisting a very creative sports master in supervising rugby. In 1962, I was given a few names and asked to organise an old scholars club called Old Thamesians. (See early history by Robin Chandler - <https://www.thamesians.co.uk/about/club-history/old-thamesians-rfc.aspx>).

This proved great fun as those few provided new names, including talented players like Dave Paget, when available during University vacations. Fixtures were arranged over beers by attending meetings of the London Rugby Fixture Exchange, and referees via subscription to the London Referees Association. Finding a permanent home would prove more difficult.

I initially captained the first team but dropped myself to help build the reserve team – a matter of some ribaldry with those claiming I was just dropped!! (That definitely happened with **SOAKS** to make way for the powerful combination of John Harry and Doug Doust.)

Anyway, I'm proud to say that the club is still going strong under the name of Thamesians RFC (<https://www.thamesians.co.uk/>), despite the school closing in 1977, with two teams plus a women's team.

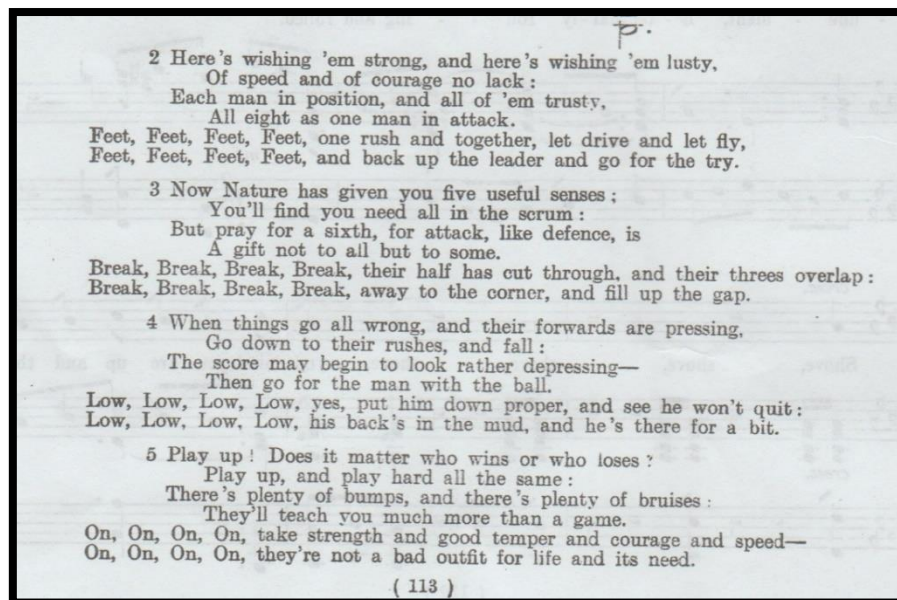
From that initial core of players, two (now deceased) followed to Tasmania – David Paget, via New Zealand with his then new wife Leone, and Peter Wiltshire, as an engineer at Hydro Tasmania. Dave was a brilliant Maths lecturer at Uni. of Tas. **RIP old friends.**

[Editor's note: Phil is most likely our oldest **SOAKS** Old Boy and when asked when he was born, Phil replied: "I was born 8 May 1935. We awoke to news of the Nazi German surrender on the morning of my 10th birthday in May 1945. Everyone went crazy."]

Song of the Forwards (Dedicated to C. D. Laborde and the Rugby XV of 1932)

The threes they may stand in a graceful alignment,
The back may be shivering cold:
But forward know none of such dainty refinement,
Eternally rolling and rolled.

Shove, shove, shove, shove,
And mind you are up and the first down to do it,
Shove, shove, shove, shove,
Get down and get under, and heel or go through it



The Last Word (?) on the try scoring controversy that has raged since 1981

Messages from Alan Fong and Mike Keating were read to the assembled **SOAKS** Old Boys at the recent Anniversary function at Buckingham Bowls Club and they clarified (sort of) the question about who was responsible for the game deciding try on that Reserve Grade Grand Final day in 1981. Below is the abridged version:

All I can recall (with some modesty) is me setting Fongy up for the try that broke the back of Glenorchy and delivered **SOAKS** one of their first Grand Finals in many years.

As I recall Logan kicked in open play from our half and one of the Sheedy boys playing fullback took it in his 25 and attempted to clear from the Brooker Highway end of the ground. He didn't find touch and I ran full steam onto the ball and retrieved it on the half volley before it was going across the sideline. (I surprised myself but it came off.) I then ran the obligatory 50 metres to set Fongy up. I do recall Greg Hill yelling at me to run faster by screaming go Michael "Fleeting". I drew Sheedy and David Dransfield before offloading to Fongy who admittedly had a further 20 metres to run before planting the ball 10 metres from the left-hand post. I didn't see this, as Sheedy and Dransfield were kicking the shit out of me on the ground 20 metres up field. This is all TRUE! When I did manage to raise myself off the ground Fongy is running around with his shirt up like a soccer player and every forward was there trying to kiss him.

(Mike Keating)

It was a special time for **SOAKS**, especially when the Sheedy boys got stuck into Keating, (thanks Mike for reminding me they got you!!!). And let's put the record straight, if I wasn't there to rip the ball off you... it doesn't matter whether you half volleyed the ball, kicked it backwards to yourself or did a pirouette (and if you did that, then that would have bamboozled the Sheedys and you **"WOULD"** have scored yourself!), but they got you and I scored a try – the *Mercury* said so, and THAT is not fake news.

(Alan Fong)

Season 1982 by “SeaLeigh”

In the course of human history
There are heroes by the score
And to these hallowed halls of fame
‘Tis time to add some more.

From the barren fields of Rugby Park
Laid waste by Lovett’s flames
Phoenix-like these legends rose
Associates was their name.

This highly trained and daring troupe
Like ancient Norse berserkers
Had learnt this art in every part
Whilst playing for a circus.

The circus closed as I suppose
A circus always will
But the painted frowns of laughing clowns
Linger with us still.

So to the turf of Rugby Park
Their efforts were transferred
And downwind from the sewerage works
They played on undeterred.

Michael Logan led this crew
So jovial and hearty
When in the mood he throws his food
And even threw a party.

With men of steel like Goldthorpe
Who in his quiet yet brash way
Who even though he doesn’t smoke
Can always fill an ashtray.

And vile Wayne Cole that wingman bold
The scourge of Abel’s Bar
Eats dog food for his supper
And for breakfast eats cigars.

And little Andy Herbert
That priapismic clone
Had to play Reserves
Because he cracked a bone.

And Harris also cracked a bone
Twas more than he could stand
But no-one was surprised to learn
The bone was in his hand.

And Michael Keating keeps competing
Tho' battered half to death
And Keating's beatings keep depleting
The funds of the MBF.

Tho' Peter Tucker's always late
The reason's quite compelling
On Saturdays he goes to school
To help improve his spelling.

And Gathercole now getting old
Will soon be put in mothballs
A just desert for getting hurt
While playing social softball.

And what of young John Marron
With liver half serrated
He fills his bath with Cascade draught
So now he's Marron-ated.

Fitzpatrick's lodgings are unique
His friends are most inquisitive
If he should go from his bungalow
Will Brian's shed be revisited?

And Martin Burrell – Treasurer
Takes his duties keenly
But didn't raise a single thing
When exposing himself obscenely.

And old Ron Ward the aged sword
His try we'll not forget
Despite the rum and his tank-like run
There's life in his Life Member yet.

And Steve King made a comeback
And trained and trained and trained
And then he got selected
And was never seen again.

Greg Hill played his annual game
He said to help the club
And played quite well considering
He'd had breakfast at the pub.

And wily Steve Maxwell
Overplayed his hand
He had no choice when he threw his voice
Which quite surprised the band.

And Alan Fong did nothing
To bring him to attention
But he might eat me for breakfast
If he didn't get a mention.

As for all the young blokes
Like Albertson and Standish
If you want yourselves immortalised
You must be more outlandish.

The cudgels must be taken up
Behaviour must be rotten
A spew or two will often do
Lest you be forgotten.

In the course of human history
There are heroes by the score
And all of them played rugby
A dozen times or more.

And all of them were gentleman
And therein lies the rub
All of them played Rugby
For Associates Rugby Club.

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/>

