

## **MEMORIES or a farewell to Selborne College - June 1984.**

\* Neil Emslie \* Adapted for the 25th Reunion of 1969 Matric Class and for the 40th Reunion of the 1962 Matric Class – 11th October 2002

Thirty three years.....

Not long - if you say it quickly, -  
But it represents one half -  
Very nearly -  
Of three - score years and ten -  
or a third of a century - .....  
And it seems so short a span!

I'll miss the old place .....  
The Cloisters and the old hall.....  
And C35  
Where I taught for so long.  
And the staff room -  
With its camaraderie and characters.....

Characters .....

Like "Carlo", George Smith, and Neville Blackbeard.  
And old --- "Meatballs" and --- Mr. Magoo.....  
Not to mention Uncle Jack and Charlie Prior..

And Bones himself .....

Headmaster without peer!

Then there was the younger crew, Lionel Heath and Botch, and Kinton Weakley..... Clyde Broster,  
Alan Webber, and Trevor Webster too  
Owen Neil, Noel Vorster, Peter Holgate - Good men one and all!

But most of all, I'll miss my boys  
The real Selborne -  
Tall ones, fat ones, burly ones, scrawny ones,

Very good .....very naughty  
Very clever.....pretty dim  
Or just in-between

Run of the mill, salt of the earth  
Selbornians.....  
With lots of good in the worst of them  
Oh! There's lots of derogatory talk  
About the rising generation,  
But you can take it from me .....

They're just the same today!  
I've taught a lot of the sons  
And they're every bit as good as Dad .....  
And sometimes better!

I see them often on my travels -  
'neath the shadow of Constantia.....  
Or in the Kruger National Park...  
Or when we were camped  
Beneath the misty Drakensberg,  
Or even farther afield,  
In England or in France .....

Or bel' Italia.... hopefully!

And when I lie awake  
We'll play old rugby matches over again....  
And they'll come back to me again.....  
On a flood – a tide of memories!  
And I'll remember  
Ryan Moore and "Buck" Murray  
And Barry Kockett,  
Who could put the ball on a Tickey!  
There was Sav Stunner.... Gentle giant..

And Ian Stewart going in for one of his 51 tries .....  
Horizontally, as was his style-----  
The original india - rubber man!

There was Brian Page leading the 1960 team through Rhodesia from behind a movie camera..... And  
twenty two years later there was Baby Derek. A chip off the old block, all right!

And back in '66 and '67  
I remember Raymond Carlson  
Taking over the captaincy  
From luckless Norman Hardwich  
And doing a damn fine job.....  
And going on to wear the green and gold.....  
Perthes 'of te not'

And Peter Thompson kicking goals to keep us in the hunt against Dale College and Pierre Dreyer  
dominating line-outs against Maritzburg College.... with a broken thumb and Trompie - scoring in  
injury time against Muir from his own in-goal area!

I remember Alan Wright,  
Long since gone before...  
Asking the dining-car steward for a Port and Lemon,  
And looking abashed when I told him  
It was a ladies drink---. ....

How well I remember Rowan Armist, Captain without peer in 1971 "The ball, you guys, the ball  
..... And Gary Weber, weaving a magic spell on the Boet Erasmus.

I remember both triumph and disaster -  
And how Dale College gave us headaches even then!  
And I remember little Norma Craig  
Dying by the roadside at the Yellowwoods River in 1964  
And my belated realisation  
That Rugby wasn't everything.....  
That Life and Death and God fitted into the picture...  
And my family too, of course.

I remember the good times we've had and the bad as well!  
"Remember Sir, when you threw a chair across the room?"  
"And do you remember when Alistair Milne carted the Dale bowlers for two fours, in his last match"  
Poor Alister - he had cancer of the bone, and he never came back to school ..... He was a very brave  
boy. I used to go and see him in hospital and we talked about the next rugby season - the season he  
would never see.

I remember too Geoffrey Zimmerman..... And how Robert Nuttall and Desmond Schultz fought  
off the shark that took him - fought it off with bare fists, that hot February day at Nahoon. And  
Neville Pretorius challenging a man with a knife ..... and being stabbed to death, in defence of their  
family servant.

There are many kinds of courage..... And sometimes it's not spectacular..... Just seeing something  
through, I've seen a lot of that! New boys, dreadfully homesick, hanging in there when all seems  
dark. Then there's the endless academic struggle - so hard for some! The courage it takes to open  
the innings when the light is bad and the pitch is rough..... Or simply --- to step on stage to act or  
sing ..... Or do the prayers at class assembly. Oh, it all gives dimension to the Words on the Scroll....  
'PALMA VIRTUTI' - The reward is to the brave indeed ..... But it is not just to the Toys Nortons of  
this world that the palm is given ..... but to all who strive.... and endure to win out in the end!