



# Allan Glen's School Club

# Newsletter December 2009

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## Editorial



**Alistair Kellock** took over as Scotland's Captain when Chris Cusiter was injured in the first half of the Murrayfield international against Australia in November 2009, and under his leadership for nearly an hour, the team scored a famous, albeit narrow victory, by just 9 - 8. It was Scotland's first win against Australia since the 1982 Brisbane Test, ending a run of 16 defeats by the Wallabies.

I think this is a far more important and worthwhile event to record than any waffle from your Editor. Further information covering Alistair's early career at Bishopbriggs is on P6.

Alan McLellan

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## Dates for your Diary

- Second Friday of the month - Monthly Lunch** - (0141 772 2756)  
**Fourth Friday of the month - Bishopbriggs Lunch** - (01383 730438)  
**Friday 23 April 2010 - East of Scotland Dinner** (tbc)  
**Monday 26 April 2010 - Annual General Meeting**  
**Saturday 26 June 2010 - Musical "Kiss Me Kate" Pitlochry** (tbc)  
**Thursday 9 Sep 2010 - Golf Outing - Pollok**  
**Saturday 27 November 2010 - Annual Dinner**  
**Monday 29 November 2010 - Allan Glen Tribute Lecture**

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## ***John Pearce relates his time doing National Service***

Thank you for inviting me to relay my National Service adventures. I was luckier than most, as my time of two years with the RAF was pretty damn good.

Ronnie Lang and I left Glasgow Central on the evening of September 20th 1955. Although we said a few words of greeting, we were too full of apprehension to be too chatty.

It was every man for himself, so we soon split up. This was to be my first experience on leaving home for an unknown destination.

RAF Cardington was where most conscripts were introduced to service life. This stage in the proceedings was hectic but not unpleasant, this was soon to change.

After we had been kitted out with various pieces of uniform; boot; shoes; knife, fork and spoon, and of course a kit bag, we were on our way to being airmen 2nd class.

We were all designated different Recruit Training Establishments, and mine was RAF West Kirby. We travelled finally to West Kirby by truck, and after arriving at our allotted billets (wooden huts), we were greeted by a most unpleasant person called a Corporal D.I.

We were more or less thrown out of the back of the truck along with our kit bags. We stumbled our way to our new home chased by this D.I. (Drill instructor). Every second word was an expletive starting with f\*\*\*. There were eighteen of us per hut, which was heated by two pot bellied stoves. Outside ablutions of course, which were freezing cold.

Reveille was at 06.30 hours, and then all hell broke loose. Our nice D.I. ran up and down the hut yelling and screaming and threatening us with terrible fates if we did not jump at his every command. We all jumped as a man, even the tough cockney and scouses etc showed great energy. After we all managed to do our ablutions and throw on our uniforms (working blues), we were told to "get fell in"!! We were marched to our first RAF breakfast which was awful.

Knife, fork and spoon plus white mug, had to be carried in your left hand behind your back. The idea of this quaint custom, was to allow airmen to salute officers when required.

Our squadron was named after Sir Winston Churchill, others were named Smuts etc.

Square bashing started immediately, and so the torture commenced. Left turns; right turns; about turns; stomachs in; chins in; eyes front at all times, breathing allowed but only because of necessity. We were given all sorts of inoculations, always given on grass in case anybody fainted. We were asked to give a pint of blood, and if you refused you ended up doing some form of fatigue. We all gave blood to a man, which was the only time I lay down during training! We were shown a film on Venereal Disease in colour (no expense spared in the RAF) plus various other lectures.

The other article of uniform issued was known as a Best Blue which would be worn for parades etc. Every recruit wore his Best Blue for the Passing Out Parade.

After a few days, we were allowed to drill with rifles (old 303s). We even had bayonets to fix on our rifles. Very few bayonets were dropped, if you did, you were for the chop. On one occasion, our D.I. forgot to give the order to open ranks when we had fixed bayonets. One recruit in the line behind me caught a bayonet on his face, but didn't even flinch. That incident showed what fear and discipline can do. All recruits were treated like non-humans, but there was no escape. If you worked as a team, the D.I.s eased off slightly.

Cleaning equipment (bull) was extensive as was cleaning our hut. Everything had to be done to satisfy the Corporal D.I.. Nobody in our hut was charged, so we must have pleased the D.I. - or were we just lucky. One recruit from another squadron hanged himself. When the newspapers found out, there was a slight thawing of the harsh treatment.

We very quickly developed into a close knit team, and started to look like Airmen.

Firing rifles and Bren guns was interesting, as I had fired off a .22 rifle while I was in the ATC at AG. We had been issued with a type of jump suit and a leather jacket, for all the rough antics we performed. We climbed up nets and scrambled down the other side. I was never any use at AG on the ropes, this improved rapidly with a D.I. bawling at me.

By the time for our Passing Out Parade, we were all pretty fit and reasonably adept at following commands. On the parade ground for the last time, we were preceded by the RAF Band playing the RAF March Past. I know that we looked good and performed reasonably, but I have no photographs of the event.

After passing out, we were given a short home leave and then sent out once again, this time for Trade Training.

This email has been abridged because of lack of space. I also apologise for any errors and omissions of events.

If requested by the Editor, I will continue with my RAF career, during and after Trade Training. I never had a dull moment in my two years, but I do not wish to dull the senses of readers.

Regards in the meantime

John Pearce

## Correspondence

**From:** ALAN McLELLAN  
[mailto:bigalpar3@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, 29 October 2009 3:22 AM  
**To:** tomknox@optusnet.com.au  
**Subject:** AGSC October Newsletter

Hello Tommy,  
I assume that this is your son's email address but it is the obvious way to say "thank you" for the £50.00 donation to the Club which arrived in my mail today. Thank you very much, that's the exact contribution that we look for from overseas Old Boys to give them Lifetime Membership. It also means that we make a contribution from the amount to the Endowment Scholarship Trust, which helps students through their University Degree. I will forward the money to our Treasurer - Mike McCreery.  
Again many thanks,  
Alan McLellan  
PS You mentioned a "Harry Arnold" as a contemporary of yours at School & we had an "HA" as a Maths Teacher. Is there any possibility that it was the same

Hi Alan

This is Tommy's son, also Tom.  
I rang my dad, he was happy you received the money and very pleased to see his article in the newsletter you print.  
I asked him about Harry Arnold, he did not know what happened to him after school. A slight chance his mate Eric Nicoll may know, I'll chase up Eric's email address and find that for you.  
Dad did say that Harry was a tall fellow, mind you my dad is 5' 4" and left at age 15, so everything is relative. He also said Harry was a good Athlete, sportsman. \*  
Harry won the school sports medal, a significant achievement and that he was of solid build. Maybe that will add some clues if he was your maths teacher.  
All the best, my dad really likes reading the newsletter when it arrives.  
Thanks  
Tom, the younger!

*\* Ed's note. I have an abiding memory of 6 of the best from HA - so it could be the same man!*

Dear Alan McLellan

At last someone I know about, namely Ken Nicoll.  
Ken and I attended Hillington Primary School, and shared the same intake. We used to knock around after school hours and at weekends. I remember Ken being a very fine artist even at that early stage. He was always "top of the class", and I spent my life trying to beat him. Ken always won, but it made me try a bit harder. I never took to the regime at Allan Glen's, but Ken being Ken took it all in his stride.

As invariably happens, we lost contact as we all went our separate ways. When I received the list of old boys, I spotted Ken's name and decided to write to him. I did eventually receive a reply which was quite sad. Ken had lost his wife in 2005, and he was spending his time abroad. He had no wish to re-live the old days in Glasgow, and as he had had no contact from any other of the OBs he was not interested.

The letter was couched in a very pleasant way, so I respected his request. On a completely different subject, do you ever receive any tales of National Service. That particular subject may arouse a little bit of interest. I have some interesting tales about my service in both the UK and 2nd TAF Germany.

In the meantime very best wishes

John Pearce (1949/53)

## Recent Lunch at the Bearyards with WAG's



### 'BRIGGS LUNCH 30TH OCTOBER from Joe Miller

Eleven couples and eight lost souls, who have not yet mastered the art of getting a 'lumber' assembled for what turned out to be an excellent Lunch and a lively Social Gathering.

As we all know, one thing that was in extremely short supply at Glens, was an excess of female pulchritude, so it was delightful to wallow in our more



decorative companionship.

The Sports Pavilion still has a decent collection of Glen's Memorabilia, which merits close examination, and the grounds themselves still evoke more than a hint of past glories with bat and ball, tempered by the occasional disaster. Even a brief visit can unlock the door to the distant past.

Apres munching, we were entertained royally by David Tanner, who conjured up a programme of Ballads and Blues, moving, boisterous, and above all humourous, from an old AGS Science jotter. David also found time to give credit to his old German teacher, Maurice Blytheman, alias Thurso Berwick. Should the future offer a reprise - try not to miss it.

Our sincere thanks are due to Anne Kennedy, Carly and all the catering staff for the major contribution they made to a most enjoyable afternoon, and of course to our 'Wine Waiter' extraordinaire, Bob Leckie .



## Plaudits

Hello Alan,

Just wanted to congratulate you on another excellent newsletter. I was in the process of saving the file to my pc when I made the mistake of starting to read it. Result: cold tongue and cold shoulder for a belated lunch but a most enjoyable read!

Best wishes,

**David Tanner**

Dear Gregor

A slightly belated note to thank you and the Club for your kind hospitality last Friday (*lunch at Strathclyde*). I had a most enjoyable day in Glasgow with you all and was thrilled that there were quite a number present whom I had taught and who took the opportunity to share memories with me. Thank you too for your kind remarks of introduction.

It was for me a most interesting walk down memory lane and I would hope to maintain my contact with the Club in the future.

Warm regards and thanks to all concerned.

**Charlie Thomson** (former teacher)

## **Third Annual Allan Glen Tribute Lecture Dec 7th 2009**



**The assembled audience**



**Don receives an AGS quach from Gregor**

### **Dr Don Cameron explains the role of ENGINEERING in the design and construction of Hot Air Balloons**

Around 85 senior school pupils gathered in the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow on Monday afternoon of the 7<sup>th</sup> December to listen to Dr Don Cameron explain the importance of engineering in hot air balloon flight. This was the third lecture in the series which is now known as the **Allan Glen Tribute Lecture**

The purpose of the lecture was twofold. Firstly to introduce school-age young people to engineering and secondly to make them aware that financial assistance may be available to them while attending University from The **Allan Glen's Endowment Scholarship Trust**.

The keynote speaker was introduced by Gregor Egan. In his introduction, reference was made to several notable former pupils (including our speaker) and their achievements. The point was made that they all had started out with a specific interest in their subject. They worked at it; became enthusiastic about it and ultimately dedicated all their energies to extending the boundaries of knowledge in their chosen field.

Dr Cameron, world authority on the technology of the hot air balloon then addressed the audience. Don grew up in Glasgow, attended Allan Glen's School and Glasgow University and is an enthusiastic supporter of the aims of the Trust. He spoke about the problems of constructing balloons to replicate human shapes such as faces; the texture of materials that are used in construction and how leakage through stitching for a hot air balloon was tolerable but not on a helium and hot air combination. He explained how some high altitude helium hot air balloons require protection from exposure to the sun on the top surface to prevent excessive heating during the day and at night needed protection from the cold and condensation on the top of the balloon. He also covered much of the history of balloon experimentation, how he personally became involved with balloons eventually setting up his own business. In conclusion he spoke about the many international events where balloonists meet and fly in competition with each other. A very interesting lecture was followed by a lively question and answer session.

The lecture concluded with the presentation of an Allan Glen's Quach to Don by Gregor Egan President of the Club and Chairman of the Trust.

Thanks to David Tanner who greeted all the pupils, made them most welcome and registered them: to the phone-round team, Ken Guiney, Ronnie Wright and Craig Downie, without whom there would have been no attendees; and to Mike McCreery for pictures and video. Gregor Egan.

**Ed Note. Main thanks are really due to Gregor, who masterminded the whole operation.**

## **Alistair David Kellock**

Alistair was a pupil of Bishopbriggs High School and commenced his rugby career with **Allan Glens RFC** at the age of 14. His coaches at the time were past-pupils of **Allan Glen's**, David Reid and John Buchanan. I would also like to point out that David Reid trialled at loose head prop for Scotland in the 1950s.

Alistair played for Scotland at Under 16, under 18 and under 19 level and played for Glens until he was 18 when pressure to further his career obliged him to move to a Premiership Club. He joined Stirling County and after two seasons he was offered a professional contract with Edinburgh Rugby where he played for three years. In 2006 at the age of 24 he changed his allegiance to Glasgow Warriors and after a year he became captain. At a mere 6 foot 8 inches and 18 stone he is considered light for an international lock but with his considerable mobility he has gained 10 caps for Scotland.

It may be of interest that Allan Glens RFC has recently produced three under 18 Scotland internationalists Nick Campbell, Mathew Bradford and Greg Sinclair but, as usual, they have been required to move to a higher club to continue their representative career.

## **New CD's from Sandy Howie - The Register Project**

### **1. MAGAZINE DISC**

This disc complements the Pupil disc and contains all of the School Magazines produced from 1940 until 1973. All of the discs are easy to use on PCs and the home page of each will appear within a minute of the disc entering the computer.

### **2. HISTORY DISC**

This disc allows Members to view the History of Allan Glen's School 1853-1953. As this History is no longer available in book form this disc is a vital link with our past.

### **3. PUPIL DISC**

The main disc lists over 11,000 pupils, each with the year that the pupil entered his 1<sup>st</sup> form. This disc also contains information on some of the sources used in its production - including the names from three School Directories.

There are 850 pages of information which include the annual lists of 1<sup>st</sup> form pupils for the final 80 years of the School's existence. Where the names of pupils are found in magazines, newsletters, school registers etc, then the sources are to be found in these annual lists together with information on whether there is a photograph.

The discs are available to Members at a cost of £10.00 each and can be ordered directly from Sandy Howie at....

**sandy@ahsolutions.co.uk or (tel 0141 639 4143)**

A fourth and final disc in this Register Project is being produced and it will feature the contents of as many pre-war Magazines as can be found.

Should any Member have old Magazines from the 1910s, 1920s or 1930s, please let me or anyone on the Committee know and hopefully we can compile an even more comprehensive record of our past.

**The missing magazines are from the first in 1891 until the one for 1904.**

**Also missing are the magazines from 1907 until 1917 and finally the magazine for 1925.**

**However any pre-war magazines would be welcome as some of the club's earlier magazines are in a fairly distressed state.**

### *Editor's Note*

*During 2009, Sandy Howie has masterminded the production of 3 significant CD's, now available to the Membership. This is the result of some 7 years of research into a variety of archive sources.*

*The first disc contains scanned images of all the School magazines from 1940 till 1973. Thanks are due to those who either donated or loaned copies of these magazines.*

*The second disk is a scanned copy of the original "The History of Allan Glen's School and Allan Glen's School Club 1853 - 2003" as this is now out of print.*

*The third disc is the most remarkable piece of work following on from the discovery and copying of the original School record books (which were thought to have been destroyed) in the Mitchell Library and searches done at Strathclyde University Archives and other such places. This disc is a cross reference of the pupil register to the publications in discs 1 and 2, and the current series of Newsletters.*

## Annual Dinner Trades house 28 November 2009



Thankfully the downpours of mid-week had abated by the Saturday of the 2009 Dinner as we assembled at the Trades Hall on the evening of 28 November for a 7pm start.

A strong turnout of members and guests meant 143 were expected for the proceedings. In fact two late calls-off due to illness cut the attendance to 141. This was an increase of 13 over 2008. There were 96 members and 45 guests. The latter included 24 who had indicated the school they had attended. It is a matter of interest that at Table 3 were three professors, viz., Sutherland,

Wilson and Russell. Table 2 had the distinction of seating Col. John L. Kelly, MBE, Len. Sneddon, OBE, and Raymond Miquel, CBE. The Top Table guests included representatives from The Incorporation of Wrights, Kelvinside Academicals, The High School of Glasgow, The Aloysian Association, Hutchesonians, and the Sports Club. Ian S. Hogarth attended on behalf of the East of Scotland Club.

The guests and members were greeted briefly by the President, Gregor M. Egan. Grace was said by the Reverend Alan Garrity. Grooms, the caterers, then served the meal in their usual efficient manner.

The Guest of Honour, Professor Herb Saravanamuttoo, from Carleton University, Ottawa was introduced by the President. The Professor concentrated his address on the contribution Allan Glen's pupils had made to science, education and engineering. His own field of activity had involved gas turbines, especially in the area of aviation and had included work on the engines for Concorde. He had graduated from Glasgow University with First Class Honours in Mechanical Engineering and throughout his career had met Glens boys from other times who had taken the same route. He had started at school during the war in QC, and in the senior school remembered a very good lady maths teacher. His sporting activities were built round cricket and he remarked on fellow-players who also became distinguished engineers, for example, Dick Rimmer and Bill Cox.

Following the interval The Toast to the School and the Club was proposed by Colonel John L. Kelly, MBE in a virtuoso manner which included memories and a briefly sung ditty about J. B. Somerville, Headmaster from 1956 to 1968. The Vice-president, Ronnie Wright, then gave a more detailed depiction of the Top Table guests. The reply on behalf of the guests was delivered by Eddie Rose, with the usual combination of jokes and seriousness. A keen footballer who was also a tennis and squash player, he echoed the Guest of Honour in his love of cricket.

Past-president Alan F. McLellan closed the function with a comprehensive vote of thanks to all who had prepared and organised the occasion. Special thanks went to the President for the manner in which he had conducted the programme and to the staffs of the Hall and Grooms the the caterers.

May I take this opportunity to express my thanks for the support I have had and to wish John Bolton, who is taking over as Dinner Convenor, every success.

Ross Graham



## Visit to S Alan McKinstrie

On 3<sup>rd</sup> December, John Bolton and Brian McAllister had the pleasure of visiting S Alan McKinstrie at his home in Condorrat. Alan had taught Engineering and Mathematics at Allan Glen's in the 1950s and 1960s.

His teaching career had begun at Finnieston Secondary following National Service with the RAF, where he became a Fighter Controller and then Sector Controller. Alan re-mustered in the Auxiliary Air Force and then the Volunteer Reserve for a further 13 years. Whilst at Glens he was an obvious choice to lead the ATC after the promotion of Bob MacAusland, the former C.O. Alan developed his career further while at Glens by gaining a degree in Mathematics.

In addition to letting us hear some of his stories from the days of fighter intercepts during the early days of the Cold War, Alan revealed the secret of the Allan Glen's school timetable which JB Somerville announced to the staff on the first day of each year. The secret known only to a few was that it never changed!!

Subsequent schools included Grange Comprehensive, Possilpark Comprehensive and finally Bannockburn High School, where he was appointed Depute Rector before becoming Rector.

Alan's time these days is devoted to the local Royal Air Force Association where he is President (see [www.rafa1355.co.uk](http://www.rafa1355.co.uk)). Alan has a married son and daughter and 5 fine grandchildren.



## John Wright Caldwell 17/1/39 – 22/9/09 - Allan Glen's Pupil 1951-1956

Jack, as he was known to his many friends, died this year after a long and debilitating illness, which he faced with courage and a remarkable spirit.

In spite of being settled in California, for over 30 years, he retained his loyalty to Scotland, and particularly Allan Glen's. As a former pupil he was a stalwart and energetic member of the Rugby Club, both as a player and Committee Member.

He retained his enthusiasm for rugby and was able to enjoy it through the medium of TV which brought him the best of both the Northern and Southern hemispheres.

Jack met Doreen, his wife, when they were in their 'teens and married 4 years later. Living in Bishopbriggs, they had 3 daughters, Susan, Fiona and Lesley. All married in the USA they have added 8 grandchildren to the family.

Jack worked in the family glazing business in Alexandra Parade in Glasgow. He used the experience and expertise gained when he emigrated to the USA in 1978 to launch his own company – Caldwell Glass.

Highly successful, the business continues to operate today. His Scottish roots came to the fore by learning to play the bagpipes in the Cameron Highland Band, who perform for mainly gatherings and functions.

He loved the great outdoors (not an exaggeration in California) and built a lovely home in the mountains 30 miles East of San Diego. He loved his sport, snooker and occasional dram.

Family and friends join to celebrate Jack's life at the Alpine Community Church in Alpine, California on October 3<sup>rd</sup> 2009.

To quote Jack's favourite poet, Robert Burns –  
"The honest man, tho'e'er sae poor, is King o' men for a' that"

D W Reid





## Iain Lambie 22<sup>nd</sup> May 1910 – 24<sup>th</sup> November 2009



We shall devote more space in the next Newsletter, to a full obituary to our oldest member, who very nearly made his century.

Robin Lambie wrote to the Newsletter, thanking all the members who came along to the funeral; the family were impressed at the number of attendees, as they thought he had outlived almost all his friends!

He also said that the visits from George Smith and Fraser Russell were most appreciated by his Dad, as they helped to give something of interest to otherwise very boring days.

### **More on the Glenallan / Glen Anarchist**

From Harry Marsh Oct 09

Dear Alan, many thanks for the most recent edition of the Club Newsletter which I read with usual mixture of interest and nostalgia. I especially enjoyed Bill Murray's recollections as he and I overlapped at the school for a couple of years and so many of the names he mentioned were familiar.

On the topic of The Glenallan, which you rightly say I edited for a while, 1956-57 from memory, I am afraid I do not have any copies but I will be delighted to look at those you have in the archive when possible.

The big scoop for The Glenallan in my day was in 1955 when I was deputy to Gordon Hunter —a very gifted pupil who went on to win the Observer Mace debating trophy alongside the late John Smith at Glasgow University. That year Dirk Bogarde was playing the lead in a play at the King's Theatre and we had heard that he attended the school for a while. So off we went to the stage door, pushing past his fans, and entered the star's dressing room for an interview. To our disappointment he would not be drawn on any questions about his school career and when pressed about what his best memory was the reply came "Well, they sold very good pies in the canteen". Much later when we read of his unpleasant AGS initiation in the first volume of his autobiography we understood his reticence. John Coldstream gives it a brief mention in his recent biography of DB.

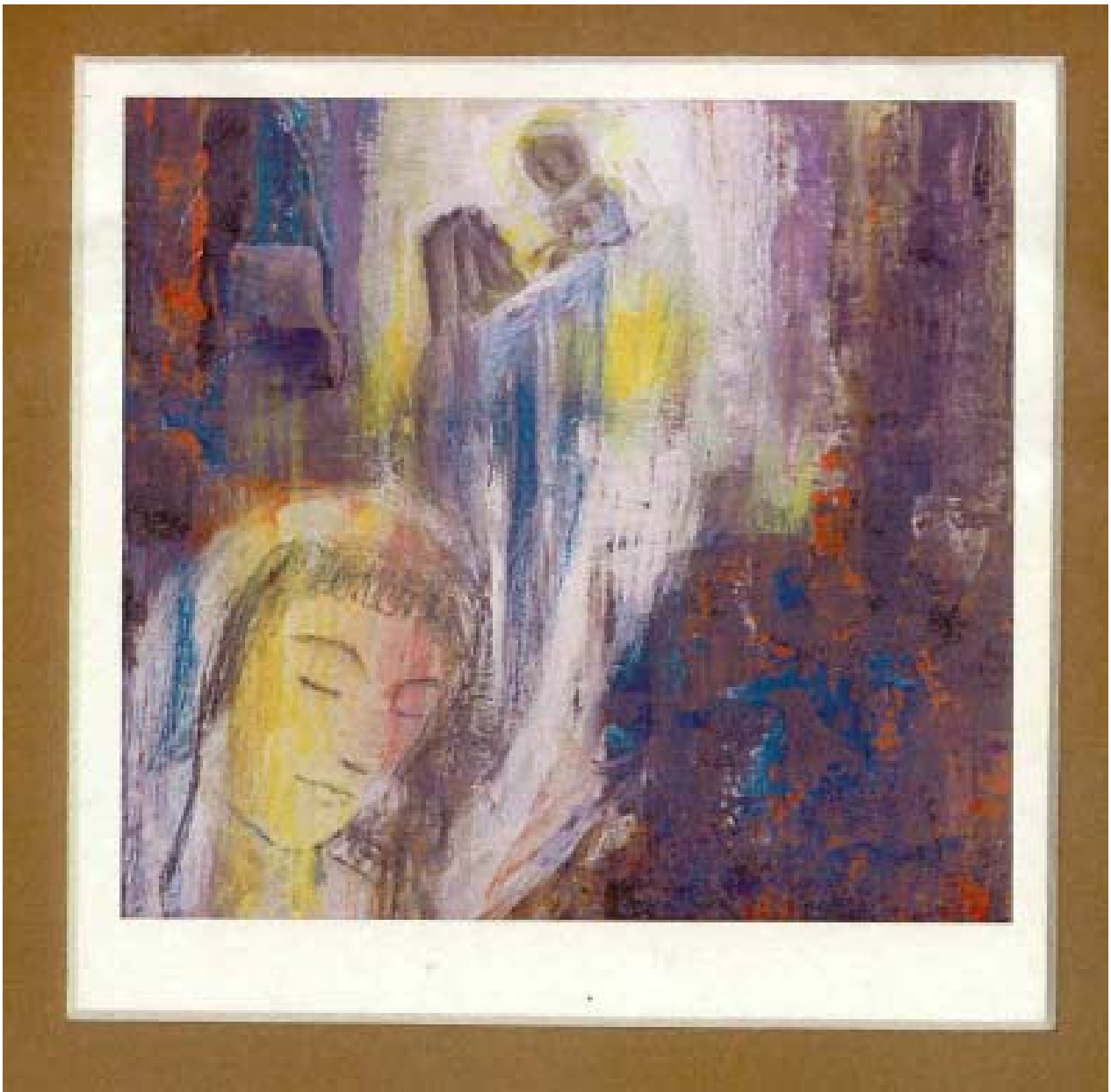
With best wishes,

Harry Marsh

PS I had forgotten the description "playground revolutionary" but with hindsight it seems fair!

*Ed's Note. We now have 11 Glenallan's and 3 Glen Anarchists. They seem to have been published sporadically from the mid 50's to the mid 60's. Most are undated. Please send any copies you have for scanning - we will return them, so that we can expand the collection. Content-wise, I suppose they do not compare with the school magazines, but they are nonetheless interesting and will be made available to the membership on request.*

# Season's Greetings from Allan Glen's School Club



Card Designed by the late Ralph Cowan 1989 and reproduced with kind permission from his daughter Diana