

## THE PUNCH CLUB

1837 – 1965

The History of its Origins, Aims and Activities

by

Past President Brother HAROLD A. D. RUDD

### **Preface**

It may be, that many histories concerning the activities of the Punch Club have been written over the past years, which have not been preserved. However, within the period 1944 to 1965, two have been printed, the authors being Brother Harry Warden in 1944, and Past President Brother Sydney Butcher in 1949. These two, performed a great service to the Club, in producing well written, informative accounts, examples of the same being preserved in the archives, charged to the care of the Trustees.

It is now requisite, in the year 1965 AD, during the reign of Her Most Gracious Majesty, our Sovereign Lady, Queen Elizabeth the Second, to compose a further edition, not the least for posterity, but, mainly for the pleasure of the Brothers of the Bowl, and for the Guests to the Punch Club. There is no doubt, as heretofore, when revision and reprinting becomes obligatory, that this account in its turn-will be superseded, or, at least revised.

A glance into the existing records of the Punch Club creates a passionate desire to feel the reality of the past, in beholding our forebears as they really were. The early records, scant and perfunctory to the limit of exasperation, as they prove to be, reveal nevertheless, the form, thought, colour and mosaic, of a long vanished past. The personalities, the aspirations, and the fabric of brotherhood shine through the years, forming the basic pattern of our Club today. To view the past, even if it be a mere glimpse, is to know the present; for, the inherent character of this unique Club, has preserved a tradition since 1837, both cogent and distinctive.

In the Punch Club, the Brothers of the Bowl-bound as one, by the indissoluble tie of Fellowship-find a serenity of purpose, and enjoy a tranquillity of mind, seldom encountered in the blatant, turbulent world of materialism, with its hollowness, its shams, and its vulgarity. The sole purpose of the Club is Fellowship, having its foundation on a discernable pattern, established in 1837, which has remained unchanged through the decades, producing the remarkable cohesion of today. The Brothers of the Bowl are ardent in the conviction, that it is only by Fellowship, mankind can prosper. The effectiveness of the Brotherhood is consolidated in this belief, with sympathetic understanding for each other, and by mutual respect.

Many and varied have been the personalities, whose contributions to this pattern have resulted in the Punch Club developing its own personality, far greater than the individualities comprising this Fellowship. Thus, the whole is greater than the sum total of its parts. Members are held by

this phantom power, this intangible force of Club personality. On four occasions in the Club's history, it has been poised on the brink of extinction; but, the thread of Fellowship, attenuated though it must have been, held fast, and assured the Club's survival.

It could be said, perhaps, that the Punch Club is an anachronism in a modern age; that it is trying to escape from reality, or, is too attached to the past. It may be so; perhaps it is so. There is much from which it is good to escape; for, this is not an age which easily commends itself to gracious living. The modern world belches inelegance, glorifies the grotesque, debauches standards, prostitutes thought, and stresses material advantages, to the exclusion of the eternal values. It is a remarkable paradox and a grim commentary on contemporary life, to come to the realization, that never before in the history of mankind, has such benevolence been shown to society as a whole, and where there has been so little regard for the individuals comprising that society. People are being reduced to economic units in the stream of life-inevitably expendable, when uneconomic - mere transitory phenomena in a mindless universe. The degradation of the dignity and destiny of man is certain, if fellowship ever fails. Thus it is, this ancient club, with firm intent, makes fellowship its chief dogma. People are people in any age, and are more important than things. It is vital, that fellowship is not lost in our time.

The light of the Founders of the Punch Club has shone down the years of history. May our own light burn as brightly, and for as long, so, that Brothers of the Bowl, one hundred, two hundred, three hundred years hence, shall say of us, as we say of our first members, "Here was Fellowship-here were worthy men."

#### **Origin and Early Days. 1837-1858 "The Jolly Cocks"**

There are no records covering this period, but, scattered references in later records substantiate the foundation of the Club, circa 1837. It is known, with certainty, that the foundation members were drawn from the professions of medicine music, art, literature, entertainment, and the armed forces. Authors, poets artists, doctors, musicians, service officers, publishers, and gentlemen of private means, met for mutual enjoyment, round a bowl of steaming punch, at the **University Hotel**, Grafton Street, London. They created an atmosphere of geniality and good fellowship, styling themselves the "Jolly Cocks"; a convivial title, which, twenty-one years later, was to be considered inapposite. Most of the members of that time had made a mark, each in his particular sphere, the achievements of many of them being recorded for all time, in authentic reference books of today. In those days, gathered round the bowl, were to be found, **George Linley (1798-1865)**, composer of the Toy Maker produced at Covent Garden in 1861 and youngest son of the famous family of musicians and singers; **Samuel Lover 1797-1868**, the Irish poet and miniature artist, who painted a portrait of Paganini for the Royal Academy; **John Parry 1776-1851**, the famous Welsh Bard, "Bardd Alaw," or, "Master of Song," composer, bandmaster, clarinettist, and conductor; **William Vincent Wallace 1814-1865**, composer, conductor, producer, violinist, and pianist. The well known opera, "Maritana," is only one of his many brilliant compositions; **John Wilson**, a famous Scottish vocalist; **George Cruikshank 1792~1878**, artist, caricaturist and illustrator whose most characteristic specimens of his style are to be found in the original editions of books of Charles Dickens, Oliver Twist, Nicholas Nickleby, and Sketches by Boz. There were many others worthy of mention, comprising this talented and illustrious group, over whom, presided **John Duff**, the well known publisher, the secretary being Joseph Edwards Carpenter, author, poet, littérateur-of whom more shall be written later. During this period, **Charles Louis Napoléon Bonaparte**, later Napoléon the Third of France was a guest of the Club. While there is no written evidence, it has been passed on by word of mouth, via Carpenter, Donald King, Conrad King-to me, that Mr. Charles Dickens was a frequent guest to the Club. His association with Cruikshank gives verisimilitude, so that the nuncupative account is certainly credible.

A wealth of information has been lost to the Club, covering the first twenty-one eventful years of our foundation. The earliest minute book in the possession of the Trustees, dates from 1858; but, its form indicates clearly, a continuation of a previous record. The scraps of information available, although satisfying in themselves, only intensify the frustration, for, no member of this Club can fail to lament, or, wistfully deplore, the loss of "what might have been." The "Jolly Cocks" without a doubt, were worth knowing. We are proud to be their lineal descendants.

### **The University Punch Club 1858-1867**

On November 20th 1858, the title "Jolly Cocks" was changed to the "University Punch Club" There seems to have been some apprehension concerning the word, "Punch," for the Club is often designated, "The University Club." The meeting place was the same, and apart from deaths and resignations, the members continued in their services to the Club. The minute book gives a list of members, which reached forty-five in number by November 1862. Mr. John Duff remained as President, while Mr. Joseph Edwards Carpenter continued as secretary until 1862, when he was elected as Vice-President, fulfilling the duties of both offices until 1864. The minute book for this period is interesting but, somewhat sketchy. Certain points of importance are worth mentioning, as they give a clue to the pattern of the Fellowship.

**Rule 2.** That each member, in rotation, provide a Bowl of Punch for the company. Bowls were five shillings.

**Rule 4.** That the amount of any wager lost, during the sitting of the Club, be handed to the Treasurer, for the benefit of the Club.

**Rule 6.** That every member pay an annual subscription of seven shillings and six pence, (it used to be 2/6), and that new members pay an entrance fee of two shillings and six pence.

Meetings were weekly and the dinner cost two shillings and nine pence, or occasionally, three shillings and six pence, which included Punch. The members were of the upper middle class, or, top professional class, and were men of substance, living in most desirable neighbourhoods. Consequently, the costs, thought somewhat expensive were considered deservedly extravagant, commensurate with the status of the Club.

There were "Wager Bowls," "Whip Bowls," "Had in Bowls," the last being obscure and unknown to us now-a-days. The first is, of course, self explanatory, while the second was a whip round contribution.

In May 1863, "Mr. Duff, in the name of the Club, presented Mr. Carpenter with an elegant Porte Monnaie, (and contents), as a small testimonial of esteem in recognition of his services as Vice-Chairman and Secretary, the same having been proposed by Mr. Stokes, and seconded by Dr. Dillon." On December 3rd, 1864, Dr Harding proposed and Mr. J. E. Carpenter seconded "That as a token of the high regard in which the members of this Club held their esteemed president - Mr John Duff - a portrait of that gentleman be painted and placed in the Club Room, over the Chairman's seat - the same to be the property of the Club. That in the event of the Club being dissolved, the same be presented to Mr. J. Duff, or, to his legal representative and that the subscription to the same, be restricted to five shillings each member - Dr. Harding having most generously undertaken, to supply any further sum that may be required to remunerate the Artist." Carried by acclamation. "Resolved that Dr Harding, Mr. William Parrott and Mr. J. E. Carpenter be authorised to see that the foregoing resolution is carried into effect."

On February 11th, 1865, Mr. Carpenter announced that the portrait of Mr. Duff was finished and proposed that the presentation be made at the Mid-Season Dinner - price 3/6 - to be held on March 4th, 1865. On February 25th, 1865, Mr. Parrott announced that the health of Mr. Duff was so uncertain, that it was doubtful whether he would be able to attend the proposed dinner on March 4th. It was proposed that the dinner be postponed "sine die."

Mr. Duff returned for the season 1866-67, but no presentation is recorded in this period, for, Mr. Duff died early in 1867.

It was customary at each meeting, for members to be called on, to compose impromptu nursery rhymes, using other members as a subject for their versification. There are thirty-nine of these efforts recorded in the minute book, which give a wonderful picture of the members at that time.

A Derby sweep was held and the winner had to provide a Bowl for the Club. The Club Song was composed in January 1865, by Mr. Carpenter, but was not published. Manuscript copies were presented to the members. This song appears in a volume of Carpenter's works, now in the possession of the Club.

Later on, in this period, the Club became known as the University Hotel Punch Club, so, it would appear that there was a diversity of opinion concerning the title. Long gaps appear in the minute book, and even the little that is minuted, apart from what has been mentioned, is trivial, discursive and indeterminate. The calibre and intellectual endowments of the membership of the period 1858-1867, are not reflected in the written records of the Club. Had there been a Sydney Butcher in those days, we would be in possession of a rich heritage and a revealing documentary.

### **The Universal Club 1867-1884**

The second minute book records with a flourish, the foundation of a re-organized Club, after the death of the first known president, Mr. John Duff. Nevertheless, although it gives important information concerning the foundation of the Club, together with lists of members, gaps of three, five, and seven years occur. Very few minutes have been recorded, and those which have been, are nugatory. This was the period of Joseph Edwards Carpenter, who gained his doctorate of Philosophy in 1871. To him alone, we owe some knowledge of the Club's early beginnings and it is worth while including his comments, verbatim, which he wrote in the minute book of the period. The fly leaf is adorned with the extravagant spiral ornamentation-so beloved by the Victorians - surrounding the title, which is encircled by a quotation from Horace, "Felices ter et amplius quos irrupta tenet copula." - Thrice happy are they who are bound together by indissoluble ties. Then follows the most important contribution to our history.

"The Universal Club, like many other kindred societies, has had a previous existence under other names, but its place of meeting, has remained, from the first, unchanged. It has been distinguished, for more than twenty years, by the "men of mark," who have always been found among its members. Originally designated "The Jolly Cocks" it included in its ranks, the late John Parry, John Wilson the Scottish vocalist, and others. The name being of too convivial a character for more modern taste and feelings, it was changed, in 1860, to the "University Punch Club," and until the year 1867, was presided over by the late Mr. John Duff, the well known music publisher, whose portrait adorns the Club room, the same having been subscribed for by the members in 1865; during this period it numbered among its members, the late William Vincent Wallace, the eminent composer, who was a frequent attendant; the late James Bruton, the humorist, was also an honorary member and frequent visitor, and at the time of the late president's decease (1867), many gentlemen, eminent in Art, Literature, Science, and Medicine, remained. An objection being taken to the term "Punch", as not expressing the real object of the Club gathering, another change was suggested and the name "Universal" adopted. This, necessarily involved some slight changes in the constitution of the Club, as indicated in the following rules, but "open" as the qualification for membership is now made.

The existing nucleus is, it is presumed, a sufficient guarantee that its "fellowship" will remain, as heretofore, a body of gentlemen."

Then follow the rules, the three quoted being of interest.

**Rule 2.** That the qualification for membership, shall be unfettered by any condition of

profession, or calling, nationality, or, creed.

**Rule 10.** The business of every ordinary meeting shall be the discussion of any subject (religious controversy excepted), and the voting thereon such discussion to be closed or adjourned, at ten o'clock each evening and to be regulated by a code of "bye-laws for discussion" which may from time to time be determined upon.

**Rule 16.** No wagers for money shall be made at any meeting of the Club. The Victorian period was now being established and the Club took on the pattern of a quasi debating society, examples of topics discussed being: -

*"Ought Superstition to be met by Satire."*

*"Ought Capital Punishment to be abolished."*

*"Do pensions by the State to men of eminence in Art, Literature, and Science, contribute to the advancement of the same."*

There were twenty-five resignations in 1867, but no reasons were recorded. Change of title, no wagers serious debates, might have been contributory. Idle speculation can be indulged, by those so minded. The death of the Vice-President, Mr. Footman, in 1872, prompted the sending of a letter of sympathy to the family, praising his qualities. It is recorded in the minute book for this period.

The season 1872/3 records the entry into membership, of Donald King - vocalist. Reference is made to a signature book, which is no longer in the possession of the Club. On November 4th, 1871, it was resolved "That in future, only those members who wish for Whip Bowls, be expected to contribute towards them." A slight suggestion of annoyance? The first presage of disintegration came on January 18th, 1873, when eleven members were present, following appeals by circular, urging attendance, in view of the very thin assemblies, throughout the previous season. After discussion, "It was unanimously agreed that the Club should **not** be broken up and the following officers were then elected: -

President	-	-	-	Dr. J. E. Carpenter.
Vice-President	-	-	-	John Franklin, Esq.
Secretary and Treasurer	-	-	-	Edward Baker, Esq.

The thin golden cord held and the Club was saved, yet, the records following this decision were negligible until 1882, when the minutes begin to take shape. The next minute book overlaps this period by two years. It would seem that there was an effort to establish regular recording.

### **The Punch Club 1882-1887**

On the twenty-eighth of October, 1882, John Harcourt Lee, presented to the Club, an engraving in a gilt frame, by William Hogarth, entitled, "A midnight modern conversation" - "Punch Bowl meeting." Furthermore, thirty-one portraits, the names being listed, were placed in an album presented by a member. All these treasures, have at some time, been lost. In succeeding years, many other portraits and photographs were added, in an attempt to establish an historical record, but, the Club has been negligent by not preserving its property, which has resulted in grievous loss. This period was one of difficulty and upheaval. For forty-five years, the University Hotel had been the meeting place, established and secure.

On December 15<sup>th</sup>, 1883, no gathering could be held because the gas had been cut off and the Secretary arranged for two meetings at "**The Old Jerusalem Tavern,**" St. John's Gate, Clerkenwell. It was not known if the new owners of the University Hotel, which was being sold, would allow the Club to continue there. A proposal to adjourn for one month was rejected and it was decided, "That the Club do continue at the 'Gate,' as at present - till matters are arranged for

the return of the Club to its old quarters at the University Hotel.” Other suggestions were made, when the Secretary reported on February 9th, 1884, that he had discovered by chance the University Hotel had been permanently closed and sold to the adjoining hospital; moreover, the goods of the Club had been removed by a private member, Mr. Milner. Several members were determined not to continue at the Jerusalem Tavern, there being much difference of opinion. At this point of the meeting, Dr. Joseph Edwards Carpenter sang one of his own songs. The title was: -”Have faith in one another.” Finally, it was agreed to meet at the “**Black Bull Hotel**” in Holborn, an arrangement which terminated in January 1885 for, the Club had then decided to move to the **Masons’ Arms** in Maddox Street. The Bull and Bush in Hampstead, and the Highgate Gate House, were used by the Club, for the Annual Dinner. Following closely these disturbing changes, Dr. Carpenter was seriously ill in March, 1885, and died on May 6th, after six weeks of painful endurance. The minute book records a letter of sympathy to the widow, signed by all the members. This letter extols the Doctor’s attributes as well as expressing the members’ great loss. A deterioration in the form of the minutes, resulted in very little information being recorded. On Saturday, July 3rd, 1886, an unfinished entry reads: - “Donald W. King, Vice-President of the Punch Club died at . . .” This entry, many years later, has been embellished, with an additional comment, obviously by Past President Brother Conrad King, giving further information. The first Commemoration Supper for Dr. Carpenter took place on December 4th 1886, in the forty-ninth season of the Club. It is this heading on the printed toast list, which helps to establish the year of the Club’s foundation. Portraits of the Doctor and Donald King were painted. The portrait of Donald King painted for the Club, was evidently displeasing, for the Club gratefully accepted an offer from Miss King, to give another portrait of her late father, in exchange. Mr Mills adapted the smaller picture to the frame of the original picture. Even then, one member was captious, in demanding that the artist be asked to improve the picture, by altering the hair. No steps were taken. The closing dinner, in 1887, was at the Mitre Hotel, Hampton, and in the previous year, at the King’s Head, Harrow.

The anxieties concerning the Club’s headquarters prevailed, the members suffering yet another change to the Duke of Argyle, in Little Pulteney Street, at a cost of six guineas for a hire of a room for six months meetings being held weekly. Reference is made, to the traditional custom of observing the anniversary of Trafalgar and the memory of Nelson. It became traditional for a member to sing the song, ‘The Death of Nelson’, on this occasion. From the time of Doctor Carpenter’s death, until October 1888, the elected president was Mr. J. E. Plomer.

In spite of the changes by death and circumstance, there is evidence of a lively spirit sustaining the Club during this period. Critical examination, as well as appraisal, were both varied and regular. Minuting records were improving, but, much more activity than has been recorded, must have taken place. It was a lively period, fraught with difficulty, disappointment and tragedy.

### **The Universal Club 1888-1889**

The fifty-first season, is notable for the change to title and rules and for the succession of Mr. C. Johnson as President, in the place of Mr. J. E. Plomer. Apart from the programmes of the Commemoration and the closing dinners, nothing has been recorded. The Monaco was chosen for the final dinner.

### **The Punch Club 1889-1897**

On October 12th. 1889, at the Annual General Meeting, Mr. Walter proposed and Mr. Ormsby seconded, ‘That the name of the Club shall again be changed into the “Punch Club”. This was carried with great applause. Mr. Nelson Watts was elected president and Mr. W. F. Mills accepted the office of Vice-president. The Carpenter Commemoration Dinner in 1890, took place at Frascati’s Restaurant in Oxford Street, where only twelve attended, many being kept away by, ‘la maladie diplomatique’. However, a full musical programme and eight speeches together with

excellent chairmanship made an enjoyable evening. Very little minuting was done, and attendances became very poor. In October 1891, the 54th season a discussion took place concerning the advisability of holding weekly meetings, for some thought it better, to hold meetings less frequently. Newspaper reports concerning the Carpenter Meetings were inserted in the minute book of this period, and there seemed to be a tendency to favour Anderton's Hotel as a meeting place. For a time, the meetings alternated between the Duke of Argyle and Anderton's. In January 1894, Mr. John Walter and Colonel Bird, moved that the officers of the Punch Club, be instructed, to sell by auction, all the property of the Club, and divide the amount received from the auctioneer, among the members. An amendment in the form of a substantive motion, was put by Mr. C Johnson and seconded by Mr. Nelson Watts 'That the Club be removed to Anderton's Hotel, as soon as arrangements can be made This was carried, only one member, Colonel Bird, voting against it. By November 1894, the club and its property, removed to Anderton's. A list of the property was as follows: -

Paintings in oil-gilt frames: - John Duff, J. E. Carpenter, D. King.

Prints: - William Milner, William Sawyer, W. Vincent Wallace, Dr. J. E. Carpenter.

Engraving: - A midnight revel - Hogarth

A Punch Bowl: - presented by William Milner

Two Japanned Tin Boxes

John Parry's inkstand

Album of portraits bound in red

A Punch Ladle and a Lemon Squeezer.

Various sundries.

Printed programmes of the meetings became customary and these can be seen in the minute book. In December 1895, Mr. Conrad King Junior, was elected an honorary member the beginning of a long membership. His name appears as an artist, on several occasions. These programmes are interesting and deserve attention. By 1897 the Club seemed to be well established and extremely active, many well known gentlemen becoming members, the bias being markedly musical. A pretty arrangement of Birthday celebration taken from the Germans was effected by Nelson Watts. Each member whose birthday fell on the month named, had to rise and drink to his native land, so that, when a year had passed, everybody had by turn performed this ceremony. During this period, in 1895 under the Presidency of John Turner, this resolution: - "That at the next dinner or entertainment, ladies be invited subject to the veto of the officers of the Club, as suggested by Signor Corelli", was '**declined with thanks**'.

Monthly meetings, commencing in October, and terminating in May, had now become the custom. Mr. Mills, Mr. John Turner, and Mr. Plomer for the second time, were presidents in succession, yet, it was still customary, to appoint a Chairman, for each meeting, to organize the programme, and to control the affairs for the evening. The minutes were far from satisfactory, in that full records of the meetings were not given. One small minute book, covering the activities of seven seasons, cannot give much information, and is the despair of the research historian. Speculation, concerning the spirit and strength of the Club, has to be employed in linking the sparse gleanings, so reluctantly recorded. Future historians will be more fortunate when writing of our times, for, the minutes are a history in themselves, so rich are they in detail.

### **The Punch Club 1897-1915**

During this period the Club vacillated between discontinuance and survival. Members, although celebrated, were few, meeting only three times a year, on St. George's Night, Nelson Night, and Carpenter's Commemoration. Many had migrated to the new suburbs, and it was thought, that a

Friday evening meeting, would be more generally acceptable than Saturday thus minimising travel difficulties. In 1898, it was further mooted that the Club should transfer to the Urban Club which met on Friday. A curious error occurs in the date of the minutes of May 8th, 1900, the date being given as 1890. The members present were J G. Ashmore, C Braid, J P C A. E. Corelli, G. M. Dibdin, A. J. Hill, J. T. Plomer, T. Alder Smith and G Nelson Watts. The meeting was called to consider the position of the Club, by deciding whether dissolution should be effected, involving the disposal of the Club property, or, to preserve the continuity. The members were averse to termination and pledged themselves, to do all in their power, in making a success of the Club. Mr. G. M. Dibdin offered to stand the Club a bowl of punch at the next meeting, a gesture, which was accepted with acclamation A crayon portrait of the president, Mr. J. T. Plomer, was commissioned and the minutes concluded with the sentence, 'This very pleasant meeting then came to a close'.

In spite of this fervour, the next meeting did not take place until March 1st, 1902, when T. Alder Smith and Conrad King were elected as Trustees. The crayon portrait of the President had not been done because Mr. Plomer had failed to furnish the Club with a photograph of his likeness. He was again asked to do so, and upon being requested, stated that he had no objection, the presentation being arranged for the next meeting in November The picture was completed, but, the illness of the President, made him an absentee on the evening of the ceremony. The portrait was hung on the Club wall. That same evening, Mr. C. Braid presented the Club with some volumes of Dr. Carpenter's works, which, even now remain in the possession of the Club. The next meeting on November 27th, 1902, attracted only three members - Mr. C. A. E. Corelli, Mr. Octavius Johnson and Mr. Alex Hill who - "although much discouraged, spent an enjoyable time together and after dining and indulging in much enjoyable conversation, departed at a somewhat earlier hour than customary with members of the Punch Club". It then appears that activities were suspended until March 1905, when an informal luncheon meeting was held at Anderton's Hotel, to discuss the position - a crucial situation in the history of the Punch Club. Four members C. A. Corelli, T. Alder Smith Alex Hill and Conrad King were in attendance, and the fate of the Club was in their hands. They considered abandonment, with the distribution of Club property to relatives and friends, amalgamation with some other society and a proposal by Conrad King, which was not favourably received that members individually, should undertake entertaining, in turn, the rest of the members, privately. Three out of four opposed the closure of the Club the one dissentient being unknown to us now-a-days, for his name is not recorded. A plan of campaign was debated for the successful rehabilitation of the Punch Club. The courage of the three enthusiasts was admirable, when one considers the hopeless situation, for they little knew what their tenacity was to achieve. Two meetings a year were arranged, one in March for Dr. Carpenter, and the other in October, for Nelson. The question of removal to new quarters was waived. The spark ignited and became a conflagration. The Club took on a new lease of life; past presidents rejoined the fellowship; new members were enrolled; assemblies became very successful, being well attended and governed by an ebullient enthusiasm. Whatever was done by those stalwarts, three only in number, it resulted in an unbelievable resurgence.

The minutes became lively, informative and humorous clearly reflecting the changed spirit. In 1906, a St. George's Day meeting was added, the Club pictures were renovated, and the emergence of the Punch Club from its perilous decline into oblivion, was like the sun in splendour. On Nelson Night in 1909, the Punch Song was introduced and sung by T. Alder Smith, who distributed copies of the refrain for the use of members. By universal consent this was adopted by the Club as an accessory to the brewing of the Punch. It has been sung ever since that day, harmonized later by Conrad King, and-owing to the loss of the original composition, re-harmonized by the writer of this history.

In 1910, the St. George's meeting was cancelled, by President G. M Dibdin, the reason being, "The universally regretted death of King Edward the Seventh".

The minutes of Alex Hill give full details of entertainment, printed programmes being provided at each meeting. The written accounts portray the exhilaration and enthusiasm. By 1912, the Punch Club was firmly established, and in May of that year printed Rules and Regulations were introduced a copy being inserted in the minute book. The vital leadership of President Dibdin and of President Sergeant bore great fruit, but, misfortune descended, when the former died in the summer of 1912. G. M. Dibdin was a great force and a generous benefactor to the Punch Club, together with other members of his family, all descendants of the famous composer of the 18th Century. The support of such formidable members as Alder Smith, Conrad King, Alex Hill, with Ernest and Montague Severn, preserved the traditions of this ancient club, and all was favourable in 1913, when Conrad King became President having been Vice President to Dibdin and Sergeant in turn. At the December meeting in 1913, some interesting propositions were accepted, a few being:

A uniform charge of five shillings per head for members and visitors.

Suitable invitation cards to be presented to visitors.

Evening dress to be 'de rigueur'.

A souvenir programme to be presented to all Presidents and containing a list of Past Presidents.

That Rule 6a. shall not be interpreted as admitting lady visitors to nomination for election. (This was accorded a unanimous vote, accompanied by great and fierce determination on the part of the members).

At the close of each meeting, donations for the foundation of a reserve fund should be collected for the immediate aid of any '**brother**' of the bowl who should fall upon evil days. (This was received with great favour and the donations were to be banked in the names of the Trustees).

This was the first time, that the title 'Brother', had been used. Thereafter, it was the custom. In March 1914 the first Ladies' Night took place, as the outcome of a proposition by the President, Conrad King. Evening dress was obligatory and Brother President provided a grand piano for the occasion, as well as presenting each lady with a bottle of perfume. Souvenir programmes were given, and the attendance was a record for the Club. The Brew was 'passed with distinction as above criticism'; the speeches were excellent ~ entertainment was of a high level, ably organized by Brother Newman Smith who gave yeoman service. It was a memorable event.

Mr. Washington West became Brother President at the St George's meeting in April 1914. The general cash account showed a deficit of one pound thirteen shillings and eleven pence, but the reserve fund, showed a balance of one pound three shillings. The meeting was well attended and it was agreed that the May meeting in future, should be 'Ladies Night' Three bowls were brewed, and it was recorded that the evening was exceedingly pleasant.

For the season 1914/15, the following dates were arranged: -

October 24th; December 25th; January 30th; March 6th; May 1st.

According to the attendance book, all these meetings took place, Brother Washington West presiding. May 1915 was the last meeting in this period, but, no minutes were written after April 1914.

The twilight of the gods was approaching, for, the dogs of war were being unleashed. The records ended abruptly, as a prelude to a long period of darkness and obliteration. At the height of its successful evolution, into a great social force of brotherhood and fellowship, the Punch

Club disintegrated, in company with the established order of the times, engulfed by the Great War of 1914-1918.

### **The Punch Club 1923-1940**

On March 3rd, 1923, after a lapse of eight years, owing to the great effects of the 1914/18 war, the Punch Club celebrated its eighty-sixth year, by a joyous reunion at **Gows**, 357 Strand, London. The event was inspired by the joint efforts of Vice President Alex Hill and Past President Conrad King. There were nine brethren assembled, in addition to the two organizers, and four invited guests. Some past members were unable to be present, but intended to resume the Fellowship of the Bowl. There was recorded, the lamentable loss by death of Ex-Presidents Brother Sergeant and Washington West and of Brother Walter Allen, killed in the war. Letters of condolence were sent to the relatives.

The Club soon settled into the traditional pattern, and by April 1925, it was once again firmly established. Minutes at first were meagre, and took the form of an annual report, but, in 1926, and thereafter, the minuting of each meeting became progressively informative, the accounts of the activities clearly indicating the stability of the Club. Life flowed smoothly for the Brotherhood at Gow's in the Strand, a continuance which was remarkable, as though the dead years of the war and after, had never been. The last meeting in 1914, was linked to the first meeting in 1923 - regardless of time and events - by the golden thread of Fellowship. A portrait of the late President G. M. Dibdin, was graciously presented to the Club, by Brother Cecil Hewetson, as the work of his wife. This painting, was pronounced by G. M. Dibdin's nephews Brothers E. and M. Severn, as well as those friends of the Club, who had the pleasure of knowing him intimately, as a most faithful likeness of the man they loved and cherished, and the Secretary was instructed to send a letter to Mrs. Cecil Hewetson, expressing the Club's great appreciation and gratitude. This portrait, still in good condition, is one of the two relics left from a large number of presentation portraits, which were once our pride and heritage.

Titles were given to each meeting as follows:

October -	Nelson Night
November -	Dibdin Night
January -	Founders' Night (Originally Carpenter's Commemoration)
February -	Ladies' Night
March -	Authors' Night
April -	St. George's Night

The summer ramble, recorded as the first for fifty years, took place in 1927, and covered the historic parts of Hampstead. The Club was entertained afterwards, at Brother Hewetson's home at Canons Park, where a "bowl was filled to the brim, as likewise were all the brothers when they bade farewell to their host and hostess at 11 p.m." In 1929, the Club sent a message to His Most Gracious Majesty, King George the Fifth, wishing him a speedy recovery from his illness, to which a gracious reply was received. Unfortunately, this historic document is no longer in our possession. The minutes of this period are so rich in detail, that with great advantage they could be quoted verbatim, but, since only salient features can be recorded in a history such as this, it should be the earnest desire of every Brother of the Bowl, to acquaint himself of the information available in the minute books. Montague Severn the President 1930/31, presented to the Club, an ivory chairman's mallet with a block suitably inscribed which belonged originally to *H.M.S. Anson*, which went out of commission in 1894. This valuable heirloom is also lost to us. There was much dismay, when the Ladies' Night was cancelled in 1931 the President's reasons being given but not recorded. In January 1932, following a proposition by President William Foyle (of

Foyle's Charing Cross Road), induced by the lack of accommodation at Gows for the increased membership of the Club a move was made to Wine Office Court, establishing the Punch Club at 'Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese' As in the past, the Club continued in attracting men of renown as members who had at first been introduced as illustrious guests. Sir Dennison Ross the world famous Professor of Oriental Studies, Dennis Wheatley the author, Charles Coborn the star of the music hall, and Scott Liddell are only a few of the many brothers, whose names are written in the history of the Club. Great presidents followed in turn and the Punch Club prospered. The minutes reflect the success and happiness of the Fellowship. Ninety eight people attended the Ladies' Night in 1934, under the presidency of Sydney Kemp. Twelve bowls of Punch were brewed, but, there were still those who, 'languished for more'. The driver of the coach who conducted the brothers to Whipsnade for the summer outing of the same year, remarked to the Secretary that on the journey out, he had speculated on the party being a band of Sunday School teachers, but, that on the homeward journey, he had come to other conclusions.

In the second of the two minute books covering the events of this colourful period, it is recorded that a recommendation was unanimously endorsed, by which all Past Presidents who had not resigned membership, were to be presented with a suitably engraved tankard. A facetious proposition by Past President Brother Egerton, that a barrel of beer go with it was not put to the meeting. The tankards were presented on Nelson Night 1934 For the first time in the history of the Club, a presidential collar and a badge of office, was invested on Brother Bertram Nobes, who, in a graceful reply, regretted that others had not worn it before him Tankards are still presented to the out-going president, after a year in office, and the insignia is still worn.

The increasing membership, made another change of venue unavoidable On November 6th, 1934, it was agreed to transfer to 'Ye Olde Cock Tavern', in Fleet Street. It was also stated in the minutes-but this cannot be corroborated from our existing records - that the Club had gathered there, fifty years before the premises had been rebuilt. On November 24th, 1934 the Punch Club was settled in the commodious premises of this famous inn. At the December meeting of that year, following an unwelcome story by a visitor, the gavel was used by the President, who said he felt sure that the high traditions and integrity of the Club would not thoughtlessly be violated. He was strongly supported by Past President Brother Egerton, who regarded the Club as a place where he could bring his most respected friends, and trusted it would ever remain so. The subject was pursued further in the following meeting in January, after references had been made during the toast to the guests by Brother Donisthorpe, who had said - 'Let us say what we like and let the brethren correct us if necessary! The President said that he had a duty to perform to the Club, and he urged that no tales should be told there, that could not be told in a brother's home. A show of hands was called for support, by Brother Roberts, and the President - who was feeling a little uneasy - had the satisfaction of seeing every hand raised in his favour.

Past President Brother Egerton poured oil on the troubled waters and added: - "As we are a musical and literary club, tales of doubtful character are entirely foreign to the aims and objects of the Club, and, that in common with every member of the Committee, I most earnestly trust, that there will be no further need to remonstrate on this subject".

The change of premises had placed Past President Brother William Foyle in a quandary, as to what should be done with the thousand menu cards with the old address, which he had just printed. Cries of 'Don't be cheap', were heard when he suggested that the new address might be printed over the old. A further suggestion was made, that he should sell them at two pence a piece, at his emporium. With many regrets, Brother Hsiung, the author of 'Lady Precious Stream', had to relinquish his membership, on going to America.

The death of King George the Fifth in 1936, necessitated the cancellation of the Ladies' Night, by the President Cecil Hewetson, to the great disappointment of all. In September 1936, Past

President Brother Conrad King became President for the second time-as a signal honour - it being the centenary year of the Club. It was recorded in January 1937, that the true aims of the Club had acquired a deeper meaning. At the Ladies' Dinner in the Prince's Restaurant, which was attended by one hundred and nine brethren and guests a telegram, in this centenary year, was sent to His Majesty the King George the Sixth, who replied most graciously. Regretfully, it has to be reported, that this is not in the possession of the Club. During President Conrad King's Centenary Year the minutes ceased to be so full with detail, as heretofore, which is somewhat, disappointing, but, in September 1937, with Brother Conrad again in the Secretary's chair, the Punch Club records live, depicting a pattern of great activity. In September also, a further move from 'Ye Olde Cock Tavern', to **Williamson's** in Bow Lane, was made. An amusing account is given concerning the difficulties encountered by the secretary, in transferring the Club's property piecemeal, from one establishment to the other, single handed, obstructed in turn, by policemen, by firemen and by traffic. Several brothers felt it was a mistake to make so many moves, and they devoutly hoped, that this would now be their home for all time. The exhausted secretary, praying that he might be able to weep, to give relief to his sufferings, heartedly concurred with these sentiments.

**Williamson's** founded in 1666, in New Court, Bow Lane, soon after the Great Fire of London, proved universally acceptable, apart from Willie Foyle, who still yearned for 'Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese' in which he had some interest. It must be mentioned, that this period is noted for the services of Brother Sydney Butcher, as Punch Master. For some time the laconic statement that 'a brew was produced' or, 'a bowl was brewed', gave no indication of the brother responsible, but, in September 1934, Brother Sydney was accorded the rank of 'Punch Master' - a new office, in view of the considerable services he had rendered in the past, and was willing to do in the future in administering to the wants of the brethren. In March 1935, the Committee decided, that on account of the great services Brother Sydney had rendered, in the capacity of Punch Master, it was thought he would be irreplaceable, but he was given the choice of going on as Vice-President, or, continuing as Punch Master for an extended period, without prejudice to his future election. Brother Sydney replied that he would gladly serve the Club where he was most needed. In September 1935, Brother Bertram Nobes proposed and Brother Sam Watson seconded, that a collar be purchased and be placed round Brother Sydney's neck on the first meeting by the incoming president, in token of gratitude they felt for him, for the excellent manner in which he carried out the arduous duties of Punch Master. This was the second collar to be provided, but, although there is no doubt that Brother Sydney wore the collar, which is still part of our regalia, there is no account of the investiture. In 1938, he was still Punch Master, and was presented with a tankard, with the affection and gratitude of the Club. He continued as Punch Master for yet another four years, before being persuaded - with difficulty - to serve the Club as Vice-President. A period of more than eight years as Punch Master, constitutes a record, and only those who have been Punch Masters, can appreciate the service, Brother Sydney gave during this long period. His services in later years, will deserve comment, when the appropriate period is under surveillance. There is so much that could be written of this period in the Club's history. Mention could be made of Brother Tom Smith, who founded the Islington Corinthian Football Team, touring the World with them, and gaining great success; of the gay pranks of the irrepressible Willie Foyle; of the ebullient Bertram Nobes; of Gordon Hope and of so many others. There is a natural tendency, to eulogize the early founders and the tradition they established, but, it must not be ignored, that men of not-so-long-ago, and men of our time, are worthy successors, and are also establishing a traditional pattern for the future. The period 1897-1915, closed with the Great War, followed by extinction for eight years. The second World War of 1939-1945, did not succeed in terminating the activities of the Club. The members proved more resourceful than their forebears, and quickly adapted themselves to the new conditions, overcoming many

difficulties. The first meeting of the new season, 1939-1940, was held at **Gows** again, because Williamson's had closed on Saturdays, for the war period. Thereafter, normal meetings took place, attendances being excellent. It was proposed, for at least the third time in the Club's history, that an album, wherein should be placed the portraits of all Past Presidents, be provided by the Club. In the year of the writing of this account, and in spite of several propositions made on this subject, there is neither album, nor a single portrait in the archives of the Club, apart from that of Dibdin, of King and of Butcher. At the meeting of January 1940, Past Presidents were urged to have their photographs taken, as a first step. It is then recorded, that four bowls were brewed, and consumed by seventeen members, at a cost of twenty two shillings per bowl. Many interesting talks were given, throughout this period and the life blood of the Club throbbed healthily. The activities of the Club are covered by two minute books.

### **The Punch Club 1940-1965**

The change of premises from Williamson's to Gows, caused by many difficulties due to the second World War, resulted also, in depredations of Club property. The Secretary, Past President Brother Conrad King, had written to the manageress Mrs. Orsi of Williamson's concerning the Club property which was missing, which included the historic ivory gavel and block, the Club Snuff Box, and other miscellaneous articles, but, neither a reply, nor, the return of goods was received. Later, the secretary reported, that the bailiffs were in possession at Williamson's, but, he was not able to rescue all the property. Some pictures were recovered, but, the gavel, block, and snuff box, seemed to be irretrievable.

Meetings now took place in the afternoons to avoid the black-out and the night raiding from the air. There were difficulties in obtaining whisky, lemons and sugar, for the Punch, yet nevertheless, the meetings were always enjoyable, sometimes hilarious and never poorly attended. The war conditions prevented any startling developments, so that there is little to report on the first part of this period, except to mention, that Brother Sydney Butcher, at long last, in September 1942, was prevailed upon to become Vice-President to President Tom Hawes. He became president in the following year, which coincided with the change of premises to the **Albany Club** in Savile Row. Minutes of meetings were kept faithfully until 1944, when, as had often happened in the past, no records were kept for six years, with the exception of a few desultory notes written between 1947 and 1949. Fortunately, the writer of this history has a stock of bulletins, which almost wholly cover this period, and a certain continuity in events is thus maintained.

At the close of the War in 1945, V.E. day was followed by an event that made history in the Club. A Thanksgiving Service, for the Brothers of the Bowl and their Ladies, was conducted by Brother Padre in the bombed ruins of St. James' Church, Piccadilly. After the service, the Brothers and their Ladies proceeded to the Albany Club, where the Ladies' Luncheon was held.

A well produced bulletin first appeared in January 1946, the result of the efforts of Brother Victor Farmer This appeared regularly each month and was of great interest, for, it included photographs of the Presidents, as well as profiles of Club personalities thus giving valuable information. At the Christmas meeting, it was the custom to have a tree laden with gifts, which were presented to the Padre, for distribution in his parish. At this meeting, carols were sung by children of his choir, though it must be said, that the singing was somewhat affected by the lavish refreshments, enjoyably consumed by the choristers, before the performance. Cheques were also given, and it was always a happy Padre who returned to his parish, warmed by the generosity of the Brothers. In January 1951 the Grace, which is now used at each meeting, was first heard, quite unpremeditated and unforeseen. The incident was reported in the bulletin as follows: -

“When the Brothers of the Order of Savile, had taken their respective places at the board, already laden with goodly, yet simple fare, the Prior Ellis, with benign smile and silken tone, called upon

a Brother to offer Grace. In a silence, only to be found in the peaceful cloister, or, the lofty shaded cathedral, Brother. Rudd, tall, lean and tonsured, in clear tone and minor key, chanted his prayer: "BENEDIC DOMINE NOS ET HAEC TUA DONA QUAE DE TUA LARGITATE SUMUS SUMPTURI PER DOMINUM CHRISTUM NOSTRUM - AMEN".

Prior, Brothers, and Guests, in an atmosphere, no longer peaceful, but charged with acute and electric surprise, sank to their benches, eyes turned upon the unperturbed features of Brother Rudd. And so on - this Bulletin might well have continued, as it began, had not the dulcet tone of Brother Quarterman's stentorian bellow, shattered the silence, and set the platters vibrating, with the remark, reminiscent of cloister and Brooklyn - 'That shook 'em, Brother', followed by the well known guffaw. Peal followed peal of laughter no disrespect no irreverence - just pure enjoyment of a situation, so typical of our beloved Punch Club. The monks threw off their shadowy habits and sat with their guests, as Brothers of the Bowl, attending the January luncheon in the "Punch Club".

The nineteen fifties produced innovations and gifts, while the Club maintained its high standards and traditions, gaining in membership and in approbation. A suggestion by Brother Hugh Ramsay, that the silver collar surrounding the plinth of the ceremonial bowl, should be engraved with the names of the Presidents of the Club, resulted in an engraver, Albert Kelsey, performing the task, which involved a careful scrutiny of the required signatures found in the minute books, with a subsequent painstaking facsimile, transferred to the silver collar. Past President Brother Cyril Oettinger, dedicated the artist's work as follows, the engraver himself being present on that memorable occasion, November 1951:

"We receive into the Punch Club the engraved plinth to the Ceremonial Bowl. Albert Kelsey, with the inspiration of your mind, the skill of your hands, and the experience of your craft, you have caused this silver circlet, to reflect into ; posterity, the names of a band of men much endeared to the Punch Club It is, therefore, with feelings born of pride and humility, that we call upon the shades of the Presidents who have passed on, and the guiding genius of those yet serving in our midst, whose names are here inscribed upon this gleaming plinth, to witness, that as we do them honour, we re-dedicate ourselves to the service of the fellowship of mankind, and commemorate the inspiration of their love and leadership, for as long as this metal shall remain".

Mr Albert Kelsey then kept the company enthralled, in giving a most absorbing oral insight of the joys and struggles of his craft, as engravers to British, European, and Indian Royalty, throughout sixty two years of experience.

The year 1951 also witnessed the introduction of an initiation ceremony, created by Past President Brother Cyril Oettinger. This was supplemented later, several additions being made, by the writer of this account, in his presidential year, and which will be given in full, under a heading dealing with ceremonies.

The generosity of Brother Harry Warden was proverbial, and his further gift of two jewels one for the Vice-President and the other for the Secretary, added lustre to the offices in question, increased the cost of the Club's insurances and aggravated the anxieties of the Trustees. A gift, as a thanks offering, for the privilege of being a brother of the bowl, in the form of three gavels, three blocks and an ash tray, in oak, obtained from the Hall of Westminster, and of his own design, was presented to the Club by Brother Pearson, at the Annual General Meeting, in 1952.

Period dress for the Ladies' Festival became the vogue, but, the innovation, although now very popular, gained favour slowly and at first failed to capture approval. It has become a 'traditional high spot' in the ceremonies of the Punch Club. There were a few occasions when ladies officiated at the Ceremonial Bowl, on Ladies' Night. This did not meet with the unanimous consent of the Brothers of the Bowl, and was discontinued. An unfortunate series of concomitant

events plunged Brother Frank Lovesay, prematurely into the Chair, as President The removal of the Vice-President, Jock McCartney, to Canada, and the death of the President Elect, the Rev. Brother S. Spackman, translated Brother Frank to an office beset with difficulties, which multiplied as the year advanced. Licensing laws rigorously enforced, unsympathetic obstruction from the Albany Club - who were themselves engaged in a contretemps - the enforced changing of meeting place, lamentably effecting considerable loss of Club property, while the general atmosphere of unsettlement, made a troublesome and anxious year for a brother who deserved much better from Fate. A year of negotiation, inspection of recommended rendezvous, an Annual Meeting at the **Stadium Club** in Holborn, brought the season to a close, with the ultimate decision to meet in the evenings at the '**Wooden Horse Club**', Hertford Street, Mayfair. During this season, the Brothers quaffed experimental brews concocted with soft drinks, and on some occasions, toasts were honoured silently, with empty glasses. However, the change from afternoon meetings-a temporary measure due to war conditions, unreasonably extended until nearly ten years after the termination of hostilities - to evening meetings which always obtained heretofore removed the encumbrance of the licensing laws, which are themselves an anachronism in a modern, civilized society, only possible in this Gilbertian country of paradoxes.

In the 118th season at the Christmas meeting, December 18th, 1954, a special tribute was paid to Past -President Conrad King, in his eightieth year, and in the fifty ninth year of his membership. A poem extolling his virtues, has been inserted in the minutes of that meeting. The story of Past President Brother Conrad, is written in the golden lettering of affection, and he occupies the most eminent position in the history of the Club. At the Christmas meeting, held on January 7th, 1956, our beloved Brother attended his last meeting, after covering sixty years of service with the Punch Club He realized his ambition, by having with him on that occasion, his son Donald and his grandson, Brother Brian King. Conrad had left a bed of sickness, determined to be present. This was in the presidential year of the writer, and all who were present at that time, will remember the great joy that was Con's. On the Tuesday following that memorable occasion, the ageless Brother Conrad left to join his ancestors. The Club was the poorer, for he was the Punch Club. In direct descent with one of the early founder members of the Club, he formed a link with the 18th Century, and it is good to know that a grandson, Dr. Brian King, a brother of the bowl, preserves the name of King, in the Club his grandfather served and loved so much. In losing Conrad we the brothers lost part of ourselves. He loved life, he loved his work, he loved people, and he loved the Punch Club. It is impossible to measure the contribution he made to human society, in good fellowship, in music, and in the arts. Through the many years, he had given great delight with his tenor voice, which, even encroaching and relentless age - as if Nature were jealous of his eternal youth - curbed, but failed to extinguish, or, even subordinate his musicianship and his artistry. A composer of merit, a pianist and organist of no mean skill, there were many taught by him who have gained profit, and who have cause to be grateful for his gifts and abilities. Whom the gods love, die young - yet Conrad was eighty one in years. Nevertheless, he was indeed young in spirit, and truly, he was loved of the gods. An old world charm and courtesy, cloaked an able, gifted man of integrity, tenacity and indomitable will, whom it was good to know. The glory has departed. An epoch had ended, but a legend was born. A sonnet to his memory was included in the minutes of the January meeting of 1956.

In February 1956 the Committee decided that the Club history required rewriting, in **amplified form**. Thus, nine years later, it is being done. In addition, Past President Brother Sydney Butcher, as Honorary Secretary, has made a history of his own, in the most informative and elegantly expressed minutes, that have no rival. The historians of the future are indeed fortunate, for they will be in possession of verbatim reports of our times.

A suggestion was made, that the wording of the Initiation Ceremony, originated by the President of the 119th season, should be adopted officially. This was carried in April 1956, and is now established in one of the most impressive ceremonies of the Club, and will be described later.

In February 1957 the haunting spectre of another change of venue arose. The Wooden Horse Club amalgamated with the Gay Nineties Club, due to a development plan in Hertford Street, and the accommodation offered was inadequate for the Punch Club. The February meeting took place at the '**Goat and Compasses**' in Euston Road as an emergency measure. The March meeting was held at **Williamson's**, and the Annual General Meeting took place at the **Rotary House** in Portman Square. At the beginning of the 121st season, the Club was established at the **Glendower Hotel**, South Kensington. The Club still maintained the high standards expected, in spite of these changes, while the meetings at the Glendower were very enjoyable and comfortable. However, a further move was yet to come, and in November 1958 being the 122nd season, the Punch Club found another home at **Rotary House** in Portman Square. What headaches these changes caused, to Secretary and Trustees alike. The difficulties in keeping check on the Club property became overwhelming, yet, in spite of the upheaval and uncertainties, the spirit of the Club persisted, the aims were resolute, the continuation assured, with the life of the Club pulsating robustly. Meetings were very pleasant in a period house of Georgian splendour which at one time had been the Dutch Embassy. The glory of what was best in the 18th Century, encompassed the Brothers of the Bowl; a domicile, truly worthy of this ancient Club; an archetype for our tradition and ceremonial. However, our pleasure and content were to be of short duration, for, after only three seasons in our magnificent headquarters, the Club was stunned on hearing of the closing of the premises, which the Rotary Club intended to vacate. Dismissing vain hopes, that the Rotarians might purchase the lease as a very desirable property, the Brothers of the Bowl sought new headquarters, an occupation, in which, by hard experience, they had become expert.

The 125th season commenced in September 1961, at the **Talbot Restaurant**, London Wall, one of the few city inns open for catering on Saturdays. The Club was conscious of the unpretentious, gloomy and uninviting premises, the contrast between the previous headquarters and this, being so pronounced.

The Punch Club spirit, being what it is, took up the challenge presented, so that, before very long, the dismal surroundings glowed, in response to the gleaming personalities of the Brethren, who were determined to repudiate mortification and dejection. At every meeting, one was conscious, only of the living persons gathered round the bowl, who seemed to ennoble the mean background, to the exclusion of its cheerlessness. In this, the Club was helped most generously, by the amiable co-operation of the Talbot Staff, who did everything in their power, in making us comfortable and contented, so that we soon felt at home in our new abode. The Punch Club had returned to the City.

In this period, there is so much that has been faithfully recorded, that a difficulty arises, in deciding what to select for inclusion in this history, or, what to reject. Brothers of the Bowl must be encouraged-especially when they become presidents-to read with interest, the minutes of our time, and it is sincerely hoped that this humble effort will spur and goad curiosity.

An interesting Addendum by Past President Brother Harold Rudd, was entered in the minutes, at the request of the Brethren, and under great protest by the Honorary Brother Secretary, whose modesty and dislike of personal praise, was known to all.

"At the conclusion of the minutes by the Honorary Secretary and Treasurer, Past President Brother Sydney Butcher, notice of an omission of some importance, from the minutes, was made by Past President Brother Harold Rudd. The latter expressed some concern, that his personal tribute to Past President Brother Sydney, made during the course of his toast to the Club, at the

Ladies' Evening in May 1962, had not been recorded in the minutes. He said, that having due regard for the Honorary Secretary's natural modesty, and appreciating his reluctance, to write in the minutes, personal praise, which he would find embarrassing, nevertheless, the Club would wish the tribute to be recorded, and an addendum added to the minutes accordingly.

On the occasion of Past President Brother Harold's toast to the Club, at the Ladies' Evening in May 1962, he said, at one stage: -

"I am now engaged on compiling a history of the Club, but, I wonder sometimes at my temerity, for, here in this Club, before our eyes a wonderful history, recorded almost verbatim, in impeccable English, of fluent style, with quiet and friendly humour, and which will be a joy to future historians of this Club, is being written, after each meeting, by our much loved Honorary Secretary, Past President Brother Sydney Butcher. How I envy those brothers of the future, who will have at their disposal, such a complete and fascinating account of the affairs of the Brothers of the Bowl of our time".

"On looking back through the records of the past, in order to glean, even the most scanty information, how much have I yearned for a Brother Sydney to have been recording the affairs of the Punch Club, in those early days. Indeed, we are lucky to have, in Brother Sydney, such a scribe and such a treasure".

Cruel fate robbed us of Past President Sydney Butcher on June 6th, 1963, when he exchanged time for eternity, and left us his love of the Punch Club, his influence and his example. Modesty, self effacement, devotion and integrity, were but few of his attributes. A loving cup ceremony, perpetuates his memory, for, he was one of the great brothers of the bowl. The recorded minutes extol his virtues, but, we mourn the diminution of part of ourselves. Such men are rare.

We, the brothers, were indeed fortunate in living in his time. In the same year, Past President William Foyle, a great character, mischievous, effervescent, eccentric and loveable, joined the Brothers of the Bowl, whose work on this earth is done. Joy is mingled with sadness, for, as the poet William Blake wrote:

*'Joy and woe are woven fine  
A clothing for the soul divine.  
Under every grief and pine  
Runs a joy with silken twine.  
It is right it should be so  
Man was made for joy and woe:  
And when this we rightly know  
Thro' the world we safely go.'*

An interesting feature of this period, had been the gradual development of official posts. In the Punch Club, things just happen, gain a foothold, achieving unobtrusively, an established, hierarchical position, in the rites and ceremonies. For many years, Brother Sydney served the Club well, by giving yeoman effort in the brewing of Punch, long before his skill and devotion were recognized in 1934 with the title, 'Punch Master'. The new office created, was dignified with a jewelled collar, in 1935. The bejewelled lustre of Brothers President, Vice President, Punch Master and Secretary, of the nineteen fifties, had been augmented between 1963/4 - the long established offices of Brothers Treasurer, Pipe Master and Jester, being emblazoned with collared splendour, these insignia being the gifts of Past President Ted Watson, Past President Peter Poynter, and Brother James Cullingham, respectively.

The Incantation, introduced in 1909, and sung ever since, at the Ceremonial Brewing of Punch at the Bowl, was performed by a Brother, selected for this, and other musical rites. For a brief period, in the 1940's, he was called Brother Organist; in the 1950's, the title was Brother Incantator; in 1962, he was aggrandized into the office of 'Master of Musick'.

Lemon peelers, or, Brothers Decorticators, Cup Bearers, Assistant Secretary, and other important duties, are willingly accepted as a great privilege in helping the Club.

It had happened, that some time before 1934, the old custom of Honorary Punch Tasters, had fallen into discontinuance, for, in May 1934, it was decided to observe more ritual, and renew ancient usage. Punch Tasters were henceforth appointed, to pass judgment on the Brew. It would seem that the year 1934, was one of taking stock, of correction, and of revival. The years which followed, produced modifications, innovations, embellishments, but, the fundamental pattern, the attitude of the members and the aims, have remained firmly established and unchanged. Minutes of years ago, by changing dates and names, mistakenly could be accepted as minutes of today. The parallelism is uncanny and remarkable. The research undertaken to make this history possible, establishes a certainty, that Brothers of the Bowl, are the same, throughout all ages. The mosaic of the long forgotten past, is the mosaic of today, producing similar scenes, separated by intervals of time. The past is as real as the present, and the present anticipates the future.

On Carpenter Night, the Founders are sometimes mentioned and it is thought that Brothers of the Bowl should know the names of the members who were in at the beginning. Here is a list of the earliest recorded members, many of whom were certainly the original 'Jolly Cocks'. John Duff, president for more than twenty years is the first president on record.

#### **Founder Members - The first twenty five years**

Brothers Andrews, Atkinson C., Atkinson W, Barrett, Bennet, Benwell, Berger, Beular, Blake, Bourne J, Bourne R, Butlin, Brandard, Bruton, Carpenter, Cater H, Cater M, Cater W, Challen, Clint, Cowland, Cox, Cruikshank, Davies B, Davis, D'Iffanger, Dillon, Duff, Farrer, Fielding, Footman, Franklin, Glover, Graham, Guernsey, Hammerton, Harding, Hardy, Haward, Herman, Hine, Hodgson, Holland, Horsley, Johnson, Jones, Kennedy, Linley, Lover, Maddox Megiddi, Morgan, Monckton, Nelson, Nightingale, Parry, Parrott, Portch, Rasden, Richards, Richards W, Roberts, Russell, Seymour, Simpson, Slater, Smith, Smythe, Statham, Stokes, Thomson, Walker, Wallace, Waters, Wilson, Winn.

#### **The Emblem**

This is of recent date designed by Mrs. Cecil Hewetson, the wife of a very popular past president 1935/6.

The Emblem simply and suitably embodies the purpose and features of the Club. Centrally placed, the Bowl symbolizes the fount, from which emanates the spirit of friendship and brotherhood, marked characteristics pervading the meetings of the Punch Club.

Hands clasped above the Bowl, and the word Fraternitas in the scroll below, depict the spirit of fellowship, which inspired the founders, and binds the members into one brotherhood.

The Book, on which rests the Bowl, and the line of Music above, reflect the literary and musical aspects of the Club, from its foundation to the present day. Two Churchwarden pipes, entwined within the scroll, on either side, indicate the social history and habits of tobacco, as well as one of the customs, which characterize every meeting.

#### **Permanent Institutions**

The Officers have increased considerably in number in the last two decades. Previous to that President, Vice-President, Secretary-Treasurer, and Trustees, ordered the welfare of the Brethren. For many years the offices of President and Vice President were occupied by the same

brothers for many seasons, as has been indicated, but since 1907, three only have occupied the Presidential Chair for even two years in succession.

The President now occupies the chair throughout his year of office, or, in his absence, the Vice-President, a custom decided upon in 1909. This constitutes a change from that in existence, as far back as 1858.

It has become almost customary now, for length of membership, to constitute a brother's 'claim' to promotion to the Chair, he having been first Vice-President and having served in the capacity of Punch Master. The institution of this office in 1934 has already been mentioned.

The qualification of having been Punch Master, is waived in exceptional cases, as in the translation of the Secretary to the Vice-Presidential Chair, owing to the disorganization which might ensue. This, the most onerous office, has been occupied with great success and for very long periods, by such well known brothers as Dr. Carpenter, Brothers J. T. Plomer, Charles E. Johnson, Alex Hill, Conrad King and Sydney Butcher.

Following the installation of the President, it becomes one of his first duties, to present to his predecessor an inscribed tankard, as a token of the brethren's esteem, thus continuing the custom instituted in 1934, which has already been described. This special privilege was granted to Brother Sydney Butcher in 1937 for his long services as Punch Master.

Since 1943, other offices have become permanent institutions. To the **Jester**, descendant of the King's Fool, the Court Jester, and the Chairman of the Victorian and Edwardian Music Hall, falls the lot of providing entertainment for the Brethren, either by his wit, or, by calling on any brother to entertain with such talent as each may possess, or, by engaging professional artists. As the Jester rises at the President's request, the Brethren greet him with a stentorian roar of 'STORY', to which he must submit.

Provision and distribution of churchwarden pipes, snuff and tobacco, are the duties of the **Pipe Master** who is also responsible for the care of the Presidential Pipe and the ceremony of the lighting of the same, before permission to smoke is given to the assembled company, at each meeting.

The Incantation for the Ceremonial Brewing of Punch at the Bowl, the Sung Grace at the end of the dinner, the Chant to Absent Brethren, and other matters musical connected with the ceremonies of the Club, are the responsibilities of **Brother Incantator - The Master of Musick**. It is to be noted that the ancient spelling of Musick is customary in the Club.

Dissemination of Punch Club matters of interest and a survey of the monthly meetings flow from the pen of the **Editor** - who is often the Secretary - of the Bulletin. First edited in type script by Brother Bernard Leverton, the Bulletin proved so popular, that in January 1946 the first printed copy was produced and to which reference has already been made. Past President Brother Cyril Oettinger was an Editor of great ability and for a long period his productions were much appreciated. However, the printed copies, proving too costly, had to be abandoned in favour of a more modest production. The President's letter is a regular feature.

The office of **Padre**, if not entirely discarded, has fallen into abeyance. The Padre is involved in parochial matters which often prevent his regular attendance. Consequently, the office has languished so as to become non-existent. The Club Padres have often combined the dignity of their office with the attractiveness of vivid raconteurs.

### **The Sydney Butcher Loving Cup**

As a variation from a special evening commemorating a person or an event, the late Past President Brother Sydney Butcher is remembered in the ceremony of the Loving Cup held on three occasions as follows:- At the first meeting of the season in September ; the February

meeting being the anniversary month of his birthday; the Annual General Meeting in April. Much has been written about Past President Sydney Butcher. May the Punch Club always honour his memory.

### **Honorary Members**

By the mid-century, the Club had a definite constitution and the earliest rules extant, are fundamentally as they are today. In the early days, “gentlemen of musical ability”, were elected as honorary members. At the present day, “honorary” is accorded only to good members, whose age, health or distance, preclude their attendance.

### **Meetings**

These usually take place on the last Saturday in the months commencing in September, and ending in May. Slight variations are made which are determined by circumstance. Each meeting used to be given a title, when special toasts were honoured and entertainment appropriate to the occasion was given. On Founders’ Night when Dr. Carpenter’s memory was celebrated it was and still is traditional, that the President may call on any brother to provide entertainment. Failing this he may pay in forfeit, either the cost of a bowl or read a passage from Dr. Carpenter’s works. The latter are in the safe keeping of the Trustees and as one of them always ensures that the volumes of Dr. Carpenter’s works are available on that evening, there is every likelihood of the forfeit being paid.

The custom of special evenings is maintained. New ones have been added while some have been allowed to decline into disuse - that of George Michael Dibdin being particularly grievous.

September	Churchill and Battle of Britain Night	Established 1965
October	Nelson and Trafalgar Night	Established 1837
November	Formerly Dibdin Night	Established 1913
December	Dr. Carpenter and Founders’ Night	Established 1886
January	Conrad King Night	Established 1957
February		
March	Ladies’ Festival	Established 1914
March	Formerly Authors’ Night	Established 1923
April	Formerly St George’s Night and always the Annual General Meeting	Established 1837
May	Ladies’ Meeting - formerly Luncheon	Established 1947

The Ladies’ Festival, established in 1914, was abandoned during the second World War, and a Ladies’ Luncheon took its place thus avoiding the difficulties of ‘black out’ and night air-raiding. When the Ladies’ Festival was resumed in 1947, the Luncheon was retained because it had proved so popular. It became an evening meeting in June 1956, the Ladies thus being honoured on two memorable occasions in each season.

The remaining permanent institutions such as the Initiation Ceremony, the Ceremonial Brewing of Punch at the Bowl, the Toasts and other traditional customs will now be described as they occur during the course of a typical Punch Club Meeting.

### **A Punch Club Meeting**

Within the hour before the time arranged for the formal greeting of the President, Brothers of the Bowl and their guests begin to congregate at the place of meeting. Guests are introduced to

Brothers, and the whole company indulges in animated conversation, one with another, made easy by the geniality, the benevolence, and the hospitality of the Brotherhood. The exchange of witticisms, the banter the Parthian shots, and the general good humour, convince the most retiring and reserved, that they belong and are most welcome. Of course, this is aided by the 'liquor of life' - although perhaps minimal in its effect - yet nevertheless, a pleasant accessory.

Interest is taken in the well displayed valuable regalia, centrally placed at one end of the room, and facing the Presidential Chair at the other end. The Silver Bowl and Tankards, the Silver Ladles, the Pewter Jugs, the Snuff Horns, the Tobacco Caskets, the Peeling Knives the Jewelled Collars of the officers and the few portraits which remain, remind all present of the Club's antiquity and heritage, commanding delighted interest and attention.

During this prelude to the evening meeting, the officers are busily engaged in the preparation necessary for the performance of their respective duties. At the stated time, never earlier but always later, Brother Secretary, in a loud voice, requests the Brothers and their guests to approach the festive board, where standing each one in his place, all await the instruction, "Brothers of the Bowl and your Guests - please receive your President". Brother President approaches his chair, accompanied by the rhythmic plaudits of the company. He greets them warmly and prays silence for Grace by Brother Incantator.

"BENEDIC DOMINE, NOS ET HAEC TUA DONA QUAE DE TUA LARGITATE SUMUS SUMPTURI, PER DOMINUM CHRISTUM NOSTRUM. AMEN".

The assembled company then being seated at dinner, Brother Vice-President takes charge. By his technique in his province as Toast Master - animation, vitality and stimulation can be made to permeate the expectant and receptive company.

He is thwarted at the start, for his simple question whether each one is charged, seldom meets with a unanimous 'AYE'. At a second attempt, he may be more fortunate and then proceeds: "Brothers of the Bowl and your Guests - your President is pleased to take wine with you all - and in accordance with accepted custom of this general toast, will you please remain seated while he stands". The second toast requires that Brother President will have great pleasure in taking wine with all the guests. Applause greets each toast. Then comes the toasting of the Immediate Past President which is followed by a similar honour to all Past Presidents present. A short respite allows Brother Vice to eat and drink a little, until the Immediate Past President calls him to his feet, announcing that Brother President desires to take wine with his Vice President. The toast list then proceeds, subject to variation, either in order, or in addition, but never by omission, according to the design or whim of Brother Vice The toasts can be coloured with humour, with asides, with queries, and with unpremeditated mistakes, awakening the watch dogs of form and propriety. The accepted order preferred, continues thus:- Brothers - Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer, Trustees, Punch Master, Pipe Master, Jester, and the Master of Musick. Then, when Brother President announces the Cup Bearers, which may be at this point, or at any time previously, they take wine with the President. Lemon Peelers sometimes called Decorticators, are announced and are given the lemons and the peeling knives by Brother Punch Master. Immediately, Brother Vice announces the last general toast of the first part of the meeting: "Brothers of the Bowl and your guests, it is your President's wish that you toast each other freely". This occasions some hilarity, especially when every brother, in turn, is pleased to take wine with each lemon peeler, individually and severally, thus aiming towards the maximum obstruction to efficient decortication. Yet, in the midst of jollity and in spite of the good humoured interruption, the task is done. Meanwhile, Brother Punch Master has vied manfully with the arduous and exacting mission of preparing the brew for the ceremony of the Bowl. At the same time, Brother Pipe Master has distributed to the company, snuff, tobacco and churchwarden pipes. When the lemon peelers have completed their exercise, the lemons are

collected by Brother Punch Master, who takes them to Brother President for critical examination, and for judgment, which may be commendatory, devastating or jocular, to the great delight of all, even including the victims of the discriminating assessment. Brother President then requests the Master of Musick to play the Grace, which is sung by all, standing: -

‘For these and all Thy mercies given  
We bless and praise Thy Name O Lord.  
May we receive them with thanksgiving,  
Ever trusting in Thy Word.  
To Thee alone be honour, glory,  
Now and henceforth for ever more. - Amen’.

Laudi Spirituali 1545 A.D.

After a brief pause, Brother President proposes the Loyal Toast, the first verse of the National Anthem being sung heartily by the Brothers and their guests. All eyes are now turned to Brother President, by whose side stands Brother Pipe Master preparing the Presidential Pipe. The company wait with expectation as the pipe is lit by Brother Pipe Master, while Brother President puffs - sometimes with difficulty, sometimes unsuccessfully - for, it has been known for Pipe Masters to create hazards in their preparation of the Pipe -but, as the blue clouds of smoke ascend, Brother Pipe Master declares Brother President to be well ‘lit up’, and announces that the assembled company has the President’s permission to smoke. Conversation and laughter, some discreet sneezing by those unaccustomed to snuff, the clinking of glasses, the interweaving smoke rings, paint a picture of relaxation, friendship, toleration and geniality.

The focal point of the meeting now approaches, when the symbolism of the ceremonial brewing of Punch, emphasizes the deeper meaning of the aims of the brotherhood.

### **The Ceremonial Brewing of Punch**

Brother President nominates certain brothers to assist him at the Bowl for the ceremonial brewing, to be responsible, each to his own charge, for the lemon juice, the sugar, the boiling water, the old ale, and the whisky. Two brothers are invited to be first and second tasters, respectively, while Brother Incantator, the Master of Mesick, is required to play and to lead the singing of the Incantation, which accompanies the brewing of the Punch. At a signal from Brother Punch Master that all is prepared, Brother President requests the Brothers to join him at the magnificent Silver Irish Bowl - purchased through the good offices of Past President Brother Aubrey Collins. Brother President and Brother Punch Master, arrayed in the collars of office bearing the Club Emblem, are attended by the Stewards of the Bowl appointed - who, in turn, as each couplet is chanted, add the lemon juice, sugar, water, ale and Irish whiskey, the traditional ingredients, the mixture being stirred by Brother President. The other Brethren and the guests stand, participating in the Ceremonial Brewing of the Bowl, to the accompaniment of the following Incantation first sung on Nelson Night 1909, when it was introduced by the author and composer, Past President Thomas Alder Smith.

Four elements joined in harmonious strife  
The World represent and typify life.  
Into the goblet the Lemon’s juice pour,  
For acid is ever Life’s innermost core.

Now with the sugar's all sweetening juice,  
The strength of the acid its power to reduce.  
The bright boiling water pour in the bowl there  
For water encircles the world everywhere.  
Let drops of the spirit to join it now flow  
Life to the living nought else can bestow.  
Drink it off quickly before it exhales  
Save when it is glowing, the draught nought avails.

Now follows the crucial moment when Brother President demands the verdict of the tasters as to the quality of the brew. The Brethren and their guests, thus being acquainted of Brother Punch Master's skill, look forward to the sampling of the delectable potion which is distributed to each one present by the Cup Bearers. Brother President remains at the Bowl in isolation, while Brother Punch Master, standing behind the Presidential Chair, assuring himself that all are charged, calls for a bumper toast to, 'Your President'.

The impressive ceremony is well understood by the Brothers of the Bowl, and its significance is neither underrated, nor disdained by the guests. At the Ladies' Festival, when the Stewards of the Bowl are clothed in the costume of the period of the Club's foundation, the presentation becomes a notable and cherished spectacle, and is deeply engraved on the tablets of memory.

Punch, the liquor of contradictions, signifies the combination of antithetical elements into an harmonious whole. The analogy of the Brewing of the Bowl to the unified Fellowship of the Brotherhood is manifest and needs no elucidation.

On occasions, new members are initiated as Brothers and this takes place immediately following the toasting of the President at the Ceremonial Bowl. The following ceremony is an embellishment by Past President Brother Harold A. D. Rudd, used during his presidential year, and based on a form first compiled and introduced by Past President Brother Cyril Oettinger in 1951. It has now become an established custom in the Club.

### **The Initiation Ceremony**

After the toasting of the President at the Ceremonial Bowl, the President will remain standing in his place at the Bowl, instead of proceeding to the Presidential Chair as is customary.

The two Initiating Officers then place themselves, one on each side of the Presidential Chair.

Then shall the **First Initiating Officer** address the assembled company . . .

In the name of the President, I ask your attention, Gentlemen and Brothers.

Brother President, Sir, Brothers and Guests of the Bowl, I am privileged to ask Mr. . . . . to join the President at the Ceremonial Bowl.

Brother . . . . . and Brother . . . . . will you both stand forward at the Bowl to sponsor your nominee.

Mr. . . . . , Sir, having been a guest at the Bowl on three or more occasions and having responded to the toast of the guests at least once - having inquired into the full meaning of Membership of the Punch Club, the concepts and traditions on which the Club is founded-and having a complete understanding of the same-are you still minded to join the Fellowship of the Bowl?

**Nominee** - I am so minded.

**First Initiating Officer** - I am to remind you of the assurances given by you to your sponsors and brought by them to the notice of the Committee - namely: -

That you will endeavour to uphold the traditions of the Club.

That if called upon, you will take active part in the meetings and functions.

That, at all times, you will endeavour to be of regular attendance and to do all in your power to preserve the spirit of Fellowship, which, for decades, has been the basic tenet of the Punch Club.

Do you now, before the President and Brothers of the Bowl assembled, affirm those assurances?

**Nominee** - Most freely do I affirm those assurances.

Then shall the **Second Initiating Officer** speak on behalf of the President and the Brothers of the Bowl assembled . . .

Mr. . . . , Sir. In the name of the Brothers of the Bowl, herein assembled and in the name of those Brethren, who, for diverse reasons are unable to be here present in person - but who are here in spirit - by whose authority and consent - the President - their elected and humble representative - now stands before you to admit you into the Fellowship of this ancient and historic Club, for which purpose you are hereby presented.

It is my solemn duty, to remind you that fellowship is a spiritual necessity, without which, civilization merely degenerates into organized savagery. Active fellowship is the life blood of the Punch Club.

Such gifts skills and abilities as you may possess are to be offered freely to the advantage of the Club and to its members great content.

Then shall the **Second Initiating Officer** address the President

Brother President, Sir, . .

In the name of the Brothers of the Bowl, herein assembled, either in person, or, in spirit, I ask you, Brother President, Sir, to receive Mr. . . . . into the Fellowship and full membership of this historic Punch Club.

Then shall the **President** address the nominee.

Mr. . . , Sir, It is with the greatest pleasure that I admit you into the Fellowship of this unique Club, so, that hereinafter, you will be known as Brother . . in consummation of which I extend to you, across this Ceremonial Bowl, the hand of Fellowship and Brotherhood.

Then shall the **First Initiating Officer** address first the sponsors, then the company. .

Brother, . . . . and Brother . . . , Brother President is pleased to accord you the pleasure of a welcoming toast to your nominee.

Brothers and Guests of the Bowl, I ask you to rise and drink a toast to Brother . . . .

And now-Pray silence for a response by Brother . . . .

The new Brother then gives his maiden speech as a Brother of the Bowl.

The President, then returning to his customary place, calls on Brother Jester to provide entertainment. To the cries of 'STORY', he endeavours to meet the request of the company, avoiding by established custom, such stories as might offend - the humour of the tap room being inappropriate at a meeting of the Punch Club. Brother Jester can arrange his programme of entertainment, either from the talent within the Club, or by the engagement of professional artists from the agencies. It must be mentioned, that music is played at intervals throughout the evening, by the professional pianist, who in these days is Leo Con Riche, who also accompanies the singers who entertain.

Then follow the toasts in the traditional order, the Brothers being called upon for their particular task, by Brother President.

**The Club** coupled with the name of the President, to which Brother President responds.

**The Special Toast** - if the evening be devoted to a celebrity.

**Absent Brethren** - This is traditionally drunk at 9 p.m. The time varies, dependent on the length of speeches, the length of entertainment, the preparation of the second brew which is not done ceremoniously, and other factors. At the end of the speech, which always refers to letters sent by Brothers unable to attend, the toast is honoured, after the singing of the Chant . . .

“Absent though you be my brothers  
We this night do think of you,  
As the clock chimes nine this even,  
May your thoughts be with us too.  
Whether duty calls or sickness  
Whether good or ill assail;  
May the architect who heeds us  
See that nought but good prevail”.

*Words and Music by Past President Brother Conrad King.*

At this point there will be further entertainment if time permits, which will be followed by Brother President calling on **Brother Secretary to read the minutes**. At one period of the Club’s history, this request was treated somewhat flippantly, for it was rare that minutes were ever produced. Though it caused much hilarity and jocular quizzing at the time, the Club is deprived of all accounts of those merry moments. Fortunately, now-a-days and over a long period, the members have enjoyed the detailed accounts, enlivened with humour, of the previous meeting. The thundering ‘NO’, to Brother President’s request to sign the minutes as correct, is traditional, and in no way deters him from signing. Sometimes, humorous and extravagant corrections are urged, Brother Secretary remaining imperturbable to the jesting and the jovial chaffing which cloak a sincere appreciation of his work.

**The toast to the Guests**, by the Brother named, is given next. It used to follow the toast to the Club, but it was decided to place it near the end of the meeting, so that the two guests, who will be called upon to reply to the toast, will have experienced the complete fellowship, thus providing them with sufficient material to stimulate their thoughts for the response.

The final toast is to the **Officers** and the proposer is reminded, that “the quality of mercy is not strained”. The brother proposing the toast has the privilege of calling on any officer of his choice, to respond.

The strains of **Auld Lang Syne** close the evening, and while ever the same spirit of fellowship, which has flowed from the Bowl since 1837, goes on, the Punch Club will hear those same strains for centuries yet to come.

The evening ends as it began, with brothers and guests mingling happily in lively confabulation. The Brethren part reluctantly, but with anticipation for the next meeting of the Punch Club.

### **Property**

Mention has been made, from time to time, of the sad losses sustained by the Club. In order that the Brethren may be aware of the valuable property owned by the Club in the year one thousand nine hundred and sixty five in the reign of Her Most Gracious Majesty, our Sovereign Lady, Queen Elizabeth the Second, a list is herewith recorded.

Ceremonial Silver Bowl

Two electric urns

Two silver circlets to Plinth

Half Gallon Beer Jug (Devonshire Pottery)

Two Goblet Trays  
Six peeling knives  
Lemon Squeezer  
Two Lemon Bowls  
Sugar Bowl  
Case for Ale and Hot Water Jugs  
Loving Cup – Sydney  
Butcher Memorial  
President’s Jewel  
Vice President’s Jewel  
Punch Master’s Jewel  
Pipe Master’s Jewel  
Jester’s Jewel  
Treasurer’s Jewel  
**Books**  
Later Lyrics - Carpenter  
Three Popular Readings, Compiled  
Carpenter and Presented by Charles Braid  
Six Oxford Song Books  
**Recordings**  
Magnetophonband-BASFTYP LGS  
**Attendance Books**  
1879-1891  
1891-1894  
1894-1935  
1935-  
**Account Books**  
1867-1913  
1922-1923  
1937-38-43  
1947-  
**Engraved Blocks**  
Absent Brethren (2)  
Grace Personality Caricatures (3)  
Saturday night at sea  
Bowl Cabinet  
Large Silver Ladles (2)  
3 Small ladles

Tape-Brothers speaking Tape-Punch Club  
Incantation sung by P/P Brother Harold  
Rudd  
Black Plinth to Bowl  
Old Bowl  
Ladle guinea inset  
Ladle ‘guinea inset’ (missing)  
Tankard  
President’s Pipe  
Square Tobacco Box  
Pipe Cabinet  
Pipe Master’s Box  
**Portraits (3)**  
G. M. Dibdin  
Conrad King  
Sydney Butcher  
**Photographs**  
Conrad King, enlargement  
J. E. Carpenter  
Miscellaneous  
Not listed and not known  
2 Snuff Horns  
Oval Tobacco, Box  
6 Leaden Ash Trays  
5 Gavels  
5 Blocks  
2 Square Inkwells  
2 Deed Boxes  
Candle Bases  
Document Case  
**Minute Books**  
1858-1867  
1867-1882  
1882-1887  
1887-1897  
1897-1914  
1923-1934  
1934-1940

1940-1944  
 1950-1954  
 1954-1958  
 1958-Not completed

1946-1952  
**Half tone Blocks**  
 Xmas Party (2)  
 President at Punch Bowl

**Buletins**

In addition there is a collection of bric-a-brac, some letters and a miscellany of literature, a Winston Churchill Commemoration Silver Ash Tray, given by Bro., Denis Goossens, and a Victorian Snuff Box given by Bro., Nicholson.

Some of this material will be attached to the appropriate minute books of the period. There is also some pottery presented by Past President Peter Poynter, from his guest Mr. John Probst and made by his niece.

**Presidents from circa 1837**

John Duff-Founder President before		Walter G. Ough	1928-1929
	1845-1867	W. Harold Walbrook	1929-1930
Dr. Joseph Edwards Carpenter		Montague D. Severo	1930-1931
	1867-1885	William A Foyle	1931-1932
John T. Plomer	1885-1888	Rowland H. Egerton	1932-1933
Charles E. Johnson	1888-1889	Sydney A. Kemp	1933-1934
G. Nelson Watts	1889-1892	Bertram W. Nobes	1934-1935
W. F. Mills	1892-1894	Cecil Hewetson	1935-1936
John Turoer	1894-1896	Conrad King Centenary	
John T. Plomer	1896-1898	Year	1936-1937
W F. Mills	1898-1900	George W. Webb	1937-1938
John T. Plomer	1900-1906	Harold C. Driver	1938-1939
T. Atder Smith	1906-1908	Thomas L. Butler	1939-1940
Carlo A E Corelli	1908-1909	Gordon Hope	1940-1942
G. Michael Dibdin	1909-1911	Thomas W. Hawes	1942-1943
The Reverend		Sydney F. Butcher	1943-1944
Charles Sergeant	1911-1913	Thomas Smith	1944-1945
Conrad King	1913-1914	Reginald Quartermain	1945-1946
Washington West	1914-?	Aubrey L Collins	1946-1947
Alex J. Hill	1923-1924	William Dale	1947-1948
George W. Jeffery	1924-1925	Rupert A. Barker	1948-1949
George H. Cook	1925-1926	Frank G. Nash	1949-1950
Edmund C. Roberts	192C-1927	Richard D. Ellis	1950-1951
Eroest M. Severo	1927-1928	Cyril Oettinger	1951-1952
Edward H Ward	1952-1953	John A Spring	1959-1960
Frank E. Lovesay	1953-1954	Selwyn ~Collins	1960-1961
Eugene Rogers	1954-1955	Eric W. J. Smith	1961-1962
Harold A. D. Rudd	1955-1956	S. H. Petsr Poynter	1962-1963
Robert D. Ward	1956-1957	A. Edward Watson	1963-1964
Gerald Falkner	1957-1958	Wiiliam E. Crafter	1964-1965
Bernard J. Black	1958-1959	H. Denis Goossens	1965-1966

**Presidents Elect who were unable to take office**

Donald W. King	1886	Charles M. Braid	1906
	Died 1886 June.		Died 1906 c. June.

Arthur G. Hutt 1930  
 Died 1930 June  
 The Reverend S. Spackman 1953  
 Died 1953 August

T. 'Jock' McCartney  
 Resigned-Emigrated.

**Vice Presidents from 1862 - No records 1837-1862**

Dr. Joseph Edwards Carpenter	1862-1867	Sydney A. Kemp	1932-1933
		Bertram W. Nobes	1933-1934
Dr. Garratt Dillon	1867-1870	Cecil Hewitson	1934-1935
Henry Footman	1870-1872	George W. Webb	1935-1937
John Franklin	1872-1881	Harold C. Driver	1937-1938
Dr. Barringer	1881-1883	Thomas L. Butler	1938-1939
John Morison	1883-1885	Gordon Hope	1939-1940
Donald W. King	1885-1886	Clennel Fenwicke	1940-1941
Charles E. Johnson	1886-1888	Thomas W. Hawes	1941-1942
G. Nelson Watts	1888-1889	Sydney F. Butcher	1942-1943
W. F. Mills	1889-1892	Thomas Smith	1943-1944
Colonel J. W. Bird	1892-1894	Reginald Quartermain	1944-1945
John Turner	1894-	Aubrey L. Collins	1945-1946
President same year		William Dale	1946-1947
John T. Plomer	1894-1896	Rupert A. Barker	1947-1948
W. F. Mills	1896-1898	Frank G. Nash	1948-1949
Charles M. Braid	1898-1906	Richard D. Ellis	1949-1950
Thomas Alder Smith	1906-	Cyril Oettinger	1950-1951
President same year		Edward H. Ward	1951-1952
Carlo A. E. Corelli	1906-1908	T. 'Jock' McCartney	1952-1953
G. Michael Dibdin	1908-1909	(Emigrated to Canada)	
Conrad King	1909-1913	The Rev. S. Spackman	1953-
Washington West	1913-1914	(Died August 1953)	
Alex J. Hill	1914-1923	Eugene Rogers	1953-1954
George W. Jeffery	1923-1924	Harold A. D. Rudd	1954-1955
George H. Cook	1924-1925	Robert A. Ward	1955-1956
Edmund C. Roberts	1925-1926	Gerald Falkner	1956-1957
Ernest M. Severn	1926-1927	Bernard J. Black	1957-1958
Walter G. Ough	1927-1928	John A. A. Spring	1958-1959
W. Harold Walbrook	1928-1929	Selwyn Collins	1959-1960
(Vice Brother Horsbrugh		Eric W. J. Smith	1960-1961
who was elected, but resigned)		S. H. Peter Poynter	1961-1962
Arthur G. Hutt	1929-1930	A. Edward Watson	1962-1963
(Died June 1930)		William E. Crafter	1963-1964
Montague D. Severn	1930-	H. Denis Goossens	1964-1965
(President in same year)		Norman S. Seeney	1965-1966
William A. Foyle	1930-1931		
Rowland H. Egerton	1931-1932		

**Trustees from 1895**

John Turner	1895-1902	Frank Lovesay	1950-1954
W. F. Mills	1895-1902	Aubrey L. Collins	1950-1954
Conrad King	1902-1914	Aubrey L. Collins	1954-1956

Thomas Alder Smith	1902-1914	Robert D. Ward	1954-1956
William Dale	1942-1946	Cyril Oettinger	1956-1957
Norman Seeney	1956-1957	William Dale	1946-1949
Cyril Oettinger	1957-1958	George Birmingham	1946-1949
Edward H. Ward	1957-1958	George Birmingham	1949-1950
Edward H. Ward	1958-	Frank Lovesay	1949-1950
Harold A. D. Rudd	1958-		

#### Secretaries from circa 1837

Dr. Joseph Edwards Carpenter		Charles Levin	1888-1891
Before	1858-1864	Charles E. Johnson	1891-1898
John C. Bourne	1864-1865	Alex J. Hill	1898-1914
Edward Baker	1865-1881	Montague D. Severn	1914-1923
John T. Plomer	1881-1882	Conrad King	1923-1936
Charles E. Johnson	1882-1885	Rowland H. Egerton	1936-1937
John T. Plomer	1885-1886	Conrad King	1937-1942
Henry Leigh Ormsby	1886-1887	Rupert Alex Barker	1942-1947
Edward J. D. Bromley	1887-1888	Robert D. Ward	1947-1949
Douglas W. Lough	1888-	Rupert Alex Barker	1949-1950
(Did not complete a season.		A Sydney F. Butcher	1950-1963
number of Secretaries acting)		John P. D. C. Pratt	1963-

#### Assistant Secretaries from circa 1911

Montague D. Severn	1911-1914	Robert D. Ward	1946-1947
Walter S. Allen	1914-	Eugene Rogers	1946-1947
(Killed in the War)		Eugene Rogers	1947-1949
Edmund C. Roberts	1923-1925	Harry Gould	1949-1950
Walter G. Ough	1925-1927	Eugene Rogers	1949-1950
Edmund C. Roberts	1927-1942	Eugene Rogers	1950-1963
George Birmingham	1942-1946	Allan Y. Teal	1963-

#### Treasurers from circa 1837

Dr. Joseph Edwards Carpenter		Charles E. Johnson	1894-1898
Before	1858-1862	Alex J. Hill	1898-1914
Thomas D'Iffanger	1862-1864	Montague D. Severn	1914-1923
Henry Footman	1864-1865	Conrad King	1923-1936
Charles Horsley		Rowland H. Egerton	1936-1937
1865-1870 Edward Baker		Conrad King	1937-1947
1870-1881 John Morison		Robert D. Ward	1947-1949
1881-1882 Charles		Rupert Alex Barker	1949-1950
E. Johnson	1882-1886 Edward	Sydney F. Butcher	1950-1963
J. D. Bromley	1886-1888 John M.	Harold Begernie	1963-
Walter	1888-1894		

#### Punch Masters from 1934 when officially recognized

Punch was always brewed since 1837, but no mention is made of the office of Punch Master until 1934.

Sydney F. Butcher Before	1934-1942	Bernard J. Black	1956-1957
Reginald Quartermain	1942-1946	John A. A. Spring	1957-1958
Arthur Angwin	1946-1947	Selwyn Collins	1958-1959
Frank G. Nash	1947-1948	Eric W. J. Smith	1959-1960
Richard D. Ellis	1948-1949	S. H. Peter Poynter	1960-1961

Cyril Oettinger	1949-1950	A. Edward Watson	1961-1962
Edward H. Ward	1950-1951	William E. Crafter	1962-1963
T. 'Jock' McCartney	1951-1952	H. Denis Goossens	1963-1964
Frank E Lovesay	1952-1953	Norman S. Seeney	1964-1965
Herbert V Hollands	1953-1955	Harry J. A. Trepte	1965-1966
Gerald Falkner	1955-1956		

### Pipe Masters from 1946

Although Pipes Tobacco and Snuff were distributed from the earliest days at each meeting, the official office is of recent recognition.

Thomas Connor	1946-1947	Eric W. J. Smith	1958-1959
Possibly before 1946		S. H. Peter Poynter	1959-1960
T. 'Jock' McCartney	1947-1951	Francis A. Winterton	1960-1961
Derek Cudlipp	1951-1956	William E. Crafter	1961-1962
Selwyn Collins	1956-1958	James F. Cullingham	1962 -

### Jesters from 1946~No previous record

Roy Thomas	1946-1951	H. Denis Goossens	1958-1963
Bernard J Black	1951-1956	Victor Thorpe	1963
Reginald Quartermain	1956-1958		

### Master of Musick - Brother Incantator

The title Brother Incantator was introduced in 1956, and became Master of Musick in 1962, now established as an office.

Harold A. D. Rudd 1956 - Still in office

### Tributes in honour of Past President Brother Conrad King

*Illustrious forebears, this thine honoured son  
Hath wrought a pattern worthy of all time;  
In modesty renowned, who envieth none,  
'Fraternitas' his life and faith sublime.*

*Integrity deep grooved in his face,  
A loyalty profound which nought can yield  
Enobling all, with courtly mannered grace,  
The radiant lustre of the past revealed.*

*And when in song with artistry refined,  
A spirit young rejects each passing year;  
His gentle voice, sweet lingering in the mind  
Exalts the soul and wistful charms the ear.*

*The keys beneath his fragile fingers pressed  
Yield soft, melodic, vibrant tones discrete  
In haunting, whispering cadences-caressed  
From Music's art, where Truth and Beauty meet.*

*These attributes wherewith he is imbued  
Impel the gods to laud their choicest youth:  
Throughout his generous life, he hath pursued  
Th' Eternal Forms of Beauty-Goodness-Truth.  
Thus Fellowship-Good Faith-and Arts unite  
In him so loved, revered and esteemed.  
His spirit, self effacing, seeks the light  
Of hope renewed-a trust in man redeemed.*

Harold A. D. Rudd, December 1954

### **Sonnet in memory of Conrad King written after his death in 1956**

Not only in the Arts renowned he,  
Man's brotherhood in man he did maintain.  
He stood-a symbol, in an age profane  
Where fellowship and human constancy  
Were little reckoned. So, thrice honoured, we  
Who laughed and talked with him-sweet recompense,  
For here were goodness, culture, and a sense  
Of dedication; deep sincerity.  
Small wonder he was loved: 'twas thus designed  
Mirrored in him, we saw that better part  
We all desired to be. He thus refined  
The mundane urges of the soul and heart.  
To frailties of others he was blind.  
His epitaph shall be-he loved mankind

Harold A. D. Rudd, January 1956

### **CONCLUSION**

The continuation of the narrative from this point must now be the task for future historians. Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy during the search for authentic detail. Nevertheless, incomplete accounts, missing records and contradictory information which is quite inexplicable, must of necessity cause hesitancy in believing that this account is free from error. The search has been sincere and laborious, but most rewarding. I feel that I have made many friends with the brothers of the past, and I have listened as they spoke to me down the years. Consequently, I have the sensation of knowing them intimately. Whatever this short history may lack, the spirit of the Brotherhood is bound to forgive its imperfections. Love of the Punch Club, and the Fellowship of the Brothers of the Bowl, actuated this modest effort. Should this-the reason for authorship - be its only merit - it is enough.

In the words of the immortal Charles Dickens, said by Mr. Wilkins Micawber, “The events of the past tinged in short, with the prismatic hues of memory, have ever afforded as they will continue to afford-gratifying emotions of no uncommon kind”.

William Morris, 1834 - 1896, is also worth quoting: “Forsooth, brothers, fellowship is heaven, and lack of fellowship is hell: fellowship is life, and lack of fellowship is death: and the deeds that ye do upon the earth, it is for fellowship’s sake that ye do them”.

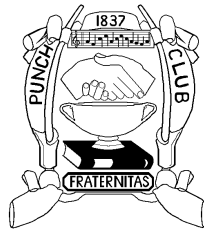
It is fitting, I think, to conclude with the complete quotation from Horace, 65 - 8 B.C. - part of which was adopted by Dr. Joseph Edwards Carpenter, as a motto for this Club, in 1867.

“Felices ter et amplius  
Quos irrupta tenet copula nec malis  
Divulsus querimoniis  
Suprema citius solvet amor die”.

Thrice happy they, and more than thrice, whom an unbroken bond holds fast, and whom love, never torn asunder by foolish quarrellings, will not loose till life’s last day.

Harold A. D. Rudd, June 1965.

## THE PUNCH CLUB



1837-1965

# THE PUNCH CLUB

1837 - 1986

A Supplement to the Club History 1965 - 1986

by

Past President Brother HAIG ELLIS and Past President Brother DENIS GOOSSENS

## **Preface**

The Punch Club was rendered a valuable service by Past President Brother Harold Rudd who wrote an excellent history of the Club. However, his work on behalf of the Club ended in 1965. It is now thought appropriate, in the year 1985 as the Club approaches its 150th Anniversary Year, to produce a supplement to his work. This supplement to place on record the activities of the Club over the past twenty years for the further enjoyment of the Brothers of the Bowl.

## **The Punch Club 1965 - 1986**

The Club continued to meet at the rather gloomy and uninviting premises of the TALBOT RESTAURANT, London Wall, until the costs became so prohibitive that it was decided to look for a less expensive and more congenial meeting place. Thus, it followed in 1968, we moved to the BEDFORD HEAD, Maiden Lane, a more suitable venue for the Club's proceedings. It was here at the first meeting in September that the Club was faced with chaos, only half the restaurant staff arrived for work and, not to be outdone, the Punch Master managed to boil the whisky! However; the members dealt with the problems with their usual easy good humour.

It was here at the Bedford Head that the Club made an important change to its normal procedures. Due to the fact that the Ladies Supper had been discontinued in 1969 on the grounds of cost, the Brothers of the Bowl decided as an alternative to invite the Ladies to be with them at an ordinary meeting in December. This decision was taken not without some heart - searching and exception by a few members, the objection being that it reduced the number of ordinary meetings. To resolve this shortcoming an additional meeting was arranged to be held in May, this to be the Annual General Meeting previously held in April. Unfortunately, resulting from these discussions and the decisions taken, several resignations occurred which were accepted with great regret by the members.

Thus in December '69 the Ladies were present at an ordinary meeting for the first time in the Club's history. The first meeting was a great success, subsequent meetings were equally enjoyable and now the presence of the Ladies at the Christmas meeting is a well established custom.

In 1970 the Club was, once again, forced to move due to the closure of the Bedford Head. With the assistance of the owners, alternative accommodation was provided at THE PILL BOX, which is located on the south side of Old Father Thames, opposite St. Thomas's Hospital. To look across Westminster Bridge, and see the proud tower of Big Ben on the skyline is indeed inspiring.

Thus had the Punch Club crossed "The Styx".

The Club is still meeting at this very comfortable restaurant although there have been different owners and changes of name. First to THE GEOFFREY CHAUCER and latterly THE FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE.

It was in 1966 that Summer outings were renewed. Members and their Ladies were invited to the Sussex home of Past President Brother Eric and Mrs. Muriel Smith. There, on a day in July, for some seven Summers they entertained everyone to tea, croquet on the lawn and a Bowl of Punch

to see them on their way. On another two occasions they were invited to the London home of Brother Cyril de Vere Green and his wife Bertha. There they were entertained and privileged to see Brother Cyril's magnificent collection of Musical Boxes and his wife Bertha's most beautiful collection of Fans. To both these Brothers of the Bowl and their families the grateful thanks of the Club were recorded.

### **Meetings**

In 1970 the Annual General Meeting was changed from April to May and the ceremony of the Loving Cup also changed accordingly.

In April 1976 the toast to "The Club - England and St. George" was revived and continues to be the speech of the evening at our April meetings.

In 1979 it was resolved that a new Special Toast be introduced at the February meeting, that to -, "A Great Briton". The Brother who is privileged to propose the toast may, in consultation with Brother President, decide who that "Great Briton" will be. This change has proven to be most satisfactory and has added to the enjoyment of the Brothers at the February meeting.

In 1978 after much deliberation it was decided, for financial reasons, to change the venue of the Ladies Festival from the Cafe Royal to the St. Ermins Hotel. The new venue has proven to be very satisfactory and the function continues to be well supported.

### **A letter of gratitude**

On the evening of Saturday 28th October, 1978, one of the honoured guests to our Club meeting was a retired Fleet Street journalist named Leslie Latchford. His visit motivated him to commit his impressions to paper.

#### ***A NIGHT TO REMEMBER***

*Incredibly, in this day and age a short walk across Westminster Bridge produces an anachronism where men of all walks of life meet in an upstairs room, lit by candlelight and gleaming silver to escape for an hour or so into a Dickensian past known to its habitués as the 'PUNCH CLUB':*

*On the desk as I write lies an engraved card with my name stating I was, on Saturday 28th October, 1978, the honoured guest of the Brothers of the Bowl, as members of the Punch Club are known, with an encribed symbol depicting crossed hands over a silver bowl dated 1837 and the signature of the President. The symbol bears the Latin inscription 'Fraternitas' - the indissoluble tie of Fellowship.*

*For me, the greatest experience in my life was to listen to the "Toast of the Visitors" by a distinguished historian and his reference to the choice of visitors vouched for by their hosts as gentlemen of honour and integrity' before admittance to their festivities. What finer compliment could be paid by anyone? And to the joy of hearing the reply of a young man born in this country in 1939 (nephew of a popular member) who after travelling to Australia and elsewhere eventually went to live in the United States of America to become a citizen of the New World and subsequently a serving Warrant Officer in the U. S. Air Force. Now stationed at the U. S. base in North East England for a final three years before retirement he was his Uncle's guest at the Punch Club and made a most impressive and manly reply which was loudly applauded by us all.*

*Past President Brother Harold A. D. Rudd has compiled an excellent history of the origins, aims and activities of the Club and I feel that these cannot be equalled by anyone - certainly not by me - so at the request of my own joint-hosts I am merely trying to convey an impression of Saturday night's proceedings which I shall always remember with pride and humility and deep gratitude.*

*Time stands still at the 'Geoffrey Chaucer' when the Brothers of the Bowl meet, and it needs very little imagination to look back to 1837 when the gentlemen of the day wore velvet coats and*

*flowered waistcoats be-wigged hair, took snuff and warmed their backs before a blazing open fireplace before sitting down to dine.*

*The witticisms laughter and music leavened by enormous quantities of homebrewed punch constitute an atmosphere of great cordiality, friendship and wellbeing which persists of course to this day, and my own reaction was of lifting a curtain on the past, recalling the famous names and personalities of art, literature and music, and indeed, of dear Mr. Pickwick himself who, if rumour and legend is accurate, was probably conceived in the mind of the Author, Charles Dickens, when attending one of the Club's functions.*

*A serenity of purpose, tranquillity of mind and true brotherhood permeate the upstairs room - a feeling seldom found today in the blatant, turbulent world of materialism outside and I thought how wonderful it is that the Brothers of the Bowl have survived all the past decades and are ardent in their conviction that it is only by Fellowship and loving kindness that mankind can prosper.*

*Humour, too, is an important requisite (like witty conversation and cross-talk at the table) and the Club's 'Jester' - a friend from another Club - Archie - was in grand form and had us in fits of laughter with his fantastic monologues and asides.*

*All in all, then, an 'evening to remember' in very truth and I regard my visit as a privilege and an honour and hope I shall have the pleasure of dining with you all ere long . . .*

*As already stated . . . this is just an impression and not by any means a profound study of the Punch Club, its aims and purposes - simply a human reaction to a delightful evening in the company of congenial friends and I would like to conclude this with a quotation from R. D. Blumenfeld's autobiography, 'R. D. B. HIS LIFE' undoubtedly one of Beaverbrook's finest editors of the 'Daily Express':*

*" . . . and as a working journalist all my life I feel I have occupied a front stall in the theatre of life, seen 'em all come and go and experienced everything there is in life . . ." Appropriately, I thought too, I could share the same thought until last night but I now count my visit to the Punch Club as a unique occasion - the finest and the best in my span of three score and ten.*

*Leslie, Latchford - October 1978*

The founders of the Punch Club, whose light has shone down these many years of history could not have dreamed that such a tribute would be made to the Club some 140 years later.

### **Property**

During the past twenty years further items have been added to the property of the Club and a list is herewith recorded:

A "Master of Music" Jewel given by Past President John Pratt, a Victorian Silver Heart Shaped Snuff Box C1880 given by Past President Frank Lovesay.

In 1977 the Club sent loyal greetings to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on the celebration of her Silver Jubilee and in honour of the occasion a Pair of Silver Two Handled Bowls, Jubilee 1977, were given by the Brothers of the Bowl. These are used for the Lemon and the Sugar at the Ceremony of the Bowl.

A Brass Bound Portable Cabinet made and given by Past President Fred Bennett, the cabinet is fitted to accommodate the entire Club's property.

A Silver Dish celebrating the Marriage of the Prince and Princess of Wales, given by Past President Fred Bennett.

An Antique Long Stem Steel Pipe presented by Bro. Douglas Gale, this pipe is one of only three made, of the other two, of one there is no trace, and the third is displayed in a Midland Museum.

A Poniard given by Past President Derrick Horner, this beautifully finished weapon has further enhanced the ceremony of the Loving Cup.

In the year 1968, Club ties were introduced, they being maroon in colour with the Club motif embroidered in gold.

#### **Presidents from 1966**

Norman Seeney	1966-1967	Peter Shea	1976-1977
John P.D.C. Pratt	1967-1968	Derrick Horner	1977-1978
Bill Grayson	1968-1969	Brian Jarman	1978-1979
Victor Thorpe	1969-1970	Fred Bennett	1979-1980
Haig Ellis	1970-1971	David Pratt	1980-1981
Geoffrey Smith	1971-1972	Terry Bennett	1981-1982
Jack Regan	1972-1973	Miles Cleghorn	1982-1983
Frank Ward	1973-1974	John Kimble	1983-1984
Frank Rehder	1974-1975	Douglas Gale	1984-1985
Horace Grice	1975-1976	Jack Springall	1985-1986

#### **Vice Presidents from 1966**

Frank Lovesay	1966-1967	Derrick Horner	1976-1977
Bill Grayson	1967-1968	Brian Jarman	1977-1978
Victor Thorpe	1968-1969	Fred Bennett	1978-1979
Haig Ellis	1969-1970	David Pratt	1979-1980
Geoffrey Smith	1970-1971	Terry Bennett	1980-1981
Jack Regan	1971-1972	Miles Cleghorn	1981-1982
Frank Ward	1972-1973	John Kimble	1982-1983
Frank Rehder	1973-1974	Douglas Gale	1983-1984
Horace Grice	1974-1975	Jack Springall	1984-1985
Peter Shea	1975-1976	Aled Hughes	1985-1986

#### **Trustees from 1958**

Edward Ward	1958-1967	Denis Goossens	1976-1985
Harold A. Rudd	1958-1967	Haig Ellis	1976-1985
Frank Lovesay	1967-1976	Hajg Ellis	1985-
Denis Goossens	1970-1976	Terry Bennett	1985-

#### **Secretaries from 1963**

John P.D.C. Pratt	1963-1966	John P.D.C. Pratt	1971-1983
Bill Nicholson	1967-1971	Fred Bennett	1983-

#### **Assistant Secretaries from 1963**

Allan Y Teal	1963-1971	Bill Grayson	1979-1984
Horace Grice	1977-1979	John P.D.C. Pratt	1984

### Treasurers from 1963

Harold Begernie	1963-1974	Frank Sumner	1982-1985
Joe Clarkson	1974-1977	Dick Richards	1985
Horace Grice	1977-1981		

### Punch Masters from 1966

Bill Grayson	1966-1967	Brian Jarman	1976-1977
Victor Thorpe	1967-1968	Fred Bennett	1977-1978
Haig Ellis	1968-1969	David Pratt	1978-1979
Geoffrey Smith	1969-1970	Terry Bennett	1979-1980
Jack Regan	1970-1971	Miles Cleghorn	1980-1981
Frank Ward	1971-1972	John Kimble	1981-1982
Frank Rehder	1972-1973	Douglas Gale	1982-1983
Horace Grice	1973-1974	Jack Springall	1983-1984
Peter Shea	1974-1975	Aled Hughes	1984-1985
Derrick Homer	1975-1976	Frank Sumner	1985-1986

### Pipe Masters from 1962

James F. Cullingham	1962-1979	Dick Richards	1984-1985
Miles Cleghorn	1979-1980	Alan Evans	1985-
Aled Hughes	1980-1984		

### Jesters from 1963

Victor Thorpe	1963-1967	John Kimble	1979-1981
Jack Regan	1967-1970	Douglas Gale	1981-1982
Denis Goossens	1970-1971	Harry Thorogood	1982-
1984 Derrick Horner	1971-1976	Alan Evans	1984-
1985 Archie Baker	1976-1979	Harry Fryer	1985-

### Master of Music from 1956

Harold A. Rudd	1956-1969	Harry Thorogood	1984
Geoffrey Smith	1970-1984		

One of Life's Most Pleasant Features

Is a Love for Fellow Creatures

BY DENIS GOOSSENS

Life today is very wearing  
Unless may be you are past caring  
Life today is quite a bother  
So I turn to Hiawatha  
Hiawatha has a metre  
With whose rhythm I can beat-a  
Tattoo on the dining table  
On the table beat a metre  
Beat a sweeter neater metre  
Thus I think that I am able

To thump upon the dining table  
Just to keep my time adjusted  
Till the - tables busted  
This I do to tell a story  
Keeps me "true" from going awry  
If you think I should say "Awry"  
Then you can stand and have a try

The story starts long years ago  
In quiet days of come and go  
Come and go by ancient puffer  
Horse and carriage, roads were rougher  
Days when men through fire and water  
Would pursue their neighbours' daughter  
Thinking thoughts they didn't ought-a  
Of deeds they d do if they had caught her .  
But 'tis of men, who in their latter days  
Would on the last of each month's Saturdays  
Gather together as good men did  
and take a dish of steak and kid  
Take some steak and kidney pudding  
Or was it pie with equal good-in  
Took themselves a goodly portion  
And ate it up with little caution  
Ate it up with wild abandon  
With no ceremony to stand on  
Such it was upon those Saturdays  
One these nothing very much matters days  
That these men who in their latter days  
Ate their steakey pud  
Then they set aside their muttons  
Loosened all their waist-coat buttons  
Thus did they their paunches ease  
Then helped themselves to ample cheese  
They their muttons set aside  
and their legs they opened wide  
Just to let their paunches slide  
down between their knees.  
We are told when life begins  
There are seven deadly sins  
And by far the worst of these is  
Carving lumps from ample cheeses  
Thus the founders of our Club did dine  
With libations of good wine  
Ultimately when they'd had enough  
Circulated horns of snuff  
They sniffed and snuffed  
And many spluttered  
Especially those with noses cluttered  
Sniffed and snuffed and coughed and stuttered

One of these our early brothers  
Had a notion for the others  
Told them he had a hunch  
They should brew a bowl of punch  
So they got them bowls and lemon  
Lots of glasses with a stem on  
Ale and sugar and some spice  
Which would not itself suffice  
Turpentine they thought too risky  
So they got them Irish whisky  
Lemons grow with the skinside outside  
But the juice is on the inside  
Thus to get the juice side outside  
They had to get the skinside offside  
The skin itself has a pith side inside  
How to get the juice side outside  
and to leave the whiteside pithside inside  
That's the problem that beset them

So thought that they would get them  
From the dressers of their wives  
All the sharpest kitchen knives  
From their wives these knives did steal  
To remove the lemon peel  
Now with all these things assembled  
They in excited anticipation trembled  
Nearly had they reached their goal  
Gathered round a silver bowl  
Round the bowl they congregated  
Watching waiting breath abated  
Whilst into it were gently canted  
All these things and they all chanted  
Rhythmic words and sounds incanted  
Till they thought that it would do  
For their taster to try the brew  
Taster one was good and true  
Pronounced it fit for all the crew  
Then passed it on to taster two  
Who sipped and supped until he too  
Thought it good and they all knew  
They could drink it till they blew  
Out their gaskets and went cuckoo

Oaths and naughty words they uttered  
Spoke these words with chokes and wheezes  
Punctuating them with sneezes  
Caused their noses frightful itches  
Stifled them and burst their britches  
Milder ones just stretched the stitches

Now the tale of this Club's over  
And their fame's from Ayr to Dover

OUR NAME'S RENOWN  
IN LONDON TOWN  
AND HAVING FINISHED  
I SIT DOWN

### CONCLUSION

Yes, the Punch Club remains in good heart and is flourishing. It will, we trust be the pleasant duty of a future Brother of the Bowl to continue this history. This supplement has been written to record the affection with which the Punch Club is regarded and for the Fellowship found therein.

It ends with the words of an English poet, Robert Blair:

“Friendship! Mysterious cement of the Soul!  
Sweet'ner of Life and Solder of Society!”

Haig Ellis  
Denis Goossens,  
October 1986

## THE PUNCH CLUB



1837 - 1986