

HOUSE SUPPER -1978

GRACE: Rev Hylton Knowles

ONS LAND: AVC

INTRODUCTION: Ladies & Gentleman Gentlemen of Graham:

I'm always glad to get over that hurdle, since, after House Tutoring elsewhere before starting here, I opened my first Graham House-supper with Gentlemen of Upper. I have never appreciated the House's courtesy and restraint more than I did on that occasion in that no-one told me of the error until the next day.

+Much worse off was the American delegate at a conference in Moscow, who took a crash course in Russian in 12 lessons, so that at the farewell dinner for the delegates and their wives he might reply to their hosts in Russian.

When eventually he got to his feet, he found that he had forgotten the Russian for "Ladies & Gentlemen", but just at the critical moment he noticed the signs over two pretty obvious doors across the room from him, and he was able to begin his speech.

It was received with mystified smiles rather than great appreciation, so afterwards he asked a gentleman sitting next to him how it had gone. His host replied: "In Russia we normally start our speeches with the words 'Ladies and Gentlemen' - not with 'Flush Toilets and Urinals'."

+And, incidentally, should anyone require a 'Ladies and Gentlemen' break during the evening, there will be an interlude after Mr Birrell's speech while the Std. 9s serve desserts - and the Admin. Block is just around the corner.

++Which brings me, not coincidentally, to The Ladies.

At Graham we break with the usual tradition at Andrean and Old Andrean dinners by elevating the ladies to the top of the Toast List, not only because that is their rightful place, but also because addressing a gathering like this is calculated to ruin the appetite even of the most experience speaker - and why should we ruin the evening for our youngest member by keeping him on tenterhooks until the very end?

+Before I call on John Connock to propose the toast to the DSG, let me reiterate how much in Graham we owe to the Ladies: to Mrs Bagshaw, to the House Tutors' wives, to Mrs Gerber, who brightens our lives not only with flowers throughout the House all year round, but also with her sincere caring for you and caring about you; and to Sheila, without whom Graham as it is now would cease to exist. I cannot begin to give you any idea of how much we talk together about you, how much she understands of you, and of how often the direct, simple human resolution of a problem is really her solution, though it may reach you through me. I'm proud to say that this House is founded on love - and I'd like to think that it shows.

+Still talking about families and the ladies, Mrs Norton is no stranger to Graham House - her sons were Graham boys - but we do welcome her in a new guise tonight.

This is the first time that the Graham family have had an opportunity together of wishing the Norton family every possible happiness together; and, without wishing to steal Marc Dhalluin's thunder, I'd like you now to rise and drink with me a toast to the continued health and happiness together of Mr and Mrs Norton.

+ (Afterwards) The fact that Mr Norton was with the Royal Marines during the last world war, and is recently married, brings to mind the occasion when the newly married wife of a naval officer attended a function such as this, wearing a very pretty brooch made up of miniature, jewelled naval flags. When asked by her neighbour at table what they signified, she replied that they were a present from her husband, and signalled 'I love you.' Unsure whether a ship's flags could make such a signal, the neighbour later checked with a senior signally officer. "Actually, you're both right," he said. "You can't make the signal with flags, but the flags she is flying in her brooch are a signal frequently used by a ship entering harbour. They read: 'permission requested to lay alongside.'

+Now, John, it's your turn. You must have wondered after this long preamble, when I was going to get around to introducing you. And also, at what length you would be required to speak.

I think the shortest speech I have ever heard of, occurred when Bernard Shaw was guest speaker at a dinner. The M.C. went on so long with his introduction that when eventually he asked Bernard Shaw to give his address, he stood up, said: '48 Grosvenor Square" - and went home. Perhaps you can strike a good balance between him and me.

++ I now ask John Connock to propose the toast to the DSG.

THE GUESTS:

We have always pronounced Marc Dhalluin's name incorrectly (though at his insistence, perhaps because he finds we spell it more correctly when pronouncing it that way).

Marc is to toast our guests tonight, and in introducing him, his unusual name brings to my mind a yarn I once heard about another fellow with an unfamiliar name.

A policeman on duty one night outside a factory near London saw a parked car, and became suspicious. He waited beside it, and after a while a man hurried out of the factory's main gates and approached the car. The officer questioned him, asking him his name and his business with the factory. The man said that he worked at the factory, and that his name was Cuddlebrake.

This sounded like a fabrication, so the policeman went to the gate-keeper and asked, "Have you got a Cuddlebrake at this factory?"

"Not ruddy likely," replied the gate-keeper. "It's taken us ten years to get a tea-break!"

++I now ask Marc Dhalluin to propose the toast to THE GUESTS

REPLY: (Mention break for serving desserts)

Most of you will know that Mr Harry Birrell, who will reply to Marc's toast, is on the College staff, and has a son Adrian at Graham. What most of you won't know is that last term when I typed the House Organisation list, instead of Birrell as Monitor in Littlewoods, I typed Borrell.

A borrell in Afrikaans is a bubble, and no-one would associate Adrian's physique with a bubble - nor that of his father, let me hasten to add; though we do see him float past Graham on his frequent early-morning jogging sessions.

Like Mohammed Ali;
Float like a bubble,
And sting like an HBB!

No- it was a purely typographical error. Next time you look at a typewriter, notice how the 'I' and the 'o' are next to each other, and take care because it could get you into trouble. I shouldn't tell this next anecdote were it not true.

Before I came to teach at College, I was on the staff at Bishops. The vice-principal was a thorough gentleman, called Mr Hunneyball (another unusual name, which has nothing to do with this story, but if anyone here knew him, it adds credibility to my tale). He was a classical scholar, and one of the most stately men I have ever met - 'patrician' is the word.

In addition to being vice-principal, he was Officer Commanding the Cadet Corps. In those days (perhaps still today) cadets were given shoulder-badges according to their ability as marks men: 3rd Class, 2nd Class, and 1st Class marksmen. As O.C. Cadets, it was Mr Hunneyball's duty to list the names of successful marksmen on the school notice-boards.

I shall always delight in the memory of the notice that appeared one year. Listed were all the most eminent senior boys in the school, starting with the Head Prefect. Across the top, in red capital letters, was the legend: The following are First-Class Shots - but Mr Hunneyball, too, had not noticed that the 'i' is perilously close to the 'o' on a typewriter.

Well, we know that Harry Birrell is a first-class rugby payer, a first-class cricketer, and a first-class golfer (though perhaps he'll tell you what his caddy said to him on the 13th during his recent Country Districts tournament in SWA) - and now he's going to have a shot at replying to Marc Dhalluin's toast to the guests.

++ I now call on Mr Harry Birrell to reply to the toast

DESSERTS AND COFFEE

S.A.C. & GRAHAM

This evening is, of course part festive, part reflective. Mr Jock James' toast to Graham House and St Andrew's College, and Bruce's reply, are necessarily largely reflective: so perhaps you will forgive me for introducing them both somewhat flippantly to provide a counterpoise. Unlike the other five Houses, at Graham we lump the toasts to House and to College together, instead of treating each separately, each with a separate reply. This is partly to symbolise that College and House are inextricably interdependent, and partly because, as Graham has been in existence for only 15 years, there is really not enough material for a separate toast.

This shortage of material, and the fact that part of Mr James' business activity is concerned with making dog biscuits, put me in mind of the little dog that trotted down a city street that was so full of lamp-posts, and he had so little material that by the time he got to the other end he had hardly a leg to stand on.

I am sure that Mr James is in a better-prepared state!

++ I now ask Mr Jock James to propose the toast to St Andrew's College and Graham House.

REPLY:

Mr Khrushchev, who was leader of the USSR, died and went to the Pearly Gates, and St Peter was unsure what to do with this leader of a Communist, atheist country, so he left him in the waiting-room, and went to consult with the All Highest.

The Almighty said to him: "Let him in, but explain that he is on a year's probation, the conditions being that he must make no speeches and must not throw his weight around."

A year later Peter went back to the Almighty with his report. The Almighty asked him if Mr Khrushchev had made any speeches or thrown his weight around, and Peter replied: "No, Comrade."

And that's how Bruce has led the House this year: no chucking his weight around, no pompous speeches, but (unlike Khrushchev!) a steady influence for good, the courage of his convictions, and his very strong principles and influence.

++ Bruce's reply is traditionally a report on the more significant aspects of this year in Graham, and I now call on him to read it.

Those are the House's accomplishments that you can evaluate materially. Perhaps not as glamorous a record of measurable success as we had last year. But, in the end, it is the things that you can't measure materially that really count. Don't get me wrong for a moment: I'm as competitive as the next man, and Sheila and I cheer the loudest when someone brings back an individual or team trophy. Without a truly competitive spirit we would wither and die; and some measurable success is vital to keep that spirit keen.

And, as Bruce's report demonstrated, we have had some.

But, in a changing community like this, we do tend to live from year to year: and somehow each year has a quality that sets it apart from the year before. I can honestly say that I have enjoyed this year in Graham more than I can remember enjoying any other: and this is in no small measure the result of Bruce's insight and understanding, sympathy and firmness, and leadership by example.

There was no mention in his report of his own achievements: of his rugby colours, the achievement of which required a great deal of dedication and determination; of his squash colours - he returned only this afternoon from the inter-Provincial Schools' Championships, where he captained the E.P. B Team. These again are the measurable achievements.

In my experience in Graham, no-one has done the job of Head of House better. Without Ant Bowes, there has been no Second Prefect, but the other Prefects and Monitors have been a tremendous support. It's going to be a hard year to follow: and I wish now to express my thanks to the Prefects, to the Monitors, to all the leavers for helping to make this a rewarding year in every way. Just clinch that Templeton Work Trophy with your Matric results, and that will be the cherry on the top.

The last two speeches will be lost on most of our guests. The toasts to the Leavers and Stayers are traditionally a compendium of nick-names and references: and perhaps it's just as well that it passes over most of our heads. I normally do, though, reassure the more sensitive mothers among us that your son's nick-name is invariable used with affection, though it may assault your ears brutally when heard for the first time.

THE LEAVERS: Mark Rabie, who will roast - I mean toast - the Leavers, is, of course, not a leaver himself, though we may have to do something about the House's 1840 foundations if he goes on growing next year.

Mark has an appetite in proportion to his capacity - and I am only sorry that it must have been ruined this evening by the prospect of proposing a toast so late on the list.

During tomorrow's Retreat Ceremony you will notice that Mark has the responsibility of lowering the National flag. On one memorable occasion some 15 years ago the flag stuck at the top of the pole despite the most strained efforts of the young cadet who was required to lower it. Perhaps they may have given Mark the job so that if the flag sticks this year, he can simply flatten the flagpole. On the other hand, it may have something to do with an occasion when he was practising drilling a squad on Lower under the watchful eye of a Permanent Force Sergeant-Major. The manoeuvres were complex, and as the squad headed for disaster straight for the steep-edged ditch towards Christchurch, Mark was so horrified that he was struck dumb. At last the Sergeant-Major rasped at him: "For God's sake man, say something - even if it's only 'Good-bye!'" Well, this evening that is Mark's duty: to say goodbye to our squad of leavers, in effect. I wish he needed to say only: 'About turn!'"

++I now call on Mark to propose his toast to The Leavers.

I am sure that the leavers are as conscious as I am of the great debt of gratitude we owe their parents for the sacrifices they have made, and are making, to send their sons to St. Andrew's. And for many of them it is, or has been, sons in the plural too.

+ I heard of an Old Andrean recently who produced twin sons, and the new babies' little sister was approached by an elderly lady neighbour, who said to her: "I hear that God has sent you two little brothers" "Oh, yes," said the little girl. "And Daddy says God knows where their school fees are coming from, too."

THE STAYERS: Robin Jolliffe, who will propose the last toast, to the Stayers, has two younger brothers, the elder of them a newboy in Graham this year.

When one thinks of Rob, one thinks of the ball games at which he has always excelled - particularly cricket. The fascination of cricket may be a mystery to many of us, but not to the Jolliffes. Perhaps I can best illustrate its complexity for the uninitiated by reading to you an excerpt from an essay written by a 13-year old, who was attempting to clarify its mysteries: 'You have two sides, one out in the field and one in. Each man on the side that's in goes out, and when he's out he comes in, and the next man goes in until he's out. When they are all out, the side that's been out in the field comes in, and the side that's been in goes out, and tries to get those coming in out. Then, when the in side is out, including not-outs, that's the end of the game.'

++ I now call on Robin to confuse most of us further with his toast to the Stayers

APPRECIATION: Sheila, Mrs Gerber, House Tutors' wives, who have done so much preparing to make this evening enjoyable for us all.

Boys thank Bagshaws

+ I hope you have all enjoyed yourselves; but not like Bernard Shaw again, who, when he returned from a dinner like this and was asked if he had enjoyed himself, replied: "Of course I enjoyed myself: there was nothing else to enjoy."

PORT

GRACE: Hylton

HOUSE SUPPER - 1979

GRACE: The Ven. Peter Bowen

ONS LAND: Mr Tony Crankshaw

INTRODUCTION: Ladies & Gentlemen, Gentlemen of Graham

It gives me great pleasure to see you all here this evening, and to welcome our guests into the Graham House family - but I must not elaborate on that or I shall be straying onto Jonathan Campbell's preserves. In fact, I must not elaborate too much at all, or I shall be setting our speakers a bad example, after having asked them not to break the ten-minute barrier.

+If I do go on too long, it's no use pointedly looking at your watches, as all schoolmasters become hardened to that in the classroom; but if you start shaking them, I shall probably get the message.

I referred to the Graham House family, and would like that to be the touchstone of this evening, because it has always been Sheila's and my most earnest hope that the House would become a large family in the best sense of that word: a family in which the principal features are a common forthrightness, sympathy, firmness, fun, and love.

+Of course, no family can expect plain sailing all the time, and here I am reminded of what seemed to me a perfect illustration. I heard of a young mother, who, after putting her two young children to bed after a harassing day, changed into a droopy blouse and an old pair of slacks, and proceeded to wash her hair. All during the shampoo she could hear her children growing wilder and noisier, and finally she wound a towel round her head turban-fashion, stormed into their room, and dumped them unceremoniously back in bed with a stern warning to stay there.

As she left, she heard the two-year-old say to his sister, in a trembling voice: "Who was that?"

THE D.S.G. Richard Axe

And now it is the turn of our youngest member to say his piece. It's Andean tradition that the toast to the D.S.G. comes at the end of the dinner: but it's bad enough for a young fellow to have to propose a toast at all - let alone have his first House Supper ruined as well.

So, in Graham, we put the ladies first: it is one way in which we give recognition to the tremendous value we place on the generally unsung contribution they make to the welfare of the House. We owe so much to Sister Whittaker, to Mrs Bagshaw, to the House Tutor's wives, to Mrs Gerber, and to Sheila.

My gratitude for Sheila's love and support is beyond expression: she really is the heart of this family.

And so, Richard, we come to your toast. No doubt your experience of our Green Heritage is fairly limited, perhaps only to casting a casual eye at the D.S.G. croc as it winds its way down Somerset Street.

+I am reminded of what one centipede said to another as a lady centipede walked by: "What a lovely pair of legs...pair of legs...pair of legs!"

I'm sure, though, that with a little help from your friends and mentors, you will have found more than that to say. In fact, if anyone takes exception to any of Richard's references, I suggest he sorts it out with Colin Hobson.

I now call on Richard Axe to propose the toast to the D.S.G.

(Thanks, Richard, I understood every bird... uh.. word.)

THE GUESTS: Jonathan Campbell

Jonathan Campbell will propose the toast to our guests. It is perhaps the most hazardous toast of the evening, in that Jonathan inevitable does not know many of you; and perhaps I can best put him at his ease by

illustrating the kind of hash that can be made of it. (On the other hand, perhaps that won't put him at his ease.)

+One instance of this kind of thing happened at a fancy dress ball - a rather smart affair, where each couple was announced by a footman at the head of the staircase leading down into the ballroom.

One couple consisted of a rather insignificant man and his imposing wife, who were dressed up as Henry IV and a Norman Peasant. The little man whispered this to the footman, who then boomed out to the assembled throng: "Henry IV and an enormous pheasant."

+ A worse one was committed by a Prefect in Jonathan's position. This is a tale that I wouldn't make up; and I'm going to have to give you some details, or you'll never believe it actually happened. It occurred when I was House tutor in Upper, either towards the end of Mr Norton's tenure as Housemaster or at the beginning of Mr Ohlsson's. You can check it out if you like because among the guests were Canon Aubrey and Miss Porter. It was Canon Aubrey's first House Supper as Headmaster, and Miss Porter had been appointed Headmistress of the D.S.G. that term, so it was her very first St. Andrew's function.

Quite an august occasion, and clearly the Prefect proposing the toast felt that he had to make something of it by linking them together as Heads of the respective schools.

These were his words: "And now we welcome Miss Porter, who has her private school, and Canon Aubrey, who has his private school. And then there was a baboon who was crossing van Ryneveld Street on a hot, hot day in Summer when the Grahamstown Butter and Ice factory's wagon went by and a huge block of ice fell into the road. So the baboon promptly sat on it - and he had his privates cool too!"

Well, Jonathan, drop a brick like that, and we'll always remember at least part of your toast.

I now call on Jonathan Campbell to propose the toast to The Guests.

REPLY: The venerable Peter Bowen (Desserts & Coffee afterwards)

Peter Bowen, who will reply to Jonathan's toast on behalf of the guests, had better watch his step too, because people seem to delight in quoting the clergy out of context.

+I understand that the Pope was warned of this when he visited the United States last week. He was told to be very careful when he talked to reporters.

On arrival at Kennedy Airport, he was besieged by pressmen asking about his plans and the purpose of his visit. One reporter asked him, "What do you feel about the extent of Catholic prostitution on the East Side of New York?"

The Pope, remembering how cautious he had to be, countered, in a non-committal way, with: "Are there any Catholic prostitutes in New York?"

The next morning, to his horror, he saw his photograph in a newspaper with the headline:

Pope's first question: 'Are there any Catholic prostitutes in New York?'

I now call on the venerable Peter Bowen to reply to Jonathan's toast.

Desserts and Coffee

ST ANDREW'S COLLEGE & GRAHAM HOUSE: Dr Gerard Bowes

Dr Gerard Bowes will propose the toast to St. Andrew's College and Graham House. Dr Bowes graduated at U.C.T., and then went to Edinburgh University to read for his Fellowship of the Royal College of surgeons. This reminded me of a true tale I once heard about a South African studying medicine at Edinburgh. I was tempted to adapt it to suggest that Dr Bowes himself was involved; but it's a true story, and I think Dr Bowes will appreciate it more unadorned.

+Dr Ron Wylde, whom many of you will know because he was the Prep doctor for years, told me one day, when he heard that my daughter Sandy was studying medicine at U.C.T., and had been assigned to a body in the dissecting room as one of a group of six, that in his time at Edinburgh the students were two to a body. His partner was the only other South African in his year.

Now, Dr Wylde's mother, obviously feeling that her son would never survive in a country where they feed oats to people not horses, used to send him vast quantities of biltong. One day, as they were engrossed over their body, Dr Wylde dissecting and his partner making notes, it became apparent to them that they were surrounded by a deadly hush.

They looked up into the eyes of a circle of horrified fellow students, dumbstruck by the spectacle of the South Africans - each of whom was idly chewing on a stick of biltong. "Guid God!" one of them gasped. "They're eating it!"

I now have pleasure in asking Dr Bowes to propose the toast to St. Andrew's College and Graham House.

REPLY: Anthony Bowes

+ On this occasion, Anthony has to take his place in the queue of toasts and replies behind the clergy (in the form of the Venerable Peter Bowen) as he prepares himself to reply to his father's toast by presenting a report on the highlights of the year so far in Graham.

But I want you to visualize a situation decades in the future, when Anthony joins the queue at the Pearly Gates. He is behind the clergy again, on this occasion two bishops, who are looking rather pleased with themselves; but suddenly, St Peter spots him, walks down the queue, greets him warmly, whispers something into his ear, and then personally conducts him through the Gates and into the land beyond.

When St Peter comes back, the two bishops, who are still way back in the queue, and obviously not destined for preferential treatment, go up the gates to ask what Anthony had done to deserve such V.I.P. status. "Well," says Peter, 'years ago I used to sit up here watching him as a schoolboy driving an orange buggy about the streets of Grahamstown; and I can assure you that in those nine months he put the fear of God into more people than you two have in your whole lives.'

I now ask Anthony to present his report in reply to the toast to Graham.

Afterwards: I would like to take this opportunity to thank Anthony, his Prefects and Monitors, and all the leavers for the tremendous job they have done this year. I cannot remember a year which has been more comfortable for Sheila and me, and much of the credit is theirs, as the House takes its cue from them. I have felt a sense of fellowship, self-discipline, and balanced good-humour deep in the House this year; and it is not coincidental that these are Anthony's cardinal qualities. He has been an outstanding example of sheer guts and determination to the rest of us. It's certainly been one of the most rewarding experiences of Sheila's and my life to have him back in Graham as Head of House this year. He hasn't finished his speech-making yet; I look forward to hearing what he has to say as acting Head of School at Prize Giving tomorrow.

THE LEAVERS: Andrew de Jager

Now we come to the two speeches which will, perhaps just as well, be largely incomprehensible to our guests - indeed to most of the adults. These are the toasts to Leavers and to Stayers, which are traditionally an amalgam of nicknames.

+Andrew de Jager is to propose the toast to the Stayers. Now, what can one say to introduce Andrew? He lives such a dull, ordinary, run-of the-mill existence. Everything about it is monotonously predictable and colourless. However, when I collected Andrew from the Settlers Hospital last week, two days after his knee operation (Andrew is the only person I know who suffers from fat knees), I think I began to understand what it is that makes Andrew de Jager TICK.

There he was as I entered the ward, sitting up in bed with his knee under a cradle, knitting. Yes-and he had a book propped open against the cradle. As he slipped it into his bag I saw that it was entitled How to Stop Smoking. No - Andrew has never done things by halves; but I would never have associated either of these pastimes with him. I leave deliberately ambiguous whether it was smoking or giving up smoking that I would never have associated with him.

I now call on Andrew de Jager to propose the toast to the Leavers.

THE STAYERS: Andrew Rettie

Andrew Rettie, Second Head of house, who is to toast the stayers, is probably the most cosmopolitan young man we've had in Graham. He came to us from Peru, via Australia, and now lives in Botswana. His mother was born in Brazil, of German extraction, and his father is a Scot.

+Being a Scot myself (and with respect to Mrs Rettie), I always believe that in these circumstances the Scottish blood comes through strongly; and this was borne out recently when Andrew gave Jane lipstick as a birthday present; he knew he'd get most of it back!

Actually it was Andrew's birthday yesterday. I believe Jane gave him no present: she just took most of her lipstick back again! Who could ask for more?

I now ask Andrew to propose the toast to the Stayers.

THANKS: Sheila (flowers)
Mrs Gerber
House Tutors' wives

Boys thank Bagshawes

PORT

GRACE: The Rev. Peter Campbell

GRAHAM HOUSE SUPPER - 1980

GRACE

THE STATE PRESIDENT Bishop & Mrs Oram, Ladies & Gentlemen, Gentlemen of Graham

INTRODUCTION: An aggressive teacher walked into a new class. "If there are any idiots in this room, stand up, and let's clear the air straight away."

A long pause, and then a tall, red-haired young fellow at the back shambled slowly to his feet.

"One honest boy among you anyway. So, you know you're a fool, do you"

"Well, not exactly, sir: I just felt sorry for you standing there all alone."

Now the point of that yarn was to emphasise that those of us who will address you this evening hope that you will treat us with at least equal sympathy!"

There are one or two points I want to make before I call on Cedric Biggs to propose the toast to the D.S.G. (so you've got about five minutes to warm, Cedric, before it's your turn to bat.)

Firstly, I want to tell you that the champagne our leavers and guests are enjoying this evening was give to us by Mr de Jager-----senior. I don't know if that means we are celebrating the fact that it's Andrew's last term and Rae's first year; or if his family are celebrating Andrew's impending return to the fold! We are very grateful, Hennie, and thank you.

Then I must say how sorry we all are that this will be Mr & Mrs Long's and Mr Owen's last House Supper. We have greatly appreciated their contribution to the Graham family, and I find it hard to visualise the House without them: they are going to be impossible to replace. I'm glad to say Mr and Mrs Long will still have a vested interest in Graham-and, come to think of it, will attend at least one more House Supper—as parents.

Looking back on the year reflectively, which is part of the purpose of this evening's festivities, I am so conscious again of what we owe to the womenfolk in the Graham family-and especially to Mrs Gerber and Sheila. Mrs Gerber's loyalty to the House and her concern for everyone in it never change, and this constancy is a great strength. Sheila's contribution is immeasurable: how can one measure or articulate an influence that is there in everything we do? Much of what is lasting in Graham has been put there, directly or indirectly, by the womenfolk.

THE D.S.G.: This brings me to Cedric Biggs, whom I have kept waiting for far too long already.

Traditionally, at any Andrean dinner, the last toast of the evening - to the D.S.G. - is made by the youngest member present. In Graham we put it first, primarily because the ladies first is a natural courtesy; but also because the youngest deserves to be put out of his misery first - as do his parents!

+I'm sure his mates at table appreciate fully what a fateful day Cedric's birthday was: firstly it was on Christmas Day, which generally means party and presents only once a year; and secondly it made him the youngest by about ten days, so he landed this toast.

+Before he proposes his toast, I must tell you what a very pompous benefactor is reputed to have said on a similar occasion when he was called upon for a few words at a gathering celebrating an alliance between two schools just like College and D.S.G.

"Many of you," he said, "will, I am sure, be sorry to see our fine old school merging with its sister school; but I can assure you that, though there are some things boys can do better than girls, and even perhaps some things that girls can do better than boys, believe me, nothing can equal the things that boys and girls can do together."

I now call on Cedric to toast the girls—if he appears to have a more experienced command of his subject than you would expect in one so young, this may be because he had a ghost writer.

THE GUESTS: Now it is Clive Field's turn to welcome and propose the toast to our guests.

Clive's shy with the girls. Consequently it was much to his parents' surprise last holiday when he arrived home to announce that he was taking the prettiest girl at the D.S.G. to the Upper/Graham dance on the first Saturday of this term.

He told them this at dinner on the first night, and they were surprised at and impressed by his nonchalance—until, a few seconds later he sprinkled sugar on his roast beef!

+Actually, there's an element of realism about Clive's romanticism. This year, I believe, the Valentine he sent her has this verse inscribed in it:

Roses are red
Violets are blue
Orchids are R15.95 cents:
Will dandelions do?

I now call on Clive Field to propose the toast to our Guests

REPLY: There will be a short break after Dr Hummel has replied to Clive's toast on behalf of our guests—because we think you will need it, although he is a history lecturer, but to enable the Standard 9s to serve desserts and coffee.

+Mrs Hummel, as most of you know, teaches History at the D.S.G.: Dr Hummel does the same thing at Rhodes. How's that for putting the ladies first!

+Historians are devilishly logical people, and it's dangerous to trifle with them. (I can see Mr Brooker, who taught History at College for so many years with quite remarkable results, nodding his head in agreement.)

Well, I understand that quite recently, after a lengthy lecture Dr Hummel asked for questions. One student rose and demanded documentary proof that Hitler had indeed committed suicide. Dr Hummel pointed out that he had no such proof, but it was easily obtained.

"Well," the show-off replied, "do you mind if, until you produce documentary evidence, I call you an unmitigated liar?" There was dumbfounded silence; until Dr Hummel quietly asked the student to produce his parent's marriage certificate.

Unable to produce it, of course, it was the student's turn to sit quiet as Dr Hummel countered with:

"Well, sir, until you can produce documentary evidence to the contrary, do you mind if I call you an impertinent bastard?"

I now call on Dr Chris Hummel to reply to Clive's toast on behalf of our guests.

Coffee

Desserts

ST. ANDREW'S COLLEGE & GRAHAM HOUSE

The next two speeches are a father and son act—in that order—which reminds me—especially as Mr Beaumont in addition to his role as Financial Manager of The Daily Dispatch runs a restaurant called Steve's Kitchen — uh, Dave's Kitchen — of an occasion when a father welcomed his son into the family business.

He said he was looking forward to some aggressive management from the young man, and, to make him feel immediately part of the business, suggested that his first task would be to alter the shop sign.

At closing time, he went out into the street to admire the new sign—and immediately wondered what aggressive young management might really imply, because the sign read Joe Soap AND FATHER.

+I was amused last Sunday by a yarn told me by Sheila's uncle about a newspaperman who retired at 65—and because Uncle Ken is an East Londoner, this may well have happened at the Dispatch. At his retirement party, the newspaperman was presented with a book, which, he was told, his colleagues had especially printed and bound for him. When he took off the covering, he was somewhat taken aback by the title:

How to Regulate your Love Life after 65—A Daily Guide.

None the less, he opened it, and was even more taken aback to find that the first page was blank. So was the next. And the next. And so were all 365 pages.

Ah, but it must have been Leap Year, because there was a 366th page, and it had some print on it. Hurriedly he read it:

'HIERDIE UITGAWE IS OOK IN AFRIKAANS VERKRYBAAR!'

I now call on Mr Beaumont to propose the toast to St. Andrew's College and Graham House.

REPLY: Stephen's reply to his father's toast is traditionally to read a report on the year's accomplishments so far (though the greatest challenge, the end-of-year examinations, is still to come). It has again been a full and happy year, and to reduce the highlights to a readable synopsis is no easy task.

Before Stephen begins, I would like to thank, and pay tribute to this year's Prefects and Monitors. For me, this has been one of the least stressful years: the mood in the House has been positive, disciplined, and cheerful—and this is largely the responsibility of the Prefects and Monitors. The spirit and tone of the house is primarily set by the Seniors, though each individual contributes in one way or another.

The ultimate responsibility is Stephen's, and the highlights he touches on in his report testify to the excellent job he has done.

+Another mark Stephen has left on the House may be apocryphal, but the story is worth repeating. It is said that one of the House Tutors (Who has since left) found some graffiti on a wall in the nether regions of the House—we shan't say how nether—and was at first greatly struck by the evident scholarship of the inscriptions:

To be or not to be - - - - - Shakespeare

To do is to be - - - - - Socrates

To be is to to - - - - - Jean-Paul Sartre

And then the last one:

Ooh bee doo bee doo - - - - - Stephen Beaumont

I now call on Stephen to reply to his father's toast by reading the House report.

THE LEAVERS: And now we come to our own Bishop - the Bishop of Graham House; and perhaps the two Bishops (or should I say four) will enjoy a story I heard of a genuine Bishop in a similar situation, but having made his after-dinner speech, being approached by a waitress who asked him to autograph her menu. Delighted, the Bishop complied, prefixing his name with the customary small cross. "Ooh, thanks, My Lord, (he was a British Bishop)" whispered the waitress, as he handed her back her menu, "and thanks especially for the wee kiss!"

+ Our Bishop is actually the one from a town called Alice, which used to be a quiet community on the Border side of the Fish River - much given to antiques of both the human and furniture variety.

I believe Edward found an antique grandfather clock something of an embarrassment when, on escorting a girlfriend to her home in the early hours of the morning after one of those wild Alice parties, the clock struck three as they entered the dark living-room. Simultaneously, from upstairs came her father's voice: "What do you mean by getting back at this hour of the night? The clock's just struck three."

"It's entirely my fault, sir," replied Edward - as, of course, he would. "The clock was about to strike midnight, sir, but thinking you were asleep, I stuck my hand in and grabbed the gong so that it wouldn't disturb you."

As he turned over in bed, the father was heard to mutter to himself: "Why didn't I think of that one when I was his age?"

I now ask Edward to propose the toast to the Leavers.

THE STAYERS: David cherry's two principal interests are music and the Church, not necessarily in that order. This year he has had what has appeared to me to be a most valuable post-matric year, with a foot in the camps of two educational institutions: St Andrew's and St Paul's Theological College.

The use of music in worship must surely pre-date history.

In one of the most renowned and fateful incidents in the Bible, the Lord summoned Moses to the top of Mount Sinai. There he appeared to him in the form of a fiery cloud, and the heavens rang with the appropriate peals of thunder as He presented Moses with the Ten Commandments.

That, as far as I can recollect, is the earliest use of audio-visual techniques in mass education.

I now call upon David Cherry to propose the last toast - to the Stayers.

GRAHAM HOUSE SUPPER - 1981

GRACE Sanctify

THE STATE PRESIDENT

INTRODUCTION Ladies and Gentlemen, Gentlemen of Graham

It is always with mixed feelings that I open the proceedings at House Supper each year: it is an occasion with so many connotations. For the boys it is a special evening, looked at in a special way depending on their status in the House; for the adults the occasion must carry similarly varied associations depending upon whether they are guests, staff, or parents. It's our biggest fun get-together—and it's also thank you and goodbye. However, what must be common to us all must be a feeling of celebration; and I hope that this is the major note we can strike this evening. I say we meaning those of us who speak to you; and I say hope because it's not an easy note to strike in five minutes or so.

Five minutes or so it will be, though. I have a horror of emulating the British civil servant visiting a Polynesian Island, who was asked to say a few words to the native islanders after a magnificent banquet on the beach. He launched into an interminable anecdote and rambled on for nearly half an hour. When he eventually sat down, his interpreter rose and said four words, whereupon everyone laughed uproariously. The dignitary was stunned. "How could you tell my story so quickly?"

"Story too long," said the interpreter, "so I say, 'He tell joke. Laugh.'

It's an especially mixed occasion for me this year. Sheila and I have got to know this year's leavers probably better than any other group because our son, Robert, is a leaver too, and has been with them for four years at least—with some since Sub A. And yet Sheila is not here to celebrate with us for that very reason: Mom and Dad in town and neither at his leaving House Supper would be too hard on him.

So I give you Sheila's apologies: and point out that it took TWO daughters to try to take her place!

Seriously though, I am delighted that Sandy and Belinda can be with us: they have been as much a part of Graham House as Sheila and I have for the past ten years. At the risk of embarrassing her, I must recall the time some years back on a Sunday when the House 1st XV came back after a loosening game of soccer on Knowling and Pete Adamson (Craven Week for 2 years) had a comradely arm thrown over one of the sweating player's shoulders as they came into the courtyard, and I heard him say with absolute sincerity, "Hell, Sandy, you're a damn good goalie!"

And then there was another Sunday evening, with Belinda in about Standard 4, upstairs in our spare room overlooking the courtyard, and quivering with outrage, excitement, and laughter as Peter Allen, then a newboy, serenaded her from under the oaks with his guitar, his own version of 'Pretty Belinda', and the rest of the House egging him on.

It's what Sheila and I have always wanted - that Graham should be a family as far as possible, with each member able to develop as an individual, but never alone.

In fact, Sheila and I both wish we could be in two places at once this evening.

I would like, while on this tack, to thank the womenfolk for what they do each year, without much acknowledgement, to keep the Graham family functioning happily. You boys have no way of knowing how often your interests are looked after by Mrs Suth. When we discuss problems that arise - how often she cuts through the schoolmaster conservatism or stuffiness with the clearest, most sensible of solutions.

And I wonder how many of you think to say thanks to Mrs Gerber, whose whole life is taken up during term time with the never-ending details of caring for all 70 of you. It's not a task that has much reward in itself: The rewards are all in your appreciation and in seeing you benefit.

We are all very grateful, Mrs Gerber.

THE D.S.G. Christopher Todd

Talking of the ladies in this way leads me to our first speaker who will toast our sister school - the D.S.G. Earlier I said that the feeling of celebration would be common to us all - but I'm not so sure about Christopher Todd's feelings: as the youngest person at Graham he cannot be looking forward to the next five minutes with absolute delight.

However, at least he gets his turn first and then can enjoy the rest of his first House Supper - which is why we reverse the traditional order of the D.S.G. toast, normally last at Andrean dinners. Co-tuition, too has made the job easier: there is a much larger source of background material - though to judge from a note I picked up in my classroom last week some of the boys are still finding the girls as confusing as ever they were. I read:

Dear Andre, I hope you are not still angry. I want to explain that I was really joking when I told you I didn't mean what I said about not reconsidering my decision not to change my mind. Please believe I really mean this.
Love Kay

I now call on Christopher to propose the toast to the DSG.

His knowledge seems unusually well researched for one so young.....experience of fag-master.

THE GUESTS: James Lang

Jimmy Lang, who is to propose the toast to our guests, is the strong silent type - with his tape-deck turned up full-volume all the time, he has to be.
Since Jim moved into the Junior dorm cubicle this term, the rest of us whose windows or doors open onto the courtyard have traded in our tape-decks and radios. I'm not complaining - he plays good music. I eat to the beat, talk to it, mark to it, am even finding an easier swing in my early morning exercises.
I know Jim dresses to it: it's quite an eerie experience to go out into the courtyard early in the morning and glance up at his window through the sound waves. There you see the top 4' of Jimmy's 6'3" putting on its vest to Bob Dylan. (Gestures)

I now call on Jim to propose the toast to our Guests.

REPLY: Mr Andrew Lang

We've kept this part of the programme a family affair.
Jim's father, Mr Andrew Lang, who will reply to his son's toast, is a lawyer, a lecturer, and incidentally, a farmer. He wouldn't say incidentally, but I do because it's the combination of man of law and lecturer, and a resultant precision with words that has always intrigued me about Andrew. Legal men do, of course, advocate communicating precisely what one means.
Did you hear of the lawyer's daughter, who said to her boyfriend "Stop and/or I'll slap you!"
It was at a tennis club, I believe that Jim, when corrected, said, 'Aw, come on Dad! What does it matter if I say badly or bad?"
Just then an attractive girl in a skimpy tennis skirt walked past, and, when he could catch his son's eye again, Mr Lang commented, "There you are, son, are you looking at her sternly, or stern?"

I now call on Mr Lang to reply to his son's toast to the Guests
and immediately afterwards the Std 9s will serve desserts and coffee.

REPLY: Stephen Beaumont

Stephen's reply traditionally takes the form of reading his Head of House's report on the year's achievements so far.
This is Steve's second year in the hot seat, and before he reads his report I would like to express my thanks to him and his Prefects and Monitors who are doing such a fine job in Graham this year. College has had its rough patches this year - necessarily so - and I remain enormously grateful that so far Graham has been virtually untroubled. That we have escaped this sadness is largely because of the tone established by the senior boys in the house, by the Monitors, by the prefects - and for two years now by the man at the top, whose attitude and personality makes or breaks the spirit in a House.
For my money, Stephen's greatest strength has been his disregard for personal popularity when the hard decision or the hard statement has to be made. No Head of House, if he's worth his salt, can please 'em all the time - unless he's a saint.
And that reminds me of a yarn I heard the other day about a politician named J. Sterling Morton.
Once, when he was making a speech a man in the crowd shouted, "Louder!" Mr Morton raised his voice, always more sonorous than a whisper, but the man yelled "Louder!" again. Mr Morton put on more steam and his voice fairly reverberated around the outer fringes of the crowd.
When for the third time the same man yelled "Louder!" Mr Morton paused for a moment and then continued:
"My friends, the time will finally come when the vast machinery of this universe must stop, and all the wheels, gears, belts be motionless, when the spheres shall cease to roll, and the defined periods of time be lost in eternity.
"In that awful hour of utter silence, my friends, the angel Gabriel will descend from the battlements of heaven, place one foot on the land and the other on the sea, and he will force from his trumpet of Doom, a blast which

will reverberate throughout the remotest corners of the universe. And there will still be some small-bore idiot who will holler "Louder! Louder!" Nope. You can't please 'em all, Steve.

I now ask Steve to read.

THE LEAVERS: Neil Hodgson

Before I introduce Neil Hodgson, who will propose the toast to those leaving at the end of this year, I would like to make two points. Firstly, that the last two toasts will be Greek to the uninitiated; and secondly that the nick-names of your sons used throughout are invariably meant respectfully, even reverently. If you, Mother, are tempted to scream "But they can't call him that!" try to turn the nickname round and see its beautiful side - and feel grateful that I have censored the worst of them.

Neil's father, of course, is Housemaster of Espin House; but, unlike Mrs Sutherland, Mrs Hodgson could not do a swop because tonight is their farewell House Supper as Mr Hodgson's term in Espin ends this year. However, they may join us next year, as Neil will more than likely return for a Sixth Form year - which is why he is proposing the toast to the leavers.

To explain why Neil is in Graham and our Robert is in Espin I would like to tell you of an occasion some years ago in another House in another school, when the Housemaster called a special meeting of all his boys after Chapel, and addressed the House formally after he'd called one young man to stand beside him.

"Gentlemen," he said, "you are about to see how this school rewards those who are keen, conscientious, and capable. This young man standing beside me has been with the House for only a couple of years, but already his unusual qualities have made themselves manifest. I have enjoyed observing the way in which he has asserted himself almost as though a special aura of authority surrounded him. It is therefore with great pleasure that I hand him this badge, proclaim him Prefect, and look forward with absolute confidence to his fulfilling his promise to my complete satisfaction. Congratulations to you, my boy."

The youngster shook the extended hand and said, "Gee, thanks, Dad."

And now, without any vested interest, it is my pleasure to ask Neil to propose the toast to the leavers.

THE STAYERS: Edward Bishop

Last year Ed proposed the penultimate toast; this year he proposes the ultimate one - two good meals gone a-begging.

The other day I was pointing out to my Matric English class that their problem in Matric was going to be their poor vocabularies. The average boarder, boy or girl, can communicate perfectly in the dormitory with grunts, gestures and slang, and their vocabularies are appalling.

I was suggesting an almost foolproof method of increasing their word-banks.

"Just settle on a word," I said, "visualize its shape, use it ten times, and it will be yours for life."

I was most surprised when one of the girls put her head back, closed her eyes, and repeated quite audibly, "Bishop, Bishop, Bishop, Bishop, Bishop, Bishop, Bishop, Bishop, Bishop, Bishop."

I now call on Edward in his capacity as Second Prefect to propose the toast to the stayers in which, I think, he must name each stayer at least once.

CONCLUSION:

Well,

The food's fed,
The speeches spoke ...
And so to bed -

But, before you do, I'd like to ask our guests - and their sons to join us in Graham for a glass of port.

APPRECIATION: Sheila, Gonda, Mrs Gerber, and Sandy & Belinda.

Boys..... (flowers) The Crawfords

GRACE: For food and fellowship,
Thank God.

HOUSE SUPPER - 1982

GRACE

THE STATE PRESIDENT: Brix Breytenbach

INTRODUCTION: Ladies & gentlemen, Gentlemen of Graham

I am reminded while standing here of the two cows in a pasture next to a highway. As they stood ruminating, a tank-truck of milk on its way to the distributor passed by. On the side of the truck in big red letters was a sign which read, 'Pasteurised, homogenised, standardised, Vitamin A added.'

One cow turned to the other and remarked, "Makes you feel sort of inadequate, dun' it?"

Your after-dinner speakers this evening (at least the boys among them - I can't speak for Messers Goddard and Hodgson) are not Pasteurised, homogenised, standardised and haven't Vitamin A added - and they're amateurs too, which the cows were not - and they are probably feeling a bit inadequate.... As even King Solomon must have felt when he was introduced by an eager agent to a new harem of 271 brides - like our speakers, he was perfectly well aware of what was expected of him, but was unsure how to begin.

Therefore, I ask for your indulgence, if not your sympathy, on behalf of each of our speakers, whom I have the pleasure of introducing to you. To ensure that you are on their side, I would like to read to you a poem I came across recently. Part of my job is to introduce classes to good poetry, and it was in my researches that I found this sobering piece. It has a ring of The Rime of the Ancient Mariner about it.

A man knocked o the heavenly gate.
His face was scarred and old.
He stood before the Man of Fate
For admission to the fold.
"What have you done," St Peter asked,
"To gain admission here?"
"I've been an after-dinner speaker, Sir,
For many and many a year."
The pearly gates swung open wide;
St Peter touched the bell.
"Come in and choose your harp," he said.
"You've had your share of hell."

The D.S.G. Justin Lippiatt

As I point out to the boys each year, our moving the first toast, that to the D.S.G., from its traditional last position at other Andean functions to first place at the Graham House Supper is symbolical of our regard for the position of womenfolk in our lives - apart also from the obvious benefit that our youngest newboy does not have his first House Supper entirely ruined for him.

I am again grateful for the support of our House tutors' wives; for the quiet good-humoured efficiency of Mrs Joan Crawford who is primarily responsible for this fare tonight; for the Christian level-headedness, indefatigable energy and perfectionism, and the general good-spirits despite frustrations, thoughtlessness by the boys and this year personal sadness of our Matron, Mrs Gerber; and, of course, without Sheila there would be no Graham as we know it.

We have always aimed at being a family House, happy for constructive reasons, and supportive of one another if our wholeness is threatened. Again this year Sheila stepped in when I succumbed to a bug, and at the most impossible time of term's end. But I know, and you know, that the House hardly had to adjust a step in the transition.

For Sheila and the ladies of Graham we are grateful, to put it mildly, and I'd like you to drink a toast with me to them.

May I also, at this juncture, say how grateful I was to have Mr Brix Breytenbach to depend on too when I was out of commission. He is thoughtfulness and dependability personified.

However, my subject was the womenfolk, and I was working towards Justin Lippiatt, our youngest newboy, whose traditional duty it is to toast the D.S.G. I was reminded of the negative effects of co-tuition the other day when I walked into class and saw that someone had written three words on the blackboard, one beneath the other:

classes

lasses

asses

Anyway, Justin, this may be your first effort at public-speaking. It's certainly not your first attempt at holding floor, and I know you are going to have no trouble at all.

However, if you need any advice at this late stage, I am reminded of one young speaker who was advised by an experienced friend that a) he had to be short, and b) all after-dinner audiences were interested in only four subjects: religion, royalty, sex and scandal. The young man thought about this, and made his first speech as follows: "Good God," said the Princess. "I am pregnant." Who is responsible?"

I suggest, Justin, that you pad it out a bit.

I NOW CALL ON JUSTIN LIPPIATT TO PROPOSE THE TOAST TO OUR SISTER SCHOOL, THE D.S.G.

THE GUESTS: Alfred Adami

The evening when the Prefects volunteered to make the various speeches was an hilarious one this year. Eventually, Alf Adami and Peter Jolliffe tossed for who should make the toast to the guests, after they'd refused to make it a duet, as I'd suggested. Andrew Jillings tossed a coin; Peter called "Heads"; the coin came down 'tails'; and to my utter astonishment both of them looked equally relieved.

And so without further ado, it gives me great pleasure to ASK ALFRED ADAMI TO PROPOSE THE TOAST TO OUR GUESTS.

REPLY: Mr Trevor Goddard

---- One of South Africa's most famous cricket captains, now a widely respected and loved minister of the Assemblies of God -but most important of all this evening, father of our Second Prefect, Andrew Baker.

I thought that in giving him a few minutes to gather his thoughts I might recall two stories, each concerning one of the two main facets of his life. The first was told by Sir Leary Constantine, then High Commissioner in London for the West Indies, who was recalling in an after-dinner talk at the Savoy in 1963 a famous match in which he was playing at the Oval. Just as he was walking towards the steps of the pavilion going in to bat he saw the opposition's twelfth man answer the telephone. He heard him use his name, and as Sir Leary neared the telephone the twelfth man looked him straight in the eyes and said, "Yes, I'm afraid he's just going in to bat. Would you mind holding on?"

The other concerns two youngsters overheard coming home from Sunday school.

"Hey, do you believe all that stuff today about the devil?"

"No, man. Don't let them fool you. It's just like Father Christmas. It's really your old man."

If sometimes Trevor feels over-extended in his pastoral duties, it might comfort him to know that Canon Robert Mullins, who came to South Africa with our Founder John Armstrong, and who built what is now Graham House, was appointed Chaplain to the 32nd regiment, then stationed at the Drostdy. It always delighted him to tell that the first order he received from Cape Town required him on the same Sunday to take morning service in Grahamstown and afternoon service in Pietermaritzburg. A horse would be provided.

I NOW CALL ON TREVOR GODDARD TO REPLY ON BEHALF OF OUR GUESTS:

(There will be an interval for the serving of desserts and coffee.)

ST ANDREW'S COLLEGE & GRAHAM HOUSE: David Hodgson

It was with extreme trepidation that I invited David Hodgson to propose the main toast of this evening, that to St Andrew's and Graham House - trepidation because David has just completed his term as housemaster of Espin House, and if anyone asks me to speak at a House Supper the year after next I think they're in for a short answer.

However, there were several factors that caused me to quell my misgivings about approaching David so soon after he had earned at least a year's grace. Firstly, he is father of our Head of House, who will reply to his father's toast; secondly, there can be few people better qualified to speak about St Andrew's College and Graham House; and thirdly, David and I have known each other and St Andrew's for so long that there is just none I would rather proposed the toast. We were at school here together; my father who was P.T. instructor taught David to box and always said he was the best pupil he'd ever had; and then as Housemasters we swapped sons - a decision I've never regretted on both counts. It is therefore with considerable pleasure, and gratitude to David and Jeanette that I now ask David TO PROPOSE THE TOAST TO SAC & GRAHAM HOUSE.

REPLY: Neil Hodgson

Neil, who will read his House report in reply to his father's toast, is doing a really fine job as Head of House this year. As his report on the state of the House will reveal, it has been a year of variable fortunes in the concrete terms of sporting, cultural, and academic competitions - but it is not only these that ultimately measure the success of a year. I would much prefer to measure the development of individuals within the House, and particularly the extent to which the House has encouraged such development, both corporately and as individuals.

I can genuinely say that this has been the best year I've known in Graham for inter-group concern and concern for the individual. It has not been an easy year for those with rank, for we are experimenting with a new disciplinary system, which puts much more of the onus on the ranker. Without people at the top of Neil's maturity, sympathy, and strength of character, we would never even have got it off the ground. I am tremendously grateful for the broadmindedness and the willingness to give the new system a full go by those at the top of the House this year. It has not been easy, Neil; but if it had been easy, it would not have been so well done.

Neil finishes his UNISA examinations at about the end of this month. He will then have some spare time, and it wouldn't surprise me if he spent some of it in getting his driving license. 'Trying to get..' I should have said, because I understand from my son that they fail you for anything in Grahamstown these days. In fact preparing to outwit the traffic-officer is such an undertaking that some of the candidates get quite neurotic.

I would warn Neil not to get into the state of one young man a colleague told me about the other day. He'd been swotting his traffic signals before going off to a dance with a blind date. Next morning his father asked him how he'd enjoyed the party.

"O.K., Dad. She was a tremendous girl - but somehow the evening didn't go so well."

"Why not?"

"Well, I don't know. She had red hair and green eyes - and I couldn't make up my mind whether to stop or go!"

I NOW ASK NEIL TO READ HIS HOUSE REPORT IN REPLY TO HIS FATHER'S TOAST.

THE LEAVERS: Andrew Jillings

I must first warn parents and guests that much of the next two toasts will be lost on them, because the language of nicknames is a particularly exclusive one. I should also warn any sensitive mothers who feel, "My God, they can't call my little boy that!" that nicknames are always used with tenderness and respect.

I should give Andrew Jillings a chance to collect his thoughts, which he's sitting on at the moment - sorry, Andrew, I didn't mean to imply that that is where you keep your brains, but rather that I know that you have your notes in your hip pocket. Anyway, Andrew will be toasting the leavers, and I know he'll be fair to them, because he's a very fair fellow - blushes a lot, too.

I understand that one occasion when he blushed a good deal was when he was leaving the Stutterheim cricket ground after a match one Saturday when he noticed a young lady crying her eyes out in the pavilion. Andrew rushed back, ever the chivalrous knight-at-arms, to comfort her. She was pretty, so he put his arm round her and squeezed a little tighter as the tears continued to fall. "Is there anything I can do," he asked, "to help you stop crying?" "I don't think so," she sobbed. My name's Janine, and it's hay-fever -- but please don't stop trying."

I NOW CALL ON ANDREW TO PROPOSE THE TOAST TO THE LEAVERS

THE STAYERS: Andrew Baker

I am sure that at this stage of the evening I shall be doing Andrew no favours by protracting his introduction. I am reminded of two elderly people who were leaving church after listening to their new priest for the first time. They were comparing him to the old favourite whom he had just replaced.

"You know," said one, "I much preferred Father Tom. When he said 'In conclusion....' he concluded; but this feller, when he says 'And lastly....' He lasts!"

But I do want to compliment Andrew on his work as Second Prefect this year, and particularly on the two spells - once when Neil was on Squash tour in England, and again this term when he was with the VIth Form tour in Cape Town - when Andrew stepped in as Acting Head of House very well indeed.

However, his anxiety now must be to get started. In fact he must at this stage of the evening feel rather like the child who was stumped when an over-ambitious mother unexpectedly stuck him with saying Grace at a rather stiff dinner-party. When he hesitated she said, "Darling, just say what you heard Daddy say at the start of breakfast this morning."

The boy dutifully closed his eyes and intoned: "O God, why did you have to ask all those damn people to dinner tonight."

I NOW ASK ANDREW TO TOAST THE STAYERS, in which he must name each of the to-odd stayers at least once.

+Well, another House Supper over, and I hope enjoyed.

+Thank Mr & Mrs Ronnie Crawford for their major contribution to the wine we have enjoyed.

+I would remind the boys to go through to thank Mr and Mrs Crawford.

+Guests—and their sons—a glass of port.

+Appreciation again to all the women of Graham and to Mrs Hodgson for the work put in to make this evening what it has been.

+GRACE: For food and fellowship, thank God.

HOUSE SUPPER - 1983

GRACE

THE STATE PRESIDENT: Cliff Walters

INTRODUCTION: Ladies & Gentlemen, Gentlemen of Graham

This is Graham House's 21st House Supper, and Sheila's and my last. In that plain statement of fact, it seems to me, is the nub of what all House Suppers are about: celebration and contemplation. I have used before on this occasion the phrase 'festive and reflective' - fun and food for all; but also food for thought. Sheila and I have had tremendous fun from our previous eleven House Suppers - and from the years in Graham associated with them - and we could bore you stiff all evening with stories about them, but we're not going to. Inevitably, there will be a measure of looking back, but this is the boy's evening - especially the boys who are leaving - and the accent is on good cheer.

I find a delightful irony in the fact that Sheila and I should help bring the juvenile to adulthood, and then skip the House ourselves. We have always stressed the family in Graham more strongly than anything else, and it give us great satisfaction that many of the Graham family in the largest sense, associated with those 21 years, are with us this evening.

Two of the House tutors of the 60's are Mr Richard Todd and Mr Jan Breitenbach. Had he not left when he did for the Headmastership of St John's, Mr Breitenbach would, in fact, be standing here in my place this evening.

Mrs Nan Graham's late husband unveiled the family coat of arms over the main entrance in 1963 when Graham was first opened as a full House.

Mr and Mrs Cliff Walters take over the adult House next year - and may I take this opportunity of saying how delighted we are that it is they who will be taking over.

And, of course, Mr and Mrs Roger Clark nurtured the infant through the vital nappy stages and the truly formative years, before handing it over as a thriving 10-year-old.

We are also delighted that Sheila's mother, Mrs Bax, can be with us this evening. The grace with which the meal began is the Bax family grace.

Our elder daughter, Sandy, has found time in a very busy schedule to come up from UCT this evening. This means a great deal to us. Growing up in a family of 75 boys is not an ideal childhood, but Sandy has always been wonderfully supportive - and anyway, Sandy, I guess it had its compensations.

When we went out at night, Sheila and I never bothered with baby-sitters, and I well remember returning one evening to find Robert at 8 engrossed in a game of poker in the prefect's common-room; and when we asked how the girls were Adrian Allen responded innocently: "Fine, Mrs Sutherland. I've just been up and tucked them in."

And now we turn to the first half of the evening's toast list. There are great risks in public-speaking, and anyone who tells you he does it without a qualm is either a fool or a liar. I say this not to unnerve our young speakers this evening, but to reassure them that as they speak we are sitting back relishing not only the fact that they are doing the job well, but also that warm and relaxed feeling of gratitude that it's not we who have to do it.

The mind of man is truly a most remarkable device. It starts working the instant you are born - indeed, one of Time magazine's recent cover articles suggests that it begins to work before you are born - and it never stops again, day or night, until - until the moment you get up on your feet to make a speech.

Which is why I always advise my young men to use notes, because there are even greater risks in speaking extemporaneously. I have always been conscious of this since I heard the story of a young curate about to give

his first sermon. He was a very shy young man, and he got into such a state before the service that he took a glass of sherry to steady his nerves. He had never taken alcohol before. Feeling much better, he climbed into the pulpit, crushed up his notes, and preached from the heart - in simple words and with conviction.

After the service, in the vestry, he asked the vicar: "How did I do?"

The vicar replied: "Considering it was your first sermon, it was indeed a remarkable performance. But there are three things I would like to point out: firstly, it was the Phillistines and not the Americans the Israelites defeated; secondly, it was David who slew Goliath, and not the other way round; and thirdly, please remember, he used a small, round, river pebble -and not a bloody great rock."

THE D.S.G.: Anthony Norton

At Graham we reverse the normal order of toasts at Andrean and Old Andrean gatherings, and we put the D.S.G. first. We do this for two reasons: the first and most obvious being that that's where the ladies should be. The heart of Graham is in the ladies' hands: Sheila's, Sandy's, Mrs Gerber's, the House Tutor's wives, the mothers who've given up their sons for much of four or five years - not to mention the dozens of younger ones the boys are thinking of at this instant.

Without Mrs Gerber's concern and efficiency, Graham would run down very quickly. May I take this opportunity, near the end of my tenure, of saying how tremendously I respect Mrs Gerber's qualities as Matron of Graham House. Your lives at boarding-school are necessarily fairly Spartan, and too often, I feel, Mrs Gerber's tireless efforts to bring some brightness and comfort into your daily routine are taken for granted. When recently, at his request, I took another Housemaster over Graham he couldn't get over how bright, warm, and homely the interior of Graham was compared to his relatively modern House. This is so important, and the credit for it is Mrs Gerber's.

Obviously, without Sheila's selfless support I would have fallen apart years ago. The only real trial about Housemastering is the demands it makes on one's own family, and there is no doubt that Sheila has taken the brunt of that, and quietly adjusted to compensate for an all too frequently absent or preoccupied husband and father. My gratitude for that is beyond expression; and the fact that our family is relatively balanced, inter-dependent, loving, and close is largely Sheila's achievement. What the Graham family owes to her too is boundless - and I think the boys know it.

The second reason for starting with the toast to the DSG, which is traditionally made by the youngest Andrean present, is to take the pressure off him... let him get it over with, and at least enjoy his dessert course.

However, though the youngest in the House, Anthony Norton, whose family is part of the history of St Andrew's, is well-qualified to string a few words together - and that's putting it mildly. So far this year he has won a Gold Medal for writing at the Eisteddfod held each year in Grahamstown, he has won the Std 6 Bobbins prize for poetry, and he has been awarded the OPEN prize for narrative writing throughout the school. He is also working on a play for production in the Junior One-act play festival in November.

I NOW CALL ON ANTHONY NORTON TO PROPOSE THE TOAST TO THE DSG. (And that, unlike most DSG toasts, was in the words of the immortal John Lennon 'in his own WRITE')

THE GUESTS: Andrew La Trobe

One of the things I have enjoyed most about Housemastering is ferreting out chinks in the prefectorial armour for exploitation on occasions like these when I am required to introduce the speakers.

Andrew La Trobe, who will propose the toast to our guests, however, is one of those delightful people who are so naturally invulnerable that they don't wear any armour at all. For instance during my researches I was assured by someone who should know, that Andrew is thought of by they girls as the most gentlemanly person at St Andrew's - high praise indeed!

Talking about not wearing any armour at all, there was one occasion on an Exploration Society's expedition to the Great Fish River Canyon when Andrew was caught with his guard right down. One stifling night at Ai Ais he and some mates crept down to the public bathing place for a skinny dip - only to be flood-lit by the long arm of the law.

Rather like the situation of the young lady who was apprehended by the law just as she stepped into the waters of a beautiful inland lake. "Sorry, lady..." "But why..." "Ja, well, but there's no law against undressing!"

I NOW CALL ON ANDREW LA TROBE TO PROPOSE THE TOAST TO OUR GUESTS.

REPLY: Dr Brian la Trobe

Dr and Mrs la Trobe, as you have just heard Andrew say, have seen four sons through private schools. I'm sure we are all aware of the sacrifices involved in an achievement like that.

(I'm reminded of the response of the father whose son asked him, "Dad, what's College bred?" "Son, it's made of the flower of youth liberally mixed with the dough of middle age.")

However, that's not the tale I was going to tell. There's one I like that is more specifically linked to Dr la Trobe's situation. It concerns a backwoods farmer, who had only one cow, and who was sold a milking machine by a zealous salesman.

That evening he hooked Daisy up, and, taking advantage of the unaccustomed leisure, went to put his feet up, and have a sundowner.

He drifted off in the easy chair -- and awoke at 9.00 pm. He rushed off to the barn, and there stood Daisy, the container full to overflowing, the floor awash, and the machine still pumping.

"My God, Daisy!" he said. "How are you?"

She looked back at him over her shoulder, sweat rolling off her eyelashes, and said, "Pooped - but proud!"
Dr and Mrs la Trobe have every reason to feel the same.

Before I call on Dr la Trobe to reply to his son's toast, on behalf of our guest, may I remind Std 9s that we shall have the break for desserts and coffee immediately afterwards.

ST ANDREW'S COLLEGE & GRAHAM HOUSE: Mr Roger Clark

Mr Roger Clark, who will propose the toast to St Andrew's College and Graham House, needs no introduction at all because he is so obviously custom-made for the job. As Second Master, he keeps St Andrew's functioning - literally - and as first Housemaster of Graham, he is the House's history - literally, though he and Betty look remarkably young to fill that role. He is also one of a very exclusive list, always limited to 12, of honorary Old Andreans, elected to that status by the Old Andrean Club in gratitude for their service to the school.

A story Mr Clark told me the other day illustrated, in an oddly understated way, that something of what we stand for at St Andrew's rubs off sometimes in the most unlikely ways. He had received, as Senior Science Master, a letter from Britain which contained a fairly substantial cheque and the explanation from the writer that this was in payment of a debt he felt he owed for chemicals stolen from the laboratories while he was at College more than 20 years previously.

So you see, you guys, how long you sometimes have to live with your consciences.

Mr Clark's story chimed with one told my Mr Arthur Bottomley, Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations at a dinner in 1965. A letter containing a cheque for £100 arrived at the treasury, and the writer said: 'I can't sleep at night. For hours I think about it have it on my conscience that ten years ago I did not

declare tax on goods imported and I enclose a cheque for £100. If I find I still can't sleep, I'll send you a cheque for the balance.'

I now ask Mr Roger Clark either to send us a cheque or to rise and sing for his supper by proposing the toast to St Andrew's College and Graham House.

REPLY: Andrew Jillings

The next three speakers are veterans, to the extent that Andrew Jillings, who will read his Head of House's report in reply to Mr Clark's toast to Graham, proposed the toast to the leavers last year, and Richard Axe and John Connock have both proposed the toast to the DSG in their time as youngest newboy.

Andrew, as Head of House, has, among his many responsibilities, the job of keeping the peace between the boys and the kitchens, and he's done it really well. I don't know, though, if it's been good for his waistline. Ed Bishop, one of Andrew's mates, who left Graham in 1981, on seeing Andrew this year remarked that he would have to watch his waistline - and how lucky he was to have it right out there where he could. Unfair, I know, but I was disturbed when we tested a new scale for House heights and weights -- a scale which spoke your weight, and which said, when Andrew got on it: "One at a time, please!"

Seriously, though, Andrew's finest quality as Head of House this year has been the way he has grown with the job - and now I'm not teasing him about his waistline. It is so easy to start the year with an 'I've made it' attitude - 'The rest can take care of itself.' But Andrew has kept his mind open and receptive to change; and we've made considerable strides particularly in approaches to punishment, fagging, and first-years in general. He speaks his mind firmly, and we've had some first class arguments.

Sheila and I are very grateful to Andrew and his prefects and monitors for making this our last year in Graham a relatively trouble-free and very happy one. The boys' spirit has been good, and their inter-dependence, concern, and support has been most evident.

I NOW ASK ANDREW TO READ HIS REPORT ON THE HOUSE SO FAR THIS YEAR IN REPLY TO MR CLARK'S TOAST.

Afterwards: Own contribution despite a series of injuries.
Rugby colours
School captain of athletics and colours
And School captain of the 'businessman's game' - golf

THE LEAVERS: Richard Axe

Richard Axe, who will propose the toast to the leavers, I've known all of his life, and longer. I vividly remember one 14 December marking JMB English examinations with his father in Cory 2 when John Axe had to make a dash for the local hospital - and a few lucky candidates got bonus marks that day in lieu of cigars all round.

I am, in fact, Richard's godfather - and I'm conscious of the fact that on more than one occasion in our Housemaster/pupil relationship he must have thought of me as THE Godfather!

I came across a silly little tale the other day concerning what one battery hen said to another battery hen: "Always remember, an egg a day keeps the ax away" - clearly not a remedy the DSG birds have taken to heart.

Before Richard speaks I should make two things clear. Firstly, the toasts to Leavers and Stayers are traditionally boy-directed and therefore unintelligible to the uninitiated; and secondly that that's probably just as well. But if you do pick up a nickname, Mother, and feel: "They can't call my son that!" try to see the underlying beauty of it.

I NOW CALL ON RICHARD TO ROAST THE LEAVERS.

THE STAYERS: John Connock

John Connock, who will propose the toast to the Stayers as second Prefect is another guy who doesn't have many chinks in his armour. But if you can imagine me testing his suit of armour listening for flaws like a railway wheel-tapper, there was a healthy 'clunk', 'clunk' everywhere; but as I got closer to his heart the little hammer began to sing - 'Ting! Ting!'

I've known John for much of his life too. I remember going to his parents' wedding, swooping along the old dirt roads on the Peddie coast in one of those marvellous winged Chevrolets driven by Sheila's late father.

John's father, Dudley, is in the motor business, so John has grown up in the city, but his mother, Beryl, is a farmer's daughter - so John has never had the city child's almost traditional distaste for milk, when he sees down on the farm at milking time where it actually comes from. I believe that when John first saw a cow milked, he rushed in to call his garage-proprietor Dad to come and see how they made milk: "Dad, they just put fuel and water in at one end, and then they drain the crankcase!"

AND NOW I ASK JOHN TO RISE AND DRAIN THE CRANKCASE IN EFFECT BY PROPOSING THE LAST TOAST OF THE EVENING, TO THE STAYERS.

- +Thank Crawfords
- + Guests, and their sons, glass of port
- +Appreciation to the women again
- +Souvenir programme

GRACE