

## Member focus – John Boielle

### John Boielle - a personal view by Tony Hill, Chairman of Tring Running Club

I first met John Boielle in 1985. We both joined Tring Jogging Club (as it was then called) around the same time. The Club was very different then. The majority of members were men and there was an almost exclusive focus on road running, and especially marathons. Club nights were quite competitive and usually ended with a sustained sprint up Station Road. In this hotbed of skimpy shorts and dodgy haircuts John was, even then, quite unique. I had never met anyone who could talk so freely on (apparently!) any subject. Not only that, but even running quite fast seemed to do nothing to stem the flow of words.

John is around 15 years older than me and I vividly remember a conversation we had around his 50th birthday. I was amazed that he was still running and I wondered, out loud, whether, I might be foolish enough to still running at that same advanced age. Funny how things turn out...

As I look back over the last 25 years, I feel immensely privileged to be have been part of Tring Running Club. John is an enduring and central part of that history. His ready wit, encyclopaedic knowledge and his ability to talk without breathing are part of our history. He has enriched the Club for many years and he has made an indelible impression on all who have had the good fortune to know him.

**Tony Hill**  
**Chairman**



John joined Tring Jogging Club about 1985.



MEMBERS of Tring Jogging Club each received a Christmas pudding when they competed in the Sneyd Community Christmas Pudding Run, a ten-mile road race at Walsall. See picture above.

was Tony Smith in a personal best of 62.02 followed by Mike Bass in 63.44 and Ray Todd in a personal best of 63.54. Other Tring runners were Len and Maureen Cousens, Steve Fryer, Alan Williams, Brian Nicholson, John Boielle, Geoff Dennis, John Sheldon, Terri Grant and Lee Cousins. Running in the four-mile fun run at the same time were Mike Blake and Jill Fowler. Therace was voted 'Ten-mile Race of the Year' by readers of 'Today's Runner' magazine.

John Boielle, Steve Fryer, Maureen Cousens, Mike Blake, Terri Grant, John Sheldon, Brian Nicholson, Geoff Dennis, Lee Cousins, Alan Williams, Jill Fowler, Mike Bass, Tony Smith

## CONGRATULATIONS

John Boielle of Tring won the award for over 50 year olds in Division II of the Chiltern Cross Country League.

Jolly good - but who is John Boielle? Well John can be seen in the last 10% of finishers at any Chiltern League. John can also be seen chatting to some Metros at most meetings.

John's connection with Metros goes back to 1983 when he first invited me as a then teamless member of North West Region of LRRC to compete in the Chiltern League as Tring. (Tring then as now can rarely turn out 10 men to score).

With a charming disregard for the rules John also recruited Tim Peachey, Alistair Anderson, Jim Giles and Barry Bestonso to run for Tring.

Some of our youngsters got their first taste of KC through John and even the redoubtable

Sylvia Suffield once ran for Tring at Luton.

It was when the Harrow branch of Tring became more numerous than the home grown Tring members that we decided to try to form our own team.

Since then Metros have been in friendly rivalry with Tring (sometimes John has been the only representative of Tring present).

John retired from Kodak in 1986 but took a job in a local hospital to keep busy.

At the age of 53 he is often beaten by most Metros men (except me blast him) but most Metros men wouldn't be running in the Chiltern League without John's early encouragement.

Thank you John and congratulations.

Brian Jackson

And was soon a very active member of the club.

Sunday Morning Marathon Training. Mike Blake was the angelic driver of the support vehicle while John was the refreshments king back at Dundale Rd.



Maria Cook:

Committee meetings were never more entertaining than when JB was in a head to head with David Heron...aah fond memories from a long time ago. However, my main and more recent memories are from the marathon training when JB would have the kettle on and the biccie barrel at the ready to welcome us in from our miles of plodding round the lanes in all weathers. As soon as our shoes were off, JB was handing out cups of tea and guiding our weary, ruined bodies to a chair. We would then consume as many calories as we had lost in the form of custard creams, hobnobs and cake (often supplied by our own Delia Smith, Kim Reed). I also used to eagerly read his contributions to the newsletter, his letters were hugely funny but normally made a valid point (yes really!). Thanks John for all your help in the 16 years that I have been at the club, your contributions are legendary.



Cheers

*Maria*

Shona Mullen:

In summer/autumn 2002 I was training for my one and only marathon. John and Mike were kindly supporting me. On one occasion I was on my own on a long training run which finished with a run up through Tring High Street, then back down Icknield Way and into Dundale Road . Mike had seen me at the layby by Tesco and I just had to complete this last little bit. I was painfully slow by this time to the extent that John and Mike must have got worried. As I came over the crest of the hill coming down Icknield Way , there was John on the corner, looking for me. I felt so loved! I really did appreciate the help and support they both gave me.

Shona

Gill Foy:

I remember the marathon training mornings well....cold and too early in the morning...then nervous with anticipation....then the run....and the best part was at John's house. Pleased the run was completed and the biscuits!

Obviously Mike did a great job of collecting all the clothes that we decided to take, when we thought it was cold, as we had just got out of bed! Moral boosting was good too!

Best wishes

Gill

Mike Burgess:-

Simply one of the funniest things I have ever witnessed, ever was (giggling thinking about it); Steve Long coming out of the showers looking for his green towel. It had disappeared from the pipe that he had hung it from. On a general naked mooch around he could see John drying himself, to be brutal about it, drying himself between his legs in a sawing motion with a towel. Not the prettiest sight to linger on. Anyway, Steve say's "is that my towe?!" John replies rather indignantly "no my towel is green". I chipped in "what do you mean that green towel under your bag John". John apologises and offers Steve's green towel back to him. Steve's face was so funny. I could mind read him thinking "I'm not touching that".

I'm laughing so much my tummy hurts.....

Michael

John Manning:

John

I will always remember your skill and guile in setting the handicaps for the Brenda Barlow and none of us will forget your impeccable timekeeping for the race itself. That kitchen clock with the dodgy minute hand surely played an immense part in my, and many other's, PB performances over the Ridgeway course!

*John Manning*



Jonathan Mulcahy's Boiellisms

**On the opening of the new Clubhouse:**

"The bell loop is now officially 8.2 miles...."

**On Marathon Training**

"Always aim to complete precisely double the distance of the race you are running in a week." This led to the formulation of Boielle's First Law, namely: If you are training for a marathon, take absolutely no notice of what JB says, because frankly, running 52 miles in a week is nigh on impossible

**On dietary sustenance during a marathon**

"Forget all this rubbish about gels and powders and lucozade! Rodwell's Ginger Beer! Can't be beaten!" This led to the formulation of Boielle's Second Law, namely: Under no circumstances take any notice of JB's dietary advice. I did, and it led to Mulcahy's First Law of Motion - and believe me, you don't want to know the details

*Jonathan*



## Clive Cohen recalls:

Many moons ago I received a hand delivered letter through my door purporting to be from our then and since deceased Tory MP Robert Jones. I cannot remember the exact content but it was on official looking notepaper and was along the lines of thanks for all your support in the campaign, while we may have a few differences, what we have in common far exceeds this, please join us. We'll on the traditional left-right political spectrum some of you probably know I'm somewhat to the left of Mr.Jones & I was rather wound up. Anyway several months, maybe even more than a year later it transpired the whole thing was a JB spoof! JB will have a far better recall than me of the content & why he did it. When he confessed to the spoof and with a mischievous look of schoolboy of self satisfaction I had to concede he'd 'got over over me' - quite why??

# **JOHN BOIELLE: A BREATHLESS EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE**

**By Ian Verchere**

I'm not sure if it's because we both have French names (or amble down footpaths at the same OAPs' pace) but running alongside John Boielle was always an enriching experience for two very good reasons: first, you got the necessary exercise and secondly, you learnt a hell of a lot about Tring (and much more besides). Call it a sort of physical and educational experience.

Of the former, I can still see John up ahead – slightly stooped in his inimitable running style – disappearing around the next corner. Whenever I did catch up – which wasn't often -- his commentary would resume with effortless fluency about who owned Tring reservoir fishing rights, the preferred initiation rites of Tring's Baptists or how George Eastman perfected the Kodak roll-film in 1884. In short, John is a deep well of knowledge – a veritable encyclopaedia – on a wide range of subjects. And if these conversations were really monologues, it was only because I needed all my breath just to keep up with the guy.

His background is interesting. He was born and brought up in Jersey and has vivid childhood recollections of the German occupation. And Britain's decision to abandon the Channel Islands to this fate in 1940 still triggers some colourful – nay, resentful -- oratory from our man on Dundale Road. So, too, do the evacuation arrangements prior to the German arrival. But that, as they say in the movies, is another story. As a long-serving member of Kodak's research laboratories in Hemel Hempstead, however, John is in his ordained comfort zone and speaks with enormous authority on the history – scientific, industrial and commercial – of film and photography.

After he'd retired, running and motorbikes and looking after son Mathew had all continued to play a big part in his life. But sadly, his passion for running and motorcycling were brought to an abrupt halt one day through an unfortunate road accident from which – over many months – he has made a long, slow and painful recovery. Not the easiest thing to do in your 70s. So, I won't be running alongside John this summer. But I'll certainly be listening to the man because his mind is as razor-sharp as ever. And there's always something new to learn.

**Ian Verchere**

## Steve Pearce looks back:-

I first met John 24 years ago on my first visit to Tring Jogging Club, as it was then known, before everyone miraculously all got a lot faster overnight and changed the name to Tring Running Club. There I was, standing in the changing room of the old rugby club in Cow Lane (so called because you could see the cows through the holes in the walls), looking around at all the various characters, to see who looked slow enough to accompany me on my first ever club run...

I can remember a lot of my first impressions. There was club chairman Chris Dove, 7 ft 2 in his underpants, talking about his previous weekend's record-breaking 100 miler. No, he wouldn't do. Then there was Tony Hill, so lean and fit-looking I thought there was no way on earth I could keep up with him – how appearances can be deceptive! And there was John, standing alone in the corner, beaming at me with a welcome so bright I almost climbed through the largest hole to escape across the field.

But having been brought up to mind my manners, I said I would be delighted when John nobly offered to 'take me out'. Everybody else thoughtfully stepped aside to allow us out into the night. This, I was soon to discover, was part of the initiation process – a nice little five miler, just John and the new bloke.

By the time we had gone 200 yards I had discovered that John was born in Jersey, was a founder member of the club, knew a lot about the General Strike (although, curiously, not that it happened in 1926), had just taken early retirement from Kodak, had found a new job as a hospital porter at Stoke Mandeville, liked motorbikes and cycling, and enjoyed a chat. It was also obvious that he was a really nice chap – the way he talked non-stop was clearly an attempt to save me the embarrassment of trying to speak and run at the same time.

Later, back at the club, John continued his introductory comments over a drink. This was known as being 'Boielled at the bar', and was also part of the initiation ceremony.

Over the next 15 years or so I got to know John really well. He was that rarity in life, somebody who would do anything for anyone without a thought for himself. In fact, his friendliness and thoughtfulness were such that I always felt a little guilty hiding behind the frozen food to avoid bumping into him at Tesco.

His humour also brought sunshine into the club. When I had a stint as editor of the newsletter, John's contributions were always funny and often brilliant. It was John who came up with the training tips for our first ever women's page ("improve your upper body strength: - stand further away from the sink to do the washing up" was one I will always remember).

His escapades were also a source of humour. There was the day he interrupted filming in a field at Drayton Beauchamp, when he ambled into shot in his Tring JC vest and old army shorts, out on a morning run just as the cast were halfway through a scene. If I remember rightly, that was the same month as the entire club were barred from the Tesco store at Leighton Buzzard when a female member was caught washing her feet in the sink after a breakfast run – that was a particularly good month for the newsletter.

I've stopped running now – beating Tony Hill every weekend finally became a little tiresome – but I still see John occasionally. When I do, I remember the happy times at the club, and all the best times seem to have John at the heart of them.

**Steve Pearce**

## The memories on Mike Gaunt

It is over 20 years ago but I still recall my first ever Wednesday night with TRC. Unsure which group to join I was allocated for assessment by John Boielle. We did a 5 mile loop through Tring Park, over the A41 footbridge, down to Tring Station and back to the Cricket Club for a couple of pints. Returning home that evening was asked how it went? Replied " Really enjoyed myself, fantastic group of people, they talk a lot". On reflection the first and second thoughts were, and still are, spot on. However the third thought would have more accurately been " one of them talks a hell of a lot"....

That evening was the start of a long friendship with JB, we became most involved during my 2 year stint as Editor. Regularly a large, green motorbike would roar up the drive and a pile of John's jottings would be rammed through the letter box. Possibly because we had both spent time working as organic chemists, we seemed to share a sense of humour and enjoyment in looking at situations in an unconventional manner. The best example of this was at the time when Walkers Crisps were spending millions on an advertising campaign based on "Salt and Lineker". John gave the matter some thought and actually wrote to them suggesting sales would go faster if they changed their name from Walkers to Runners!!

Lunacy like this is guaranteed to get me rolling with laughter. Long may it continue.

**Mike Gaunt**

## The Brenda Barlow handicap race

Brenda Barlow was a founding Club Member back in the early 1980's. Sadly, she died prematurely from cancer. The Brenda Barlow Handicap (BBH) was set up in her memory. It allows Club members who are busy on the actual Ridgeway run to compete against one another after the actual event. The handicap is applied so that, ideally, all entrants will finish at exactly the same time.

The real skill in organising the BBH is the determining the actual handicaps. JB was ideally suited to this task. His love of detail and his abiding interest in all kinds of social interaction made him ideally placed to do the analysis and negotiation that is a key part of the BBH. Most attempts to influence fell on deaf ears but he could be persuaded!

Dave Jones:

Being a proud winner of the Brenda Barlow, I feel qualified to comment on John's brilliant organisation. Although looking at the names of the other winners, engraved on the trophy, perhaps I shouldn't be quite so proud.....



John would send out his first draft of handicap times having thoroughly researched performance times during the year. The aim, to get everyone back around the same time. It was the only chance cart horses like me would ever have a chance to lift a trophy, so, a few bad performances during the year, and a complaint of broken ankle, recovering from malaria or just jet lag, having driven all the way from Edlesborough meant I was able to compete with the likes of Kevin or Rick, who incidentally, are never going to win. (A little empathy at last.) John spent a lot of time rejigging the handicaps as he saw fair and, most impressively of all, then conducted the whole event in terms of starting people off at the right time; writing comments on the results when they didn't; keeping check of everybody's finish time; producing comprehensive results of entrant finish times, both with and without handicap. It's basically the same race as the Ridgeway, so just think how many of us are involved in organising that to get some picture of JB's competence and commitment.

Thank you JB. It's the only running trophy I'm ever likely to win (I came last the year before and last-but-one the year after.) but I loved my moment of glory and short acceptance speech at the presentation evening.....

Dave

***Steve Pearce has kindly gone through the archive box and retyped some of John's letters:-***

Letter from John Boielle (November 1995)

One Track Mind

Dear Editor

The major turn-on for runners is shoes, and just as the top-class top-shelf magazines have photos of Readers' Wives (or so I'm told), it would be exciting for TJC members if the newsletter printed pictures of Readers' Shoes.

Unfortunately, I am aware that the reproduction of good-quality photographs is not an option at present. Nevertheless I feel that although it is said that a picture is worth a thousand words, a few words are better than nothing, and can give an idea of the 'partnership experiences' runners have with shoes. I am sure the demand is there since I have overheard people saying 'Show us your Nikes'.

One of my running partners comes from Indonesia and has a wide toebox, a dusky complexion, plenty of motion control devices, good cushioning, and a midsole with a firm feel. The well-packed tongue peeps shyly over long white butterfly-lacing, and hidden under the thin contoured insole is slip-lasting.

Those with a child-like build would be ill-at-ease with my partner's generous statistics of 500g and 13UK, but these majestic proportions make me feel that the earth moves as together we stride through life's byways, highways and ridgeways. My feelings about our relationship are indicated in the following lines:

*Last night as I came through the door*

*I saw you lying on the floor*

*Still steamy from the night before*

*Canal to Crong – Excelsior!*

*And I knew what you were made for*

*Six times a week, yet I want more*

*And I want more, and I want more*

*And more*

*And more*

*And more and more*

At this point my emotions overcame me, and I seized my supine Indonesian for a quick thrash beside the reservoirs. In spite of this triumph of runners' lust over writers' cramp, I hope some of your readers may feel inspired enough to tell us about their favourite shoes.

Yours in sport

John Boielle

**John Boielle talks about talking (Jan 1992)**

Most of us talk to others on club runs. But not enough. Talk increases aerobic capacity. The more you talk the more the increase. Sentences should not be too long. No longer than a gasp. There should be only short gaps or gasps. Between sentences. Or phrases. Keep it short. And loud. There does not have to be a point. Jogging is the same: it's not where you go that counts, it's how much ground you cover. To increase effect try repetitions. After enough repetitions your listeners may decide to go slower. If they should slow then so should you. You will now have more breath to talk. Talk increases aerobic capacity. Speak faster (sprints), speak louder (efforts), try repetitions. Your listeners may now decide to go faster. Try to keep up while still talking. If they leave you behind save your breath for a downhill stretch when you can catch them up. The sound of your approach with 'as I was saying...' will revive their flagging legs and speed them up the next hill away from you. See how many repetitions of this galvanic speedplay (fartlek) effect you can get in before you get back to the clubhouse. Afterwards your listeners will be amazed by the short time the run has taken.

John Boielle

### **A load of bull (Nov 96)**

Most of us know that it is an offence for a farmer to keep a bull in a field or enclosure crossed by a right of way. But according to the Country Commission, there are exceptions. These are (a) if the animal is less than 11 months old, and (b) if it is of a named dairy breed and is accompanied by cows or heifers. The named breeds are Ayrshire, British Friesian, British Holstein, Dairy Shorthorn, Guernsey, Jersey and Kerry.

It is clear therefore that the next time you run along a path and come to a field occupied by bovines, you should take the following actions before proceeding:

1. Ascertain the sex of each beast (tip: ask them to turn around)
2. Estimate the age of any males (tip: if the height at the shoulders is more than 100 cms then it is older than 11 months)
3. Verify the breed of any males.
4. Check that if a male is older than 11 months, and also belongs to a named dairy breed, then its companions should be female and of a similar breed.
5. Advance if, and only if, you are satisfied.

If you are uncertain on any of these points, or if you can't tell the difference between a British Friesian and a Hereford/Friesian cross, or between a Kerry and a Beech, then you should stick to road running. If you can't tell the difference between a Jersey cow and a woman then you are probably from the Channel Islands.

Yours anonymously

John Boielle

### **Handy training tips (from the women's page, July 97)**

Many of you ladies live such busy lives that it must be a problem to fit in the training. Why, I know one or two of you even do little part-time jobs to help lift some of that huge financial pressure from your man's shoulders. But you can be a good wife and a good runner too – just follow some of my tips to improve your running performance:

- When you are next in Tesco, try running with your trolley around the frozen foods. This type of resistance training really does build up the strength in those leg muscles, without spoiling the feminine look.
- When washing up, stand a little further back from the sink. That way you make more use of your arms, building up that important upper-body strength without ruining the bustline.

### **Hunk of the month (from the same women's page)**

July's Hunk of the Month is Bob Garland, the club's most eligible bachelor. Brown-eyed Bob may be 44 but he has the body of a 21-year-old. When Bob isn't pounding the streets of Hemel he's pounding out a rhythm on those big drums of his. Hmmm, he can put those snake hips next to mine anytime! (this appeared with pic of Bob looking extremely un-hunk like).


Joan Boielle

### **And something from the Odds'n'Sods page (May 95)...**

John Boielle recently bought a new running watch for less than a fiver. He thought he'd found a bargain until half way round the Burnham Beeches 10km, when it suddenly started playing *The Yellow Rose of Texas*. Desperate punching of buttons failed to do anything, except eventually to change the tune to *When the Saints Go Marching In*. How come it always seems to happen to John?

Tring Jogging Club Newsletter 1995. (Thanks to John Shelton for digging out the next few pieces)


## Another JB Letter...

 My tortoise (George, male, about 40) twice covered about 800m in about three hours (uphill from my back garden to Miswell Lane). Rated against the world record for a 40-year-old doing 800m on the track, if George was competing in the Tring JC club championship his time would have worked out to about 1 per cent - ie, about one-hundredth of the pace of a world record holder.

Interviewed afterwards, George said he'd been aiming to do the mile in under four hours and had been expecting to crack the hour for 800m on the downhill home run. "Last year" he said "I set out to beat a hare, but it was September, and I got cold, and before I knew where I was it was March".

**John Boielle**

## And another...

 Since my tortoise can achieve 1 per cent, I suggest that this should be defined as one tortoise. The world record is therefore 100 tortoises, and the editor's league score is 68.79 tortoises.

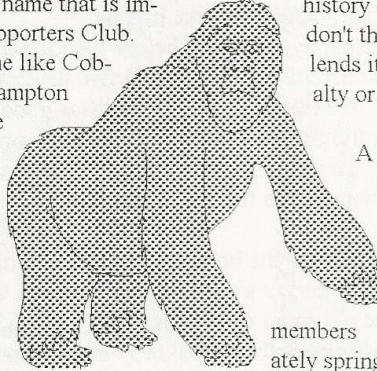
**John Boielle**

## THE JOHN BOIELLE PAGE

### The Club's Name

"Oh no!" you are saying to yourself "not the resurrection of TJC". Well that's not the type of name that is important to Tring Running Club's Supporters Club. What we are interested in is a name like Cobblers, being the nickname for Northampton Town. This was brought home to me during a discussion with supporters of other clubs, as we pounded over the sand hills at Woburn, during the cross-country mob-match last season. There were affectionate words for "Old Gays", "The Shafts", "Vale" and "Park", while mention of Tring became confused with "Dacorun and Tring".

An appropriate nickname acts as a focus of loyalty to a club. Such a name may be related to the symbol displayed on the club's badge. For instance TJC badges dis-



played a kingfisher, but this does not reflect Tring's history or residents. On the other hand I don't think the A41 Ridgeway footbridge lends itself to a nickname that inspires loyalty or affection.

A suitable name can be derived from old names for Tring - e.g. Treung, or Trehanger, or Treehanger. Looking at rafting members of TRC, with their enormous upper-body muscular development, compared with members of other clubs, an image immediately springs to mind of tree-hanging creatures.

A good name.

A good symbol.

A good shout of encouragement:

**"Come on you Apes!"**

### Ten from the Team Minibus

( We can't afford a Team Coach)

1. A marathon is a race of two halves.
2. Wear your vest with pride, and don't let your head hang down or you'll be over the parrot and sick as a moon.
3. At the end of the day it's the end of the race that counts.
4. We don't want no watch watchers cos you gotta watch where you're going not your watch.
5. It's Team Spirit we want but if we can't get it a few pints of bitter will suffice .
6. When I were a lad the only carbo-loading we new about was carbo-run-dum.
7. The boy Mitchell done well. The boy Gareth done better. The lad Nicholson come through good and done himself proud. But that boy Tony is over the Hill.
8. As Geoffrey Shakespeare said " it's all for all and all for free for all the team".
9. Go out there and do your own thing and enjoy yourselves.
10. Wash your hands afterwards.

### Childrens Corner



Young Jack went to market and spent all his dinner money on a packet of beans. The man who sold them to him gave a sly wink and said:

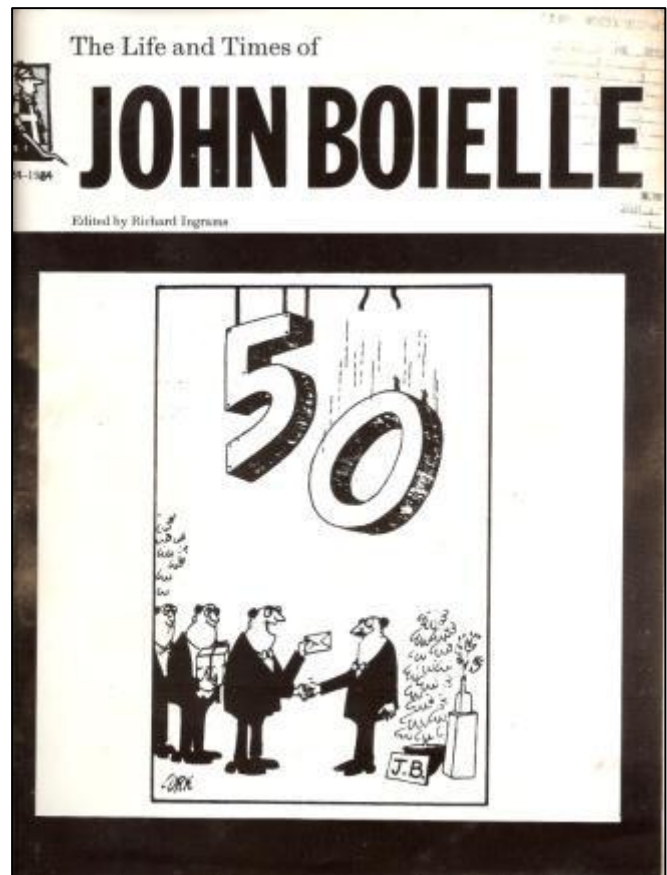
" Don't forget to water them with Leppin"

" Why's that?"

**"Because they're runners"**

*John Boielle*

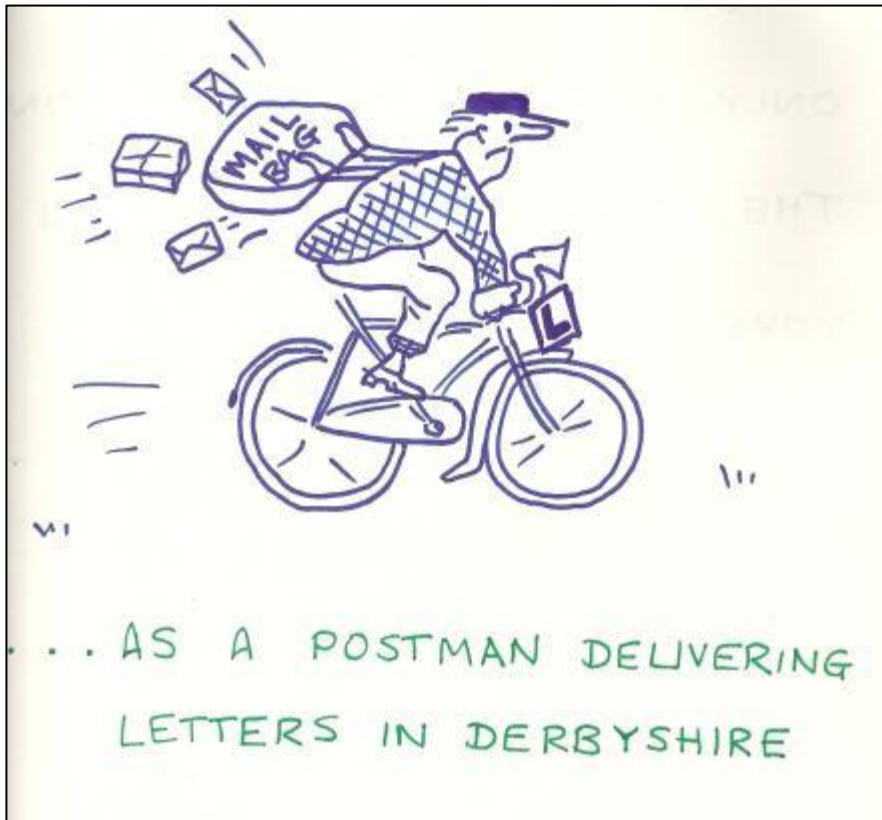
Bits out of John's 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday celebration book from Kodak. A marvellous scrap book, the comments in the book reflect the John we all know and love, adept, sharp and encyclopaedic knowledge but with an almost cantankerous side and pragmatic view of life.



“Even at a tender age, John was quick to demonstrate his wide knowledge of technical matters”



“After the war, John moved to England, and with his active mind, enquiring brain and deep grasp of scientific principles, he soon found his niche in life.”







At the age of 9 months, John was performing on stage, dancing and singing....



With his Auntie and sister, stuck in Jersey

## ANARCHO-FASCIST PARTY

Self-appointed, Self-opinionated Life Leader: John Boielle

### MANIFESTO

The aims of this party are to bring about an economic system based on meritocratic feudalism. We believe in having only a few laws - though these must be rigidly enforced. To this end we would create an anarchist police state with a one-house-only parliament: The House of Lords. The House of Commons would be abolished and benevolent feudal lords would run the country as a meritocracy. This would involve choosing "The Best Man For The Job" at all times and at all levels of employment. If people are not up to the position chosen for them, they would be moved or shot with no chance of appeal. Education would therefore be of vital importance in ensuring that this policy was accepted by the populus at an early age. Consequently, children would be taken away from their parents at an early age. (Parents are incapable of bringing up their offspring; being far too interested in play rather than the necessary spartan upbringing.) An independent assessor would then choose the best future for the child at the age of seven and the outcome would be adhered to strictly. Such totalitarianism is necessary if we are return this nation to its former glory. Retirement would be based on medical opinion and retirees would be put into homes with their peers to live out their remaining days.

LONG LIVE THE SEIGNEUR!

A Kodak colleague created a manifesto to reflect John's political views...

## OBITUARY

Technically in Memorandum

J. Boielle, 1880 - 1986

It is <sup>with deep</sup> regret that we record the demise of John Boielle, who became a victim to administration in the 1986 Corporate Cast Improvement Programme.

An early graduate of the Jersey Kindergarten (Jerk), John progressed to secondary school where his greatest achievement was to fail his A levels (twice), apart from biology, for which he wrote a memorable essay on mammalian reproduction. Unfortunately this nobriety was short lived as he followed this up with an obscene poem concerning the habits of monitors and teachers.

Shortly after being expelled, John hit upon the scheme of going into chemistry as a career (as this involved drugs, so he could become a simultaneous pusher and junkie). Such ambitions were short lived, and he started a brief career as a stand-in postman. Rumours of badly bitten dogs have since been grossly exaggerated. However, John was forced to move on fairly smartly, and soon applied to the maintenance department of British Railways. He was found even less suited to this kind of work - he passed the entrance exam - so he was forced into accepting even more mundane employment; namely, the Standards Lab at Kodak.

His career was unfortunately broken at this point when John was called up for National Service. Undaunted by this challenge, it didn't take him long to be discharged as mentally unstable. After only three weeks distinguished service, John was invited to join the sick, lame and lazy, leaving his superiors confused as to why a man getting 100% in the IQ test, and clearly officer potential, should

Fake obituary written by Kodak colleague on John's retirement from Kodak (continued on next page)

claim pacifist tendencies whilst laying out fellow conscripts who set upon one of his colleagues. His reputation was also somewhat marred when, after being told to blanco his belt, John proceeded to blanco his complete outfit.

Back at Kodak, he worked for four years with John Willie Janus without once seeing him (though he inherited all of his characteristics). His scientific progress was meteoric (i.e. it ~~fell~~ was shot down in flames like a stone). He assisted in the demise of the "Help" plate, CT Offset and Instafax systems, and just failed to do the same for PMT II (though he may have lit the fuse). Scientific breakthroughs included the realisation that chilli con carne and cider don't mix at lunchtime (unless you want to make an exhibition of yourself) plus being responsible for having PMT II metal plates designated an accident black spot area.

Many people still recall the mini skirt era, when John frequently picked up the group secretary, Leslie - literally, and placed her on top of a cupboard from which she couldn't escape. Another favourite pastime was to lurk around the ladies loos waiting for Margaret Search to enter, and then proceed to flush the toilet from the outside. Yes, John has had many admirers throughout his chequered career.

A lifetime of devoted service to plate technology has etched his name firmly in the anodic layer of photographic history (anodic: thick, porous and relatively inert).

Our condolences go to John's family at this trying time. He leaves three filing cabinets and a standard issue plastic cup holder. R.I.P. - Research is Prospering.