

5 September

Fr PETER MORRIS

31 July 1915 – 5 September 1960



Peter Morris was born in South Africa (Cape Town) and died in South Africa (Grahamstown). Travelling to England to enter the novitiate in 1934 was a great adventure. But the grey skies and cold winds were hard to put up with but still, he asked to do his regency in England and was at Beaumont from 1941-45.

He had an ‘instinctive understanding of the boys and an extraordinary knack of knowing what was going on among them’. ‘He loved Beaumont and it gave him an ideal of enterprise and initiative in education.’ He also developed the scouts.

Ordained in 1947 he returned to South Africa and was at St Aidan’s from 1951 until his death. He taught physics and chemistry, coached hockey, developed the choir and a photography project.

At the end of each term he would take ‘a train party’ and knew how to ‘forestall any of the twenty tricks that boys got up to on trains, like shorting the lights and disconnecting coaches.’ This last ‘trick’ is hard to imagine. How could a bunch of school boys disconnect a coach? Or are the wild initiatives of South African schoolboys of the time totally beyond the imagination of this writer?

In 1960 he went to Nairobi to give a retreat and on the way back was riding his motor-cycle home when he got into an ‘unavoidable’ skid when there was traffic in both directions. He was thrown in front of an oncoming car and was killed, probably instantly. The school was plunged into mourning.