

FRIENDS' SCHOOL OLD SCHOLARS' ASSOCIATION



Dear Old Scholar

And so, the final weeks of this testing and frequently bizarre year are upon us, and this means it is time for the second Old Scholars' Newsletter of 2020. As we allow ourselves to be subjugated to further impingements on our liberties, and many of us come to terms with the idea of a Christmas estranged from our kin, – to help protect our fellow human beings it is important to remember! – it seems apt to write with the many lockdown stories I've been sent by Old Scholars. These are stories of successes and difficulties, but most of all, of community and togetherness. Cheers to that.

The School Site

Firstly, as has now become tradition, an update on the fate of the School site. As many Old Scholars will know, there remains a planning application for the development of the school fields – the expiry date for the application was the 18th December 2020, so this should go to a Planning Committee fairly soon.

Old Scholars may also be aware that the site has twice been occupied by Travelling communities. The first group entered over the Spring Bank Holiday – there were up to 30 caravans on site. Some tensions developed locally, and eventually the police evicted the Travellers from the site. Currently a second group of Travellers occupy the fields (different from the first, who are not allowed to return on Section 61 grounds). There are around 5 caravans on the site and there have been no issues reported to the OSA.

Call for quick action to clear school site of travellers

THE LAST TIME travellers – more than 30 caravans at one point – took over the grounds of the Walden (Friends) School earlier this year it took two months to evict them.

So local residents had good reason to fear the worst shortly after 10am on Friday morning when five caravans, five vans/lorries, two cars, a wood chipper and

a trailer of chickens, rabbits and other animals arrived on the site, entering through the previously fenced-off exit half way along Mount Pleasant Road.

A neighbourhood residents' team was mobilised and they immediately contacted property owner Chase New Homes and various agencies, calling for swift action. The police were on-site on Friday and have been in regular contact.

REPORTS

Team members told residents that the District Council had asked for reports on all environmental issues (fly tipping/dumping, noise, light, fires, constantly barking dogs, quad bikes etc.) to be made at www.utlesford.gov.uk/article/5691/Environmental-Health; or by email environmentalhealth@utlesford.gov.uk; or by calling 01799 510510.

Said a spokesman for the local residents: "I think I can speak for everyone who lives nearby that we are furious that another illegal encampment of trespassers has been established. It is almost as if prop-

erty developer Chase New Homes are happy to have trespassers come on to their site.

ENCAMPMENT

"The experience neighbours had with the earlier encampment in the summer was appalling. This is private property so the owner must act. I have spoken to many who live nearby and we expect Chase to take much swifter action than they did last time – particularly since their security failed again.

"Last time after they failed to act quickly enough the police were forced after two months to step in and clear the site to restore law and order.

Without quick action by Chase this time we are concerned that the cost of police and fire services to protect the site and neighbours will once again fall on the public purse. That is unacceptable."

Gary Barton, MD of Chase New Homes, said: "We are waiting for our legal representatives to confirm the next step and will be endeavouring to remove this group as soon as possible."

Walden Local, 18th November 2020

Finally, as was reported on the Old Scholars' website [here](#), the school site was written about in the "Nooks and Corners" column of the Private Eye (4th December 2020). The column features discussion of public architecture and the preservation, or lack thereof, of historical buildings. The article ends with the premonitory: "No scheme has been submitted for conversion of the school buildings and long-time readers of Nooks and Corners know the risks to historic buildings left empty and neglected."

We will continue to keep you up to date with any developments as we hear of them but please also check the [website](#) for further information and don't forget we also have our [Facebook group](#).

Distribution of School Funds

As highlighted in the Walden Local, 11th November Grant Thornton's final winding up of accounts for the school has been posted on the Companies House website, dissolution set for 18th December 2020. We understand that the remaining £540k has been distributed equally between Britain Yearly Meeting for Quaker bursaries and a local education charity which has not been identified to date. See article on the Old Scholars' website [here](#).

Lockdown Stories

Recently, I sent an email out requesting people's "lockdown stories" and had a great response. Here is what some OS have been up to over the last year. Charlotte Moerman's (née Caley, Year Group, henceforth YG, 1991) lockdown tidying (an obligatory activity, and one which several OS mention) brought forth old *Caran D'Ache* pencils that she used in the Art Room at Friends' under the tutelage of Philip Richardson (Staff 1979-2013). Charlotte took part in the sketchbook challenge during the first lockdown, an activity she said was "much more satisfying than cleaning drawers." As we can all see from the picture on the right, the results of the find, the activity and Mr. Rich's teaching, are impressive!



Charlotte's sketch book

John (YG 1952, Staff 1959-64) and Val (Staff 1962-64) Cadman moved from their home of 45 years, The Red House and are now in Great Maplestead until July next year when they will move into a cottage that is being extended for them near Bury St Edmunds. They write: "our family have been wonderfully supportive, which reminds me of the support at all times given the pupils and staff at FSSW."



Charlotte's Caran D'Ache pencils!

Paul Abrey's (YG 1978) father Glyn Abrey (YG 1952) used his time to dig out Paul's old school reports. Paul says they made extraordinary reading, recognising his contemporary self in the descriptions of him then: quiet in class, but when he made contributions, they were in detail, to the point and meaningful, something, Paul reports, people say of him today in his professional career. However, when Glyn sent those reports to his son, he mistakenly also included his own. Paul can report (hopefully with Glyn's permission) that Glyn loved school. Indeed, he loved it so much he failed his school certification the first time. He did, however, pass second time. Apparently, Glyn's reports were mostly concerned with the extent to which he messed about in class. There was however, praise for sport, woodwork and scripture. Paul has assured me they are saving the reports until it is possible to have a family gathering, at which point they will all have a great laugh at Glyn's expense!

The vaccine gives Dr Fatimah Binta Musa Iliasu (YG 1982) hope that “we (humanity) are slowly but surely winning the war against this pernicious and hard to predict virus [...] I hope this pandemic draws us closer together as a human community, where we respect our differences, celebrate our commonality and strive to help each other altruistically [...] My last statement reminds me of the Quaker ethos of tolerance and respect for all people, which I experienced first-hand at FSSW.”

Binta lives and works in Abu Dhabi, UAE as a lawyer in the financial services industry. During the Covid-19 lockdown she re-connected with the Onadeko sisters: Toyin (YG 1979), Lola (YG 1982) and Ronke (YG 1985) Onadeko who, like Binta, are from Nigeria. Lola was her classmate, Toyin was her older sister's, Asmau Iliasu (YG 1980), whilst Ronke was at the school later.

Binta also contacted Lucy Firth (née Henderson, YG 1981) and her mum Jocelyn Henderson in July 2020. Lucy and Binta were not classmates but e-met in 2013, emailing about an Old Scholars reunion. Having lost touch, the pandemic has made Binta reach out to the family again. Binta hasn't heard from Lucy (perhaps because her email to Lucy went to Junk Mail, or perhaps Lucy has changed her email address) who she hopes sees this lockdown update!

Jon North (YG 1964) writes from France that he is particularly glad to have kept in touch with the longest-standing friends electronically over lockdown, namely: Martin Weatherhead (YG 1964) whose “extraordinary achievements in wool weaving” at [Snail Trail](#), Jon writes, are well worth checking out; Jane Heydecker (YG 1964) who Jon, rather cryptically, says revels in memories of fungi and good education, and Carola Dunn (YG 1964), who is a well-known crime fiction author in America. Jon's own memories are of a career in the UK voluntary sector.

Pauline Gorman (YG 1961) has written in with a detailed analysis of the handling of the pandemic both nationally and internationally. It is beyond the scope of the Old Scholars' Newsletter to include this here, but for those who would like to read the fruits of Pauline's extensive research should email me at fsswosa@gmail.com and I will put you in touch with Pauline. Here is a taste of Pauline's contribution: “Internationally some countries are reported to have coped well so far, but with 64 (one third) of the world's countries spending more on repaying debt than on their own health services, the outlook looks bleak. Many people have paid the price with poverty emerging as the main co-morbidity (overcrowded living and working conditions, poor nutrition, and lack of access to medical facilities) though few media mention this. There has been no sign of a full-scale international rescue attempt - sending medical staff, oxygen, and equipment, to areas that don't have sufficient. This the tragedy of our times – seriously under-reported in mainstream media. When you see what could, and should, have been done, and realise that death, poverty, homelessness and unemployment will be the future for millions, it's hard sometimes to maintain a cheerful outlook.”

Matthew Richardson (YG 2016) writes that during the second lockdown, he has been training to be a teacher in Birmingham. Though he is not a “particularly sociable person”, he did have one “extraordinary experience”. Walking to a takeaway near his house, not paying particular attention to anyone, he looked up to see familiar faces: old schoolmates from his year group! They talked for a while and discovered they live right across the road from each other. They've agreed that they need to meet up more often now they know how close

together they live. He says it was definitely one of the better moments of either lockdown, and would encourage all Old Scholars to keep their heads up when out and about: you never know who you might bump into! Or indeed, I hasten to add, keep your eyes trained to the ground if you want to avoid people...

Tristan Grey (YG 1984) writes that he has “very mixed feelings” about his time at Friends’, due to there not being enough “pastoral support” for students, which made the school, he feels, unsafe. Tristan wrote to the school about his concerns roughly the time he was having children, but feels he did not receive an adequate reply. However, with the pandemic and a planned move abroad, he has been dreaming a lot about his childhood and the friends made, many of whom he’s lost touch with. So, Tristan is keen to see if YG 1984 can setup an online reunion. If anyone from YG 1984 is interested, please email me at fsswosa@gmail.com and I will put you in contact with Tristan.

Katie Moncheur de Rieudotte (née Edgley, YG 1976) writes from Belgium that like everyone, she has found *Confinement*, as the French call it, long and at times scary, contradictory and frustrating - though she says she has “been lucky ... so far [...] After the initial fortnight of sheer fear imagining all of us ‘popping our clogs’ (I started to type a will!) life fell into a certain regularity and although alone, missing family in Brussels and the UK, my garden in the fine weather, bike, hiking boots, sewing scissors, music and Zooms have pulled me through.”

Those Zooms were with dear friends from YG 1976: Helen Tye-Wood, Jane Ratcliffe-Eve, Suzy Singesen-Barnard and Pradip Malde, who she describes as all having been “brilliant”. They were also joined by further 76ers: Hazel Ashforth-Kyle, Sue Finch-Damman and more recently Terry Ashby-Primett and Sally Udoma-Sikuade. Katie says the ‘76 Year Group have almost all experienced quarantine; some have been Covid-19 sufferers, but she says the Friends’ spirit has kept them “positive, entertained and quietly optimistic [...] us 1976-ers are a tough bunch and we all look forward to a time when life returns to some kind of normality; travel restrictions are lifted (albeit partially) and we can finally get together again.”

Roger Bush (YG 1952), similarly to Charlotte, took the “opportunity provided by lockdown to rifle through the enormous amount of paperwork that one collects over the years”. He writes that he came across an item: a small card with a handsome drawing of FSSW as seen from the front lawn, inscribed: “1869 Centenary Greetings from Old Scholars – 1969¹ to: Roger Bush 1942-48”. Roger says he was a fairly frequent attender at Old Scholars’ Reunions, but 1969 was a particularly busy year for him, which explains his absence on this historic occasion. For most of the first half of the year he was setting up the country’s first National Park Centre, Brockhole, in the Lake District National Park. The card is crowded with signatures of staff and Old Scholars. After more than fifty years most, Roger says he suspects, most are no longer with us, but their names “certainly brought back some memories”. Roger says: “if you can find your name in this list, you’ve done very well and I wish you many more years!”

Alan Thompson (YG 1937), Derek Barbanell (YG 1945), Donn Webb (YG 1949), Wilf Hayler (YG 1950), Ann Hillyer (née Barker, YG 1950), Susan Hill (née Maguire, YG 1948), Muriel

¹ It’s possible that some may have been puzzled by Roger’s mention of the Old Scholars’ Centenary in 1969 in view of the School only having been in Saffron Walden since 1879. Roger explains: “in fact the Old Scholars’ Association had its start ten years earlier when the School was in Croydon. When I was at the School in the 1940s the OSA was always referred to as the CSWOSA (Croydon and Saffron Walden Old Scholars Association) since there still a few Old Scholars in their 70s and 80s who had been at the School before its move to Saffron Walden”.

Rigby, Martin Holmes (YG 1955), Liz Francis (née Collinson, YG 1949), M G Yapp (Fido to all who remember her), Lesley Jacob (YG 1960), David Jones (YG 1951), Margaret Ball, David Allen (YG 1947), Michael How (YG 1950), H B Rowntree (Headmaster, 1922-34), Jean Wadge (née Burman, YG 1946), Jimmy (YG 1952) and Gwyneth Dutton (née Jackson, YG 1951), Christine (née Brown, YG 1952) and David Matthews (YG 1952), Basil G Burton (Staff), Rayleen (née Calvert, YG 1946) and David Eaton (YG 1945), Owen Edwards (YG 1950), Barry Barber (YG 1951), Heather M Reed, Edwin (YG 1948) and Ruth Wrigley (née Comber, YG 1948), GSP, Mr Pumphrey (Staff), E M Burt, John O Burt (who taught Roger Latin at Bootham), Wendy Needham (née Hopkins, YG 1950), Paul Benham, Naomi McIntosh (née Sargent), Jenny Brown, Cyril Mummery (Staff), John Woods (YG 1948, Staff 1968-89), R A Wright (Staff).

Clive Eiles (YG 1962) got in contact with a lack of lockdown story. Clive and his wife live in a small hamlet in south Wales where nobody has been affected. On the contrary, in the summer a friend of theirs joined them in their garden while Clive played some music on his violin (which he first played at FSSW). The only effects he has noticed have been that a shop which sells chocolate and has a good café has been closed, and once or twice he has not been able to have a coffee in a local hotel. Food, he reports, has been available in a small but very good shop, and the Co-op has been safe (even when its power went). It's alright for some, isn't it...

Short Lockdown Story from Roly

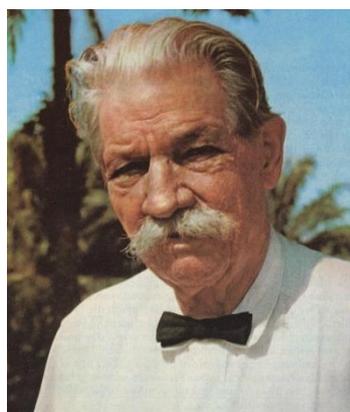
I also have a short lockdown story to tell OS – I won't include the names of those involved. The OSA was recently contacted by an Old Scholar in need: the person in question was ill and did not have anywhere to live. Through contacting their Year Group, I am pleased to say that Old Scholars rallied and supported this individual with accommodation – this, I think, is what the Old Scholars' Association is all about: bringing people together and looking after one another.

A Tale of Pandemic Past

Joan Pearce (YG 1962) was in the third year at Friends' in the autumn of 1957 when the then-named "Asian flu pandemic" struck the school. By December so many staff and pupils had succumbed that it was decided to suspend lessons. This meant that alternative activities had to be found to occupy those younger boarders who were still healthy. One afternoon a group including Joan were dispatched to Croydon House to make mince pies for the patients in the sanatorium. They were organized into a sort of production line, in which Joan's role was to put a teaspoonful of mincemeat into each mince pie. Soon after completing this task she began to feel unwell. She went to see sister, who promptly sent Joan off to the sanatorium. Joan arrived just in time for tea, accompanied by one of the mince pies that she had helped to prepare a few hours earlier!

Further news from an OS

Tony Weaver (YG 1961) wrote with the following charming story about his Form Teacher, Kelvin Osborn. Tony writes: "One day on a form outing he took us all by coach to Cambridge to go punting. Prior to the punting we visited his old college, Christ's. What was particularly interesting about this visit was that it was a day when Albert Schweitzer, the medical missionary and surgeon, was given some sort of honorary degree by the University. We all stood in the great gate and watched as Schweitzer and various dignitaries processed from the dining hall, where he had been invited for lunch, to the chapel for a service. Following my own long and pretty ordinary life in the building industry, I was delighted, to be appointed the Maintenance Manager for Christ's College, Cambridge in 1995. After about a month in the job I was so proud and excited, I invited my wife to come with me on a Saturday to have a tour of the College. As we walked, I noticed a slightly built gentleman dressed in a tuxedo, but with a normal college tie instead of a bowtie. I said to my wife: 'I know that man's face but I can't think who he is.' Following our tour, we returned to the Porters' Lodge to hand in some keys, just as this elderly gentleman walked in. It was only then that I realised it was Kelvin Osborn and he had come to College for a dinner that evening. He was about 80 years old and he had travelled up from Tavistock. He obviously didn't remember me and he wasn't quite sure why he had come to the college, but I was able to gently remind him that he was there for an old members' dinner. It was such a pleasure to see him again after all those years and it became the first of many pleasant memories of thirteen years at Christ's. Strangely enough when visiting Dresden cathedral some years later, there was, just for that weekend, a small exhibition of photographs and other artefacts illustrating Schweitzer's life."



Albert Schweitzer, polymath and Nobel Prize Winner

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Duplicates of Named Team Photos from the Archives

We have a few duplicate team photos available free to any team members. They are:

Boys 1st XI Football 1990 -

Captain Inigo Garbett - 2 framed

Girls 1st XI Hockey 1990-1991 -

Captain Alice Murray - 1 framed, 1 mounted

Girls 1st XI Hockey 1997-1998 -

Captain Nicola Hood - 1 mounted

Just need to cover p&p costs. If interested

email martin@hugall.co.uk



Boys' 1st XI Football 1990



Elisabeth is sitting in the front, wearing a leather jacket in Windsor Great Park in March 1945. She was serving with the ATS as an "Ack Ack Girl", who were part of the operation of Anti-Aircraft guns.

Obituaries

We are sad to announced the following deaths since our last Newsletter: Elisabeth Seale (née Grillet, YG 1941); Peter Cutler (Staff 1966-72) and, very belatedly, Angus Holmes (YG 2008). We also very recently received news of the death Pauline Haigh (née Goddard, YG 1946, Staff 1950-54) whose obituary will be posted on the website soon, and included in our next Newsletter.

Elisabeth Seale died on the 16th May 2020, aged 96, peacefully at home in Highgate. She attended the school from the autumn 1937 to summer 1941. Elisabeth then joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) serving in the 550 Anti-Aircraft Battery Royal Artillery until 1946. After this, she then trained as a theatre nurse. Elisabeth worked on the radar predictor system. She was the beloved wife of the late John and Simon; the adored mother of Charlotte, Marc, Victoria and Adam and the adored grandmother of Caspar, Emily, Alexander, Oliver, Jessica, Christopher and Anna.

Peter James Cutler (Staff 1966-72) died peacefully at Addenbrooke's Hospital on 30th July, aged 86. A linguist, he taught both French and Latin at the school. I happened to grow up on the street on which Peter lived, and my mother, Bidy Vousden (YG 1972) was taught French by him. She was very fond of him and told me how he used to invent nicknames for students based on translations of their names. He could still remember them when he happened to be looking through photos of Bidy's year group with her many years later. Peter was also a steam train enthusiast and a lover of classical and light music, and cats. He will be greatly missed by his family, former pupils and neighbours. He is survived by his beloved cat, Brindle Puddy Mark II.



Peter is third from the left. The photo is from a reunion of former pupils from Earls Colne Grammar School.



Angus Holmes at home at Easter

Angus Holmes (YG 2008) died 6 years ago, on 16th November 2014. Angus was two years above me at school and I have a vivid memory of him showing a friend and me how to play a particular song on the guitar in the Music School: we both thought he was definitively cool (with his long hair and guitar strapped low). Angus started at Friends' aged 13 where he was popular with both staff and students. The youngest of three, Angus' brother Edward (Ted, YG 2007) and sister Jennifer (Wren, YG 2004) also attended the school. Angus was a keen musician and, choosing to leave the school after his GCSEs, he went on to 'Access to Music' college in Norwich. He learnt every instrument he could lay his hands on: passed Grade 5 Saxophone, playing up to Grade 8 level and taught himself the piano both by reading and ear. Angus, ever modest, would say to the family that: "anyone could do it," though, as his mother told me, he must have known they could not. She said he was "too modest to accept he was gifted, though it was obvious to all those around him." On leaving college Angus went to Northern

Ireland, initially to the College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise in Enniskillen (CAFRE) where he earned an award and very large silver cup for "Endeavour", of which he was very proud, as he passed the year of academic studies with flying colours, and much hard work. He was popular with the local horse owners, and their horses and donkeys too, as he always had a way with animals. He was about to start his last year at the college when he died suddenly. He is buried in the local village churchyard in Worlingham.

Annual General Meeting 2021

We have yet to confirm a date for the 2021 AGM, but it should be on Saturday 15th May and will hopefully take place at Friends' Meeting House in Saffron Walden. Further information will be posted in 2021.

If you no longer wish to be contacted by us, please email fsswosa@gmail.com.

Wishing everyone Season's Greetings, good health and strength over the coming months.

In Friendship,

Roland Fischer-Vousden (YG 2010), Secretary to the Old Scholars' Association

fsswosa@gmail.com | www.oldscholars.com | December 2020



For those who knew him, can you pick out Peter Cutler in this section of a full school photo?

Remember that there is a full set of whole school photos in the archive section of the Old Scholars' website at www.oldscholars.com