

oganews

SPRING 2024



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WELCOME

BY JENNY THOMAS (MGC 2002)

OGA Chair

Hello everybody and a slightly belated Happy New Year from the OGA magazine for 2024! I hope you all managed some down time and celebrations over the recent months and the new year has got off to a good start.

Alongside the first Christmas in my new flat, I became an Auntie for the first time just before Christmas in 2023 so it has been a very exciting time in my family!

I managed to wave at Coll. in February as I had been at a pottery class in Eastnor. Sadly, it was a rather miserable day so I missed seeing those lovely hills.

Things are busy as ever at MSJ. Lots has been going on since I last wrote. We've had another brilliant round of GCSE and A Level results. There have been concerts, festive and new year celebrations, trips, sporting successes and so much more.

Our new Head, Dr Lloyd, has been settling in and I hope to meet him soon. I am sure we will all have the chance at upcoming Old Girl events and I know you will join me welcoming him into the fold.

We had a great Book Club last month reading *Metronome* by Tom Watson. There will have been another in March by the time you read this (see the back of the magazine for 'Future Event's for more Book Club times through the year). As ever, I am trying not to forget to buy the book and read it in time! You can join online or in person. Do let us know if you would like to join. It's always fun.

We have the main OGA Summer Reunion on Saturday 8 June. It is for all Old Girls but with a special focus on Lawnside and MSJ this year. Sadly, I won't be able to make this one as I have a big birthday and some friends arranged a weekend away for it but I look forward to hearing all about it and catching up with lots of you at other events.

Sadly, still, as I write, there are many things happening in the world causing a lot of suffering for many people and I wanted to take this moment to send strength, love and best wishes on behalf of the OGA for anyone it is affecting directly or whose family is suffering. Please know that you are in our thoughts.

I hope you enjoy the latest OGA magazine. As ever, we are always excited to hear updates and news from you, so please send anything to the OGA Office and we will add it to the next.

Wishing you all a happy, healthy Spring. Hope to see you soon!

Jenny
Thomas



Jenny Thomas and Eau Freeriks
(Vongkiatkachorn, MGC 2002)

WELCOME FROM THE HEAD

Dr Gareth Lloyd, Head of Malvern St James



“ ”

**I must say I
am thoroughly
looking forward
to meeting many
Old Girls at events
in the future**

It is my absolute pleasure to introduce myself in this edition of the OGA News, my first since starting as Head at Malvern St James.

As some of you know already, perhaps one of the most testing but also relevant questions I was asked at interview came from a Year 10 pupil (first year GCSE): “Without wishing to cause any offence Dr Lloyd...” (at which point I was preparing to be offended!) “...why should an all-girls’ School appoint a man as its Head?”

I am sure that some, if not many, of you have asked the same question.

My answer came from the heart: what **SHOULD** matter is the applicant’s experience, their reasons for applying, possibly their qualifications, and, most importantly, their alignment with the School’s ethos and values, which, in this case, most certainly includes a commitment to girls’ education.

In light of this, and my first half of term at the helm, I can truthfully say that I feel I have come home. I am absolutely loving MSJ – the enthusiasm of the girls, the professionalism of the staff, the support of the Governors, the commitment of the parents, the rich history of the School and the beauty of Malvern.

Allow me to share some highlights of my term so far.

It is a joy to walk around the School during lesson time, to witness the high quality of teaching and learning. I especially enjoyed dinner with Year 11 (Second Year GCSE) Academic Scholars who debated: ‘What is Political?’

It has been a privilege to meet our Year 11 girls to discuss their A Level choices in relation to planned university courses and eventual careers, as well as support our Year 13 (Upper Sixth) girls in their university applications. It is truly humbling to see the breadth and depth of intellectual curiosity.

I have loved supporting the girls in their Sports’ fixtures, where you will be pleased to know we are winning many more than losing! It has been tremendous fun to shout encouragement from the touchlines and I did warn the girls in my first assembly that, while every good Head normally says it’s



not about winning but the taking part that matters, in that respect I confess to being a very bad Head!

There has been an amazing array of talent on show, with wonderful concerts, recitals and assembly performances from girls of all ages. Year 12 (Lower Sixth) girls organised a particularly memorable evening of music, dance and drama, while culturally inspirational performances impressed in our Chinese New Year assembly.

Looking ahead, we are very excited to be joining Round Square, a group of around 300 schools across the world, enabling our girls to participate in online and in-person activities, including debates, scientific research, the sharing of local history, geography, culture and performing arts. This will culminate in a 'home and away' exchange with Scotch College, Perth, Western Australia.

We are also introducing our very own MSJ Sixth Form Diploma in Global Competencies, ensuring

linguistic, financial and practical skills to enable each young woman to enter into adult life as confident, competent global citizens, travelling the world and sharing the eternal values of MSJ with all whom they meet.

As I write this introduction, I am waiting to board a flight to Bangkok via Dubai, to attend an international pupil recruitment fair, where I shall meet boarding agents, prospective girls and their parents, all packed into two frenetic days. I then fly to Hong Kong to repeat the exercise, at the end of which a drinks reception with Old Girls living in the Hong Kong territory promises to be very enjoyable. I must say, I am thoroughly looking forward to meeting many Old Girls at such events in the future, guided by the indomitable Fiona Meredith. I extend my warmest thanks to her and Molly Hughes for their tremendous efforts in preparing this edition of the OGA News.

Let me return to my first assembly, when I recounted the

question I was asked in regard to a male Head at MSJ. I took the opportunity to promise the girls my commitment to help them realise their full potential and their dreams, in a world that is still unacceptably tougher for women than it is for men. I promise you, likewise, to uphold the essential principles that have guided MSJ, Malvern Girls' College, St James's, The Abbey, St James's & The Abbey and Lawnside for so many years; the same principles that nurtured you to be the fine examples that you are, inspiring the MSJ pupils of today to become the women of tomorrow who achieve great things.

I look forward to meeting each and every one of you in time. Warmest wishes.



Dr Gareth Lloyd

NOTICE FROM THE OGA TRUSTEES

The OGA has up to six custodial Trustees to hold and maintain the MSJ OGA's assets. The assets consist of investments and cash. The Trustees monitor the performance of the appointed investment manager, liaise with the OGA Treasurer and support the OGA Committee. The Trustees are appointed by the OGA from Old Girls nominated by the Committee. There is no fixed term of office.

One of the MGC Old Girl trustees is stepping down from trusteeship this Summer and the Committee has nominated **Catherine Jones (MGC 1980)** which will go to the OGA AGM on 8 June 2024 for a vote. Catherine is currently the Treasurer of the OGA so it would be very helpful to

also have her as a Trustee.

The OGA would like to maintain a list of Old Girls who would be interested in serving as a Trustee so that nominations can be made in a timely manner as and when vacancies arise.

If any Old Girl is interested in becoming a Trustee or would like to know more about the role, please contact the OGA Office.

It is not an onerous role but an interest in the School and the OGA is essential and an understanding of financial matters advantageous. It is desirable to have Old Girls from a range of ages and from a variety of former founding schools as Trustees at any one time.

Notice to remove the dormant MSJ OGA Bursary Trust from the Register of Charities

In addition to being custodial Trustees of the OGA, the present Trustees are also Trustees of a charitable trust, the MSJ

OGA Bursary Trust, which was established over 40 years ago by the then MGC OGA.

This trust has been dormant for some years, having exhausted its assets providing bursaries to pupils attending MGC and then MSJ.

The Trust has been kept on the Register of Charities just in case a legacy had been left to it (which had happened in the past) with Annual Returns filed with the Charity Commission.

However, with the passage of time, the Trustees think this possibility is now extremely unlikely and they are intending to apply to have this Trust removed from the Register of Charities later this year. In recent years, legacies have been left directly to the School.

If any OG has a query about this or knows of a legacy left to this Trust, please contact the Trustees via the OGA Office.

Anne Borrowdale (MGC 1970)

AREA REPS

There used to exist within the OGA an extensive network of 'Area Representatives' made up of Old Girls who took on the role of organising social events, outings, mini-reunions and such like for other Old Girls in their geographical area. These Reps existed in the UK, which was largely divided into areas by county; and internationally where we had significant groups of alumnae, in places such as Hong Kong, Nigeria, Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia.

This Area Reps system is still going strong in some regions – including Norfolk, South Wales and Yorkshire to name a handful – but it has fallen away in others, and we would like to regenerate it with the help of Old Girls who would be willing to lead.

It is not an onerous task – the OGA Office can help with sending out communications in the first instance to help establish groups of Old Girls who would be interested in joining activities. We can help publicise any plans you may have and offer assistance with logistics where appropriate. We can also attend events if you would like us to bring archive material or talk about school today. And our Head, Dr Lloyd, is always keen to get out and about meeting people.

Or it may be that you are already part of an informal group of Old Girls who meet as and when, and you would be willing to extend the group to include others who may also be interested.

We know that gathering with other Old Girls – even if you are from different generations and didn't know each other at school – can be a very positive thing, and can be incredibly helpful if, for example, you are moving to a new area and are interested in establishing new friendship networks.

If this sounds like your kind of thing, please contact Molly Hughes or Fiona Meredith in the OGA Office in the first instance. We would be very happy to answer any questions you may have.

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ARCHIVE DIGITISATION UPDATE

In a time where history merges seamlessly with technology, our dedication to preserving the heritage of our founding schools remains steadfast. That's why we've embarked on the journey of digitising our archives. We're excited to share a significant achievement in this endeavour – we've uploaded 10 MGC magazines from the 1970s and 1980s, and 12 editions from St James's & The Abbey spanning the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s to our digital archive.

While we're working continuously on adding more materials from each of our founding schools, we appreciate your patience as these efforts require quite a lot of time.

If you have any comments or you feel you could support the digitisation project in any way, please get in touch with Fiona Meredith/Molly Hughes in the OGA Office at oga@malvernstjames.co.uk.

Accessing this wealth of historical content is now simpler than ever.

Just visit <https://malvernstjames.daisy.websds.net/default.aspx> and log in using:

Username: MalvernSJ | Password: 1893-SDS

DEVELOPMENT REPORT



A Thank You to our Donors for the Bursary Bauble Campaign 2023

FOUNDERS' AWARDS BURSARY SCHOLARSHIPS

Roseanna, Year 12 (Lower VI)

Roseanna is a committed musician, playing drums and singing in the MSJ Choir and the Senior Vocal Ensemble.

As a Music Scholar, Roseanna's role is also to encourage younger pupils to pursue their music passions and to involve herself in lots of enrichment activities.

Recently, this has meant visiting the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra to understand more about the concept of symphony and visiting Italy last Summer to perform at various venues in the northern Lakes region.

Roseanna is studying Maths, English Literature and Music at A Level and is also doing an Extended Project Qualification (this sits alongside A Levels and gains UCAS points for university entry). Her EPQ title is: *'To what extent are the aims of sentencing achieved in the UK prison system'*. This choice of topic is inspired by her interest in Law and Roseanna's ultimate aim is to become a solicitor. She was really pleased to gain some experience recently at a top London firm, which has cemented her ambition. Roseanna achieved eight Grade 9s at GCSE and two Grade 8s. Her Founders' Award bursary has allowed her to flexi board two nights' per week. She is grateful for this opportunity which has allowed her to develop much stronger relationships with other girls she didn't know before; plus it has made her more independent and is "great preparation for university". A typical evening

for Roseanna involves going to the gym, doing a few hours of homework, then watching a film with friends in Poulton. She also manages to squeeze in Debating Club, tennis in the Summer, Orchestra and participation in the School productions (in the Orchestra rather than on stage). A few of Roseanna's favourite memories include the A Level recital at School [Editor's note: truly a magical musical lunchtime with all A Level Music students performing – open to any OGA members who would like to come along] and appearing on *Blue Peter* to play the drums after achieving her Grade 8 with Distinction at age 8 – the youngest drummer to achieve this.



Roseanna, Jess, Charlotte and Penny, the English Pointer/Labradoodle

Charlotte, Year 12 (Lower VI)

Charlie is studying for a very impressive and interesting mix of four A Levels including English, Maths, Physics and History.

Still in Year 12, Charlie is thinking ahead to university already with the intention of reading Engineering and then converting to Law afterwards. Engineering has always been an interest and she has her sights set on Oxford, Kings College London or Durham. Afterwards, she wants to practice as a barrister in IP law in either the commercial or media sectors. She has decided on this career as she likes debating with evidence-based data to support her answer. Charlie's Founders' Award allows her to weekly board: "It gives me more independence and control over how I pursue studies. I am a Sports Scholar and it means I can go to the gym after School, as well as early morning conditioning sessions and attend Saturday matches." She plays hockey, lacrosse and netball in the Winter, as well as dance; and tennis, cricket and athletics in the Summer.

Her other enrichment activities (yes, she manages time for more!) include debating, Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL), taking part in School musicals and plays, and Greek Club. She says: "Weekly boarding means that all my work is in one place; I do not have any commute to/from School and that way I gain about an hour a day. I use this extra time for the benefit of my studies and interests."

Both Charlotte and Roseanna are busy prepping for Oxford entry at the beginning of next academic year. For Roseanna, this means "lots of research, wider reading to prepare for the English Literature Admissions Test (ELAT) exam, and using our Russell-Up sessions at School which are an academic enrichment activity to prepare us for the most sought-after universities." Charlie, meanwhile, has been talking to Old Girl **Jess Morris (MSJ 2020)**, currently studying Engineering at Oxford, as well as one of our Maths teachers, **Mr Ward**, who started his career as an engineer. She is dedicating around three hours a week to this, although she knows it will continue to increase the closer to application time.



Jess, Year 13 (Upper VI)

Jess is studying Biology, Geography and Music at A Level.

Jess participates fully in musical life at MSJ, being an accomplished pianist, achieving Grade 8 with Distinction last year. She also plays clarinet (Grade 7 with Merit) and is a member of the MSJ Orchestra, the Choir and the Senior Vocal Ensemble.

Jess' other passion involves kitchen instruments rather than musical ones. Jess is an enthusiastic foodie who has just completed the prestigious Leiths cookery course, which also gains her UCAS points. She is looking to study Biology at undergraduate level and then a post-grad degree in Medicine. She holds offers from Liverpool, Queen Mary's and Southampton at present and is waiting to hear from two more.

Jess has been able to weekly board at School with her Founders' Award and this has made a world of difference to her: "It has made me a lot closer to everyone in my year group. And it's great to have a Housemistress who is always around to talk to. The boarding environment is helpful to my study time as we can work together, particularly with tests and exams coming up. Working collaboratively means we can all help to motivate each other."

Being a boarder, Jess can go back to her room to study in free periods and during Prep time; this is important for achieving all that she wants in her academic ambitions.

Jess' standout memory of MSJ is The Gambia trip last Easter: "Being with all my friends, a close-knit group of teachers, working with children in local schools and helping out at a clinic for sick children, as well as seeing a world so different from my own, was amazing."

Jess came to MSJ from a co-ed boarding school and is very happy to be enjoying an all-girls' environment: "I wouldn't switch back. There is less pressure and you can just focus on your work, with less to worry about."

THE ELMSLIE FOUNDERS' AWARD

100% BURSARY SCHOLARSHIP



Abigail has joined us for Sixth Form on the Elmslie Scholarship, which is a 100% bursary scholarship co-funded with the generosity of a parent donor.

Previously, Abigail was at a state comprehensive in Worcestershire. She joined us in Year 12 (Lower VI) in September 2023, and so halfway into the academic year seemed like a good time to catch up with her to see what she makes of life at MSJ so far, and how she is making the most of the opportunities here.

How are you finding MSJ? Have you settled in, and what are your impressions?

I've settled in well and the School is lovely. It is a friendly community. I'm really enjoying the small classes and that the teachers are more involved and give you lots of one-to-one help compared to my previous school. I have made friends and integrating with everyone has been easy.

Tell us more about your academic interests?

I am studying History, Classical Civilisation and English Literature for A Level. I am also doing an Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) with the title: *'Regime change in Zimbabwe from the white government to Mugabe's government'*. My mother is Zimbabwean and I wanted to know more about the history of the country. I'm interested in politics but didn't want to take it for A Level, so this is a way of exploring my interest.

In English, we are studying Natalie Diaz's *Postcolonial Love Poem* anthology; Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*, and comparing Ibsen's *A Doll's House* to Chaucer's *The Merchant's Tale*, which is one of my favourites. In History, we are focusing on the Crusades and the Tudors, and in Classics, Homer's *Odyssey* and the Greek Plays.

I like to read around my coursework too, as well as for pleasure. I read Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* and Zadie Smith's *White Teeth* for my Women in Literature module, and read *Out of Shadows* by Jason Wallace and *The Last Resort: A Memoir of Mischievous and Mayhem on a Family Farm in Africa* by Douglas Rogers for my EPQ.

You clearly love English. What would be your top three books, fiction and/or non-fiction?

The Explorer by Katherine Rundell, *The Boy Who Steals Houses* by CG Drews and *Raybearer* by Jordan Ifueko.

What extra-curricular activities and enrichment are you doing?

Debating, netball, Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL), badminton and tennis. I'm also in Guitar Ensemble, and studying for Grade 5 Guitar.

What are your ambitions for when you finish School?

I want to study English or History, or a combination of both, at university.

If we stranded you on a desert island, what three items would you want with you?

Flint, water bottle, waterproof coat.

What do you do to create a work/life balance?

Play with my tortoise, go for walks and listen to music and podcasts.

What has the Elmslie Bursary meant to you and other girls that might benefit from it in the future?

It has allowed me to experience a fuller, richer education with a small community of like-minded people, in which I can develop and voice my opinions.

Having been at a co-educational school and now at single-sex, what do you perceive are the differences and benefits of an all-girls' education?

Less disruptive; fewer fights; more focus on empowering girls and elevating them to be the best they can be; less of a stigma regarding certain female-related topics. Here girls are more likely to take opportunities and have leadership roles in the community.

Who is your heroine, living or dead?

My mum, Harriet Tubman.

RUNWAY SUCCESS

ETHOLLE'S FASHION SHOW

Runway Success: Etholle's Charity Fashion Show

Year 13 (Upper VI) student, Etholle, created a partnership with St Richard's, one of our local hospices, to put on a Fashion Show in York Hall. St Richard's has three charity shops in Malvern and a big warehouse just outside the town. Ettie worked with the store managers and volunteers to choose a range of fashion looks, curating a runway show for each: *'In the Country'*, *'Upcycled Chic'* (for this she had designed and made her own garments from altering existing ones) and *'Glitz and Glam'*.

The event was buzzing with guests and garnered support from the whole School, with staff and pupils from Year 7 (U3) and upwards agreeing to be catwalkers. All the outfits modelled were from St Richard's stock of donated clothes and accessories. This was Ettie's project for the Extended Project

Qualification (EPQ), an accreditation which sits alongside A Levels and scores points for university entrance. The EPQ is flexible in that it can be a traditional written paper, a broadcast or podcast or a live event such as this one.

The idea for the event came from a chance conversation Ettie struck up with Mrs Dinah Cramp, MSJ's former Head of Housekeeping, who now volunteers for St Richard's. Fashion shows were a regular event at MSJ and MGC in years gone by.

Our Leiths cookery students pitched in to help as well, creating little bowls of canapés for sale.

Lots of lovely garments were sold on the night, and Ettie raised just short of £3,000 for the Hospice.



PHILANTHROPY AT MSJ

Last year (2022-23) we raised £10,238.78 for the local, national and international charities we regularly support. This year (2023-24), we have raised £8,000 in the first two terms. There is always masses going on at School in the way of fundraising, with the pupil-led Charity Committee deciding which causes to support each year.

Some charities are a permanent fixture of School life – such as The Gambia, now in its 30th year at MSJ and MGC before it.

We make sure we cover international and national charities, as well as those closer to home in Malvern. Importantly, as well as raising money, the girls are actively involved, as with Malvern Special Families where they host a family event and provide all of the entertainment.



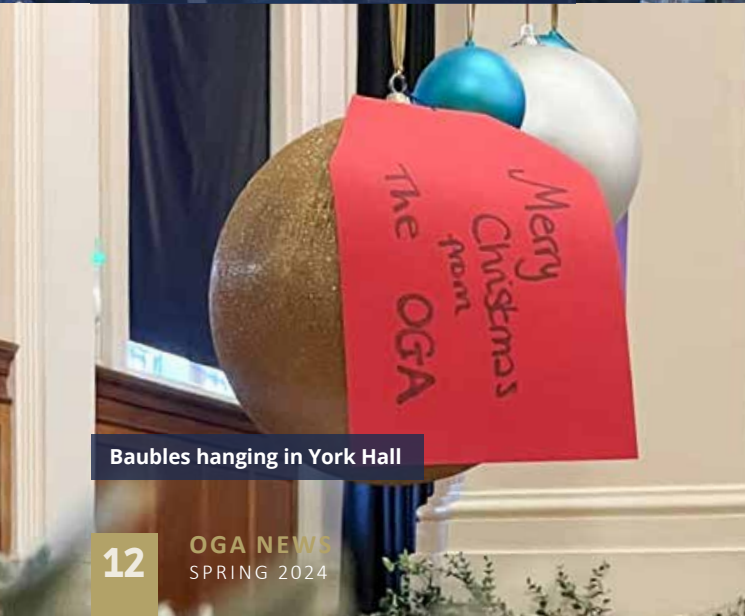
Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal, including a Remembrance Day Service in the Quad led by our Chaplain



Bursary Bauble Campaign, with all proceeds donated to the bursary campaign – £13,000



Malvern Special Families, a local charity, for whom pupils fundraise and host a family party in The Dome



Baubles hanging in York Hall



The Gambia: Huge thanks to an Old Girl from our Gambia trip in 2005 who has been in touch and pledged £1,000 as an annual donation to support our ongoing work in partnership with Ilyassa in The Gambia. The money will fund essential medical supplies in the health centre there serving people from the local area

THE CLASSROOMS RENOVATIONS

The classrooms ... where the learning journey for our girls begins, now and for many generations of girls before them.

There will be special memories of these classrooms in the MSJ/ MGC building. Languages, Geography, English, History, Economics, Business, IT, Latin and Classics are taught on the corridors of the main building.

STEM subjects (Maths, Physics, Biology and Chemistry) have already been housed in their own, modern building which was a partially fundraised project completed in 1998, adjacent to the Art block, on what was previously the MGC Headmistress' Garden.

It is now time to renovate the classrooms on the teaching corridors in the main building to incorporate functionality which fits with modern teaching and learning methods.

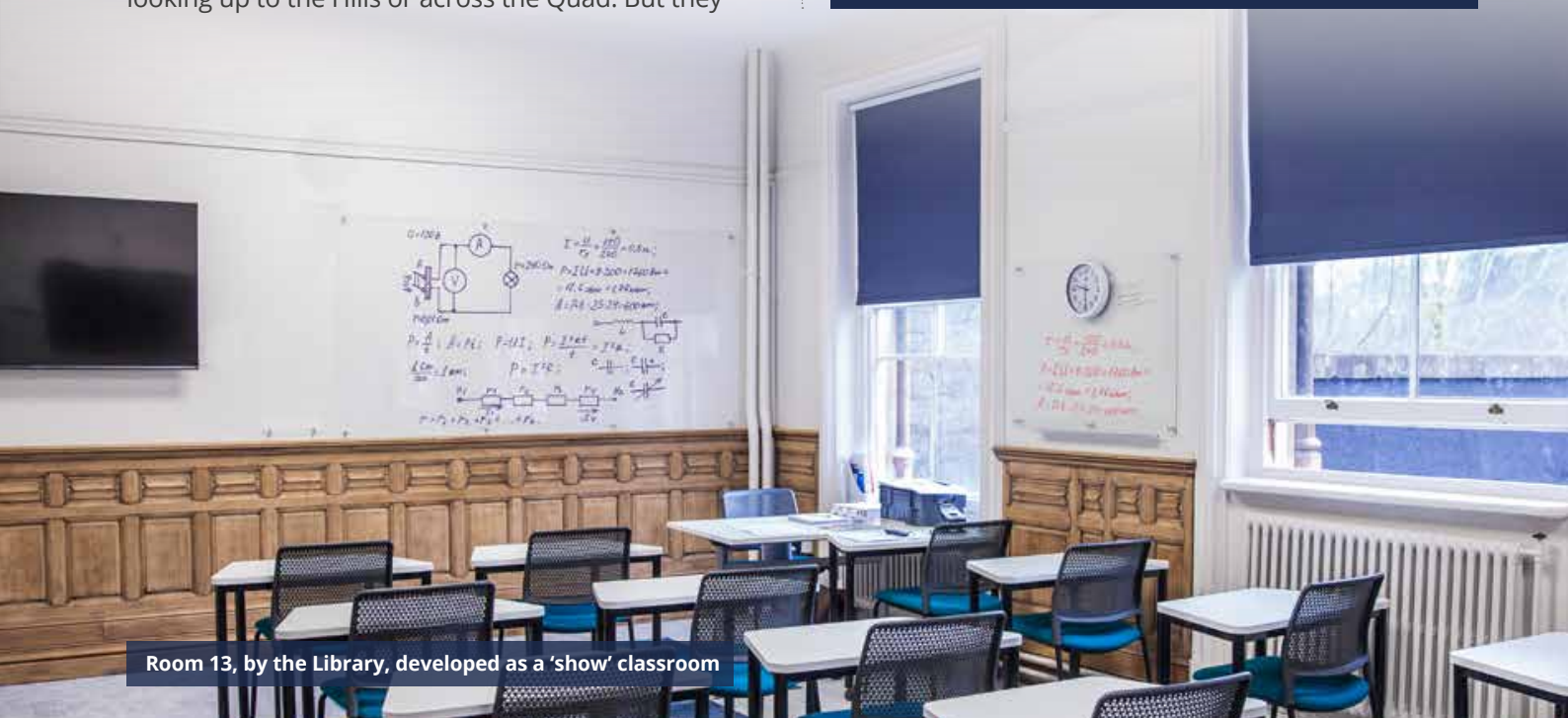
Environment is an important factor in learning: having an inspiring and uncluttered space matters. Many of the rooms are blessed with beautiful aspects, looking up to the Hills or across the Quad. But they



need human-centric design with furniture that meets the needs of modern learning – flexible tables and chairs; easy to move around and configure into different group sizes; multiple charging stations to work on laptops; lockers at the back of the room to store items tidily; wall screens, and writing walls to create more engaging and immersive learning experiences.

Would you like to sponsor a classroom – either as an individual or a group of friends/ year group/ House group – as we update them for a new teaching and learning environment? Each renovated classroom will carry a plaque to those who have generously funded them.

For £10,000 per classroom, we will be able to achieve an inspiring and functional space. New carpeting, painting and blinds will finish each room off.



Room 13, by the Library, developed as a 'show' classroom

If you would like to be part of this Classroom programme and see your name/ group of names permanently featured in the building, please contact Fiona Meredith, Development Director, at meredf@malvernstjames.co.uk / tel: +44 (0)1684 892288.

THE SWIMMING POOL RESTORATION

BY DR GARETH LLOYD, HEAD OF MSJ

"Having spent my first few weeks here at MSJ, I have come to love and admire our spectacular estate and buildings – new and historic – including our Grade II listed swimming pool which has been a fixture of School life for many decades. It inhabits an area adjacent to what was once the famous salt baths of the Imperial Hotel in the late 19th century. Salt was brought from nearby Droitwich Spa and mixed with the pure Malvern water coming straight off the Hills, to make a hydropathy treatment which attracted tourists from all around the UK and abroad. The Imperial Hotel was *the* place to stay. We are so lucky to live in a building which features this inspiring history all around us.

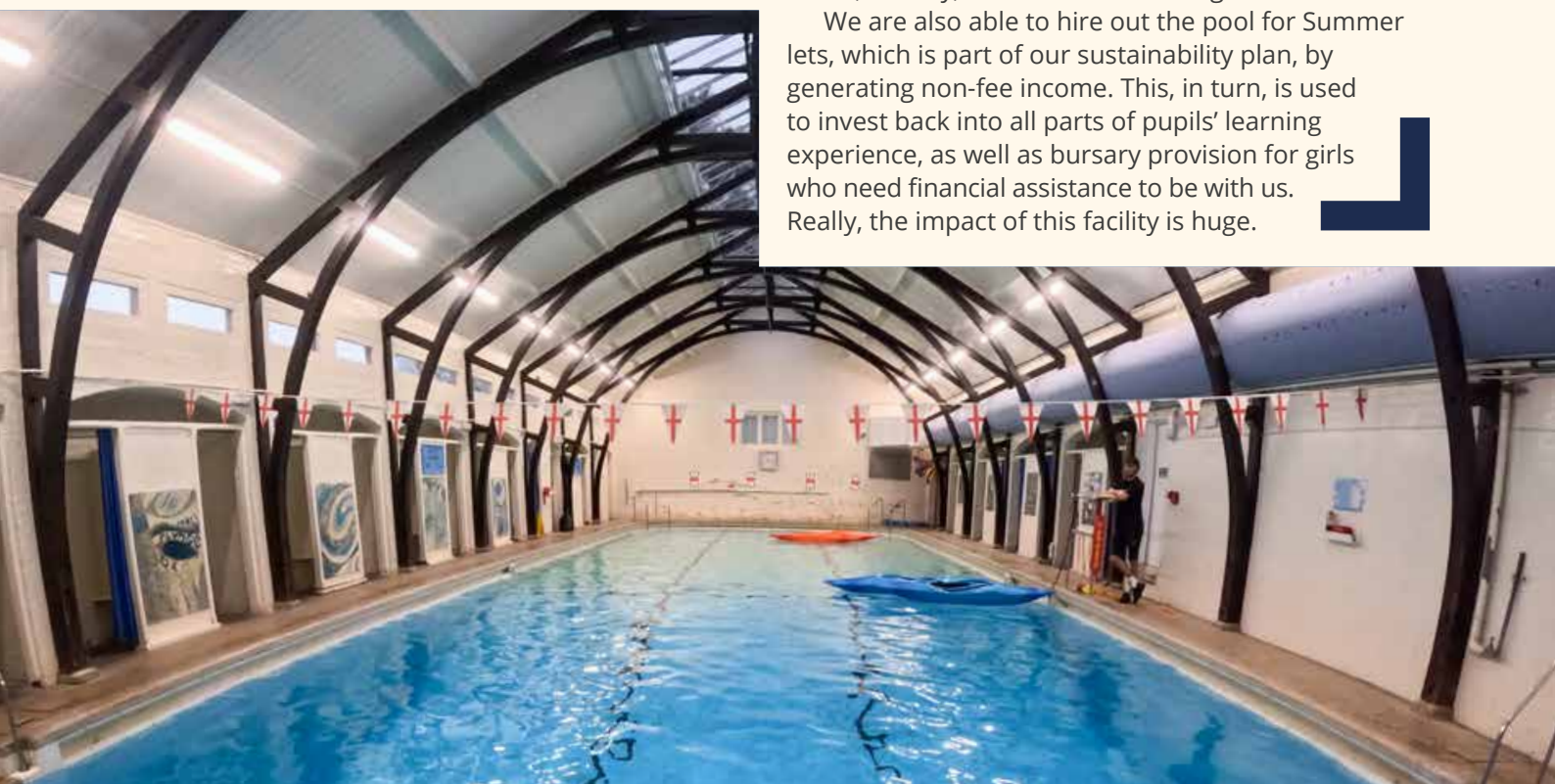


Old interior shot of pool

Having been in action for a long time (the last notable improvement in the School records was in 1967), the swimming pool needs to undergo some major work to make it a facility fit for modern purpose, now and well into the future. This is going to be no small task and we envisage that works will cost in the region of £200,000 to upgrade the building infrastructure and the facilities within it, such as the changing areas and restroom/shower room area. However, after this investment, what we can look forward to is something that will be treasured for many, many more generations of Malvern girls.

We share this facility with our Malvern community too – providing a venue for local swim clubs and swimming lessons for local children: something which, literally, can make a life-saving difference.

We are also able to hire out the pool for Summer lets, which is part of our sustainability plan, by generating non-fee income. This, in turn, is used to invest back into all parts of pupils' learning experience, as well as bursary provision for girls who need financial assistance to be with us. Really, the impact of this facility is huge.



We are looking for a major donor or group of philanthropic donors who could help us achieve this transformation. In return, the School can offer naming rights – a name for the renovated building and plaque dedicated to an Old Girl or MSJ family or group of Old Girls and Families who have contributed so generously. Would you like to see our pool named after you? Can you help us achieve our aim of revitalising the pool to its former glory?

If you are interested and would like to talk to me further about what this would involve and what we can offer you, as well as how you could help us, please do let me know by getting in touch with my Development Director, Fiona Meredith on meredf@malvernstjames.co.uk or +44 (0)1684 892288, who will organise a time for us to talk further."

THE IMPACT OF LEGACY GIVING

Malvern St James has received a significant amount of money from Old Girls who choose to remember the School in their will and this has been hugely beneficial. In Autumn 2022, we received a very generous bequest of over £600,000. In the past eight years, we have received over £1.3 million from legacy gifts.

We are very grateful to these women, and also other women in the OGA, both alumnae and Honorary Members (former staff), who have kindly informed us of their intention to leave a gift in their will.

Legacies are an easy and tax-advantageous way to support MSJ. All gifts are exempt of inheritance tax and, for estates that leave 10% or more to charity, there is a reduction in inheritance tax from 40% to 36%.



One of our pledged legators is **Veronica Blackmore (Bashforth, MGC 1959)** who says:

“ ”

I have considered a legacy gift to Malvern St James because the broad education I received while at Malvern gave me the confidence and ability to achieve in many areas – social, academic, music and sport. I would like to help other girls benefit from the all-round education provided at MSJ.

Legacies can be directed to the Bursary Fund, or other areas of School life, or at the governors' discretion to be used where needed most. Legators can define this when they draw up their will.

Legacies of all sizes make a huge difference to School life. It is particularly helpful to us if we know of people's intentions in advance, as this allows us to plan.

If you have an existing will, this can be modified by adding a codicil which is a straightforward process overseen and formally executed by a solicitor.

Every gift and every legacy pledge, large or modest, helps transform the future at Malvern St James and we are immensely grateful to all who donate in this way.



Leaving a Legacy

Legacy pledge form can be found in this magazine or on our website at: www.malvernstjames.co.uk/support-us/leaving-a-legacy-to-malvern-st-james or you may request a hard copy form from the office – tel: **01684 892288** or meredf@malvernstjames.co.uk.

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

To everyone who has given a financial gift, their time or possessions to the Archives. We are enormously grateful for your support which helps us to deliver the best in academic, pastoral and extra-curricular life at MSJ.

Adam Dockar-Drysdale	Jessica Ho	Rachel Powell	Katie Guthrie
Ahonsi Unuigbe and	John Fisher	Ros Hayes	Penny Green
Aitalohi Unuigbe	Judith Pierson (Carden)	Sally Fontes (Tickle)	Sophie Green
Andrew Wire	Katie Dawson	Sarah Sefton	Millie Cooper
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Caroline Hudson	Cortell	Vicky Daniell	Rani Pert (Aziz)
(Blackham)	Mark Tyne	Zachary Brookes	Bronwen Northmore
Cath Arnold (Bevan)	Mark and Maria Webb	Zainab Shinkafi-Bagudu	The Old Girls' Association
Catherine Usher	Mark Yarnold	Zoe James-Williams	– its members, its
Catheryn Moreland	Melanie Walker (Carver)	+ 17 anonymous	Committee, Trustees and
Commander Susie Moran	Melissa Hainoune	Time and Gifts in Kind	chair, Jenny Thomas
David Macgregor	Mike Hodges	Donors	The Second Hand Uniform
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Elizabeth Jukes	Nicola Clarke	Jess Morris	Committee and
Elizabeth Mullenger	Nicola Wilson	Olamide Lawal	Supporters, chaired
Emily Boswell	Nigel Gardner	Elizabeth Mullenger	by Mrs Ali Capper and
Fiona Meredith	Nigel Websper	Dr Rebecca Jones	vice-chaired by
Greer Owen	The MSJ Old Girls' Association	Libby Wilkinson	Mr Matthew Cripps
Hazel Harkness	Olivera Raraty	Imogen Edwards-Jones	Mrs Vicki Advani and
Ho Man Christina Pan	Paloma Novo	Marnie Probert	Mr Mark Advani
Huilan Tan	Peter Battle	Lucy Walton	The MSJ governing body,
Jane Thomson	Phyllida Cockell (Nicol)	Romilly Hughes	chaired by Mrs Gemma
Jennine and Nigel Woods	Pippa Leggate	Holly Harvey	Bruce and vice-chaired
Jenny Roberts			by Mr Robert Pearce and
(Garwood-Gowers)			Mrs Alison Warne
			+1 anonymous donor

EasyFundraising

You can help MSJ every time you shop by using the Easy Fundraising app and selecting MSJ as your chosen charity. Retailers from John Lewis to M&S, Tui to Trainline.com will donate a percentage every time you shop with them to our bursary fund at no extra cost to you.

How to sign up and start shopping: on a mobile device, download the easfundraising app, select Malvern St James Girls' School as your chosen charity, browse the retailers and the link to their website to shop. It's as easy as that and all money raised will go to the MSJ bursary fund. Thank you!

WHY JOIN THE OGA COMMITTEE?

Jenny Thomas, our current OGA Chair, became the OGA Chair in January 2019 after one of her best friends, Cecily Hewlett, volunteered her for the role after having a baby and not having quite enough time.

Jenny, in her work life, is the Executive Assistant (EA) to the Chief Financial Officer of John Lewis Partnership but she likes the OGA Chair role because it keeps her in touch with MSJ and so many different year groups of Old Girls.

"We love having a different mix of Old Girls across the years because everyone has different experiences and brings different ideas," says Jenny. "It is also vital for us to have Old Girls from all the different founding schools because then we know we are being representative and respectful of all the Schools that make up the Old Girls' Association."

Becoming a Committee Member means making time for two online meetings per year and various representatives like to make the Reunions when they can. Fiona Meredith and Molly Hughes from the OGA Office always attend the online meetings and organise the reunions at MSJ. Other Old Girls tend to take charge of regional reunions with Molly and Fiona's help. As time goes by, the original founding schools are blending in terms of reunions and that experience of 'living in Malvern' in formative educational years means there is lots of common ground, whichever School alumnae you are.

Older Old Girls won't realise that they gained OGA lifetime membership if their parents paid for this on their last ever School bill. The funds can help current girls at MSJ if needed and the Old Girls' Association is

also very helpful for current MSJ girls when thinking about particular careers.

"We often put Year 13 (Upper VI) girls who are thinking about university and career decisions in touch with Old Girls in careers they might be considering. To be able to bounce off ideas with someone who is already mid-career is so, so valuable."

Old Girls also come back to talk and this is why having a varied spread of people on the OGA Committee can really help: "You don't have to be super-involved but Old Girls have so much to offer. It really helps us knowing people out in the 'real world'. We can link people up and the more people we can be in contact with, the wider and more useful the network."

"It's a real privilege to be part of something that already has a history of over 150 years. It does feel special to be on the OGA Committee and to play a very tiny part in contributing to the history of the Schools."

So, whether you just want to organise informal meet-ups or if you think you would like to try being on the OGA Committee for a year to see what it's like, do get in touch. "Even if you don't come back to School for years and years," says Jenny, "it's nice to know that the Schools have such a vibrant Old Girls' Association. Many schools have nothing like it and we are really proud of keeping these connections going."

Request more information about joining the OGA Committee at: oga@malvernstjames.co.uk

INTRODUCING OUR ONLINE COMMUNITY WEBSITE

The online community website for Old Girls and Honorary Members is growing in numbers. Re-connect with old School friends and members of staff, sign up to the latest online and in-person events and network with a community of Old Girls and staff members from our founding schools and seek/share guidance and mentoring opportunities.

There are also galleries of pictures from OGA events, news stories and groups to join or create, for example 'Old Girls in Hong Kong'. There is also a community noticeboard if you'd like to celebrate good news or share memories/pictures from your time at School.

To join, please visit <https://community.malvernstjames.co.uk/>

“ ”

We hope you will join and make the most of the platform. The more users we have means more opportunities to connect and create a fantastic and diverse online community.

**Fiona Meredith,
Development Director**



AN EXCITING AND PROGRESSIVE PLACE FOR GIRLS TO LEARN AND GROW

from MSJ Facebook, 5 March 2024

Dr Gareth Lloyd joined as the new Head of MSJ in January 2024. He is the first male Head of a Malvern girls' school for a very long time (the last one was Peter Pollard, who was Head of The Abbey School from 1975-1979). Jo Leahy (Moulds, MGC 1991) talks to him about what it is like joining MSJ.

"I have arrived at MSJ and it's a tsunami of information," says Dr Gareth Lloyd. "A tsunami of names – teachers, parents, governors, friends of MSJ and, of course, the girls. But the girls are what is making the job such fun. And it's a great reminder to sit with them at lunch. It reminds me why I became a teacher in the first place. Because of the sheer liveliness of the girls, who are passionate about the School."

Dr Lloyd has a background that proves he can talk about many different educational settings and compare it to the all-girls' education he finds himself

amongst at MSJ. His first degree was Music at Exeter University. Then came a Postgraduate in Music and Modern Languages at Homerton College, University of Cambridge. While he was there, he sang as a Choral Scholar at St John's College.

Dr Lloyd's first teaching post was Assistant Director of Music at Reading Blue Coat School (1988-1991). He was Acting Director of Music and also taught French, boys' games and assisted in Careers.

From there, Dr Lloyd moved to St Mary's School Ascot (1991-2001).

"My 10 happiest years in education were there," says Dr Lloyd. "And so, it's no coincidence that it is all girls'. I was Director of Music for 10 years. And, in the last six years, it was in conjunction with being the first male Senior Housemaster. I'm godfather to an enormous number of girls and boys who are the children of former girls in my house. Bedinfeld was my house, and I love the fact that we won most of our competitions, most of the time! I'm awfully competitive."

Dr Lloyd then moved to Whitgift School, south London (2001-2004), an all-boys' school, where he was Deputy Head in Residence and Head of the Upper School so was responsible for GCSE and A Level and introduced the International Baccalaureate (IB) and BTech, alongside A Level.

Dr Lloyd then went to Kingswood School, Bath (2004-2009), a 3-18, co-educational boarding and day school, where he was Senior Deputy Head.

"I move schools when I achieve what I set out on behalf of the school," says Dr Lloyd. All his teaching posts have been in boarding schools.

"It's unusual for music teachers to move to Senior Leadership Team and yet I think they've got all the right skills to make it at the top because you're dealing with all the staff of your department; an entirely separate timetable within a timetable for all the instrumental lessons; the significant number of staff and visiting teachers in addition to the curriculum teachers; dealing with parents constantly, and the public, concerts and tours. So, you're running, in some respects, a school within a school because of the complexity of an effective, successful Music department."

Next came Dr Lloyd's first Headship at Ratcliffe College, Leicestershire (2009-2016), which is also 3-18, co-educational, boarding in the secondary from 11.

"We moved from outside the top 500 schools in the country to being placed second in the league tables for 'Value Added'. Again, it was a school that placed emphasis on academic achievement but not at the expense of whole person development. That's where, really, I sort of honed that philosophy of education: work hard, play hard and look after each other, and teachers inspire happiness. The two messages, if they're delivered, achieve success in its deepest and widest sense."

Back to Wales

Dr Lloyd was at Ratcliffe College for seven years and was due to go to China but the Head of a school – St John's College Cardiff – died in post and, because he is a member of ISI (the Independent Schools Inspectorate), he was asked to look after the school for a year because they were preparing for inspection.

"It worked out really well because it was a time when my parents were getting very elderly and not so good in health. So, I was able to see a lot more of them because they lived just outside of Bridgend. It is quite an academic-focused school but it is also the Cathedral Choir school to St David's Cathedral, Cardiff, so I was heavily involved back in music."

“”
Work hard, play hard and look after each other, and teachers inspire happiness. The two messages, if they're delivered, achieve success in its deepest and widest sense

Dr Lloyd grew up in a big family and was educated in South Wales at a school very different from MSJ.

"There were challenges but I loved academic work. So, I always saw academia as a way forward to a better future. And I was supported all the way by my most incredible, loving parents."

Dr Lloyd's father was a Headmaster for 33 years so you can definitely say education is in the blood.

"My father was a fabulous role model. Always compassionate, always inspiring and motivational."

Living in China

Dr Lloyd's mother was also a huge influence.

"My dear mother, even as a young girl, longed to go to China. It never happened for her but she loved all things Oriental".

Before St John's College, Dr Lloyd had been approached by the owners of the Times College, Nanjing, to be their Founding Principal (2018-2020).

"It's about a five-hour drive north-west of Shanghai and it was just too good an opportunity to miss. I didn't speak any Chinese and I lived in a part of Nanjing where I was the only non-Chinese person in a population of possibly just over six million. I had to learn »» P.T.O."



Mandarin very quickly. My PA gave me 10 minutes of Mandarin lesson every morning, six days a week, at 8am.

"I was out in China during Covid. During the first lockdown, I wrote a bilingual three-act musical. It combines Mandarin and English and is based on three ancient Chinese love stories. It's in rhyming couplets in English.

"So that was what I did in three weeks of the first lockdown because there was nothing else I could do. I was on a campus entirely on my own and I was visited once a week by two policeman and a doctor to make sure I was alive or that I hadn't run away. And my food was brought to the front of my apartment but I could only get it five minutes after they left."

Back to the UK

Whilst Dr Lloyd was in China, he was approached by a UK consultancy to be the Principal of Stoke College, Suffolk, which, at the time, was a very small day and boarding school (2020-2023).

"It is owned by a group of Chinese education investors and it had terrific support from the most amazing parent body, the parents of the children were superb but it needed to be put on a firmer footing," says Dr Lloyd. "They wanted to see the school survive and they were tremendously supportive. It had a great teaching staff and it's got great numbers now, it's got a bright future ahead."

And then, in Easter 2023, Dr Lloyd was approached by Anthony Millard Consulting, which had been appointed by the Governors at Malvern St James to find the next Head.

After several rounds of interviews involving an initial approach, a second approach, a screening interview,

a psychometric test and then a visit to MSJ, Dr Lloyd was offered the job.

"And, of course, I knew Malvern St James because two very dear friends, who are not strictly my cousins but we regard each other as cousins, came here for Sixth Form – Emmy Matthews and Kiko Matthews.

"In fact, Kiko came to stay with me recently for a concert here, with her little daughter, Ocean. We did a concert that the girls organised and I sang a solo just to beef out the programme."

Dr Lloyd tells a story about arriving at the School: "On my first visit to the School as a candidate, it was funny because Fiona Fowles, who is the Senior Deputy Head, contacted the four shortlisted candidates for what was billed as an anonymous tour. She saw all four of us separately and we had checked in and just started the walk when we heard the words: "Dr Lloyd!", literally outside what is now my office, and it was a girl who was one of my students in Nanjing. And she's now a Sixth Form student. We just chatted in Mandarin and she burst into tears because she was so happy to see me.

"It was really sweet. She gave me a big hug and I had to say quietly, over her shoulder to Fiona: 'I'm really sorry, I've reduced the first girl I've met here to tears.' And, before we'd reached the end of the corridor, I think the whole School knew about this. So, so much for anonymity.

"About 10 minutes' later, we were still walking and Fred Notman, who was the Head of Cricket at MSJ and a former pupil of mine – he was in Year 10 (first year of GCSE) when I started at Ratcliffe College. He said: 'Is that Gareth Lloyd?' and I didn't recognise him straight away. And then there was coffee with the staff and our Head of EAL (English as an additional language), Simon Forrester, came over to say hello. I had given him his first job back in the UK at Kingswood School in Bath. So, so much for anonymity again. It was really funny."

Life in Malvern

"I have also run the Malvern Hills a number of times before I came here. I've run 154 marathons. As part of my training, I would just choose half-marathons and 10Ks around the country. There's a race that's a half-marathon over the Malvern Hills.

"Since coming here, I just love the town. I love the area and I never thought, in a million years, I'd have the opportunity to come to Malvern to live. It's now my favourite place. I'm not just saying that. I didn't think I could love anywhere more than my home town, which is St David's, Pembrokeshire. That's where my house is where I go in the holidays.

"I've totally fallen in love with Malvern, to the point where I could very happily see myself selling St David's, buying in Malvern and buying a little campervan.



Dr Lloyd meets Old Girls, Current and Past Parents in Hong Kong

"I still love running – the Hills give me good training exercise. My passions are squash, tennis, dog walking, swimming, I love diving, and cliff diving in Pembrokeshire, I love sea fishing off the kayak, I love surfing and gathering seaweed and edible crabs – these are my Pembrokeshire activities."

Ethos for MSJ

"At MSJ, I am bringing the education philosophy that I have distilled over the years, which is that I ask the students to work hard because life is competitive; they need the best grades possible to secure an interview, whether university or an apprenticeship or a job. And it's especially competitive for girls and women. I think we mustn't forget that and that's why they've got to prove themselves academically."

"But I also believe in the really important life skills of humour, leadership, teamwork and patience, kindness, tolerance, motivation that are best taught outside of the narrow confines of the academic classroom. And that's why I say the playing hard is so important. So, they work hard, they play hard. But, most importantly, I say to the girls that we should look after each other."

"I will ask the older girls: 'What is the point of all those wonderful A*'s and their Gold Duke of Edinburgh and their Grade 8 Music Distinction etc? What is the good of all of those, unless they bring them all together, their qualifications, their experiences, their values and commit to having a positive impact on the lives of others now and in the future?'"



First term

In his first few months at MSJ, Dr Lloyd has been making connections with many local, as well as national and international contacts.

"Just recently, I met the local MP for West Worcestershire, Harriett Baldwin. She is going to offer girls work experience in her Office as well as in the House of Commons and she is a big supporter of all-girls' education."

Dr Lloyd wants to make more of the direct rail connection to London: "We have this wonderful direct link with London Paddington and I'm meeting with London parents who are helping us set up events in the city."

Dr Lloyd says it has been really lovely that he's been told there has never been so much traffic into the Head's Office, with girls coming to share Powerpoint ideas to raise money for charities and to initiate ideas such as a School TikTok account.

"I'm also asking a few of the girls to consider a project, *Don't Tax Our Education*. Because we've

got to address this. It's all very well head teachers of independent schools and the organisations that represent us speaking on our behalf to government but has anybody asked the views of the pupils who are going to be affected by Labour's policy on taxing independent education in the UK?"

"My view, perhaps unsurprisingly, is that I'm completely opposed to Labour's suggestion. The joy of leading an independent school is we can act autonomously, obviously under the direction of governors but we can act in the interests of the pupils, the teachers and the parents within our community."

"All-girls' independent schools are getting fewer and fewer so we've just written a paper, *'Why an All-Girls' Education still has such an important role in today's society'*.

We've written it based on a lunchtime conversation I had with a girl in Year 12 (Lower VI) on my first full day with the girls in January. I asked her questions about all-girls' education, about boarding, and it was amazing hearing this argument articulated so competently, so confidently. And I just had never heard that level of communication from a girl within a co-ed environment. So, in the first half of this term, we've really been championing the cause of why is an all-girls' education still valid?"

Dr Lloyd says one of his favourite times is lunchtime with the girls. "The highlight of my day will be having lunch when the girls tell me what's really going on. We have Chatham House Rules. I've had to teach them this concept. They now know the term so I say: 'Chatham House Rules Girls!' and it's amazing. They will tell me all sorts, which is just lovely."

"I'm teaching them all how to give a nice, firm handshake and, if they're going to take a bow, to hold it for at least two seconds. They need that confidence in their public presentation. At the risk of sounding sort-of old-fashioned, I think some form of etiquette lessons or discussions might be useful. Holding your head up high, metaphorically and literally, that's one of my aims for MSJ girls."

Dr Lloyd finishes with more philosophy of education: "I ask the staff to do one thing, and that's to inspire happiness. Not in a glib sense of the word but, in the classroom, it's about giving security to their learning, stretching the most able, supporting those for, whatever reason, are finding something difficult. Out of the classroom, encouraging the girls to do activities that take them beyond their comfort zone. You know, building their resilience because we will all have difficulties in our lives. And if they make mistakes at School and we catch them with love and encourage them with love to try and try again, then we're doing a great job as educators." •

OGA REUNIONS 2023



ANNUAL EVENTS PROGRAMME

Here are just some of the events Old Girls and Honorary Members have been invited to this year



Clockwise from top left: OGA Summer Reunion 10 June 2023; outside the Dome; Old Girls chatting in Lawnside Room; Old Girl modelling an MGC Blazer; Old Girls chatting with Dr Valerie Payne (MGC Head, 1986-1994)



Clockwise from top left: Old Girls in Lawnside Room; Pimms in the Quad; Old Girls chatting by the Quad chessboard; Old Girls during the Welcome Drinks; enjoying the sun in the Quad; The Abbey Reunion

SIXTH FORM EXPERIENCE



Molly and Audrey visited to speak to girls about their experience of Sixth Form at MSJ



PUDDING CLUB CAREERS TALKS HOSTED BY OLD GIRL PRESENTERS



Samara Gannon (MSJ 2012) talked about her experience in the performing arts sector; Jess Morris (MSJ 2020) talked about her experience applying for Oxford, and Felicity Goldring (Houlbrooke, St James's 2005) talked about her experience as an actress

ALUMNAE HOCKEY SIXES AT DEAN CLOSE



Nicky Connell (MSJ 2019) writes: "We had a fantastic day at Dean Close School and came third overall out of six teams. We also beat the Malvern College team who went on to win. (This was the main victory of the day!)" Team list: Saskia Ingham (MSJ 2013), Nicky Connell (MSJ 2019), Katie Guthrie (MSJ 2021), Romilly Hughes (MSJ 2022), Emily Marriott (MSJ 2019), Sarah Ellis (MSJ 2017) and Anna Hale, in goal (MSJ 2021)

PRIZEGIVING



7 July 2023 – Old Girl Imogen Edwards-Jones (MGC 1986)



LUNCH FOR YORKSHIRE ALUMNAE



9 March 2024



25 March 2023

OGA vs MSJ LACROSSE MATCH: THE FINALE

Malvern St James bid adieu to lacrosse with the final Old Girl vs. Current Pupil lacrosse match held on Saturday 16 March 2024. Organised by Amber, a Year 12 pupil, as part of her EPQ award project, the event marked a poignant moment for the MSJ community.



Amber, a longstanding member of the MSJ family, has grown up immersed in the School's vibrant atmosphere. With both parents actively involved in teaching, Mr Forsyth and Miss Smith, and even her dog Finley part of daily life at MSJ, Amber's passion for sports, nurtured since childhood, fuelled her dedication to organising this special event.

As MSJ bid farewell to lacrosse, Old Girls Marnie Probert (MSJ 2022), Lucy Walton (MSJ 2017), Linnea Gannon (MSJ 2018), Susan Utting (MSJ 2013), Romilly Hughes (MSJ 2022), Holly Harvey (MSJ 2019), Katie Guthrie (MSJ 2021), Helen Lau (MSJ 2010), Laurel Buchanan (MSJ 2010), Jade Chernel (MSJ 2017), Penny Green (MSJ 2016) and Sophie Green (MSJ 2017), along with current pupils, came together to celebrate the memories, friendships and the lasting impact of sport on their lives. The lacrosse match held significance beyond its competitive spirit – it served as a platform to raise funds for the Youth Sports Trust. To find out more, visit: <https://gofund.me/6649fdcf>.

The final lacrosse match at MSJ was indeed a moment to remember, honouring a cherished tradition and supporting a worthy cause.



Both teams on 16 March 2024



Penny the OGA Office dog with some of the Prefects and Sixth Form



Libby Wilkinson (MSJ 2018) visits Prep to talk about being a midwife



HONORARY MEMBERS' COFFEE MORNING (DECEMBER)



WREATH-MAKING



A WARM WELCOME FOR OUR OLD GIRL VISITORS



FOCUS ON MUSIC

Music has always been a strong suit in the educational offering at MSJ. Here, we look at current opportunities for girls



With Music always a huge part of the founding schools, these days it sits within the 'Expressive Arts' domain of MSJ, alongside Art and Drama.

For those who were at MGC, perhaps the biggest change to the Music Department is that the department now lives in Avenue House, with 12 practice rooms, a percussion room, a large rehearsal space and upstairs converted to flats to accommodate boarding assistants.

Back in the 1990s, Old Girls will remember evenings of one-hour practice on 'Music Corridor' in the eaves on the top floor of Poulton in the MGC Main School.

Pupils these days do not have to study a musical instrument but they have one hour of curriculum music from Year 3 (primary, age 7-8) to Year 9 (Upper IV) and the School is very strong on singing.

MSJ has been marked as a Trinity Champion Centre in 2023/2024 by Trinity College London for the third year running, and also won Artsmark Gold Award status in 2023.

"There are so many opportunities for music study," says Lucy Miller, Director of Music. "We are very proud of the fact that we have girls going through to A Level Music when many schools have stopped offering A Level and sometimes GCSE. In this year's GCSE cohort, half are doing GCSE Music – it's the second most popular of the chosen GCSEs – which is amazing. Across the country, Music is being taken off the curriculum and numbers are constantly dwindling but we are having an uptick and that makes our department strong. We also have a track record of pupils going on to study Music at university which, again, shows the possibilities of what we offer."

In any given week, there will be 90 instrumental and singing lessons taking place. Some days boarders will have lessons outside School but then take advantage of the practice rooms and play in Orchestra and, on many nights, the Music staff are having to ask girls to leave so that they can go home!

At present, there is one main Orchestra and Chamber Ensemble; a Piano Society; Prep Choir for Years 3-6; Years 7-8 Choir; a Senior Vocal Ensemble for Years 11-13; the MSJ Singers; a Guitar Ensemble, and a Prep Ukelele Group.

"We find that groups change depending on the musical interests of the girls as they come through," says Lucy. "We will always try and give the girls as many opportunities as possible to play together."

There is always a Spring Concert and Winter Concert to which parents are invited and Lunchbox Concerts at Great Malvern Priory and opportunities to play and sing at many other venues in the local area such as Christchurch and Tewkesbury Abbey. "These are experiences that the girls will remember forever."

Pupils also go to as many concerts as possible. In this Easter term, there have been trips to Symphony Hall, Birmingham; a visit to *Jesus Christ Superstar* in Cardiff (because Andrew Lloyd Webber is on the GCSE curriculum), and girls also take part in Independent Schools Association competitions; composition competitions; Choir of the Year, and musical theatre competitions. » P.T.O.

The town of Malvern is blessed with a vibrant music and theatre scene ... visit www.malvern-theatres.co.uk ... For the history of Music in Malvern and The Winter Gardens, check out www.malvernrockarchive.org.uk ... you will see why MSJ pupils have so much on the doorstep...



"If girls are keen to do a particular instrument, we will make every effort to find a teacher," says Lucy. "Most of the teachers are active musicians outside School and bring this wealth of experience to the pupils."

"We are about to do a push on instrumental music and are teaming up with Severn Arts Music services which has a campaign running promoting different instruments. This is another way to make sure the girls are exposed to as much music as possible."

Another change that Old MGC Girls will find is that what was the Senior Common Room (SCR) in the Main School (ground floor left of Reception) is now known as 'Lawnside' or 'The Lawnside Room'.

"We hold a Young Performers' Platform here each half term and the Prep department also has their own version. That's a room we often use for Music, as well as the York Hall."

Old Girls from MGC may find it interesting that where they sat their GCSEs and A Levels in what was the what was the Senior Common Room has now moved to the possibly quieter environs of The Dome.



"Our main ethos with Music at MSJ is that girls leave with a love of music. It doesn't matter if they are concert-level musicians or singers in the shower. Our goal is that they carry on with an interest in music generally – whether writing, playing or responding – and are exposed to different types of music. We sum it up as Positive Music Experiences for All. We want them to remember Music at MSJ." •



MALVERN GIRLS' COLLEGE

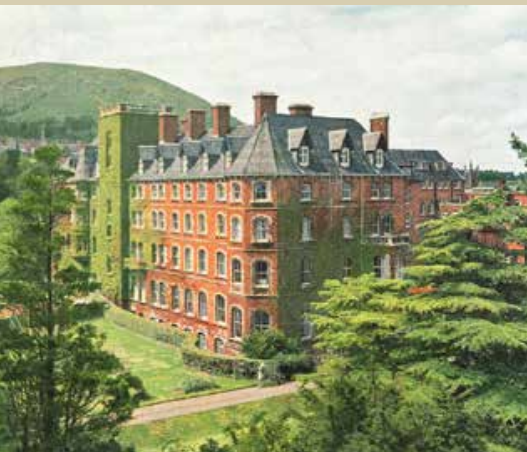


MGC FOUNDERS' AWARD

Would you like to pass on the sense of purpose, service, tradition, academic and personal fulfilment that were hallmarks of your MGC education?

Can you help Malvern St James make a real difference through our Bursary Giving scheme?

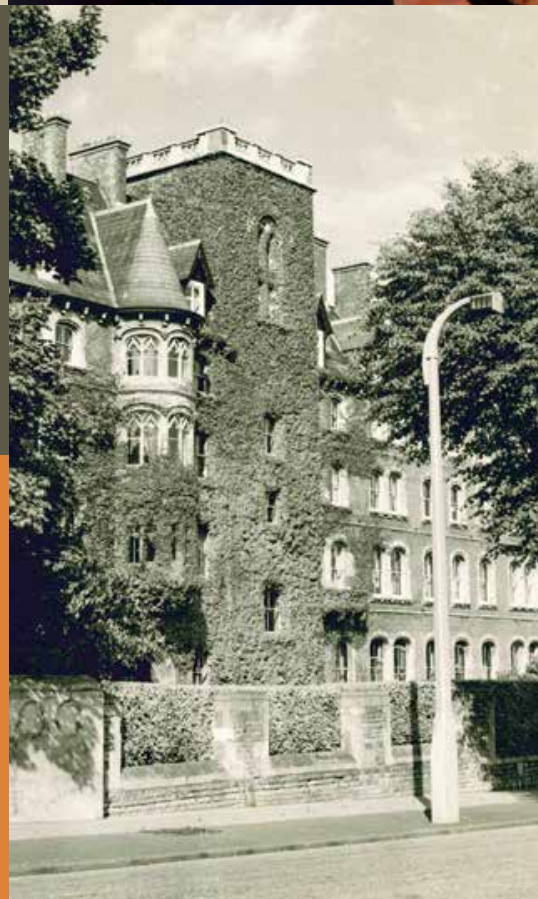
It is our aim to raise **£2 million** for bursaries by 2025 to help exceptional students come to Malvern St James. In particular, we want to be able to issue more 100% and 110% bursaries for fully-funded places.



A day place in Senior school/Sixth Form costs **£22,575 per year**, a boarding place **£46,230**. **Regular giving, single gifts and legacy gifts will help us achieve greater bursary provision.**

If you would like to find out more, please do contact Development Director Fiona Meredith on email: **meredf@malvernstjames.co.uk** | tel: 01684 892288.

There are details about bursary fundraising on our website: **www.malvernstjames.co.uk/support-us**



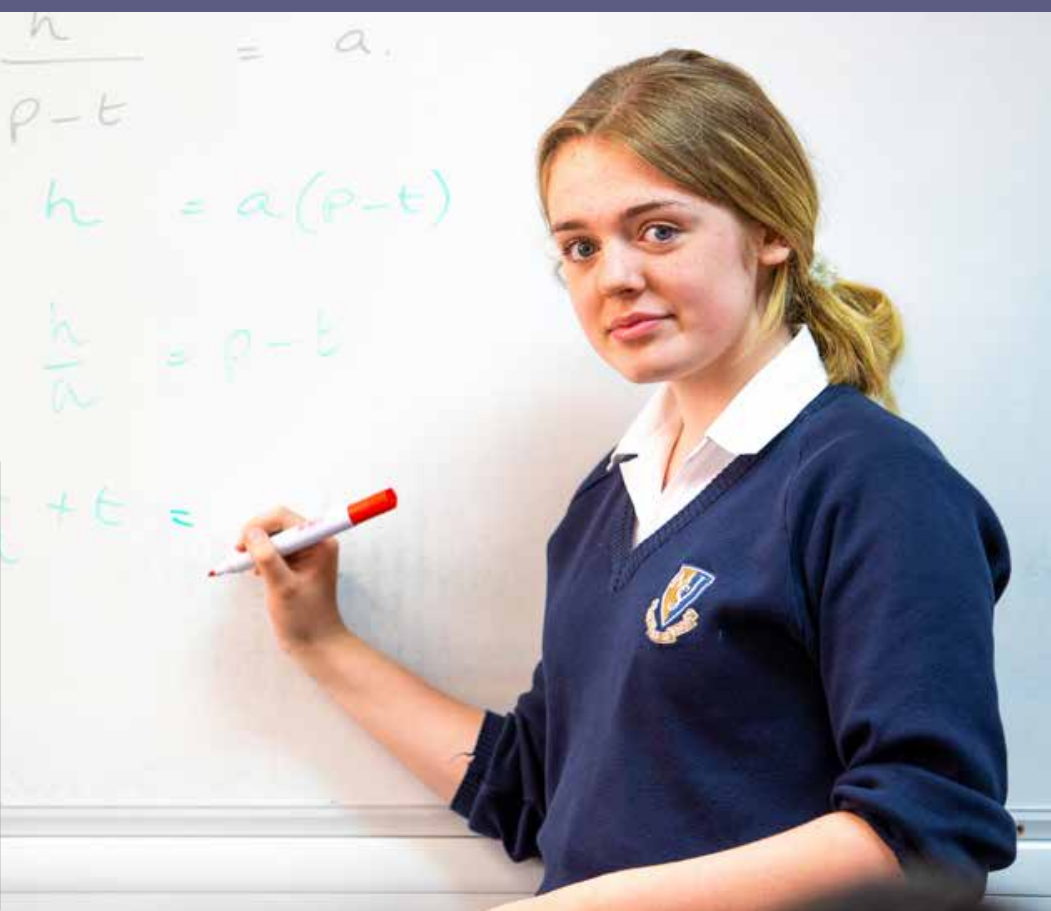
Bursaries can be named, including in memory of former teachers, Headmistresses or Housemistresses, Houses or pupils.





“ ”

**Can you help Malvern St James
make a real difference through
our Bursary Giving scheme?**



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the pages directly
by scanning the
QR code here.**



MGC Founders' Award

FROM THE FORMER HEADMISTRESS

Mrs Pippa Leggate, Headmistress of Malvern Girls' College 1997-2006

The past year seems to have flown past with a host of happy memories to reflect on in my case, despite the difficulties facing so many parts of the world. For this, I am grateful for it seems that nothing beats meeting up with longstanding friends and family whether at home or abroad.

In my case, Turkey and the USA provided some wonderful opportunities to enjoy meeting friends, although returning to Gloucestershire and celebrating in style a big birthday for my MGC daughter was a major highlight! The links with my own old school and university friends, as always, were particularly special and memorable.

It used to amaze me, when I was still working, to hear former colleagues comment on how busy they were in retirement and how they had no idea how they had time to work! Now that I am enjoying a busy retirement with a variety of commitments and activities, I must agree with aspects of this reality but I think the world of work has become even more complicated in recent years with the impact of both technology and legislation. Schools, as ever, are at the forefront and have the onerous task of preparing young people to face the realities of a fast-changing world. Whilst this is not unexpected, it seems to present further new and demanding challenges these days.

Thankfully, in the UK we live in a country where freedom of expression is still an expectation yet there are so many terms and outlooks which need to be carefully considered.

Schools and those responsible for the delivery of education today face a minefield which must be navigated with great care. As ever, the best interests of the pupil should be at the heart of the process but the balance sometimes seems unclear as the expectations of health and safety, wellbeing and mindfulness, as well as appropriate terminologies create an aura of bureaucracy through which education must be delivered. It's probably dangerous to comment on such things but basic values of respect, honesty, responsibility and resilience remain timeless and should not be overlooked as the School continues to face the challenges of these changing times.

“ ”

Schools and those responsible for the delivery of education today face a minefield...

Over the decades, our founding schools have focused on preparing girls for the wider, changing world and this remains a constant. In 2024, however, it's an exciting time for MSJ as the School moves forward under the Headship of Dr Gareth Lloyd to face the challenges of these times. As ever, the support of the wider OGA community remains important as it provides links which, over the years, have helped to bind the School

together through friendships, shared experiences and a strong sense of loyalty.

So, do please keep in touch with each other and with MSJ, which – as the fusion of all the Malvern girls' schools – welcomes your support and your views.

In the meantime, look after yourselves wherever you are in the world and hold fast to that which is good in our complicated but lovely world.

With best wishes
to you all.



Pippa Leggate and her Springer Spaniel, Liliput

NEWS

1940s Leavers

PLATINUM WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

Cynthia Haywood (Rodgers, MGC 1946) writes:

Donald Haywood and I celebrated 70 years' of marriage in June 2023. We had a few small gatherings of close friends including Tricia Wilkinson (Marsden, MGC 1956). It is quite a milestone and a very happy time, made special by kindly friends and a card from HM The King.



Summerside's sitting room

NEWS FROM BRITISH COLUMBIA

Shirley Greenwood (Fitton, MGC 1945) writes:

I am still going fairly strong at 96 and am still living on my own in British Columbia. I'm ex Summerside and am wondering if any of my contemporaries are in touch? I would love to have news. Please write via: oga@malvernstjames.co.uk.

1950s Leavers

Tricia Wilkinson (Marsden, MGC 1956) writes a lovely long handwritten letter (she is using up paper!):

I thought I would let you know who I have been in touch with in 2023 and I have also asked Elisabeth Allison (Wilkinson, MGC 1993) and Sarah Stanley (Wilkinson, MGC 1986), my daughters, to tell you who they see each year.

Marianne Fry (Newman, MGC 1951) wanted to contact Sue Bourne (Clarke, MGC) and I managed to find Sue's number through another ex MGC, Jane Clark (Toogood, MGC 1952).

Locally, I see a lot of Christine Booth (Sutcliffe, MGC 1954) and her sisters, Ann Petty (Sutcliffe, MGC 1950) and Barbara Walker

(Sutcliffe, MGC 1947). Barbara is now 94 and in a home but is in good spirits. Ann had her 90th birthday last year – she, Chris and I play a lot of bridge together!

I also see Stephanie Ingham (MGC 1965), who keeps in touch with about 25 or 30 of her group from School. They meet up a couple of times a year. They all left around 1965 and come from all over the country and abroad.

I also see Cynthia Haywood (Rodgers, MGC 1946). We had lunch not long ago with Pip Hutchinson (Robinson, MGC 1953), who lives in Cheshire. She was from Leeds originally.

I was on the phone with Penny Avison (Beck, MGC 1957), who was wondering if I was going to a lunch in March in Harrogate, arranged by Julia Wokes (Parker,

St James's 1972). She is an ex St James' Old Girl as Miss Mullenger was at the lunch last year. Caroline Pygott (Mather, MGC 1966) and Liz Ticehurst (Major, Kemp, MGC 1966) might also be there.

I keep in close touch with a group of my year at MGC – Angela Feather (Tilney, MGC 1954), Claire Wyatt (Townsend, MGC 1953), Jane Sweeting (Perry, MGC 1954), Rosemary Hallows (East, MGC 1955), Anna Manson (MGC 1955), Rosemary Weeks (Pitt, MGC 1954), Daphne Hales (Miller, MGC 1955) – she lives in Vancouver – and, apart from Daphne, we all used to meet up in London but now it is more on the phone.

Last year, another MGC pal, Dianne Donaldson (Philp, MGC 1955) and I went on a week's » P.T.O.



Jane Sweeting (Perry, MGC 1954) and Tricia Wilkinson

cruise to Spain and Portugal. Dianne lives in Edinburgh and has a sister, Linda, who also lives in Scotland. Dianne's daughter, **Alison Robertson (Donaldson, MGC 1984)** also went to MGC for the Sixth Form.

I am still in touch with **Elizabeth Virgo (Dalling, MGC 1954)**, **Susan Shaw (Pretty, MGC 1953)** and **Caroline White (Lee-Michell, MGC 1953)**. These three were at prep school with me so we have been friends for a very long time!

Caroline White's husband has sadly died and she has moved to be near her daughter in Cornwall. Sarah and I also called on **Elizabeth Kennerley (Chivers, MGC 1957)** in Cornwall and had lunch with **Bridget Hope (Hackett, MGC 1951)**, which was lovely. We stayed with **Jane Sweeting (Perry, MGC 1954)** and hope to see her and Bridget again this May. I suppose, because I was OGA Secretary for so many years, it became second nature to keep in touch with people

and, of course, my friends are so important to me.

Also, last year when I went to Norfolk, I called on **Sheila Case (Allen, MGC 1951)**, who was also at prep school with me – it was so good to see her again.

I spoke to **Jill Gladstone (Vernon, MGC 1958)** who lives in County Durham. She used to organise gatherings of her year and I think now **Gillian Hamilton (Shuttleworth, MGC 1958)** arranges these and they have recently met up at the home of **Lady Sandra Smith-Gordon (Farley, MGC 1956)**. They always used to write to me as I went to a few of their lunches when I was OGA Secretary.

Sarah, my daughter, keeps in touch with a number of her pals – **Sophie Thomas (Orchard, MGC 1986)**, **Carol Grosvenor (Thomas, MGC 1984)**, **Claire Roberts (Bishops, MGC 1986)**, **Nicola Barker (Blackham, MGC 1986)**, **Ismena Deacon (Rooley, MGC**

1986), **Louise Harris (MGC 1986)**, **Jo Hoskins (Macdonald, MGC 1988)**, **Jo Lane (Nicolson, MGC 1986)** and **Nicky Carr**.

Last year, Sarah and I had lunch with **Carol Grosvenor (Thomas, MGC 1984)**, see page 47, and her mother **Elizabeth Thomas (Wall, MGC 1949)**. Sarah sees a lot of **Claire Roberts (Bishops, MGC 1986)** and her husband.

My daughter Elisabeth keeps in touch with **Victoria Twiston-Davies (Pennell, MGC 1993)**, **Kate Fox (Thomas, MGC 1993)**, **Sarah Hales (Finn-Kelcey, MGC 1993)**, **Sall Hall (Mindelsohn, MGC 1993)**, **Tessa Davies (MGC 1993)** and **Penny Kaye (MGC 1993)**.

Both Sarah and Elisabeth meet up with two or three of the groups once or twice a year.

I am hoping to come to the Summer Reunion this year and enjoyed the letter to Old Girls from the new Head. He sounds a delightful person and I look forward to meeting him.

Love from, Tricia.



Tricia Wilkinson and Bridget Hope (Hackett, MGC 1951)

Deirdre Kinloch Anderson (Loryman, MGC 1956) sends the following news:

My cousin, Andrew Loryman, was a teacher in Zambia for 20 years and together with his wife, Albina, they have been committed to a project to enhance the quality of life in the small Luapula village to which his wife belonged. Thanks to their generosity and all the support they have received, the Community Centre building had its opening launch in October 2023. This building will be the focus of activity for the village and surrounding area, for education, health, worship and community activities of all kinds. I am proud to feel part of this "Loryman legacy in Zambia".

On St Andrew's Day, 30 November 2023, I gave a Tartan Talk and Kiltmaking Demonstration to 185 primary Year 6 pupils, sitting cross-legged on the gym floor at the Junior School of George Watson's College in Edinburgh. It appeared on Instagram next day, with five pictures!!

Eve Aveling and I started out to Malvern in 1949, at the age of 11. We set out on the School Train from Paddington Station in London. We have remained friends ever since. I married and live in Scotland, Eve married and lives in France. In recent years, we have met up once a year in a European city and this year we spent three days together in Zurich.



Deirdre and Eve in Zurich

Jill Gladstone (Vernon, MGC 1958) sent a lovely handwritten letter:

Thank you so much for the really attractive invitation for the MGC OGA Summer Reunion 2023. I particularly liked the idea of Pimms in the Quad! When I was at Malvern in the 1950s, it was a rather drear, underused space, except on sunny days when we ate our elevenses there. Was it Chelsea buns on Thursdays?!

I wish you all a very happy day. I will be certainly be thinking of you. I find I am not able to travel now at 82½.

I am still in touch with at least 10 friends from School and I remember MGC with gratitude.

Thank you for keeping me 'in the loop'. I enjoy reading news of the School and admire you for keeping us all informed.

In August 2022, my husband and I celebrated our 60th Wedding Anniversary and we received a lovely card from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, just a month before she died. So, it was very special indeed.

With all good wishes to everyone.

Patricia Birchley (Banbury, MGC Avenue House 1959) writes:

Having been Chairman of Buckinghamshire County Council in 2017-18, I have now been voted in as Chairman of the new unitary Buckinghamshire Council for 2023-24. The social skills and speech-making I learnt at MGC in the 1950s have been a great asset to my career in business and politics!

Being Chairman of Buckinghamshire Council gives me the opportunity of visiting schools and voluntary organisations, speaking at local events and encouraging people to take more exercise! It's very different from the old County Council with tighter budgets and greater needs.

My year to date has included a visit to RAF Croughton; fundraising for Scannappeal and Medical Detection Dogs, whose birthday we shall soon be celebrating at Clarence House; opening a retirement village, and attending graduation ceremonies at Buckinghamshire universities.

I first learnt about community service at MGC and have had immense pleasure in helping to improve life chances for many people as a result!



Patricia Birchley with her partner Peter

1960s Leavers

NORFOLK REUNION

Tishy Bayne (Patricia Mackenzie, MGC 1964) writes with news. We send her all our love:

I am delighted to report we had a second excellent Reunion Lunch at the Honingham Buck and this time our numbers were 20, nearly double those of 2022!

This year we had eight Old Girls from the years of 1962-1964, only **Sarah Jewson (Spencer, MGC 1963)** and myself actually living in Norfolk!

Once again, **Lottie Ridler (Crossley, MGC 1964)** drove her husband John and **Angela Crowe (Tudor, MGC 1964)** down from Lincoln and they stayed at the Buck; **Sarah Clarke (Judd, MGC 1964)** came up from Kent, as did **Charmian Gilbert (Cheatle, MGC 1962)** and her husband John; **Lyn Hobbs (Colley, MGC 1963)** came from Warwickshire and **Vicki Billings (Gaut, MGC 1964)** from Bucks, so it was a very loud and chatty table catching up with recent news and the Old Days!

We were all so pleased that **Heather Hornbrook (Christy, MGC 1956)** and her husband Peter were able to be driven up from Burnham-on-Crouch, Essex, after several years' absence, as their daughter, Sue Bishop, was over from Australia, so they all stayed a couple of nights at the Buck and visited friends and old haunts whilst up in Norfolk!

We were also glad to welcome back **Tricia Wilkinson (Marsden, MGC 1956)** down from Yorkshire after her cancellation last year due to a family funeral, and also **Anne Laubscher (Scott, MGC 1953)** and her husband Louw, after poor Anne was struck down with food-poisoning last year!

Our dear regular Norfolk Old Girls, **Marianne Fry (Newman, MGC 1951)** and **Anne Charlton (Burton, MGC 1958)** were on excellent form as usual and our semi-Old-Girl, the Director of Development at MSJ, **Fiona Meredith**, drove over from



Standing: Charmian Gilbert, John Gilbert, Lyn Hobbs, Sarah Jewson, Tishy Bayne, Sarah Clarke, Vicki Billings, Lottie Ridler, Anne Charlton. Seated: Fiona Meredith, Heather Hornbrook, Angela Crowe, Anne Laubscher, Marianne Fry, Tricia Wilkinson, Christopher Bayne, Louw Laubscher

Malvern to join us as usual, flitting from table to table and bringing interesting things from the Archives!

It was a very happy occasion and we all left hoping to meet up again in September 2024.

However, I'm sorry to say that I was sadly diagnosed in November with terminal secondaries of my bladder cancer, which we did think I had got away with!

I started on chemotherapy at Addenbrooke's, Cambridge, at the end of January and I shall be having another scan just before Easter.

As you can imagine, it has been a nasty and unexpected blow for us all, but something that we just have to accept, like so many others.

I shall obviously not be up to arranging another Reunion in

September, if indeed I am still here, so if anyone else would like to take over, do let us know and we can hand over names and email addresses etc. My email is pbayne46@gmail.com.

With very best wishes to you all.

Audrey Peters (Bennett, MGC 1964) was in Benhams and reports:

I am living in South Devon and am hugely busy since retiring from the NHS – local Wildlife Trust, sailing club, struggling to learn German, concerts, local talks, keep fit/ Pilates etc.

I am still in (very intermittent) contact with **Tishy Bayne, Sarah Jewson, Lottie Ridler** and **Vicky Strang (Robinson, MGC 1964)**.



Vicky Strang and Audrey Peters

Jenny Hawkins (Tolhurst, MGC 1965) writes:

Dear OGA, Hello from wet and muddy Somerset! In 2023, I saw **Jane Ormond (Elsas, MGC 1969)** and **Anne Hughes-Hallet (Wright, MGC 1969)** when they came to stay with my sister **Carolyne Tolhurst (Warren, MGC 1969)** who lives locally to me. In September, I met up with Anne's cousin **Elizabeth East (MGC 1964)**, staying in Brittany. I hadn't seen her for 60 years!

Three or four years ago, I played in a friendly golf match against another local club. During the meal afterwards, I discovered I had been playing against **Anne Gordon (Reid)**, a 1965 leaver like me. At the same table was **Patricia Frazer (Bychowski/Durham Hall, MGC 1969)** who was in the same year at MGC as Carolyne. Since then, Anne has come to play in our Opens and I have played at her club.

In February, I saw **Marianne Herne (Walker, MGC 1965)** when we attended the funeral of **Judith Withnell (Pryce, MGC 1965)**. Judith's sister, **Kathryn Pryce (Taylor)** was there with her family. Kind regards to all.

ROSEMARY WHARTON

(JOHNSON, MGC 1962)

In February 2024, Rosemary Wharton writes from South Africa:

I have seldom been in touch with the OGA for a number of reasons – I left England at the age of 21 and have lived in South Africa for the past 54 years, with only periodic trips to Europe.

When my husband and I visit our family and friends in the UK we realise that, although we have a wonderful time, we are ‘foreigners’ amongst the general population and are out of touch with the society and the Establishment! In short, we are now more South African than English!

However, in my 80th year, I still have happy (and I trust accurate) recollections of my seven years at MGC. I share some of them here

in case they jog the memory of any of my contemporaries (or amuse the younger set).

I entered MGC in Hatley (Junior School) at the age of 11, having already experienced boarding school elsewhere for two years. One of the previous teachers at Parkfield (**Miss Jukes**) highly recommended MGC to my parents and they ascertained from **Miss Brooks**, MGC’s Headmistress, that the curriculum covered many subjects apart from the academic ones. By the time I entered Benhams House (Middle School) everything had changed due to Miss Brooks’ retirement and I plodded along in the B Stream of

an academic school which had high aspirations and was broadening its intake beyond merely children of military or professional families! (Bearing in mind too that we were the post World War II ‘bulge’ generation). Suddenly there were many more bright girls amongst us and Advanced Maths was taught. How I hated our lessons with ‘**Latin Willy**’, who actually was a kind soul but her subject has, of course, helped me with languages through the years. A Lower VI House was created in the College for those who needed extra study time and this presumably increased the total numbers in the Senior School. »» P.T.O.



Hatley

My special memories of Hatley are of playing Jacks and Contraband on the common room floor while the big radiators kept us warm; needlework, knitting and basket weaving lessons; skipping; horseriding (which was removed from the curriculum in the Lower IV – Year 8); the exciting Natural History lab with fish tanks containing frogs, newts and other wonders of the countryside; writing compulsory letters home on a Sunday evening (I still have a couple of them).

There was a Brownie Pack and we slept in tents in the damp field below the house with rudimentary camping equipment. It was fun baking bread on a stick over a fire and singing camp fire songs under the stars. For some reason, a couple of the songs were in German (perhaps to teach us tolerance of Germans which our parents certainly were not teaching us!): '*Der Oo-Hoo*' and '*Stille Nacht*'.

One of our favourite pastimes during break was swinging from branches of the trees in the wood below the playground.

When the bell rang, we had to leave the wood immediately and head off for the next lesson. One day, I thought I would grab my turn for a last swing on a large branch. In my haste, I lost my grip and fell, injuring my right shoulder. Our strict Headmistress – **Miss Cayley** – was surprisingly kind and did not punish the wayward girl in a sling! (60 years and several skiing falls later, normal 'wear and tear' necessitated a shoulder repair!).

The food

Food was fairly good at Hatley, especially fish, and although we were often starving by Sunday lunchtime, I particularly recall a day when we were served Mutton with real Caper Sauce – delicious.

Special party dresses

I think it was at the end of the Autumn Term that we were required to have a special party dress. My mother – who did not sew often – laboriously made me a delicate dress of organza with a tulip-shaped skirt. I did not see her making it so probably did not appreciate all the hard work and love that went into creating that dress.

Illness

At the beginning of one term, I developed Erythema Multiforme (it was similar to Scarlet Fever). I was shipped off to the San for about two weeks, suffering from a small rash but had a high temperature and awful nightmares. Matron was known to be a tough character but she was kind even when my hallucinations got her out of bed in the small hours! Fortunately, no-one else caught the illness and we had no idea from whence it came...

Middle School House - Benhams

In September 1957, we moved up to Middle School Houses, with a friend if possible. We found new admittances when we arrived at Benhams and, of course, friendships were undone and new ones made. One of our early challenges was to create fancy dress costumes and props depicting well-known films and the results (including *South Pacific*) were amazing!

We hardly got settled into a routine and Asian Flu swept through Benhams. Only one or two pupils and staff were left standing to feed and attend to those of us reclining in the dorms.

Even at 13, some of the girls were addicted to home manicures and I can still recall the perfumes of their treatments!

Sometimes, we enjoyed an evening of dancing to popular music and our net petticoats went into baths of sugar water to make the skirts of our Summer dresses stand out stiffly above the bobby socks and sandals.

Also in Summer, we could apply for a few square metres of the garden to grow flowers, herbs, lettuce, radishes, etc. Digging over the rock-hard ground in the Spring was another matter and, on one occasion, my back went into spasm and I hobbled like an old lady to sit on a low wall until it eased! There was a walnut tree in the middle of the garden – it was interesting to watch the green fibrous exterior grow and eventually split to expose the young nut inside. Much later in life, I developed a passion for pickled walnuts made from these immature nuts.

House plays

I have some photographs of our house play actors – *The Goshawk* (Autumn 1958) – took place in the garden at Benhams and the bird wore an elaborate costume covered in real feathers.

Tobias and the Angel was a Lower V (Yr 10) form play performed on the York Hall stage. As I did not wish to act, I was designated Stage Manager which meant sourcing the props – not easy as the scenes were set in the Middle East, so the Director had to step in but she (**Miss Godon**) was clearly an accomplished drama teacher.

York Hall

The York Hall brings back scenes of 600 girls practising Assembly hymns with 'bone props' between their front teeth and trying to sing 'out of the top of their heads!' If you had lost your bone prop, there was a penalty so we fashioned them out of chalk to evade detection!

Music Teachers

We had two Head Music Teachers in my time. They were talented ladies devoted to their task and the Choir was introduced to the latest choral music by Benjamin Britten and others, and we did well in the Three Counties Choir competitions. We were also privileged to sit occasionally under the instruction of famous musicians like Gerald Moore CBE, Sir Max Beerbohm and Jacqueline du Pré.

Socials

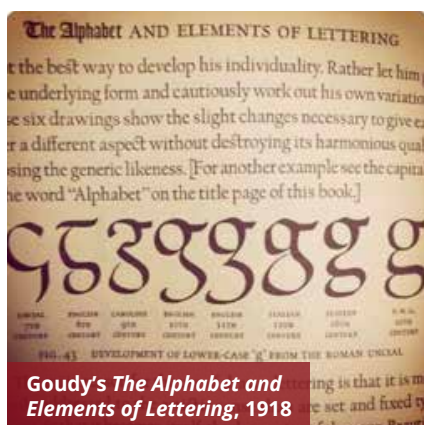
Girls who were chosen to perform at The Winter Gardens in Gilbert and Sullivan with the boys from Malvern College were, of course, much envied. However, it seems that our Sixth Form year had forfeited all our 'brownie points' because the Summer Dance with the Boys' College was cancelled in 1962 as a 'lesson' to us. It was a huge disappointment.

Climbing onto the roof to have a smoke was probably a lost 'brownie point' or climbing out of a window and disappearing to The Winter Gardens another!

I remember sitting at our dorm window in Summer when I was 15 and gazing at the night-time lights of Worcester far away – the real world was out there.

Lessons!

I have not said anything about our lessons and prep. Being a non-academic child, sadly I was not stimulated by very much of what we were being taught. Occasionally, our older teachers were absent and



Dietrich-Fischer-Dieskau and Gerald Moore CBE, concert pianist



Left: Sir Max Beerbohm, writer, caricaturist, theatre critic and radio broadcaster. Right: Jacqueline du Pré, Oxford-born cellist

we were delighted to have younger women standing at the blackboard!

One was **Mrs Robertson** who spoke really fluent French and it was inspiring to hear, having begun my French studies at the age of six (some years later, I too became fluent in French!).

Another temporary teacher wrote in Italic and I so admired it that I incorporated some letters into my own writing – consequently I still write 'g' back to front!

We did our Prep at College so, after tea, we would walk in groups from the house to our classrooms. One afternoon in the Winter term, I had to go ahead of my friends. The afternoon darkness and cold of that walk was my first experience of how winter can oppress the soul. (My saddened parents later thought that we had remained in South Africa because of the sunshine but, in fact, we remained because of my husband's unique

opportunities here in engineering – although daily sunshine does, of course, add many special dimensions to life.)

Mid-morning treats

A mid-morning reward during lessons were the baker's buns with our juice at break. How we looked forward to those and sometimes swapped with each other because there was a different type each day: Chelsea buns, currant buns, jam doughnuts, cream doughnuts, sticky buns.

After lunch, we headed off for the various sports (one field was quite a walk away), returning to our boarding houses for tea.

Tea comprised of white sliced bread, a weighed allocation of butter with our name flag on it and a choice of jam and spreads, which were brought from home along with our sweet ration and fruits at the beginning of term. » P.T.O.

Tea was the only unsupervised meal and I will not describe how we passed the bread around the dining room – in case any youngsters read this and get ideas!!

Breakfast, lunch and supper were supervised and if you were sitting next to **Miss Warry** you had to remember that she NEVER drank water with her meal, despite the waiting glass in front of her!

Some girls hated raisins and if there were any in the rice pudding, they would be left all around the rim of their pudding bowl. That is what I did with the gristle which sometimes outnumbered the pieces of meat in the stew (I had been spoilt at home with top-quality meat from the village butcher). On the whole, the food was good and we were healthy and fit.

Sport

Sport was a hugely important, and usually enjoyed, part of School life. The Head Sports Teacher, **Miss Shipley**, drove us mercilessly and to great effect – running up and down the side line of a hockey or lacrosse pitch shouting instructions to the teams and even throwing her hat at us in frustration!

We enjoyed extensive facilities and were a top sporting school in southern England.

Rounders, tennis, swimming, diving and lifesaving also challenged us and we rose to the occasion. (Oh, and I never did manage to climb the rope to the high gym ceiling!)

When the ground was too frozen for sport, we had to run around the fields and the Common – always hoping to get a glimpse of a College Boy en route!

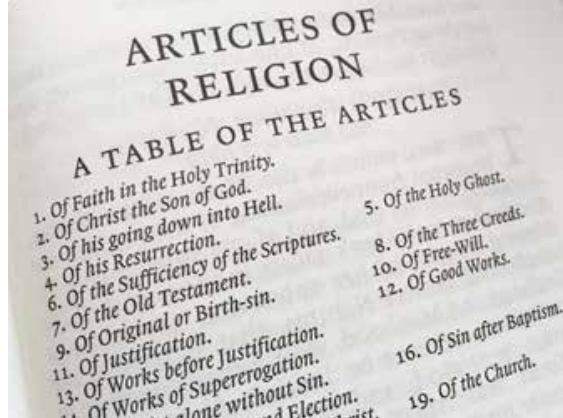
I am sure many of us still have a handsome copy of **Miss Phillips'** account of her years as a much-loved Housemistress at MGC: *Smile, Bow and Pass On: A Biography of an Avant-Garde Headmistress, Miss Iris M Brooks, Malvern Girls' College, 1928-1954*, (1980) – which is all we were allowed to do in those days if we met up with the boys when walking on the Hills.

Art classes

My daughter did not get her artistic eye from me but an amazing thing did happen in Upper V (Year 11) – in **Miss Roundhill's** art class, we were taught how to calculate how to place various features when creating a portrait. We were paired with another pupil to paint each other's portrait. I was fortunate that my partner had a very distinctive and attractive appearance – what a miracle when my portrait of her was a really good resemblance. I remember her name but will not embarrass her by mentioning it!

Religion

We had a few girls at School from the Far East, Middle East and one or two from Africa and some of Jewish background. Nobody seemed to mind the Christian ethos of MGC and everyone attended Assembly with Bible readings, prayers and hymns (*Jerusalem, There is a Green Hill Far Away* and so on). Church services were held on Sundays in the Priory but separate from the local congregation. It is such a magnificent place of worship of Almighty God and it was awe-inspiring to be there – there was plenty to distract one from the repetitive Order of Service!



At age 16, those of us who had been baptised were prepared for Confirmation by **Canon Lund** and I seem to recall we were supposed to learn the 39 Articles of Religion and possibly the Catechism.

Confirmation was treated as a milestone, with dozens of congratulatory cards exchanged and, for some, a gift of a Confirmation Cross (mine was stolen in 2022). I think we were confirmed by **Bishop Coggan**. We wore white veils and our parents came for the occasion. I was very aware that I had not really understood what confirmation meant and therefore should not be making promises to God which I did not believe. But I did not have the courage to be the only one of some 100 candidates to put up my hand and ask to withdraw!

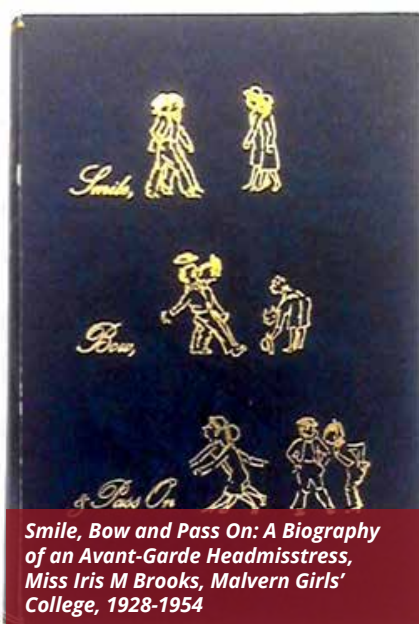
Thereafter, we were also expected to attend 6am Sunday Communion Service at Christchurch next to Benhams.

My church attendance gradually dwindled to nothing after leaving School and it was 20 years before I was fortunate to hear the Gospel fully explained and consciously to surrender my life to the Lord Jesus.

Head of House

Sometimes teachers' planning does go wrong. At the beginning of our O Level year, many of us were anxious to know if we would be chosen to be House Prefects. My father drove me back to School mid-September and waited in the car to hear what the Prefect List on the noticeboard announced. To my absolute horror, I saw that I had been chosen as Head of House.

I returned to my father and BEGGED him to go and see **Miss Warry** and have the decision



reversed as I knew I was not up to the task. Or course, he would not hear of it so I found myself with a group of Prefects who were probably as surprised as I was by my appointment. It was a hopeless situation as I had absolutely no idea about leadership and really no understanding of my responsibilities.

I discovered later that the procedure was for the House staff to take a vote at the end of the July term on who would be new Prefects and Head of House. Apparently, our young and gentle Matron had swayed the vote. I must have been such a quiet pupil that no-one understood my personality.

Eventually, **Miss Warry** and I crossed swords which gave her a reason to send me up to the Lower VI House situated in our magnificent mid-19th century College building: 'as I would not pass my O Levels if distracted by my duties at Benhams' (quite right!).

I really enjoyed my 18 months there and made new friends. We matured and our Housemistress (**Mrs Robinson?**) taught us such things as self-respect and confidence: 'Now girls, no more looking at the floor, look me in the eyes, walk with your head up and bust out!' And we did.

O Levels

In those days, MGC enrolled their Upper V (Year 11) girls for the Northern Examination Board O Level exams. This was apparently easier than doing the Cambridge Board and I can only assume that, because we were probably the first intake to have been following a totally academic curriculum, there was some trepidation about our success rate and its impact on the important MGC reputation.

Other Old Girls can explain what changes were made in subsequent years...

I recall that June 1962 was a hot month and we swotted for our upcoming O Levels while sunbathing on the grass tennis courts adjacent to College. I am sure

I was not the only girl who got burnt and I am still aware of the patch on my right knee which was caught by the sun that day so long ago!

I believe our year came up trumps for ourselves and for the School with close to a 100 per cent O Level pass rate.

Most of us sat up to 11 different exams for O Level (2 x English, 2 x Maths, French, Latin, etc etc). Those of us weak at Maths managed to pass at a second attempt in November!

Sixth Form

I believe three things were lacking in our Lower VI which will be so different today. Career guidance seemed to be non-existent. When I asked for guidance, I was told to go and read the *National Geographic* magazines!

I also do not recall any holiday camps or other off-site challenges or training being offered, unless parents were willing to pay for ski trips to Switzerland.

And there wasn't any help in study technique so it seemed to me it was 'know it' or 'hope to discover it'.

I sat at a table in the beautiful, enormous, wood-panelled College Library watching my clever friends beavering about on the bookshelves but not having a clue how to get started on my own research. It was scary and disheartening. I didn't know how to plan, having mostly learnt classroom material up to that point.

A Levels

I really enjoyed our Biology lessons, including dissecting a frog, so I chose it as an A Level subject with another favourite, Geography – only to be told that those subjects together did not fit into the curriculum and I must replace Geography with History (not my strong subject).

Ultimately, it made no difference in my case... I was not academic and not excited by the idea of university but, nevertheless, it was a pity that, at the beginning

of Lower VI, we understood that two A Levels would get us into a university. By the time the School year was ended, three A Levels were required and my father felt that my Lower VI year had been a total waste of money as I should rather have been learning typing, book-keeping etc.

My departure from MGC was somewhat humiliating as I had to return at the beginning of the September term to fetch my belongings and explain to my friends that my father had taken me out of the School because of my poor performance!

Reunions

Years later, when I was visiting England, my MGC friends kindly invited me to one of their reunions and eight of us met at a restaurant in South Kensington. Most were 'retired' by then and it was amazing to recognise each person as the girl I last saw in 1962 but now moulded by the experiences of life. It was a special day.

Looking back

I drove myself to MGC from the Wirral, Cheshire, for my first May Reunion. **Miss Warry** did not (or would not!) recognise me although, as described, I had briefly been her Head of House at Benhams.

Despite all the character-shaping ups and downs of teenage years, I knew that I had received a privileged education, learnt much and enjoyed many interesting and happy times. I probably never adequately expressed my gratitude to my sacrificing parents. My wounds slowly healed as life moved on to new things. And so ended my experiences at MGC.

In 1974, I met my wonderful husband, David Wharton, and my faith in human nature was fully restored! I thank the Lord God for all of it.

Rosemary Wharton

1970s Leavers

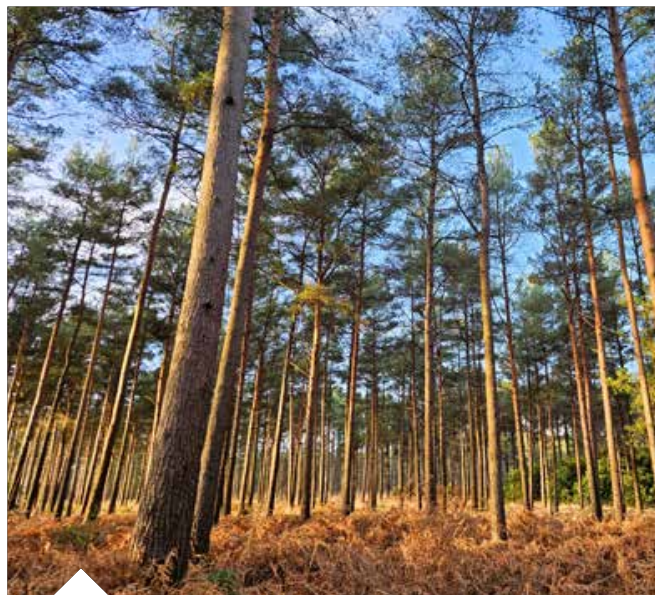
Jane Bachner-King (MGC 1971), Liz Denno (Collard) and Judith Pearman (Kenny), all from Summerside MGC 1971, attended the 2023 reunion last Summer:

It didn't seem as though that much time had passed! We Zoom regularly, also including **Ysobel Jones (Roberts), Caroline Jones (Holt) and Alison Bullock (Stedeford)**. We live in the UK, Canada and the USA. We reminisce about our Summerside days and are a supportive and happy group!



Felicity Robinson (Rivett, MGC Hatfield 1973) writes:

Now that I'm living in Colwall, I am finding it somewhat surreal to be driving around very familiar places in Malvern decades later and regularly passing the old alma mater too of course! My sister **Diana Hughes (Rivett, MGC Avenue 1964)** visits too. Semi-retired, I have an extended career as an artist! Shows and teaching are keeping me busy.
www.landscapesnaturally.co.uk
www.felicityknapstudio.org



Marian Brebner (Atkinson, MGC Hatfield 1974) writes:

Last year, my husband and I moved from our home in Lincolnshire to be closer to our older daughter and her family near Ringwood, Hampshire. We are now easily able to help out with our grandsons and share much more in their adventures as they grow up. Renovations of our bungalow and gardens are virtually complete and we are enjoying exploring the nearby New Forest, where I walk our dogs every day, as well as walks on the beaches.





Helen Pugh (MGC 1974) writes:

Judging from the wisteria in the photo, it must have been May when a group of us met at RHS Wisley, Surrey. It is hard to believe it is now 50 years since we left MGC. We were joined by **Elaine Clarke (Dumble)** who hadn't joined our group before and so there was a lot of chat over lunch.

Slightly later in the year, five of us met again to visit Westminster Abbey for a second time to reuse our tickets within the year. The only one who had remembered to sign their ticket was **Diana Lewis (Matthews)**. As our year's Head Girl, we could expect no less. Chris, Sheinaz, Rosie and I were part of this group. We had a very full-on day at the Abbey followed by the Christmas lights, dinner and then an excellent production of *Private Lives*. I was exhausted and kept having to remind myself that we are all the same age and so no use complaining about age!

Claire Hall (Cave, MGC Benhams 1979) writes:

I continue to work as a Consultant Clinical Haematologist at Harrogate, although now part-time. My husband, previously a GP, is retired. Our son, Thomas, is getting married at home in May. I also have a daughter, Amelia, happily settled with her boyfriend in Sevenoaks, Kent.

I am in touch with **Frances Von-Bertele (Loudon, MGC)**, **Harriet Campbell (Girling, MGC)** and **Miranda Plunkett (Pascoe, MGC)**. We have all met up on a number of occasions in recent years – for a weekend together, at a belated party for my 60th and, most recently, I saw Frances (Farnie) when my husband and I attended a post-wedding party for her daughter and my goddaughter, Kitty.



From left to right: Sheinaz Panjwani, Rosie Nye (Painter), Diana Smith Billard (Smith), Helen Pugh and Chris Findlay (Rees). The photo was taken by Liz Greenwood (Mackrill)

1980s Leavers

Helen Baxter (Cooper, MGC 1980) writes:

I was having a clear-out of bits and pieces the other day and came by these photos. They are Summerside house photos from 1976 and 1977. I know Summerside no longer exists but I wonder what became of all the house photos which used to hang in the corridor?

The OGA says: "All photos and special items from previous houses are currently housed in our Archive Room at MSJ."

Katharine Broad (MGC 1982) writes:

I was at MGC from 1976-1982, starting at Ivydene Hall. I remember at the start of term carrying all my belongings, in a rug, up to the top dormitory, to lay all of them on the bed, ready to be checked off. Once per week we changed the sheets: 'top to the bottom, bottom to the wash'.

Birthdays were celebrated with a choice of cake and your classmates singing: 'For she's a jolly good fellow...'. Fire drills were scary, climbing out of the window, down the metal staircase. After leaving MGC, I completed a BSc and MSc, then travelled round the world for a year, working on the way. I worked in marketing in London on my return but had a recurring dream to become a doctor. I have now been a GP for over 20 years and have loved it. I live in Poole, Dorset, with my 16-year-old twins. I am in contact with **Melanie Priston**.

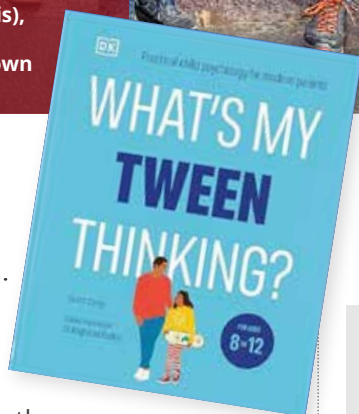


Summerside house photos, 1976 and 1977

Louise Baltesz (Nickerson, MGC 1984) sends in this photograph:



Louise Baltesz, Elizabeth Cooke (Morris), Nicki Wakeford (Brocklesby), Corinna Dawson (Hobhouse) and Georgina Brown on a visit in March 2023



Tanith Carey (MGC 1984) writes:

I have a new book (My 14th): *What's my Tween Thinking? Practical Child Psychology for Modern Parents* out this Spring. It's the third in the series of *What's my Child Thinking?* books for DK Books, which are now in more than 35 languages and published in more than 40 countries.

The paperback edition of my last book: *Feeling Blah? Why life has left you joyless and how to recapture its highs* – which is the first book to analyse the rise of anhedonia – or loss of joy in the modern world, is out in March.

This is after the hardback has featured in news media all over the world, including *The Times*, *Newsweek*, *Reader's Digest*, BBC Radio, *The Daily Mail*, *The Daily Express* and *You* magazine.

I am also in training for my MSc in Gestalt Psychotherapy at the Metanoia Institute (a psychology training branch of Middlesex University London) which I am combining with books and writing on psychology and parenting.

Feeling Blah? Why Anhedonia has left you joyless and how to recapture life's highs is out now in the UK, US and Australia.

Tanith's 'special place' at MGC was the Library (you see – it's been inspiring girls for generations) but one of her abiding memories is how cold it was!

Louise Green (Hadley, MGC Iydene 1983) writes:

I was at MGC from 1976-1983 and it is now eight years I have been living in the south of France working for the European Society of Cardiology. I should have paid more attention to Mrs Peters' classes as my French is still decidedly lacking!

I am still in touch with Jemimah Agnew (MGC), Wendy Gee (Hickman, MGC 1983), Jacqui Hawkins (Hart, MGC 1980) and other Iydene and Avenue OGs. We have an exciting 2024 and 2025 coming up with the big 60 birthday celebrations! I would love to hear from any OGs living between Nice and Cannes.

OGA: do send a message via the OGA Office if you want to be in touch with Louise Green

Sarah Stanley (Wilkinson, MGC 1986)

sends a photograph taken the day before the Summer Reunion 2023, at a mothers' and daughters' lunch. Sarah's mother is Tricia Wilkinson and Carol Grosvenor's mother is Elizabeth Thomas.



From left to right: Sarah Stanley, Carol Grosvenor (Thomas, MGC 1984), Tricia Wilkinson (Marsden, MGC 1956) and Elizabeth Thomas (Wall, MGC 1949)

1990s Leavers



Kate Ferry (Kirkland, MGC 1991), who was our **Guest Speaker at Prizegiving in 2022**, has moved from McLaren to Burberry as Chief Financial Officer and Executive Director. Kate inspired our old marketing strapline '*Be Anything, Achieve Everything*' because this is what they were told at MGC.



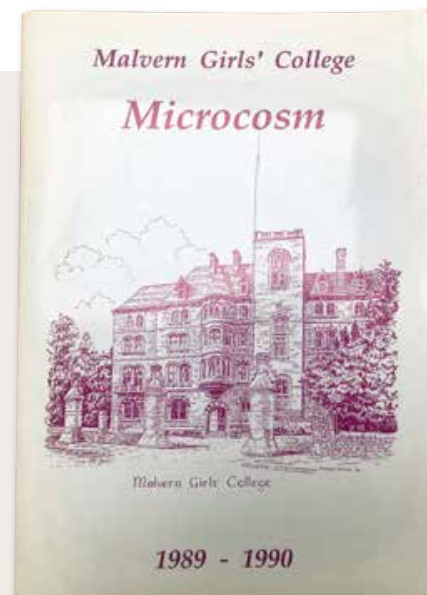
Penny Neville, current Assistant Librarian, MSJ, notes that **Elizabeth Day (MGC 1997)** was spotted on the BBC programme, *The Traitors: Uncloaked*, in February 2024. Penny says: "I always look and listen out for Elizabeth as she's often on BBC Radio 4 and I listen to her podcast."

Jo Leahy (Moulds, MGC 1991) writes:

This is a few of us in Bristol in January 2023. We had a really fun meet-up and we always go straight back in time. One of the reasons we meet up regularly is to think about **Olivia Alderson (Millington, MGC 1991)**. We still miss her a lot.



From left to right: Virge Walker (Bowen), Chitra Humphries (Thambyrajah), Charlotte Prosser (Picken), Lucy Leigh (Burns) and Jo Leahy (Moulds)



Does anyone remember this School magazine, *Microcosm*? This one is from 1989-90 and includes an interview with **Dr Payne**, Headmistress; photographs of all the sports' teams; reports from the houses and School life, including the 1989 Fashion Show, and individual photographs of the Class of 1990.

Abbie Paleologos (Franklin, MGC 1994) writes:

Dear OGA, A photo for amusement! I started at MGC in 1987 (Summerside and Poulton) finishing in 1994 before moving to The University of Edinburgh to study medicine. I now live in Sydney, Australia, working at the Manly Adolescent and Young Adult Hospice as the Palliative Care Consultant.

One chilly weekend, I went with my husband and 15-year-old daughter, Phoebe, to a charity dinner. Our 13-year-old son, Charlie, felt it wasn't his scene, so stayed at home! Here's a photo of Phoebe and me, with the Harbour Bridge in the background. I'm wearing my 36-year-old MGC cloak (still with name tape stitched in). I did unzip the purple, Summerside-coloured hood, as it didn't quite match for the evening!



Abbie Paleologos and her daughter Phoebe

Kiko Matthews (MGC 1999), our MGC Old Girl who set a new world record for fastest solo female row across the Atlantic Ocean in 2018, visited School in February 2024 for the *Serendipity* variety performance. Kiko is one of our Malvern Alumnae 100. As a School, we fundraised to help Kiko's chosen charity, King's College Hospital in London, where she had been treated for a near-fatal disease called Cushing's and sponsored her solo mission across the high seas. She says: "My focus has never been my illness. It's always been, okay, I've got something wrong with me

but everything else in life is more important." Kiko underwent brain surgery just months before setting the new world record. You will see Kiko's Malvern Alumnae 100 board by the Port Cochère, the stone archway entrance on the left side of the building at MSJ.



2000s Leavers

Georgina Davidson (MGC 2006) writes:

I now live in Las Vegas. My sister, **Becky (MGC 2005)** and close friend **Antonia Nnyanzi (MGC 2006)** visited in December 2023. I run an anti-ageing and lifestyle company and have two young children. Becky works in marketing and has a young son. Antonia runs a gymnastics club in London. We met up at the Bellagio Hotel.



From left to right: Becky Davidson, Georgina Davidson and Annie Nnyanzi

Kim McManamon (Harris, MGC 2006) writes:

I thought I would share that last year I decided to make a career change. Following a corporate career in a variety of roles from recruitment to HR to digital transformation programme management in Australia and the UK, I found myself seeking a role that combines my passion for creativity, nature and outdoor spaces with my ability to get things done. After some serious consideration, I decided on garden design.

In July 2023, I graduated with distinction from the Garden Design Diploma at London College of Garden Design based at Kew, London. I was thrilled to receive special recognition at graduation for my final project from the guest judge Jo Thompson.

Following graduation, I have been lucky enough to join an award-winning design studio in West London where I work on a wide variety of projects for private residential clients.

Through my designs, I aim to create beautiful, immersive outdoor spaces that are sensitive to their surroundings, the environment and most importantly are a pleasure for people to spend time in.



Kim McManamon at graduation from the London College of Garden Design. Inset: Studies from Kim McManamon's portfolio

MGC-HONORARY MEMBERS

SO X-SIGHTED MAKES THE NEWS

Anne Dicks, former Head of Classics, teacher and coach at Malvern Girls' College and MSJ for almost 30 years, has hit the headlines in *The Guardian* in early 2024. Anne is bandleader for Britain's only partially-sighted Morris dancing troupe, *So X-Sighted*, based in Malvern. <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2024/jan/22/a-new-start-after-60-my-puppy-made-a-friend-at-the-pet-shop-and-life-was-never-the-same-again>

NEWS FROM DEVON

Chris Shepherd (Honorary Member, 1978-1990) writes:

We are really thoroughly enjoying retirement here in East Devon where we are within a walk of the sea. I'm busier than I was when I was working. I am involved with lots of church activities including Messy Church, toddler groups, Table Talk at the local school and Open the Book (where we dress up and tell Bible stories in schools).

There are also choirs, orchestras, Sid Vale Association talks and walks, my involvement with a benefice a few miles away and drama. I'm in the Sidbury panto and auditioning for another play. There's no end of stuff to do! We are also embarking on the travel we couldn't do before and have just come back from Australia which we loved. Greetings to all and do get in touch if you're down our way.



Elisabeth Rambridge (Honorary Member, 1978-2008) writes:

I am not that fond of heights so I am proud to be looking quite relaxed on the top of my church's tower, though you will notice I am sitting as I am too scared to stand! I have recently become interested in the history of the bells at church which is why I'm there.

Ever the teacher – or maybe it's more the housemistress – my life revolves round routine, the very pleasant one of keeping in touch with friends.

Once a week I visit **Jane King** – and yes, still there's lots to talk about. Weekly – and on the dot – **Jane Corfield (Wigley-Smith)** and I speak on the telephone for a good catch-up. Regularly, I speak to **Judith Cleever (Davis)** and, again, there's always so much to tell each other. There's so much to talk about also when I see **Anne Crowther**.

Whenever I visit Charles, my son, at Philip Serrell's Saleroom, I salute The Benhams next door and remember the happy times there.

There's always the chance of 'bumping' into friends when I pop into Malvern, and I was delighted to have a chat with **Suki Pallett** in BG (downtown, eh?!).

Charles tells me that recently there was a cheery toot and wave from **Rita Taylor** when he was collecting his lunch.

I speak to **Rosie Kefford (Tapp)** often – invariably sharing our love of gardening, and this and that.

If you're wondering why I manage so much time for chat, it's to compensate for the time Andrew spends supporting his local pub, the Farmers Arms in Birtsmorton. He is fairly well after his fourth hip replacement.

Our lovely loyal Golden Retriever Ginny died peacefully in October, aged 16 and a half, after a wonderful life out here. It meant we could venture off on a holiday but I was anxious about Andrew being on a plane, so we set off for the Italian Lakes by train which was such fun.

My routine is also geared round

all I do as a Churchwarden. Our benefice has recently joined with the neighbouring one, and so it's nice to see more of **Sarah Musgrave**, the Churchwarden there, as well as **Ros Hayes**, **Greer Owen**, **Anita Lloyd** and **Maggi Harriss**.

Recently, at our Lent group, one of the attendees was an Old Girl of St James.

I went to hear the Archbishop of Canterbury on his prayer visit to Worcester Cathedral and there had a quick catch-up with **Sue Adeney**.

Earlier, I had been to an exhibition of Dame Laura Knight's works and doing some reading after, was reminded of all the links with Lawnside during the heyday of the Malvern Festival.

Of course, I try to keep up by letter and card – **Liz Prophet** and I have resolved this year we will meet up. Similarly, so do I and **Helen Vose**, and **Shirley Vose**, and **Mary Irish** too.

I had a lovely long letter from **Katherine Close (Foot)** only a few days ago.

Harsha Mason has recently retired from teaching. Her daughter is my goddaughter and keeping on the fine tradition of being a teacher.

Both Jane and I write at Christmas to **Janet Severn**.

Jenny Metcalfe shared a birthday with Charles, and I keep up with Peter and had a lovely long chat with him on The Birthday. He is now a great-grandfather and said how much Jenny would have loved to have been a great-grandmother. He is also a neighbour to **Hannah Plant**.

As ever, I love the way connections weave in and out.

I've seen **Melanie Dawes** a few times recently walking in the area when visiting her parents.

I heard from **Sarah Staniforth** also – her mother was a very cherished friend to me.

Jenny Knott's father is my very excellent PCC (Parochial Church Council) Secretary.



Elisabeth Rambridge on the roof of St Faith's Church, Berrow

I feel a bit bereft of animal company and so volunteer very quickly to stay overnight in Malvern and look after Charles and Lucy's pets – they have two cats now.

I allowed myself a cultural holiday last Summer and attended lots of sessions at the Ledbury Poetry Festival. If you live locally, I commend it to you warmly.

An additional bonus was to see **Pauline Newton** and **Sally Tudsbery Turner** at one session.

I know that **Nicki Castello** also enjoyed attending. It reminded me that I actually went up to the University of St Andrews to read English but changed to History when I got there – for ignoble reasons! You must ask me when we meet at the next OGA Reunion.



St Faith's Church with its 15th century tower

IN MEMORIAM

We sadly report the following deaths:

Margaret Boggis (MGC 1940)

John Boggis, Margaret's nephew, would like the OGA News to share the following: "Margaret Boggis, who attended MGC in the late 1930s, died on 14 November 2022. Margaret wanted me to send something to the OGA. I am now able to send you an edited version of an obituary which was produced by her goddaughter, Victoria ArrowSmith-Brown, which was included in St Anne's College, Oxford, Alumnae Magazine."

Margaret Boggis was born in Suffolk. Her father was a vicar and the family soon moved to Devon, with Margaret's four older brothers and her sister. She was educated at Malvern Girls' College as a scholar, with the financial help of a well-off spinster neighbour. Margaret's parents could not have afforded it on a vicar's income.

Margaret remembered leading walks at the School on Sundays. Her father and eldest brother were keen mountaineers and Margaret herself loved hills and walking and continued to walk and lead walks long into her retirement.

Margaret matriculated from the Society of Oxford Home-Students (now St Anne's College, Oxford) in 1940, in the early days of the war, where she was tutored by Miss Dorothy Lane Poole in Literae Humaniores. Wartime study was not easy, with shortened degree courses and much tension and sadness.

Undergraduates were encouraged to do war work and other charitable work in the vacations, such as digging for victory in Port Meadow, Oxford. And not for charity, but usefully, fruit picking in the Vale of Evesham.

Margaret came down in 1943 and joined the WRNS, eschewing a commission as a Wren Officer, and became a Leading Stoker at HMS Abatos in Southampton. Her duties were ferrying officers and crew to and from the boats and ships moored there.

From Margaret's diaries, it is clear that she was removed from stoking on account of her organising capabilities and spent the run-up to D-Day helping with the administration and logistics.

HMS Abatos was closely involved with Operation Pluto (pipelines for fuel laid under the Channel).

Margaret was more than a little miffed when, shortly after the war ended, she was demobbed almost overnight. However, she loved the sea thereafter, and had many adventures with friends that she had made during the war*.

Aged 100, Margaret owned up to having been approached to work at Bletchley Park on code-breaking but she had declined – with the comment that she would not have been able to keep a secret!

“”
Aged 100,
Margaret owned
up to having been
approached to
work at Bletchley
Park

Teaching days

Margaret took her Diploma of Education in Oxford, then went as a trainee to Cheltenham Ladies' College, where they had a Classics

department of nine teachers!

From Cheltenham she went to St Margaret's Exeter where she taught for two years and was a very young teaching headmistress for eight more (1953-1960).

Getting the school to pay and function properly as it moved from being privately run to more of a trust school was wearing, and Margaret eventually decided she needed a change, so went to teach at Kenya High School for Girls in Nairobi. She made absolutely the most of her time there, teaching, climbing both Mount Kenya and Kilimanjaro, and after four years, driving herself home via Jerusalem.

Margaret returned to teach in Birmingham in 1963, where she bought a house, her home for the rest of her life till she moved to a care home three years before her death following a fall.

In 1964, Margaret accepted a post teaching Classics and later Russian at King Edward VI Handsworth School for Girls, retiring in 1980. By then, she was Deputy Head. She passed her Russian A Level aged 48.

To say that Margaret was an inspirational teacher is something of an understatement. Her correspondence shows the huge amount of love and respect in which she was held from generations of schoolgirls and colleagues, who visited, arranged outings with her and kept in touch through thick and thin. She was a great believer in proper letters and did not like the one-liner style of Christmas cards. She had a genius for asking pertinent and interesting questions about all kinds of things, from wild flowers to comparative philology via medieval history, which meant that, being with her, even if it involved extensive Google research, was a constant mind-opener.

Later years

Margaret was very fond of her parents and her siblings and stayed close to her siblings and to their families. She was a constant presence in their lives and an enthusiastic participant in family events, always delighted to meet new generations and their partners and children and hugely encouraging of their doings.

Similarly, with neighbours, Margaret welcomed new residents, kept in touch with them and loved their children. As her nephew has said, she was good at seeing good things and talents in people and telling them. Her move to Gracewell, later Edgbaston Manor, was a lesson in how to cope with the loss of independence gracefully and gamely: she joined in, she made friends, she offered her carers interest, affection and thanks and they responded in kind. On outings she would smile and wave her royal wave and greet anyone willing with openness and friendship.

Travelling was Margaret's delight, and she used school holidays and retirement to the full. She went on bus tours, sea journeys, solo travel, walking and climbing holidays and school group trips – including a memorable Easter one in 1968 to Florence, Rome and Pompeii, travelling by train taking a party of schoolgirls from King Edward's.

Margaret twice visited the Antarctic and, in younger days, regularly drove around the Mediterranean, especially Greece. She shared her journeys and discoveries through photos and in conversation, and her accounts, though personal, were never about herself.

Finally, Margaret's faith, as her nephew Andrew said at her funeral, was 'simple, profound and unwavering'. She read the Bible daily and tried hard to live by the precepts in which she believed, chastised herself for unkind thoughts, prayed for all those she knew and loved, was a regular and conscientious churchgoer and took quiet trouble to help any less able than herself.

*The two books written by her friends about the WRNS in the Second World War are *Entertaining Eric – a Wartime Love Story* by Maureen Wells, Ebury Press, and *Maid Matelot* by Rozelle Raynes, Nautical Publishing Company.



Margaret Boggis, photograph taken as a bridesmaid in 1950

Diana Scholefield

(MGC 1950)

Dr Robert Scholefield, Diana's brother, writes to let us know his sister died in November 2023, aged 91.

Diana and our late sister Fay were both students at MGC in the 1940s and 1950s. Diana had kept up with old friends from MGC and was delighted to be contacted in the Summer of 2019 by the Association and subsequently an article about her and *A Career In Music* appeared in your magazine. Her funeral was held at Hereford Crematorium and here are some words I wrote about her life.

Diana, a Life as Music

I considered for some time how to do justice to Diana's long life and decided to try and describe it as a piece of music, with several movements – rather like a little symphony. The start is lively, an *Allegro* perhaps.

Diana was born in February 1932 in London. Shortly after, she moved with our parents to Hereford. Our sister, Fay, was born in June 1935. Both girls went to the Redcap School in Hereford and then onto Malvern Girls' College.

Diana began to excel in music at Malvern. At the age of 15, in 1947, she was awarded the Gold medal for Grade 6 piano and three years' later she gained a scholarship to the Royal College of Music. There she studied piano and viola under leading teachers of the time. One of her tutors was Dr Herbert Howells with whom she formed a lifelong friendship and who became a family friend.

For Diana's 21st birthday, she was given a grand piano and took this around her several flats in London. One in Barons Court, overlooking The Queen's Club, was on the third floor, which provided quite a challenge for the removal firm.

While Diana was living in London, she was very kind to me. For several years, as a small boy, for a Christmas present I was put on train from Hereford to Paddington where Diana met me. She then



Diana Scholefield

took me to Bertram Mills Circus at Olympia and to a West End panto or show. George Formby one year!

Diana decided not to be a concert pianist or music teacher and so took additional training in secretarial studies. This enabled her to get short-term work but she wanted a proper job.

In 1953, she found it and her life slowed to a more moderate, *Andante*, pace.

She was appointed secretary to the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain. This had been formed five years' earlier by Ruth Railton. The two worked well together and over the following decade much was achieved. Summer holiday courses were started. Leading instrumental professors were persuaded to run workshops, with professional conductors and a concert at the end.

Diana also organised foreign tours for the NYO. One exciting one was to Moscow, Leningrad and Kiev, where she managed not to lose any of the more than 100 teenagers, instruments or music.

The job was all-consuming so it was time for a change. In 1963, Diana joined the publishers, Longman Green & Co, later Pearson Group, and stayed with them for 25 years.

Taking on a variety of jobs including helping to set up a new computer system, Diana spent one year running the Edinburgh office

and, in 1980, went to New York where for two years she supervised their American operations.

Diana retired in 1988 and life slowed a little more to *Lento*. She had moved from London to Harlow, Essex, and, via Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire, eventually to Much Hadham, Hertfordshire.

There Diana devoted her energy to village life. She attended the local church and learnt to play the organ and cello so she could join the church orchestra. She produced the parish magazine and ran the white elephant stall at the annual fete. She played piano for choirs and pantomimes. Bridge became a big part of her life, making her many friends over the years.

Although Diana had no children of her own, she took great interest in the activities of her nephews and nieces, godchildren, lots of cousins and all their children. She loved to welcome many to her home in Much Hadham, which became a staging post between London and Cambridge.

After London, Diana learned to love the countryside, although she never lost her lifelong fear of cows. She compensated by becoming devoted to cats.

However, health problems made living alone increasingly difficult and, 10 years ago, the movement became *Diminuendo*.

Diana returned to Herefordshire in 2013, firstly to live with us in Ledbury, then, when stronger, she moved into a nearby flat in Leaden Bank. Active again, she resumed organising people, joined bridge groups and whizzed about on a mobility scooter.

Having lived on her own, Diana was better prepared than many for coping with the isolation of Covid lockdowns. But, sadly, increasing frailty led to a fall in December 2020. After a spell in hospital, she moved into Ledbury Nursing Home for her last months.

However.

Some musical pieces have a *Coda*. In Diana's case it recalled two old motifs.

Whilst at Leadon Bank, she had two unexpected visitors.

The first was Colin Gough, from Birmingham. He is a violinist and he had been a member of the National Youth Orchestra at the time when Diana was working there. They

had great fun sharing memories of those happy days. The second visitor was Jonathan Clinch, a lecturer at the Royal Academy of Music and an authority on Herbert Howells. In the course of their conversations, he mentioned the possibility of

there being unpublished piano music.

Diana was happy to tell him she had one such piece, *a Siciliana*. It had been written for her in 1958. Jonathan was delighted and has since published it. So, there we are. A life as music.

**Pamela Payne
(Meaker, MGC 1945)**

Penny Small (Payne, MGC 1969) writes to let us know about the death of her mother, Pamela Payne, who died in June 2023, aged 95: "My mother was at MGC, as was I."

**Margaret Cotton
(Hutchinson, MGC 1949)**

Jeremy Cotton writes to let us know about the death of his mother, who died in January 2024.

My mother, Margaret Elizabeth Cotton, was born in Newark, Nottinghamshire. She was educated at Newark High School and Malvern Girls' College and then graduated in Maths from Newnham College, University of Cambridge.

She was seconded to the Admiralty to create a computer and worked on 'Leo' for one day a week for the Royal Navy. She assisted with solving quadratic equations about torpedo spreading.

She married my father and lived in Southend, Essex, and then near Blackpool, Lancashire. They were blessed with twins and the oddment within 18 months and

then moved to Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire. She taught Maths at Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School and became a magistrate, helping to develop community service as an alternative to prison.

She enrolled on the first Ministerial Training Scheme with St Albans Diocese, was ordained deaconess, deacon and priest and ministered in the Hertford Hundred Group. In retirement, she found a home at St John's Digswell.

She delighted in the next generation – Johnny, Thomas, Richard, Sarah, Paul, Zoë and Michael, and the following generation – Henry, Percy, Hermione and Alfie.

**Cressida Margaret Buchanan
(Chambers, MGC)**

Tricia Wilkinson (Marsden, MGC 1956) writes:

Cressida Buchanan died peacefully in August 2023. She was a dearly loved wife – for 64 years – of Commander Michael Buchanan, RN. She was beloved mother of Peter and Hugo and devoted grandmother of Alexander, Emily,

Alice, Lucy and Matty. Her funeral was in Warblington, Hampshire.

Vicki Hewson (Lord, MGC 1962)

Paul Hewson writes:

Sadly, my wife, Vicki, died in July 2023, aged 76. She had been a student at MGC in, I think, Benhams, leaving after O Levels.

Lyn Knights (Grey, MGC 1965)

Elizabeth Jolley (Monckton, MGC 1965) writes:

Lyn Knights, known as LAG, died in November 2023. She was a member of Ivydene Hall and Senior House.

**Gillian Sinkinson
(Frith, MGC 1970)**

Suzy Frith (The Abbey 1973) writes:

Thank you so much for The Abbey Reunion last Summer. I very much enjoyed it, seeing long-lost friends as well as catching up with others I see more often. It was delicious food and excellent timing!

I'm afraid I have to inform you about the death of my sister-in-law, Gillian Sinkinson. She was at MGC from 1965-1970, I believe, in Lindfield. She went to The University of Manchester, became a successful accountant and lived, for many years, in Gloucestershire with her husband Jim. She had a son and daughter and five grandchildren, who all live close by. She died in April 2023 from leukaemia. She was accepting and up front about her diagnosis and was funny and brave to the end. I would appreciate it if you could mention this in the OGA News as old acquaintances of hers may not know.



Margaret Cotton with Sarah, Henry, Percy and Hermione



MALVERN ST JAMES
Girls' School



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who are going
to change
the world’

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ST JAMES'S AND ST JAMES'S & THE ABBEY



The St James's Girls at the Hickstead Derby, 1978

FROM THE FORMER HEADMISTRESSES

Miss Elizabeth Mullenger, Headmistress of St James's & The Abbey 1986-1997

Dear Old Girls,

I never thought I would have a year with so little to offer as news! Suffice it to say that my peaceful life in beautiful Herefordshire continues and, in the face of the political and geophysical turbulence around us all, I count my blessings daily.

My production of *Dark Remembered Days* at The Market Theatre, Ledbury, went ahead in 2023 and was very well supported. We were able to donate a good sum to Ukrainian refugee families and their hosts in Herefordshire and South Shropshire. Having always previously put on this show with Sixth Formers, it was most interesting to have the perspective of an older cast in this new version.



Elizabeth with Penny, the OGA Office dog

More immediately, I shall be attending the Yorkshire Lunch in Harrogate organised by Julia Wokes (Parker, St James's, 1973) for Old Girls from all our founding schools. Please do let the OGA Team know if you would like to organise reunion events in other regions. They are brilliant at providing administrative support, archive material and presentations about current School life. West Country? Cheshire?

Think about it and let us know!

Finally, a plea for help with the OGA Garden.

Lawnside's Miss Stewart, who designed and planted it, is no longer able to work on it and it needs a small team of volunteers to keep an eye and to form a working party, perhaps twice annually. Lynne Lindner and I are willing to be involved but could any local Old Girls or Honorary Members perhaps offer as well? It is a beautiful feature of MSJ and an important one. Please let me know via the OGA Team if you can help.

I hope that thoughts of your schooldays revive some happy memories of people and places. Cherish them!



Gemma Bruce (Knowles) with Kei Miyamoto and her husband and children in Tokyo

It was lovely to find myself sitting behind Pippa Martin and her mother at a concert just before Christmas. Pippa was over from New Zealand with her family and was meeting her St James's & The Abbey friends the following day. It is always good to hear of such informal reunions both here and further afield.

I enjoyed hearing about Gemma Bruce's (Knowles, St James's & The Abbey 1995) recent family holiday in Japan with Madoka Serizawa and Kei Miyamoto. I shall also be seeing Sumii Imai (Hamawaki, St James's 1989) when she visits England this Summer.

"Man was made for joy and woe;
And when this we rightly know,
Thro' the world we safely go.

Joy and woe are woven fine,
A clothing for the soul divine.
Under every grief and pine
Runs a joy with silken twine."

Auguries of Innocence, William Blake

With affectionate good wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be "Elizabeth Mullenger".

FROM THE FORMER HEADMISTRESSES

Mrs Ros Hayes, Headmistress of St James's 2003-2006, and MSJ 2006-2010

“ ”

**The world is a book and
those who do not travel
read only one page.**

St Augustine, 354-430AD

This year, I have been fortunate to read more pages of the world book, having enjoyed trips to Cornwall, Ireland and, further afield, Turkey, Vietnam and Australia.

My most recent trip was to Perth and S.W. Australia. It was not my first choice of destinations, as I like to experience very different cultures when I travel but I went to accompany my sister and her husband. Temperatures were as high as 45°C which left us wondering how best to spend our time but ferry trips down the Swan River, lazy days under the shade of trees in beautiful Kings Park and early evenings watching wild kangaroos graze on the irrigated grass of a local golf course provided some respite from the heat. On cooler days, we visited the Margaret River wineries and chocolate factory, walked the second longest jetty in the world and swam off beautiful, isolated beaches.

However, my trip to Vietnam in November 2023, with **Pet Jones, Karla Shindler and Judith Lampitt**, was much more my sort of destination. A whirlwind tour took us from Ho Chi Minh City in the South through Central Vietnam to Hanoi in the North. The trip was culturally diverse, took in opulent temples, stunning scenery and, sadly, exposed us to the results of unresolved conflict. Highlights included a boat trip on the Mekong Delta, a visit to the Cu Chi Tunnels, a stay in the old French capital of Hanoi and visits to the UNESCO World Heritage sites of Hoi An and Ha Long Bay. The limestone rock formations in the bay were spectacular and canoeing amongst them an unforgettable experience.

Back at home, I continue to play tennis several days a week, enjoy my garden and spend happy times with my friends. However, it is always good to have a challenge and this year mine is to complete the Cotswold Way. The route covers 102 miles from Chipping Campden to Bath. I walked half of it in October 2023 and plan to complete the rest in May this year. Much of the route runs through unspoilt countryside and the views have been breathtaking.

The MSJ Carol Service was a joy and the reception afterwards to mark **Mrs Raraty's** retirement a special occasion. I was pleased to be there to hear the fond messages from staff, parents and girls as they thanked her and wished her farewell. So, a new era begins. I look forward to meeting Dr Gareth Lloyd and wish him all the best for the future.

Ros Hayes



Ros Hayes canoeing in Ha Long Bay, Vietnam;
Inset: Ros Hayes with Pet Jones and Judith Lampitt

NEWS

1950s Leavers

Diana Rowntree (Butters, St James's 1955) writes:

My maiden name was Diana Butters and I was at St James's in the early 1950s. My fellow illustrious friends were among the following: **Alicia Launder**, **Susan Montague (Thomas, St James's 1955)**, **Carol Knapman** and **Alison Seebom**.

Memories are many – walking round the hills one Sunday, the boys from Malvern College were allowed the next week, n'er the Twain should meet!!

Our lovely Headmistress was **Mary Anstruther**, whom I admired greatly. She was known as **Tante**.

The first time I met Tante was on the first Sunday of term when I knocked on her door to inform her thank you very much for having me but could she please ring my parents or if they were out Nanny,

as I would like to go home! She sat me down and said I was lucky as she had only gone away to school when she was the ripe old age of 14 and that was much harder. Tante helped me when my beloved grandfather died and I was bereft. So much so, my parents decided a change of air might help and I was sent to Switzerland.

I wonder what Tante would make of a male Headmaster, probably she would say about time!! She was definitely a forward thinker.

I now live in Australia and would love to hear from any Old Girls in similar situations.

Do ask anyone who wants to be in touch to email via oga@malvernstjames.co.uk.

1960s Leavers

Zillah Richards (Pettit, St James's 1967) writes:

You won't have the faintest idea who I am but my maiden name was Zillah Pettit and I left St James's in 1967. I'll try to keep this short. I spent four years at art school – the latter three years at The Ruskin School of Art in Oxford gaining a degree in Fine Art in 1971.

Since then I have travelled widely working as an artist and archaeological draughtsman in northern Greece, Knossos in Crete and in Sparta (for the Director of the British School of Archaeology). I specialise in architectural and floral watercolours and have had several exhibitions of my work.

After returning from the Galápagos Islands and South America, I worked for Peter Scott at Slimbridge Wetland Centre (WWT) where I met my American husband.

I have two children. My son is a film/TV composer and my daughter is a TV scriptwriter and producer. Sadly, my husband died when I was 45 and the children just five and six years' old. While they were growing up, I started

teaching art from my home in Tunbridge Wells. I have **Miss Varley** at St James's to thank for nurturing my love of art – it has served me well all my life. I used to help paint the scenery for the School plays!



Zillah Richards working on a Dinos from Rhodes, now in the Heraklion Museum, Crete

Valerie Byrom-Taylor, who taught me singing in the Semichorus choir, is still in touch, which is very special.

I am also still in touch with Alison Voelcker (Edwards, St James's 1966), Janet Bowman, Sally Scott (Payne, St James's 1967) and Evelyn Bally (Crichton, St James's 1967) who is godmother to my daughter!



The restored Dinos. Zillah's job was to draw it after Petro, the on-site pot mender, had put it all back together. Originally, it would have been made in Rhodes, then imported to Crete and was found in a necropolis. It was used for mixing wine and water. Zillah went to visit it in May 2023



Janet Bowman (Sutherland, St James's 1967) writes:

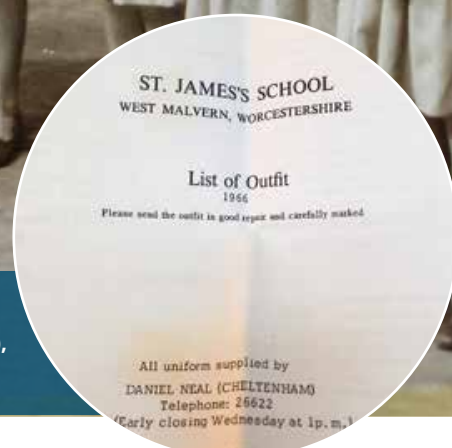
I was at St James's from 1960-1967. I have been looking through my 'leaving book' and found these photographs.

It is the Semichorus choir about to perform at the Cheltenham Festival in May 1966. We came second but we were awarded Distinction for our 'Can ye sew cushions'!

Have you seen a uniform list too from those days? This is dated 1966. I love the '24 handkerchiefs' but only 'four pairs of knicker linings'! Also 'cushion for the garden'. Best wishes.



The music teacher is Miss Byrom-Taylor and the singers, l-r: Sally Scott (Payne, St James's 1967), Lucy Clark (St James's 1966), Nurit Ball (Leader, St James's 1967), Zillah Richards (Pettit, St James's 1967), Janet Bowman (Sutherland, St James's 1967), Celia Harrison and Jacky Seymour (Kerr-Peterson, St James's 1966). We were in our best frocks and cardigans! Inset right: St James's 'List of Outfit', 1966



1970s Leavers

Amanda Harrison (Fairtlough, St James's 1970) writes:

I used to go to St James's from 1968 to 1970, then left and went to Evendine Court cookery college.

I was in Circle R. I still keep in touch with **Val Brinton (St James's 1973)**. Sadly, I lost my beloved husband in 2022. I live in Godalming, Surrey, and am unable to drive or attend anything as I have severe

osteoarthritis of the hips, knees, feet and hands. I am owned by my small dog. I would like to hear from anyone who still remembers me. Thank you.



Harrogate lunch, March 2024

HARROGATE REUNION

Julia Wokes (Parker, St James's 1972) writes:

Just to say we had a very successful reunion in March as we met for the OGA annual lunch, Yorkshire branch. The six of us are: **Caroline Pygott (Mather, MGC 1966)**, **Sarah Williams (Sales, MGC 1966)**, **Penny Avison (Beck, MGC 1957)**, **Jackie Seymour (Kerr-Peterson, St James's 1966)** and her friend **Karen Mountain**, who

was a member of staff at Malvern College, and myself.

We were also delighted to welcome **Elizabeth Mullenger** who, despite her long journey, was her usual delightful and informative self. She managed skilfully to co-ordinate our merry band, reminding us on dates and events as we chatted about our School days!

Elizabeth brought us up-to-date on the events and successes of MSJ, current and future plans

for the School and it was so pleasing to hear it still had the same positive ethos.

We had a really enjoyable time and a delicious lunch whilst exchanging stories, reminiscing about our friends and talking about our love for Malvern.

Thank you for your support for the organising of this event. I'm hoping we can repeat it next year.

With kind regards.



Vivien Culverwell (Herbert, St James's 1976) writes:

Here is a photo of a group of St. J's Class of 1976 who met up for lunch at the Victory Services Club, London, on 13 December 2023.

After exchanging all our news, we then had a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon remembering our School days. We are hoping to meet up again in the Summer and maybe some more will be able to join us.

In the photo are **Fenella Salt, Susan Jane Atherton, Alison Parr, Juliet Freund, Sophia Hutchings, Katie Lampitt, Vivien Herbert.**

I have used their maiden names as we were known at School. Kind regards.

1990s Leavers

NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND

Gillian Staehelin (McIlwaine, St James's & The Abbey 1997) writes:

In September 2023, I started voluntary work in a Fairtrade shop in our little town. I still continue to help out at the community bi-annual clothes and games/toys' bazaar and I am now head of the games/toys section. There is a tourist information office and I do translations for them from German to English, including translating the WHOLE website (over 130 A4 pages).

I also found a Trinidadian lady living in our extremely small village (I grew up in Trinidad and Tobago)!!!! Currently, I am trying to set up a multicultural group for all

the foreigners and open-minded villagers in our area.

I attend an English speakers' monthly coffee group and a monthly "Soiree Francophone". I love our little village life at the foot of the mountains in Switzerland. I have been living here since 2009 with my son and husband.

I left St James & The Abbey after six wonderful years in 1997.

Sending you greetings from Lanzenhäusern.



Gillian Staehelin

Gemma Bruce (Knowles, St James's & The Abbey 1995) writes:

In Japan, I was with **Madoka Serizawa (St James's & The Abbey 1994)** and her boyfriend in her hometown of Numazu. She invited me to a traditional tea ceremony with sushi, where Madoka performed the ceremony during her weekly session. We also visited **Kei Miyamoto (St James's & The Abbey 1995)** and her husband and children in Tokyo (see photo on page 58).

2000s Leavers

**Lizzy Haldar (Bennett,
St James's & The Abbey 2008)**
writes:

.....
Last year was a busy year with wedding planning and two significant work projects, one being heavily involved in the company listing for CVC Capital Partners on the financial markets. I am now officially married and have changed my surname to Haldar!

I also wanted to reach out as I have been in contact with a previous colleague who I used to work with at Vanguard. She has been doing some amazing work

around creating content for careers in the financial world, external to Vanguard. I thought of MSJ and wondered whether your Careers Team would find this useful for the girls at School? All through her own career, she has built up an incredible wealth of knowledge and experience around how the big investment banks function from a hiring perspective, the CV assessments, and she has been interviewing people from across the investment world, asking for advice and tips for students.

Like me, she is passionate about supporting students and

making the investment world more accessible to students who may never have thought of or don't even know what the world of finance and investment really is all about, or how to make a career in it.

OGA Office says: Thank you so much for these ideas. It is always brilliant when Old Girls suggest ideas for the Careers Team.



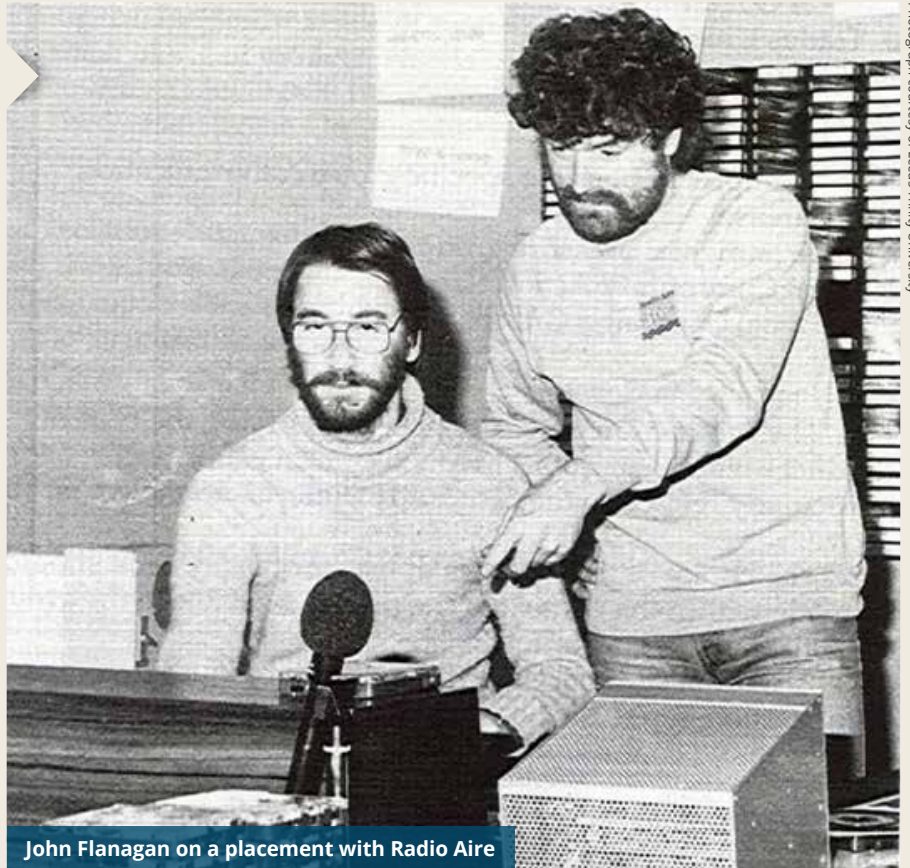
Lizzy and Neil Haldar married in October 2023

HONORARY MEMBERS NEWS

John Flanagan, Honorary Member, writes:

"You may be interested to know I was awarded Runner-up in The Robert Burns Humanitarian Award 2023. It is a prestigious international award with nominees from across the globe."

John was Head of Drama and Theatre Studies at St James's & The Abbey from 1988-1992 and temporary acting Head of Drama and Theatre Studies at MGC from 1996-1997. He moved to the Philippines in 2010 and works with vulnerable and homeless people through his own charity.



Photograph courtesy of Leeds Trinity University

John Flanagan on a placement with Radio Aire

Jill Bray, Honorary Member writes:

A sad Tale: HOW NOT TO DO IT!

Yes, I know we all have ideas or promise ourselves that we shall, starting tomorrow. Those of you who are writers, or purport to be such, stop reading now...

In due course, the time came, and enough of it came, for me to WRITE MY BOOK.

BUT WHAT ABOUT?
I had been brought up to write

short stories with titles like, *The Isle of Eats and Drinks*, where any ideas of mine literally felt unwell.

Somehow, I did manage to pass my English examinations and wrote the book, *English Essentials Explained*, which did tolerably well but my marketing skills were not dissimilar to those of my writing. At 83, I have put my pen in its case.

ST JAMES'S FOUNDERS' AWARD: FULLY-FUNDED PLACES FOR SIXTH FORM PUPILS

In 2022, when we belatedly (due to Covid) celebrated the 125th anniversary of the founding of St James's School, we launched an appeal to create a St James's and/or St James's & The Abbey named bursary as part of our Founders' Awards Bursary programme.

This means that a bursary could be called the St James's or St James's & The Abbey bursary, or it could be named after a Headmistress, Housemistress, teacher or pupil from the schools.

The Founders' Awards reward all-round excellence, leadership and commitment to the life of MSJ. Traditionally, the Founders' have been able to exceed the usual cap of 40% on bursary provision; and now, since starting our £2 million bursary appeal, we have introduced the ambition of being able to provide 100% fully-funded places for Sixth Form day pupils and even 110% funded places, which allows us to cover extras such as school trips, uniform, devices and travel.

An independent education, with its many benefits of superb extra-curricular activity and very



high standards of music, drama and sport, as well as academic excellence and pastoral care, is not inexpensive. Fees for day girls are £22,575 per annum and, for boarders, £46,230 per annum. This is why we are on a real mission to raise £2 million by 2025 to allow access for gifted pupils, no matter their family circumstances.

With the St James's Head Girl boards now hanging in School, we will add a St James's donor board to recognise those who have contributed.

Anyone who is interested in supporting this project is invited to contact Fiona Meredith, Development Director, on telephone 01684 892288 or email: meredf@malvernstjames.co.uk



THE ABBEY SCHOOL



NEWS



Clockwise from top left: Brenda Sisson (Beresford Smith), Jennifer Dalton (Standaloft), Kitty Wilson (Norton Taylor) and Susan Davey

Susan Davey (The Abbey 1959) writes:

Believe it or not the four in the photo left The Abbey in 1959! We keep in touch by telephone, email and occasionally manage to meet up for lunch which is always good fun as we don't draw breath!

We are in contact with others from our year but seldom see them now as our homes are right across the country. We used to have reunions in London but it has been some years since our last one.

Of course we remember our School days and, looking back over the years since we left The Abbey and recalling our various lives, we appreciate the values that were instilled in us. The adherence to self-control was always top of the list, and that has certainly been beneficial. I wonder if anyone recognises us?!

Jenny Moore (Trow, The Abbey 1970) writes:

Thanks for regular news and contact. My news is that we are moving to Wiltshire to be closer to the family who live in Tisbury. It may take a while to sell here but will keep you posted with change of address. I will miss hugely the regular meet-ups with Sarah Weller (Coates, The Abbey 1971), Sally Chater (Kidson, The Abbey 1969) and Jill Crowson (Carding, The Abbey 1971) but maybe find other Old Girls closer to Tisbury?

I still have contact with Ursula Martin (The Abbey 1971), Patience Trevor (Thompson, The Abbey 1971), Sarah Hanks (Gething, The Abbey 1970) and others, so The Abbey days won't be forgotten. I just won't be as near to Malvern for your gatherings.

A few months ago, I went to Edinburgh for the funeral of Penny Henderson (The Abbey 1967) who had been a few years ahead of me at School. She came with me a few years ago to a reunion held by MSJ but since then had suffered with illness and spent her last year in a nursing home in Edinburgh. Her sister Jane Roberts (Henderson, The Abbey 1974), who was a few years below me at School, has been wonderful helping Penny over the last year. Penny qualified as a physiotherapist and enjoyed her work until retirement age. There were many friends at her funeral from her life in Scotland.

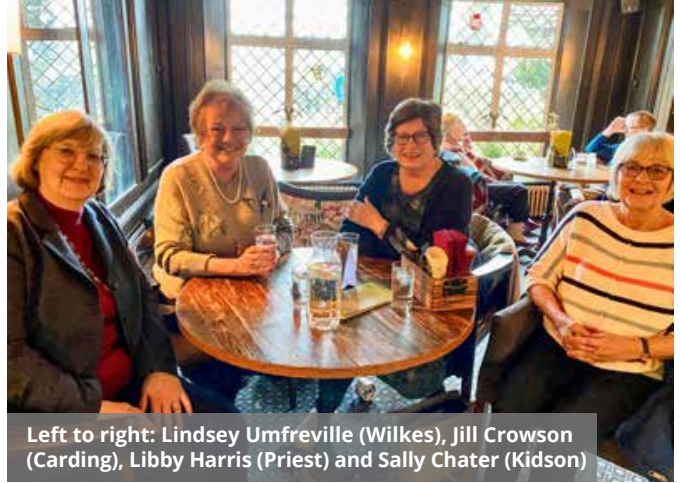
Best wishes to you all and look forward to more Abbey Old Girl news. Apologies not to have made it to the Book Club but interesting to know what book is being studied.

Jill Crowson (Carding, The Abbey 1971) writes:

This is very last minute but I really wanted to include a picture from our reunion recently.

Life has been pretty hectic over the last 12 months but, at the same time, I've done very little. Travel has been curtailed but it has been really good keeping up with friends – old and new – by video calls, visits and small get-togethers.

Sally Chater (Kidson, The Abbey 1969) returned to live in Wolverhampton just two years ago so I see her regularly. I also



Left to right: Lindsey Umfreville (Wilkes), Jill Crowson (Carding), Libby Harris (Priest) and Sally Chater (Kidson)

keep in touch with Sally Millis (Skidmore, The Abbey 1971) who lives in Brisbane, Australia. I am hoping she'll be over here again this year. Recently, I had lunch with Lindsey Umfreville (Wilkes, The Abbey 1971), Libby Harris (Priest, The Abbey 1971) and Sally Chater. Non-stop chatting for three hours – things don't change!

Libby is off to Melbourne in March to visit her daughter and meet her latest grandchild who was born earlier this year. Sally Millis's daughter also lives in Melbourne so she's hoping they might be able to meet up there! Caroline Draycott (Page, The Abbey 1969) went to New Zealand last year and she met up with Lizzie Painter. You can't escape Abbeyites visits even in the antipodes!!

Next week Sally and I are meeting up with Jenny Moore (Trow, The Abbey 1970) and Sarah Weller (Coates, The Abbey 1971). They don't change either and I know there'll be lots of catching up, and lots of laughs and talking – seems to be the norm when ex Abbeyites get together!

During the year I've also been in touch with Sue Bremner (Radley, The Abbey 1971) and Jane Reardon-Smith (Yapp, The Abbey 1971). The general feeling is that we try and organise a class reunion along the lines of the one we had about 10 years ago. If any others are interested, please email me at jcrowson@talktalk.net – also giving any ideas of a possible venue!

Plans for my future are a bit sketchy at the moment. My eldest still lives in Hamburg with his lovely German wife Jule and my

half English, half German granddaughter, Emily. Thankfully I'm instructed to talk to her in English. A good job as she tends to criticise my German vocabulary and pronunciation!! And she's only six. Do I pity any German teacher who ends up teaching her English!!

My youngest son got married in Thailand last April but I was unable to go to the wedding. However I dressed up, invited a couple of friends round and participated through WhatsApp video. I was unable to travel because in January last year I was diagnosed with lung cancer. The NHS has been absolutely fantastic. On 3 March they operated and removed the tumour along with my left lung. Since then it's been chemo, immunotherapy, complementary therapies, visits to the hospital re cataracts and so on. Luckily family, friends and old school friends have

kept me going and a full recovery is in sight.

We received some very sad news at the end of last year. **Jo Richmond-Coggan (Grant-Duff, The Abbey 1969)** passed away peacefully on the 19 November. There was a service to celebrate her

life in Bridgwater in Somerset but unfortunately I was unable to go.

Well that's a quick catch-up on the people in our year group that I've seen or heard from this year. Who would've thought all those years ago when we met we'd still be in touch, laughing and chatting 61 years later!!



Colleen Henderson-Haywood (The Abbey 1979) writes:

The Abbey Girls 1979 had a get-together in Malvern in October 2023.

Left to right: Philippa Beasley, Sharon Payne, Colleen Henderson-Haywood, Katie Vandyck, Claudia Majzub, Sara Bing, Ruth Darlington, Sally Jones and Ruth Clayton

THE ABBEY REUNION 2023

By Molly Hughes

Old Girls of The Abbey School reunited on Saturday 13 May 2023 at MSJ, for a day filled with cherished memories and heart-warming reunions.

Archive photographs and other memorabilia adorned Lawnside Room during the drinks reception, evoking waves of nostalgia and fond recollections of bygone days. From old uniforms to treasured mementos, the display served as a poignant reminder of the shared experiences that bind The Abbey Old Girls together across the years.

Following the drinks reception, the 36 attendees gathered in the Alice dining room for a delightful lunch. Amidst laughter and animated conversations, old friends caught up while reminiscing about their School days.

After lunch, the reunion took a trip down memory lane as alumnae ventured upstairs to visit 'The Abbey



Attendees at The Abbey Reunion, 2023

Room', named in honour of the merged The Abbey School. A focal point of the visit was the Head girls' boards, adorned with the names of past leaders. For many, seeing these boards reignited a sense of pride and nostalgia.

As the Old Girls bid farewell

to each other, their hearts were filled with cherished memories of a day well spent and the promise of future reunions to come. Until next time, may the spirit of The Abbey School continue to unite generations of alumnae in friendship and shared experiences.

THE ABBEY SCHOOL NAMED BURSARIES

Would you like to pass on the sense of purpose, service, tradition, academic and personal fulfilment that were hallmarks of your Abbey School education?

Can you help Malvern St James make a real difference through our bursary giving scheme?

It is our aim to raise **£2 million** for bursaries by 2025 to help exceptional students come to Malvern St James. In particular, we want to be able to issue more 100% and 110% bursaries for fully-funded places.

Bursaries can be named, including in memory of former teachers, Headmistresses or Housemistresses, Houses or pupils.



A day place in Senior school/ Sixth Form costs **£22,575 per year**, a boarding place **£46,230**. Regular giving, single gifts and legacy gifts will help us achieve greater bursary provision.



If you would like to find out more, please do contact Development Director Fiona Meredith on email: meredf@malvernstjames.co.uk/ tel: 01684 892288.

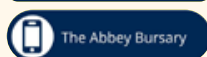
There are details about bursary fundraising on our website: www.malvernstjames.co.uk/support-us



“ ”

Can you help Malvern St James make a real difference through our Bursary Giving scheme?

You can link to the pages directly by scanning the QR code here.



LAWNSIDE



Lawnside Girls from 1923

FROM THE FORMER HEADMISTRESS

Miss Duseline Stewart, Headmistress of Lawnside 1971-1990

Dear Lawnsidians,

2024 promises to be an exciting year with the Reunion in June. I am so looking forward to seeing you again though I am sure you will find me very old and a bit shaky. It is taking me a long time to get back to normal, in spite of the exercises that I do religiously every morning.

I can't remember a greyer, windier, rainier year than the one that has just passed. A family holiday in Oban coincided with a week's rain which miraculously changed to a brilliant sunset each evening. Ironically, as this coincided with supper time, we had to close the shutters as the light was quite blinding. Nevertheless, it was a delight to be back in Scotland again with the extended family.

“ ”

**I am so looking
forward to
seeing you
again at the
Reunion in June**

January this year brought the sad loss of my Westie, Mikey. He was a mischievous but affectionate pet with an enormous appetite and he lived till he was almost 16. It is strange to be without a dog in the house. My adopted cat is no substitute.

Let us hope that the weather will be kinder in June than it was last year. Looking forward to seeing you all and reviving so many memories.

Yours affectionately,

Duseline Stewart



NEWS

1980s Leavers

Kate Hall (Warrington, Lawnside 1989) writes:

Thank you very much for the magazine which I enjoy reading. I was a happy student at Lawnside under the Headmistress Miss Stewart. I am still in touch with Crystal Leung (Lawnside 1998), Tanya Lissemmain (Harrison), Jo Bishop, Camilla Lywood, Laura Taylor (Bromwich), Louise Staples and Claire Carpenter.

After travelling, I followed a happy career as a Norland Nanny. I enjoyed high-profile jobs and looked after three sets of twins from a very small



Kate Hall at Goodrich Castle, Herefordshire

to school age. I have kept in touch with most of the families for whom I worked.

I am now happily married with a dog and three children and living in Worcestershire. I work for English Heritage based at Witley Court, Worcestershire, and Goodrich Castle, Herefordshire, which I really enjoy.

1990s Leavers



Laura Taylor (Bromwich, Lawnside 1990) writes:

I hope you have had a great start to the year. Here is my latest news: The wonderful world of fine wine continues to keep me occupied and I am juggling work at our company, Private Cellar, with studying for the Master of Wine qualification. I became a Freeman of the Vintners' Company in 2023 and was granted Freedom of the City of London in the Summer so I am now enjoying learning more about the Livery, getting stuck in with volunteering and networking with fellow Vintners.

Very sadly, we lost our lovely father in 2023 and several Lawnside friends of almost 40 years joined us in celebrating his life, which shows the enduring nature of our friendships. My sister, Immy (also a Lawnsidian), swam from Kingsbridge to Salcombe in his memory in October. It was an amazing feat which raised a huge sum of money for the RNLI, of which she and her son, George, are crew members.

LAWNSIDE REUNION 2024

Old Girls and Honorary Members from Lawnside are invited to come together for a wonderful day of Lunch and time to visit Malvern, followed by early evening Pimm's in the Quad.

- Partners and children are welcome.
- Adult tickets are £25 all-inclusive and £12.50 for any under 18's in attendance.
- Please feel free to pass this on to other Old Girls who are not part of the OGA but who may wish to attend.



To purchase your tickets visit <https://shorturl.at/fDKPW> or email oga@malvernstjames.co.uk.

IN MEMORIAM

We sadly report the following death:

The Dowager Duchess of Argyll
obituary, edited with permission
from *The Times*, 5 April 2024

*Chatelaine of Inveraray Castle,
skilful embroiderer and gardener
who played the part for the benefit
of American tourists, 1945-2024.*

Iona Campbell was at one time one of four Duchesses of Argyll walking this Earth, having married into the family in 1964. In time, Campbell became chatelaine of Inveraray Castle, which the eighth duke had aggrandised with four “witches’ hats” perched on four corner towers to impress Queen Victoria on her visit in 1874.

The Duchess was there on Guy Fawkes Night 1975 when the castle was severely damaged in a fire caused by an electrical fault. The insurance had not been updated since 1948, meaning she and the Duke received only a fraction of the cost of repairs. To make up the balance, they appealed to the Campbell clan around the world and sold off the island bearing her name, Iona. During restoration, they lived with their young family in the basement, often with no electricity or running water. “We didn’t give a moment’s thought to just leaving,” she said. “We just got on with it.”

Once the castle was reopened to the public, she retreated during the tourist season to the family’s private apartments, where a heavily carved four-poster bed from the Palace of Versailles sat in her turret bedroom. Elsewhere is evidence of her embroidery skills, both with a needle and her industrial sewing machine. Self-taught, she made bed drapes, chair covers and curtains. One wall-hanging, a fine and vibrantly-coloured floral work, took 18 years to complete working

panel by panel, often on flights around the world.

Slim and elegant, Campbell could often be found wearing jeans, her hands dirt-stained from working in the grounds. “I have to confess I didn’t set out to become a gardener. I took on the job out of necessity,” she said, looking up from a flowerbed as eager American tourists walked past wondering aloud if they might see a “real Duchess”.

Iona Mary Colquhoun was born in Edinburgh in 1945, the second child of Sir Ivar Colquhoun Bt and his wife Kathleen (née Duncan). Her older brother, Torquhil, died in 1963 aged 19 and she is survived by her younger brother, Sir Malcolm Colquhoun Bt, the present chief of the clan Colquhoun. She was raised at Rosdhu House, on the west bank of Loch Lomond, and educated at Lawnside School, Malvern, Worcestershire, before finishing schools in Paris, Florence and Madrid.

In 1964, she cancelled her coming-out dance to marry Ian Campbell, then Marquess of Lorne and heir to the 11th Duke of Argyll. He had known her since she was seven as “the girl who lived over the hill” but had since been away in the army. Upon his return, they met at a cocktail party and he proposed that night. “You stupid man,” she replied. He went on to propose every night for a month until eventually he wore her down and she accepted.

Their marriage took place at St Giles’ Cathedral, Edinburgh, in the presence of 1,000 guests, uniting the Campbells of Argyll and the Colquhouns of Luss. The couple were piped out of the cathedral by the castle’s head gardener to the tune *Iona’s Wedding*, his own composition. Four years’ later, the 11th Duke left for Paris and

the young couple took over the running of Inveraray, by the shores of Loch Fyne, where she enjoyed scuba diving.

In 1973, her husband, who was on the board of three distilleries, succeeded as the 12th Duke of Argyll.

In 2006, when returning from the Royal Caledonian Ball in London, she set one of her bags down beside a carousel at Glasgow Airport while loading heavier luggage onto a trolley. Walking out of the concourse, she forgot to pick up the smaller bag and did not notice its loss until arriving home to Inveraray Castle. Inside the missing bag was jewellery worth £100,000, including a Victorian diamond tiara and a Cartier brooch. Distraught, she offered a £50,000 reward for their return.

There was no sign of her jewels until six years later when she was browsing through a catalogue published by Lyon & Turnbull, the Edinburgh auction house, and spotted the brooch. After contacting the Art Loss Register she learnt that, because the jewels had not been claimed within three months, the British Airports Authority had sold them at auction for only £5,000 and donated the proceeds to charity.

Delighted to be reunited with her gems, she declared herself “absolutely amazed”, adding: “I thought that after six years, I’d lost them for ever. The tiara was a Victorian family one and the necklace was given to me for my 21st birthday so everything was very special.”

Campbell, who continued to wear her tiara to the Royal Caledonian Ball, is survived by her children, Torquhil, the 13th Duke of Argyll, who at the time he succeeded was working in the whisky industry in Hong Kong, and Louise, with whom she shared the patronage of the ball. “Would I remarry?” the dowager Duchess said a year after being widowed. “I’d have to love somebody an awful lot. Maybe I should get a toyboy...”

MALVERN ST JAMES



OGA PREFECT ONE YEAR ON

Phoebe Woods (MSJ 2023), OGA Prefect at MSJ 2022-2023

I cannot believe it has been nearly a year since leaving Malvern St James! I had a wonderful Summer and a chance to fully rest before starting uni. I travelled a bit and worked to save some money. I am studying medicine at the University of Bristol, and so far I am loving it.

I cannot thank MSJ enough for helping me with my application and getting the grades I required. But also, to the OGA for introducing me to other medics who were the inspiration for my future career as a doctor. In addition, being an OGA Prefect helped me with organisational skills that have proven to be necessary to juggle the workload here.



Phoebe (right) with university friends, Taleyah and Talei

I have loved my move to Bristol, despite the big changes that come with living in a city. I am excited for Summer as there are lots of lovely parks and botanical gardens nearby. Bristol has great restaurants, nightlife, harbourside, shopping and art. So there is never a dull day here. I also love how easy it is to travel to, which has meant I can return home on the train for Reading Week and Christmas.

One thing I was worried about before moving to university was finding friends, as I didn't know anyone moving here. But I really shouldn't have been concerned as I have made so many great friendships both in medicine and out.

The course itself has been fascinating and full-on. Currently, we are doing two-week blocks of learning about the different human systems such as the respiratory system or the musculoskeletal system. The A Level subjects I chose stood me in good stead for this first year which is heavily focused on biochemistry and histology.

One thing I love about the course is that we have a lot of clinical contact, so we regularly visit GP surgeries and hospitals to meet patients and practice clinical skills with them and each other. I have loved shadowing the GPs and getting to watch consultations play out that are relevant to the system we are learning about. This has been a great way of getting used to clinical environments.

Bristol has a heavy focus on how the arts can accompany medicine, and so, for one project, my group built a sculpture. We also have actors come in so we can practice our consultation

skills, which has been a fun way of learning. One memorable experience from my course was doing urinalysis on each other's urine. It was a sure-fire way to get to know each other!

A large part of university life is the societies that you can join. I opted to join Medic's Netball to continue the netball that I played at MSJ and as a way of meeting people on my course. Also, I wanted to try something new, so I joined the Surf Society, and I am even going on a Uni Surf trip to Morocco over Easter, to which I am looking forward.

In addition, I love going to events put on by the Bristol Students' Wine & Food Society and I have joined many Medicine sub-societies that host talks and other events. I can thoroughly recommend joining any society that takes your interest and do go along to the socials because they are great for team bonding and are a lot of fun.

“ ”

One memorable experience from my course was doing urinalysis on each other's urine. It was a sure-fire way to get to know each other!



Phoebe with university friend, Ruby

NEWS

2023 COMMEMORATION SPEAKER IMOGEN EDWARDS-JONES

We were delighted to welcome inspirational **Imogen Edwards-Jones (MGC 1986)** to our annual Prizegiving and Commemoration event. An award-winning journalist, broadcaster, multimillion-selling novelist and screenwriter, Imogen's witty and entertaining address as Guest Speaker left a lasting impression on us all.

Imogen encouraged pupils to work hard, grab every opportunity that presents itself and set aside self-doubt. Her moving speech resonated with students, parents and teachers alike.

After graduating from Malvern Girls' College in 1986, Imogen won a scholarship from *The Independent* newspaper to study journalism and she went on to become a prolific and bestselling author, writing over 20 books, including the well-received travel book *The Taming of Eagles* which led her to present the BBC Radio 4 documentary, *Bucks in the USSR*.

Some of her witty novels include her latest, *Have You Got Anything Stronger?*, *My Canapé Hell*, *The Wendy House* and *Tuscany for Beginners*.

Imogen authored and screen wrote her massively popular Babylon series, including *Hotel Babylon*, *Air Babylon*, *Fashion Babylon*, *Beach Babylon* and *Pop Babylon*. The series has sold over one million copies in the United Kingdom alone.

CRICKET NEWS

MSJ has really been really proud to be named one of the top 20 all-girls' schools for cricket in *The Cricketer Schools Guide 2024*: "There are exciting plans in place for cricket-specific facilities in the future so it is great to have been recognised so far with our cricket offering," says Hannah Leathart, Head of Sport.



We are very grateful to Imogen for her time and insightful words. Her address will stay with us all, particularly our Year 13's as they start to think of life beyond MSJ.

2000 Leavers

Steph Hencher (MSJ 2008) writes:

Please find an update from the "Hencher ladies", St James's and MSJ (2004-2009).

Stephanie Hencher (St James's and MSJ 2008) (Steph)

Jennifer Hencher-Hoogeveen (Hencher, St James's and MSJ 2009) (Jenny)

Angela Hencher, Business Manager, St James's, and Deputy Bursar, MSJ (to 2008)

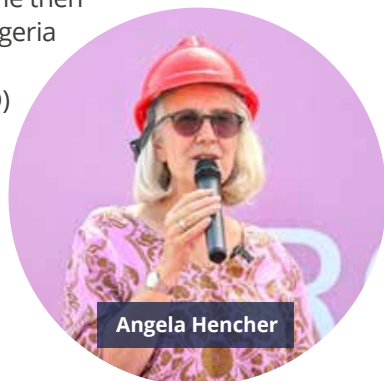
I, Steph, am currently on maternity leave from work at Gatwick Airport and have a son Ren, who is almost one. I will be returning to work in May, part-time in Passenger Operations – I am the one that turns up to help when there is a crisis or emergency of any sort. I deal with everything from medical emergencies, aircraft incidents, airline co-ordination, security threats and much more.



Clockwise from above:
Jenny, Lasse and Jules;
Steph and Ren, and Ren

Jenny is also on maternity leave and lives in The Netherlands and has a son, Jules, who is 15 months' old. Jenny runs her own garden design business and she and her lawyer husband, Lasse, have recently bought an old house in Haarlem and Jenny is in charge of the

renovations whilst she is on maternity leave. Since leaving MSJ, our Mum, Angela, and Dad moved to Kent, where Mum was a Bursar for 10 years, before relocating to Shanghai to be a Business Director of an International School. She then relocated to Lagos in Nigeria in 2022 as the Chief Operating Officer (COO) of Charterhouse Lagos, building the first British Independent School in West Africa, due to open in September 2024.



Angela Hencher

2010 Leavers

NEW BABIES!

Reverend Sue Adeney, Associate Priest at St Mary's Hanley Castle with St Gabriel's Hanley Swan and St James' Welland, ex Head of PE at MGC (1975-1984), who will be known to Old Girls of that era as "Miss Jack" and ex Deputy Head of Lawnside (1985-1990), writes to let us know the news of her daughter **Charlotte Hall (Adeney, MSJ 2010)**, who has given birth to a son, Angus John Hall, in December 2023.

Hannah Horner (Wilson, MSJ 2012) writes:

On 19 August 2023 I married Will Horner, who I met in my first year at the Royal Agricultural University, Gloucestershire, in 2013. We were married at Much Marcle church, Herefordshire, followed by a reception at my family home. Friends from MSJ, **Fern Barnett** and **Gail Rowley (Porter)** both came to help celebrate.



Hannah and Will Horner



Sophy Coombes-Roberts

Sophy Coombes-Roberts (MSJ 2012) writes:

Thank you so much for reaching out regarding the Old Girls vs. Current Pupil lacrosse match in March this year. Amber's note was touching – could you send Amber and **Ms Smith** my best wishes? I'm so sorry I couldn't play but, unfortunately, I had Wales Lacrosse training that weekend in Cardiff.

Lacrosse, at the moment, is quite literally my life. I was selected for the Great British team travelling to Portugal for the EuroLax Sixes in February and I have earned over 66 caps for Wales Lacrosse (including three World Championships).

Also knowing many other ex-pupils – **Hayley Burke (MSJ 2016)**, **Lissy Garland (MSJ 2016)**, **Penny Green (MSJ 2016)**, **Lottie Van Praag (MSJ 2013)** – have all represented Wales Lacrosse at Senior Level and gained so much from the sport.

Lacrosse was undoubtedly the highlight of my time at MSJ. I learnt the basics at School and it has provided me with something I truly love, as well as taught me key life skills such as commitment, teamwork, resilience and leadership – as well as a firm friendship group throughout life.

With the news that lacrosse has now been accepted into the Olympics, and as an unfunded sport, Sophy is on the hunt for a personal sponsor to support her on the journey to the European Championships this Summer in Portugal. The personal sponsor will be able to advertise their logo on her playing kit and receive a number of other benefits. » P.T.O.



Sophy Coombes-Roberts plays lacrosse for Great Britain and Wales

If you are interested in supporting Sophy, or know someone who might be, please reach out to her at sophy.coombes-roberts@twocircles.com.

The Welsh National team is also looking for team sponsors (alumna Hayley Burke is also part of the squad), and if you would be interested in supporting the group as a whole they will happily send over the sponsorship proposals – with an additional incentive that any team sponsorship amounts up to £20k will be matched!

Maria Bassage (Harris, MSJ 2017) writes:

These are the photos from my wedding. We were married in Malvern although my husband and I now work in Cambridge. I attended the School from 2007 to 2015 (Year 3 to Year 11). Then I returned as a Graduate Boarding Tutor between 2020 to 2021. I remember my time at School very fondly and wanted to share our special day with the OGA community. It was a small wedding but a friend that I met at MSJ as a student was in attendance.

I am the daughter of **Patrick Harris**, who worked at the School for many years. My name was Maria Harris but it is now Maria Bassage and my husband's name is Walter Bassage.

I hope to be back in Malvern soon to see MSJ again.



Maria and Walter Bassage

LITTLE PRINCESS TRUST

Benz Sirikorn Mecasuwandamrong (MSJ 2019) writes:

I'm thrilled to share some wonderful news regarding my recent fundraising efforts for the Little Princess Trust!

Over the new year, I had the opportunity to cut and donate my hair to the Little Princess Trust, contributing to the creation of real-hair wigs for courageous young children fighting cancer.

Additionally, I've launched a fundraising page to further support this charity. You can find the donation page here: <https://www.justgiving.com/page/sirikorn-benz-mecasuwandamrong-20000729>. Or you can also access the donation page by scanning the QR code in the photo. I am happy to share that the donation page will remain open for a few more months, allowing ample time for anyone interested to join me in making a meaningful difference.

DONATION FOR CHILDREN

link in bio

THIS YEAR I'LL BE DONATING 12 INCH(30CM) OR MORE OF MY HAIR TO PROVIDE WIGS TO CHILDREN WITH CANCER.

Please join me and donate to my just giving page (link in bio or scan the QR code).

All donations will go to the Little Princess Trust to fund their [free wig provision](#) and [research](#) into finding better treatments for childhood cancers 🙏

No contribution is too small. Every donation will make a meaningful impact 💖

*Late December - Early Jan

Please feel free to share/ repost!

TRAVELS IN SOUTH AMERICA

Nicky Connell (MSJ 2019), former Deputy Head Girl, has sent in pictures to Dr Bowdrey of her travels in South America.

Boy, are we jealous! Nicky has completed a Geography degree at Loughborough University and remains a keen hockey player, often playing for the Alumnae Sixes team when she is in the country.



Nicky Connell (MSJ 2019) horse trekking in Tupiza, Bolivia

2020 Leavers

LAW INTERNSHIP

Georgia Hughes (MSJ 2021), who is now in her final year for Law at Durham University, writes:

Over the Summer, I completed an internship at DLA Piper, a global corporate law firm with over 90 offices in more than 40 countries. I was based in their London office and worked mainly within the Corporate and Real Estate Finance teams. I thoroughly enjoyed my time there, working on high-value deals with many inspirational people. I am very pleased to have been offered a training contract at the firm in 2025 following my graduation and a year's study to complete the Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE). I am looking forward to the opportunities and experience this will bring in the future.

HONORARY MEMBERS

IN MEMORIAM – GAMBIA

Zinnia Wilkinson, MSJ's Pastoral Director, and Victoria Collett, Head of Year 9 and Religious Studies teacher and leaders of the Gambia Expedition, write:

We bring this sad message to all Old Girls who have been involved in the Gambia Expedition over the last 20 years or so.

Tragically, earlier in Autumn 2023, Nikki, the charismatic, kind Gambian who drove MSJ girls from place to place in his trusty Jeep, singing all the while, was diagnosed with cancer and, after a very quick decline, he died at the end of October. He was such an incredible human being and all the MGC and MSJ Girls and Staff who visited the Gambia between 2003 and 2023 were lucky to have known him.

We have created a crowdfunding page to raise some funds in Nikki's memory. Money raised will be sent to help his family and further his wonderful garden and school projects.



GRAPEVINE BY LYNNE LINDNER

LYNNE LINDNER, FORMER HEAD OF MUSIC AT ST JAMES'S AND HEAD OF VOCAL STUDIES AND MUSIC PERFORMANCE AT MSJ, SENDS IN HER UPDATE OF WHAT SHE'S BEEN DOING, ALONG WITH HER NEWS OF OLD GIRLS

It has been a delight to hear news of many Old Girls this year – news of their travels, their family life, their high achievements and their talents. I think it is very important for Old Girls to maintain contact with the School and to support it as it develops. When I first met Dr Gareth Lloyd, we talked about this and, in response to his request, I invited some girls I could contact quickly to an impromptu gathering. This was to meet Gareth and give him the chance to talk with them. Among many topics of conversation, it was a great pleasure for me to learn about his musical talent and passion for music.



In December 2023, I directed a “Christmas with the Jenny Lind Singers” concert again, in which many Old Girls performed. It is always lovely to see them and catch up on the year.



Dr Gareth Lloyd meeting Old Girls with Lynne (l-r: Felicity Williams (MSJ 2016), Georgia Hughes (MSJ 2021), Lynne Lindner, Giselle Pearson (MSJ 2016), Becky Fisher (MSJ 2011), Felicity Goldring (Houlbrooke, St James's 2005) and Dr Gareth Lloyd



Bea Clifford (MSJ 2020) graduating from the University of Exeter



Nicky Connell (MSJ 2019) at Machu Picchu, Peru

Several Old Girls have told me of their travel adventures this year – **Bea Clifford (MSJ 2020)** and **Nicola Connell (MSJ 2019)**.

Bea Clifford (MSJ 2020):

I am thrilled to say that I am a Biology graduate from the University of Exeter, where I took an active role in enhancing student life as the Travel Security for the Exeter University Surf Club. I am now taking a year out to solo travel Australia and Asia, before I look forward to starting my professional journey within the scientific industry.

St James's Old Girls **Georgia Burford (St James's 1999)**, **Angela Van der Spek (Coles, St James's 1999)** and **Sophia Aplin (St James's 1999)** met up for the Cheltenham Gold Cup day at the Cheltenham Festival. They have strong bonds from School days and love sharing time together with their families. Georgia says: "I live on a farm near Bath with two kids and I am still managing health projects with an international NGO – CHASE Africa. Soph has three kids, one only born last year! She's very happy – living in Suffolk."



Angela Van der Spek, Georgia Burford and Sophia Aplin at the Cheltenham Festival

Felicity Williams (MSJ 2016):

In 2021, I graduated from the University of York with a first-class honours degree in Music. Since then, I have continued to pursue my love of music, particularly

choral and opera singing. I perform regularly with university choirs and enjoy singing with the Jenny Lind Singers whenever I come back home to Malvern.

This year, I have been privileged to gain a place on the Genesis Sixteen programme, led by Harry Christophers and Eamonn Dougan.

I also enjoyed spending part of my Summer doing an opera course in France, culminating in a performance at a French château.

Alongside music, I am also very interested in psychology. I am currently studying for an MSc in Psychology at the University of Nottingham and hope to pursue a career as a therapist.



Felicity Williams performing at Cratoule in August 2023

It was lovely to be with **Felicity Wiggy (Rogers, MSJ 2008)** at her wedding to David in Great Malvern Priory. They are both singers – Felicity professionally – so their service was a musical delight (featuring a wonderful choir and organist) as well as a very happy occasion.



Felicity Wiggy (Rogers, MSJ 2008) marrying in Great Malvern Priory

Jennifer Kirby (MSJ 2007) in gorgeous wedding gown was married on 13 January 2024 at the Rosewood, London. The groom is Robert Gilbert, also an actor.



Jennifer Kirby (MSJ 2007) with husband Robert Gilbert on their wedding day

Grace Higgins (MSJ 2015) became engaged to Stephen in New York.



Grace Higgins

Another high achiever is **Lucy Walton, ex Head Girl (MSJ 2017)**: Since leaving MSJ, I embarked on a journey in the world of sports and education. Graduating with a first-class honours degree in Sport and Exercise Science from Loughborough University, I discovered my passion for operational planning in sports events, collaborating with diverse sporting experts along the way.

Despite the challenges posed by the Covid pandemic, I was fortunate to join Cheltenham Ladies' College as a Sports graduate. CLC was our rival lacrosse team and now I was a PE teacher at that school! I am now a qualified PE teacher, teaching a wide array of sports, with a special focus on hockey and lacrosse, alongside fellow alumna **Hayley Burke (MSJ 2016)**. Furthermore, I initiated a golf programme in partnership with a local club, introducing 45 pupils to the sport I love.

I also have the privilege of working for the Football Premier League as a Games Programme Consultant, organising events for academy teams. This led me to working for Team England at the Commonwealth Games, a period I will never forget.

While my long-term aspirations in the sporting world remain open-ended, I cherish the continued connections with MSJ friends and the opportunity to reunite with PE staff during sporting fixtures each year.

As I continue to explore my path, one thing remains certain – sport is still my life!

I would love to start an MSJ Old Girls' golf team.

If you are a golfer and would like to get involved, please email me at lucywalton8@gmail.com.

Lucy wants to hear from people who might want to start an MSJ Old Girls' golf team



Lucy Walton now teaching at Cheltenham Ladies' College

Lara Maylor-Wrout (MSJ 2019) is now at The University of Edinburgh completing her intercalated Bachelor of Sciences degree in Literature and Medicine and loving singing in the University Chamber Choir.



Lara Maylor-Wrout walking in Scotland

Vivi Manning (MSJ 2020):

Since leaving MSJ, I've been working towards my degree in Veterinary Medicine at the University of Cambridge. I'm currently in my fourth year of six and graduated at the end of my intercalated third year with a degree in Natural Sciences. Each term is a new challenge but my friends and playing lacrosse every weekend gets me through!



Tiggy and Vivi Manning



Chloe Davey

Chloe Davey (MSJ 2020) is taking an interesting career path. She explains her project: "I am a fourth year Product Design student who is designing a wrist wearable to help women feel safer which is called 'Hear Me Roar'. Hear Me Roar has two deterrent features as well as a vibration feature that allows women to send vibrations to one another to allow them to feel as though they are not alone. Hear Me Roar aims to empower women and encourage independence whilst bringing women together to help fight the issue of us as women having to compromise our personal safety on a daily basis."

It has been a joy to hear of a number of new arrivals this year:

Emma Fishlock (White, St James's 2006) welcomed a baby boy called Albert Masood Thomas Fishlock, born 13 December 2023.

We enjoyed **Hannah Buckley's (Evans, MSJ 2010)** baby shower in January and her baby is due 21 March. This is **Georgia Rees (MSJ 2013)** with her in the photo.



Charlie Hall (Adeney, MSJ 2010) with baby Angus



Emma Fishlock



Georgia Rees and Hannah Buckley

Alice Delhanty (MSJ 2020):

This painting is the result of an intuitive, layered painting process. It was a physically demanding activity because of its scale. I painted it on the floor, rotating it around, stretching myself over it to reach the middle. When painting, I was thinking about colour vibrancy, transparency versus opacity, optics and incidental marks. Destruction and resolution, resulting from the battle between the stubborn physical agency of the paint and the search for a poetic image, harmonising as I work towards 'finishing' a painting.

Currently, I am working towards creating a body of work for my degree show, which is from the 21-28 June at City & Guilds of London Art School. After I graduate, I'm

planning to stay in London, get a studio and carry on painting, exhibiting and building my practice. My work is posted on my Instagram [@alicedelhanty](https://www.instagram.com/alicedelhanty) and on my website: www.alicedelhanty.co.uk.

Amy Moore (Wilkes, St James's & The Abbey 2000):

Amy and her 10-year-old daughter, Emilia, who loves singing, gymnastics and horse riding are pictured below. Amy was head of the Choir and a great support to music at St James's.

Jessica Levi Bullock (Levi) and family in Greece. Jessica's son, Theodore Samuel Levi Bullock, is a big name for a little boy. Jessica's husband is Si Bullock and the big boy is Jimmy.

It was lovely to join **Ros Hayes, ex Head (St James's and MSJ 2010)** to celebrate **Sarah Musgrave's, Deputy Head (MGC and MSJ 2013)** milestone birthday in March this year, with music and generous refreshments.

Julia Leonard (St James's & The Abbey 2004) is currently on maternity leave from her job as a BBC journalist at Radio 1's Newsbeat in Birmingham. She and partner Elliot Webb welcomed their son Alfie in December.

Genevieve Phillips (MSJ 2017) is shown here with her cello in a string quartet for a wedding.



Alice Delhanty



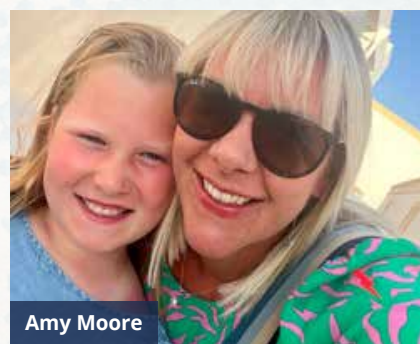
Ros Hayes and Sarah Musgrave



Julia Leonard with her partner Elliot and son Alfie



Jessica Levi Bullock



Amy Moore



Genevieve Phillips



St James's & The Abbey, class of 2000: Clockwise I-r: Vicky Thomas (Moszczynski), Zena Taylor, Amy Moore (Wilkes), Francesca Towle (Brookes), and Pippa Milton (Martin)

SCHOOL REPORT



A LEVEL RESULTS

AND UNIVERSITY DESTINATIONS 2023

Our 2023 cohort achieved fantastic results, and we are very proud of them and their hard work. Most went off to their first-choice university and course.

7%

GRADES AT A*

31%

GRADES AT A*-A

63%

GRADES AT A*-B

83%

GRADES AT A*-C

Across the group, well over half of all grades (63%) were A*-B and 83% A*-C.

Pupils have taken up places on the following courses, as just an example of their breadth of talent.

Modern Languages and Cultures at Durham University; Medicine at the University of Bristol; Biomedical Sciences at the University of York; Japanese Studies at Oxford Brookes University; Psychology at The University of Manchester; Ancient History at University of Reading; Product and Furniture Design at University of the Arts London; Rural Land Management at the Royal Agricultural University, and Graphic Design at Loughborough University. The University of Exeter was incredibly popular again this year with girls going on to study: History, Biological Sciences, Business and Management, Liberal Arts, and International Business and Modern Languages.

We wish them all well in their university endeavours and encourage them to come back and talk to the next generation of university students coming through!

GCSE RESULTS

2023

In Art, French and Religious Studies, over a third of all grades awarded were the top mark of 9; in History and Chemistry, a quarter of all grades awarded were 9s.

17%

GRADE 9

37%

GRADE 9-8

55%

GRADE 9-7

Overall, 55% of grades were 9-7 (that's A grade to beyond A* grade 'in old money'!)

MATHEMATICS

50%

FRENCH

78%

CHEMISTRY

76%

HISTORY

75%

COMPUTING

72%

ART

70%

GEOGRAPHY

69%

GERMAN

68%

PHYSICS

66%

BIOLOGY

63%

CHINESE

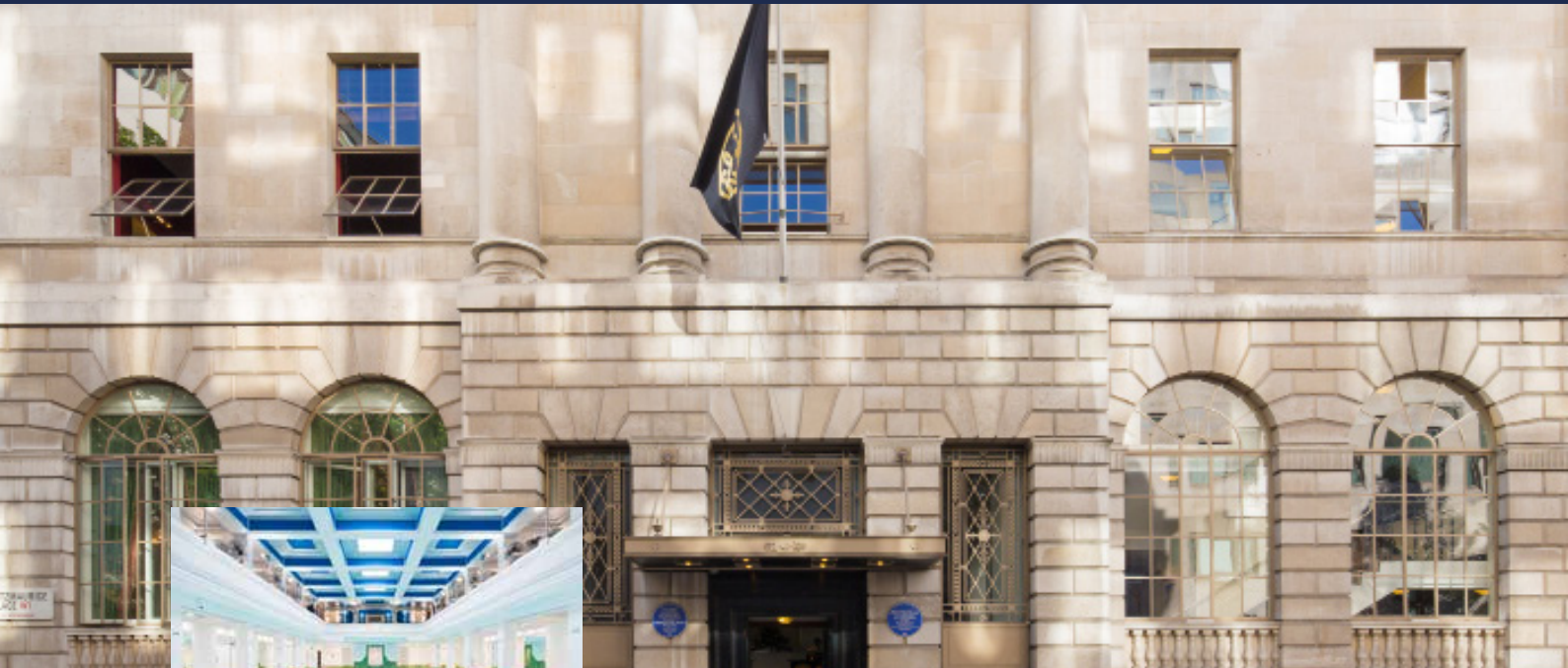
100%

DESIGN & TECH

40%



The Lansdowne Club



TRAIN



DINE



SOCIALISE



STAY

Standing discreetly at the South-West corner of London's Berkeley Square, The Lansdowne Club is ideally located in the heart of Mayfair.

With a rich heritage dating back to 1763, The Lansdowne Club re-imagined itself as a leading private Members' Club in 1935, welcoming both men and women with equal status from its inception. An eclectic mix of the historic and the contemporary, the Club boasts stylish décor, exquisite art, and unrivalled cuisine, underpinned by seamless service.

The Lansdowne Club welcomes all new applications for membership. Club 1824 membership is available to those aged 18 to 24 inclusive. A one-off payment of £1,285 provides membership of the Club for up to 7 years or until the age of 24 inclusive.

INTERESTED IN BECOMING A MEMBER?

T: +44 (0) 20 7318 6160

E: membership@lansdowneclub.com

YOUR OGA

FUTURE EVENTS

Please keep an eye on our website – www.community.malvernstjames.co.uk – for future events. It is the best place to check the latest updates on activities and plans for the coming year. You can sign up for our regular email bulletins at oga@malvernstjames.co.uk

OGA Summer Reunion 2024 Saturday 8 June

The Old Girls' Association is delighted to invite all former pupils and members of staff to The OGA Summer Reunion at Malvern St James Girls' School.

Please feel free to pass on to other Old Girls who are not part of the OGA but who may wish to attend.

Partners and children are welcome. Adult tickets are **£25** all-inclusive for Reception Drinks, Lunch and Pimms in the Quad, and for under 18s there are tickets available for **£12.50**.

This reunion will also incorporate a particular celebration for Lawnside and MSJ Old Girls. Old Girls from other schools are welcome, and can still participate in lunch, tours and drinks.

To purchase tickets visit
<https://community.malvernstjames.co.uk/event/the-oga-summer-reunion-2024> or email oga@malvernstjames.co.uk

Book Club June 2024 date tbc

We hope you will join us in June for our next meeting. We are delighted that MSJ's Head of Library and Enrichment, **Dr Rebecca Jones**, will be our guest host, and we will be discussing our featured book choice, *The Elegance of the Hedgehog*, by Muriel Barbery.

We invite those local to Malvern to join us in person in the MSJ Library from 6.30pm for refreshments, while those further afield will be able to join us as an online guest for the book discussion which will take place 7pm-8.30pm using Microsoft Teams.

Our Community Book Club is free to attend and open to everyone, so please do invite a guest if you would like, whether attending in person or online. The more the merrier!

If you would like to find out more, or join us, please email
oga@malvernstjames.co.uk

Prizegiving and Commemoration Thursday 4 July

Keep a lookout for more details of our upcoming Prizegiving and Commemoration event on Thursday 4 July 2024.

This special occasion promises to be a memorable gathering as we celebrate the achievements of our students and reflect on the successes of our school community.

We are particularly honoured to announce that our distinguished Guest Speaker will be **Victoria Prentis MP**, Old Girl and the Attorney General for England and Wales.

More information to follow with details of how to book.

Carol Concert Friday 13 December

We are thrilled to extend a heartfelt invitation to you to join us for the annual MSJ Carol Service, taking place at the magnificent Great Malvern Priory on Friday 13 December. This cherished tradition is a highlight of our School calendar, bringing together our MSJ community to celebrate the joyous spirit of the festive season.

More information to follow with details of how to book.

The latest information about OGA events can be found on our website www.community.malvernstjames.co.uk. For any individual queries please email oga@malvernstjames.co.uk

DO WE HAVE YOUR CORRECT CONTACT DETAILS?

We appreciate that individual details may have changed and ask you to please complete and return the attached form to the address below so that we can update our details accordingly.

OGA Office
Malvern St James Girls' School
15 Avenue Road
Great Malvern
Worcestershire
WR14 3BA

You can also update, or confirm your current details, or sign up with your email address by sending an email to oga@malvernstjames.co.uk or phone us on 01684 892288.

We have lots of interesting updates and activities planned, and we don't want anyone to miss out!

Current Name: *

Previous or maiden surname:

Year you left school:

Year group you were in when leaving (e.g. Upper Sixth / Year 13):

What best describes your association with the OGA? (tick all that apply) *

☐ Old Girl

☐ Other - see question below

☐ Honorary Member (former staff)

If you selected 'Other' please describe below:

☐ Current Parent

☐ Past Parent

Which school/s reflect your association? *

☐ Malvern Girls' College

☐ St James's & The Abbey

☐ Malvern St James

☐ The Abbey

☐ St James's

☐ Lawnside

Address *

Street Address

State / Province / Region

Address Line 2

Country

City

Postal / Zip Code

Email address: *

Telephone Number (Landline)

Mobile Telephone Number

THANK YOU FROM THE OGA OFFICE

What an incredible year it's been, brimming with moments of joy, connection and community spirit. Undoubtedly, the standout highlights were the OGA Reunions last Summer, especially for MGC and The Abbey, alongside the appointment of our New Head, Dr Gareth Lloyd.

As we look ahead to the coming year, we're thrilled to announce the launch of our plans for the renovation of the Swimming Pool and Classrooms. These projects mark a significant investment in our School, aiming to enhance both the athletic and academic facilities available to our pupils. The renovated swimming pool will provide a combination of modern and heritage aspects. The Upgraded classrooms will offer state-of-the-art learning spaces equipped with the latest technology, providing an inspiring setting for academic excellence and innovation.

We look forward to welcoming lots of you to School this year with our upcoming OGA Summer Reunion with a special focus on celebrating Lawnside and MSJ. We also want to say thank you to **Jo Leahy (Moulds, MGC 1991)** and her Dalmatian Cheadle for their help in editing the *OGA News*. And a huge welcome to Penny, our beloved OGA Office dog, who brings joy and companionship to our team. Our office environment wouldn't be the same without her!



Please continue to keep in touch and send us your news throughout the year. We love hearing from you and it helps us hugely when producing this magazine. As always, the best way to get in touch is by emailing oga@malvernstjames.co.uk or by calling us on 01684 892288.

STAY UP TO DATE WITH OGA AND MSJ NEWS

The OGA and the School has a strong presence across all social media channels, which are excellent ways to both stay up to date with the latest news from the School, and engage with fellow Old Girls and Honorary Members. If you don't already, please use the links below to follow us:



Malvern St James OGA
[@MSJ_OGA](#)

Malvern St James Girls' School
[@MalvernStJames](#)



Malvern St James OGA
[@MSJ_OGA](#)

Malvern St James Girls' School
[@MalvernStJames](#)

MSJ Music Department
[@MSJ_Music](#)



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[@MSJ_OGA](#)

Malvern St James Girls' School
[@MalvernStJames](#)

MSJ Careers
[@MSJ_Careers](#)

MSJ Sports
[@SportMSJ](#)



Malvern St James OGA
[@MSJ_OGA](#)

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[@MalvernStJames](#)

Our website is www.malvernstjames.co.uk



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Gold Standard for outstanding
mental health and
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**Marketing Award for Effective
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Malvern St James Malvern
Alumnae 100 campaign.



MALVERN ST JAMES

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