



KIDDERMINSTER HIGH SCHOOL

O.G.A. NEWSLETTER 2002

FUTURE EVENTS

- Fri. 13/9/2002 - 7.30pm. Annual General Meeting followed by light refreshments.
- Fri. 14/3/2003 - 7.30pm Talk on Edward Elgar's Malvern by Dr. J. Harcup. Illustrated with slides and music. Coffee and biscuits to follow.
- Fri.16/5/ 2003 - **7.00pm** Visit to Elgar Museum at Lower Broadheath near Worcester.
- Summer Lunch 2003. Saturday 21st June. Venue and time to be arranged. *Unless otherwise stated, meetings are at King Charles I High School (Formerly K.H.S.). Parking via Comberton Road entrance only. If you are attending a meeting, please notify Beryl Bedford, 80 Holmcroft Road, Kidderminster, DY10 3AG, (01562 752997) two weeks beforehand.*

All enquiries about OGA Membership or events should also be addressed to Beryl Bedford—address above.

FROM THE EDITOR

2002. A memorable year, in which we celebrate the Golden Jubilee of the Accession to the throne of H.M. Queen Elizabeth II

Fifty years of loyal, dedicated service. In 1952 we fondly dreamed of a New Elizabethan Era. What changes we have seen during those fifty years---and looking back, where have all those years gone? What have we achieved?

In addition, we former students of KHS have another anniversary to celebrate..Ninety years ago, in 1912, a group of girls led by Miss Y.G. Raymond moved from Proud Cross, into a new purpose- built school on Chester Road, Kidderminster, thus laying the foundations of the education system in which we all grew and developed. It taught us how to think and to be independent., and at the same time to be steadfast and loyal. The school, as we knew it, ceased to exist twenty-five years ago, but the lessons and the values learned then, and the friendships we made have stayed with us---so yes, in 2002 we have much to celebrate.

While browsing through the poems of T.S. Eliot recently, I was taken with these opening lines from *Burnt Norton*, in *Four Quartets*, and thought them particularly appropriate :

‘Time present and time past
Are both perhaps present in time future
And time future contained in time past.’

KHS Website

From Alison. Forget everything I said about the KHS website in the last newsletter! Our own website is on hold due to a new, dedicated 'Old Schools' website called "friendsreunited.com".The information that goes onto the site about yourself is entirely your choice; contact is through email since phone numbers and addresses do not usually appear. It costs nothing to look but for an annual payment of £5.00 you can add your name, year group, and email address to any school you have attended. You can add to the memory board, advertise a forthcoming OGA event or a reunion, write some teacher memories, see what famous pupils attended the school and check out old friends from other schools too. If you have access to a scanner, you can add a photograph of yourself (current or historic) - there are so

Patricia Stephens (née Snape) 19-10-2001

Mrs. Mary Townsend Dunn-French teacher and librarian 1968-77
Sep. 2001

Tessa Whatmore 3-7-2001

Doris Williamson 23-12-2001

(We are also saddened to hear of the death of Miss Edna Adams, loyal companion to Miss D.C.Everett, former teacher at KHS.Both were deeply committed to the Guide Movement, and had a lasting influence on the lives of the many girls who passed through their care)

BIRTHS

A number of Old Girls are celebrating becoming grandmothers.

Mary Wehner (née Crane)-- a son, Jacob Edward, was born to her daughter **Helen Ayrton** (an OG) on 13-1-2002. A daughter, Lucy Susanna, was born to Mary's daughter **Penny Holmes** (an OG) on 17-3-2002.

May Phillips (née Tuck) has two new grandsons, one born to **Vanda Shaw** (also an OG).

Barbara Hughes (née Handley) has a second grandson.

Audrey Howell (née Bishop) has a second granddaughter who is also great- granddaughter to **Joan Massey (née Clark)**.

Old Girls have continued to make headlines in the past year--literally so in the case of **Diane Ferris (née Southgate) 1959-64** Following a search for a hat for her son's wedding, Diane decided to design and trim her own. This led to her launching herself into a new career in millinery. So if you are looking for a hat to hire or buy., contact Diane at The HatBox.

In the General Election 2001 **Debra Shipley 1968-73** retained her seat at Stourbridge for Labour.

Valerie Powick 1943-51, a member of Stourport Writers' Cycle has produced a set of poems which recollect a childhood in a quieter world. A fellow member set them to music. Abberley Primary School, where Valerie taught for 25 years has made a recording of these songs to distribute throughout the county as a talking book for the blind. Valerie also busies herself as a steward at Great Witley church, is a member of Stourport Choral Society and the Local History Society.

Margaret Phelan for last year's Newsletter produced a leaflet about Monica Jones and Philip Larkin. She was amazed one day to receive a call from James Booth, secretary of the Philip Larkin Society, asking permission to reproduce the material from the OGA Newsletter. A report on this was featured in the Shuttle in December 2001. Margaret has been busy again this year producing her 'Memories of wartime work at KHS'. Some of these are included later in the Newsletter.

Betty Caswell (née Edwards) 1942-49 has sent in a report about **Professor Margaret Talbot (née Moir)** who left KHS in 1964, and has recently been appointed as Chief Executive of the Central Council of Physical Recreation (CCPR). This is the National umbrella for governing bodies of sport and recreation in Britain. She will become a key lobbyist of the Government on issues relating to physical education, and has 34 staff to help her. For the past 14 years Margaret has been involved in developing Leeds Metropolitan University into one of the finest university sports complexes in the UK. She has also served on the committee of the foundation of Olympic and Sport Education and has been President of the Women's World Sports Association. Congratulations to Margaret -- a great achievement.

(I wonder if she will ever find herself lobbying Debra Shipley?)

Alice Bennett (née Cookson) 1967-74 continues her busy life on her farm near Worcester. The Early Years Centre, started by Alice a few years ago, is thriving and educates 146 children daily.-- Wow! Alice took her family to Kenya last summer to hand over funds raised to build a nursery classroom in 'a bush school.

Jenny Booth (née Brookes) 1967-74 works for Inland Revenue as a tax inspector. In her spare time she enjoys walking in this country and abroad, most recently in the Azores.

Lorraine Burt (née Brown) 1965-72 flew for Britannia Airways as a stewardess for 7 years before marrying and having 3 children. She now nurses at a hospice working with the terminally ill and dying-- where **Brenda Talamo (née Gasson)** also worked as a physiotherapist until her recent retirement.

Doreen Heath (née Hammond) 1939-46 reports that she has five children, and will celebrate her Golden Wedding in 2002.

Philippa Ditcham 1967-74. E-mail address :

P.ditcham@czwgarchitects.co.uk, is in contact with Lesley Everley who is in Australia E-mail:Eljay4@bigpond.com.au They would love to hear from contemporaries (*Note: there are several featured on this page*)

Jenny Filby (1964-72) has located her two closest friends, Rosemary Fletcher and Marion Powell, but is still trying to find Moyra McBurney. Can anyone help?

Chris Goggin (née Brook) 1969-74 has returned to UK after 15 years in USA. She works as a support assistant at Comberton First School. Her son is at King Charles I School.

Doris Hill 1922-30 is still in touch with Alice Howell (now Rickards) who is living near Taunton. Alice was Head Girl 1929-30. A long friendship indeed.

Jean Malbon (née Lamb) 1938-44 has severe osteo-arthritis which limits her mobility, but not her determination. She has built a WebSite- not yet complete- while attending courses at Fircroft College, Birmingham. So come on all you Computer Sceptics, it's never too late to get started!

Helen Otton (née Bates) 1956-63 is now Head of Development at the Old Vic Theatre in London.

Jean Ovens (née Jarvis) 1936-44 is busy with the League of Friends coffee shop, and has been the accompanist to the WI choir for 52 years. She is still in contact with Mary Barker (née Greaves) and Gwen Lee (née Meredith)ss

Mary Painter (née Coney) 1929-40, who lives in West Sussex, had her 3 grandchildren from Auckland, New Zealand staying in summer 2001.

Beryl Smith 1935-42, after retiring from Hanbury school, where she had been Head for 25 years, moved to Wychbold. Her many interests include WI, Avoncroft Arts Society, Gramophone Society, voluntary work for the Children's Society. She is in touch with Margaret Shaddock, Mabel Tyler, Agnes Sidebottom, Margaret Jones and Jessica Campbell (née Hawkes).

Janet Taylor (née Woolley) 1961-67 is Careers Adviser at Stourport. Her two daughters, both graduates, work in London.

Memories of Wartime work at KHS

Margaret Phelan recalls an aspect of school life unknown to most of us--wartime work at KHS. This was not simply a matter of knitting sea-boot stockings and balaclavas. She 'adopted' a Free French sailor, (thinking to improve her French) who addressed her as 'Ma douce fleur des Anges.' They exchanged a flurry of letters which Margaret thought politic not to show Miss Billam!

Margaret continues: Sugar beet singling- back-breaking work involving crawling along the muddy ground, and potato picking! Ugh! It always seemed to be on wet, sticky clay soil--easier in bare feet. And our wages--those few pence per hour were commandeered by Miss Oldfield as belonging to the school! Bitter thoughts lingered for years over that deprivation!

Then there was Saturday work at Tomkinson's factory, re-boring hundreds of thousands of bullet sleeves. We worked a 4- hour shift --and this time we kept our earnings!

I remember being at Crowle Farm, Droitwich for summer time fruit picking camps. We were issued with sacks to fill with straw for sleeping, though sleeping was often disturbed. One night cows broke into the tent. On another there was a thunderstorm so tents were flooded and we had to race to a barn. And we picked plums! We each had a ladder and a basket and climbed into the trees. Safety precautions were non-existent!

Annette Jacobs (née Devitt) tells Margaret of the Serious Emergency Exercise she was involved in. She and others gathered at a point in town and were given notes on the plight of the victim they represented. Annette was given 'Woman in labour'--and was hardly aware of its meaning. She got on her bike and pedalled furiously to school, handing in her note to Miss Hunt who blushed and sent her to Miss Oldfield who calmly directed her to Miss White's office which was labelled Labour Ward. KHS could cope with any emergency, couldn't it? (*Though hopefully Miss White was never called upon to cope with that for real!*).

O.G.A. COMMITTEE

<i>Chairman</i>	Beryl Bedford (former teacher)
<i>Minutes Sec.</i>	Yvonne Ward (née Simon)
<i>Assistant Sec.</i>	Mary Wehner (née Crane)
<i>Treasurer</i>	Shirley Whiteside (née Hall)
<i>Members</i>	Alison Hargreaves Shiela Hodges (née Jacobs) Sheila Garlick Meriel Williams (née Greaves)
<i>Flower Fund</i>	Rosemarie Moore (née Brockway) and Elisabeth Robinson (née Wrigglesworth).
<i>Catering</i>	Elisabeth Robinson.
<i>Editor of Newsletter</i>	Sheila Kirk (née Ryder)
<i>Ex Officio</i>	Marjorie Rivers (née Elcock) Group 4. Patricia Nash (née Harris) Group 5.
<i>Co-opted</i>	Barbara Chalmers (née French)—Former Secretary. May Phillips (née Tuck)--Former Treasurer

Items for inclusion in the Newsletter should be sent to:-
Sheila Kirk, 'West Fortune', Ashford Carbonell, Ludlow, SY8 4DB.
Telephone & Facsimile 01584 831257.
E-mail: sheila@rkstudio.demon.co.uk

OGA FLOWER FUND

Rosemarie Moore (Tel.. 01562 67546) and **Elisabeth Robinson (Tel.01562 751932)** continue their invaluable work of administering this scheme, and we are very grateful for all the time and effort they expend on our behalf. Over the past year 40 visits to Old Girls have been made, with gifts of flowers and cards, plus at Christmas, 31 gifts of flowers or tokens.

Following a spell in hospital myself recently, it cheered me so much to see Liz's smiling face and to receive some beautiful flowers from my old friends--thank you to everyone who made this possible. Ed.

If you hear of an O.G. who is ill and would appreciate a visit, please contact Rosemarie or Liz.