



KIDDERMINSTER HIGH SCHOOL

O.G.A. NEWSLETTER 2005

FUTURE EVENTS

**Sat. 10/9/2005 11a.m Annual General Meeting,
followed by Lunch at The Hundred House Hotel,
Great Witley**

Fri. 10/3/2006 7.30p.m Illustrated talk "The River
Severn from Source to Bridgnorth" by Mr. Brian Draper

Sat.10 /6/2006 12 noon for 12.30p.m Annual Lunch

*Unless otherwise stated, meetings are at King Charles I
High School (formerly KHS.) Car park entrance via Comberton
Road. If attending a meeting, please notify Beryl Bedford two
weeks beforehand. **Address:** 80 Holmcroft Rd. Kidderminster
DY10 3AG Tel.01562 752997*

FROM THE EDITOR

I write this as I gaze across the fields to the river Teme two fields away, where a light pearly mist lingers. The sun is shining in a bright blue sky, with one small cloud (no bigger than a man's hand) hovering above the Mortimer Forest on the horizon. A swathe of yellow rattle, hawkbit, knapweed and poppies nod in the breeze. A typical English summer's day, with only the sound of the swallows twittering to break the silence. A day for counting one's blessings. It is all too easy to forget that only yesterday the illusion of peace was shattered by the screaming of low-flying jets of assorted Air Forces on manoeuvres, and that beyond these sunny skies thousands of people are suffering from the effects of war, terrorism, famine and other disasters, both natural and man-made.

A few short months ago, on Boxing Day, the world was shaken by the Tsunami in East Asia. Without being there, we can only imagine the full horror and anguish of the tragedy. Sadly, one of our number was there. Kim Peatfield (nee Ree) (KHS 1975—KCI 1982), who now lives in Derbyshire, was holidaying with her family at Tangalla in Sri Lanka. Kim's 5 year old daughter Isabella died in the disaster. Kim's Bewdley family, with the help of Wyre Forest residents, raised more than £10,000 for the Isabella Peatfield Memorial Fund. The overall total is now in excess of £20,000 including £8,000 contributed by the TV programme The Bill, for which Kim's husband is a Set designer.

Kim and her husband flew back to Sri Lanka in February to see how the money would be used. Some had already helped to rebuild a Tangalla school. The fund is also helping to rebuild the hospital in the village where Isabella died and the children's ward will be dedicated to her. Her parents have pledged to help refurbish an orphanage and a home for disabled children and young adults.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to Kim and her family in their terrible loss. We are filled with admiration for their determination to put aside their own tragedy and work to help the shattered communities where their daughter died.

NEWS OF OLD GIRLS

Last year **Eva Burford** (nee Brockway) celebrated her 100th birthday. Now, sadly, we report her death on 7/6/2005, at the age of 101.

Also: **Farewell to**

Doris Charlton (nee Fletcher) d. 18/4/2005
Marjorie Copeland (nee Amphlett) d.18/6/2004 aged 89
Marjorie Fryer (nee Stokes) d. 11/4/2004
June Hopkins (nee Hunt) d.19/1/2004
Freda Humpherson (nee Hardwick)d.1/6/2005
Greta Reynolds (nee Jones) d. 2004 aged 85
Alice Lilian Rickards (nee Howell) d. 16/1/2005 aged 93
(Alice was Head Girl 1929/30)
Margaret Sadler (nee Jones) d.2002
Hilda Smith (nee Hadwell) d.28/9/2004
Madeline Thomson (nee Beach) d. 18/4/2004
Dorothy Lloyd (nee Welch) d.15/6/2005

OGA FLOWER FUND

We are very grateful to **Rosemarie Moore (Tel. 01562 67546)** and **Elisabeth Robinson (01562 750891)**, who continue their invaluable work in administering this scheme on our behalf, in spite of having many other calls on their time. They have been very busy over the past year, with an increased number of visits to Old Girls with gifts of flowers, cards, or tokens – among them the flowers given to Annette Jacobs on her recent 80th birthday.

Rosemarie has visited Eva Burford and Freda Humpherson over many years. Following their deaths, flowers were given to Eva's daughter Robin –who has recently gained a degree through the Open University, and to Freda's daughter Diana Osborn.

The fund is generously supported by Old Girls. If you hear of anyone who is ill or bereaved, and would appreciate a visit, please contact Rosemarie or Liz,

THANK YOU

to **Muriel Wanklin** who answered the appeal in the 2004 newsletter for past copies of KHS magazines for 1934-5 and 1958-9, to complete the OGA collection

Betty Caswell nee Edwards (1942-9) and her husband Geoff celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary in July 2004 with friends on a Russian River Cruise. **Rita Sheppy (KHS 1942-9)** was one of the party. Since then, Betty has published a fourth Cookley book: "Cookley in the 21st Century: The Early Years 2000-2003." It includes information about organizations in the village, a comparison between pupils at Cookley Sebright First School in 1905 and 2001, and a brief history of The Titan Wheels factory

Margaret Jones (1930-41) is still in contact with her oldest friend **Mary Wilkinson(nee Rose)**. They met aged 8 in the Kindergarten, and went through school together, singing in the choir and playing in the hockey and tennis teams. Margaret's sister, **Greta Reynolds (nee Jones)(1930-37)** died in 2004 aged 85, at Moreton near Spalding.. Greta excelled in the field of music, being a violinist, singer and pianist. She took a B.Mus degree at Birmingham University.

Valerie Powick (1943-51), who is chairman of the Shrawley Village Hall Trustees, opened the refurbished hall and extension in February 2005. The former school, first converted to a Village Hall in 1984, dates back to 1860. Valerie was a pupil there in the 1940s. She was unable to attend our AGM because she was taking part in a World Premiere Concert at Symphony Hal, Birmingham to celebrate 25 years of collaboration between Alain Boublil and Claude Michel Schonberg who wrote the musicals "Les Miserables" and "Miss Saigon"

Edna Wakelin (nee Llewellyn) (1930s) is now living at The Minster Grange Nursing Home in Stourport. She was a guest at the 100th birthday party of **Vera Perry**, a fellow resident, who used to push Edna in her pram when she was nursemaid for the Llewellyn family.

Margaret Morris (left KHS in 1942), is Tenbury's first Mayor, and former Matron of Tenbury Hospital. She recently received the MBE and enjoyed a Royal Garden Party. Over the years she has sung for the Operatic Society, bullied off for the town's Women's hockey team and successfully challenged the town to raise hundreds of thousands of pounds for a millennium project to improve hospital facilities..

Cynthia Beck (nee Anderton)(1939-43) lives in County Kerry. She remembers being looked after by **Pat Webster** when she started at KHS. Cynthia's close friends were **Mary Cole, Eileen Willis** and **Maureen Clearey**.

Eileen Tasker (nee Porter)(1948-53) was pictured in the Kidderminster Chronicle in February 2005 in an article reporting the 25th anniversary of The Wyre Forest Talking Newspaper. She is an editor.

Pie Gethin (Staff 1937-47 and 1952-73) is now living in Romsey. Her daughter **Jill (1958-65)** is to be Mayor of Romsey in 2005-2006, and her sister **Sally Williams (nee Gethin) (1962-69)** is to be Mayor's Escort.

Beverley Newey (nee Hobbs) (1968-75) has celebrated 25 years with Marks and Spencer. She attended the Company's long service awards in London, which included a champagne reception and a West End Show. She has been a staff manager and Human Resources Manager at a number of stores. She joined the Kidderminster Store in June 2004.

Kate Wrigglesworth (KHS 1974-KCI 1981) – a niece of Elisabeth Robinson – is a painter and was commissioned to do a map for the town trail of Stourport on Severn issued Easter 2005.

Debbie Thomson(nee Chaudoir)(1970-77) is the photographer for the Kidderminster Shuttle.

Stella Grayson(nee Millman)(1943-50) is now Mrs. Jones.

Jean Malbon(nee Lamb)(1938-44) is unable to get to meetings because of severe arthritis. She has had several operations to hips and hands and is due for a shoulder operation soon.. *Good wishes, Jean.*

Jean is in touch with **Hazel Moss (nee Hingley) and Muriel**

Bent(nee Williams) Jean's mother **Edith Lamb** was a pupil at KHS when the Chester Road building opened in 1912.

Julia Smith(1970-77) was married in America on 28/5/04 She is now Mrs. Noyce. She is a senior underwriter for Amerus Life, having lived in Des Moines, Iowa since 1983.

Jenny Filby(1964-72) is planning to move to Norfolk in 2006, semi-retire, develop a brand new garden and buy 10 acres of woodland to manage for wildlife. *Jenny, this does not sound like retirement!*

A report in the Shuttle gave us the news that **Mary Gill(1924-31) and Doris Hill(1922-30)** who taught at Sladen C.E School during the Second World war were guests of honour at a reunion in May 2004 for pupils who were at the school from its opening in October 1940 until

1945. Doris is the only living member of the teaching staff who was at the school when it opened .

Another Shuttle article featured **Georgina Hurst** who left KHS in 1971. She ran her own clothes shop in Bewdley until she moved to Falmouth 13 years ago. Two years ago she became a professional artist. Her latest exhibition “On reflection 2004” was at the Oval Gallery in Cheltenham in August 2004 and featured a tribute to the Little Ships of Dunkirk called “Sea of Poppies” She brought the painting, which was due to be auctioned to generate funds for the restoration of Dunkirk Little Ship Rania, to Stourport yacht club on Remembrance Day.

Kathleen Hyde(nee Gregory)(1942-46) writes that Gwen Gregory(nee Norris) who died in March 2004, was her step-grandmother. She was her grandfather’s secretary at Weston, Fisher and Weston, Solicitors, and only 8 years older than herself. Gwen’s marriage to Kathleen’s grandfather after his first wife died caused many raised eyebrows in Kidderminster! In later life she became something of a recluse but never lost her interest in local affairs and sent Kathleen copies of items from papers and magazines.

Brenda Talamo(nee Gasson)(1941-52) reports that her sister **Hazel Gibson(nee Gasson)** who was living in Spain, is now back in UK and living once more in Kidderminster.

Margaret White(nee Jones)(1942-47) and her husband Dennis have moved back to Kidderminster from Kenilworth.

Pamela Upsall (nee Rowley) (1947-54) hears from **Pam Park (nee Richards)** in Berrynarbor and goes walking regularly with **Kay Pagett (nee Hayes)**. She is still church warden at St. Cecilia’s Church and enjoys her grandson who lives in Derbyshire.

REUNION

Lyn Chamberlain a KHS pupil between 1965 and 1972 has sent an entertaining account of the reunion she organized for her particular year group, in July 2004. She realized one day that most of those who attended KHS during 1965-72 would be fifty that year. She wondered where her old friends were, and what they were doing. She thought of the influence the friendships she formed at school had had on her – and

determined to track down as many as she could. By Christmas, 34 friends had been found and so, Lyn says, the fantasy became reality with the aid of Beryl Bedford and The George Hotel, Bewdley.

Lyn says, “ I organized a three part reunion where people could come and go as they liked. The weekend of 3rd July arrived and my first thought was, ‘What have I done, why have I come here?’ I felt incredibly nervous and was stunned by it. As we approached the school others said their hearts were pounding and that they were surprised by this reaction too. We met Beryl (unchanged by the passing years) and waited for others to arrive, walking towards us with just the same emotions written all over their faces; an unforgettable experience. It was fabulous to meet everybody again in the actual school and to tour it together.

We entered the school led by our Head Girl of the time-Sara Wormald , (now Peart). I felt sixteen again. The school was changed beyond belief. It seemed tiny. What had seemed so large and impressive was small and ordinary. We toured our old classrooms and the school grounds, all changed, only Hillgrove remaining the same. We reminisced about teachers and form rooms and stood in the halls where we used to gather for assemblies. We remembered how the floors used to be shining from the close proximity of 500 pairs of navy blue knickers every morning. Following the tour of the school many of us spent the afternoon in the coffee lounge at The George. We pored over old photos and school magazines. Other girls who had missed the tour joined us and we had such a good time. We laughed till tears ran down our cheeks. We had arranged to meet at The George for dinner at 8. Gradually everyone started arriving. Yet more new faces. The atmosphere was immediately wonderful. There was such a buzz. When we sat down for dinner there were 32 of us. The food was excellent. It was great to hear stories of people’s lives and to relive our schooldays at the same time .To be together like that again in our 50th year was a joy.

For me it was certainly a life-affirming event. I loved every minute of it. **We will certainly be doing it all again when we are sixty-so watch this space!”**

Ed’s Note : For My year group, 1946-53, 2006 will see the 60th anniversary of our entering the portals of KHS. Perhaps we should have another reunion??

O.G.A. COMMITTEE 2004-2005

- Chairman* Beryl Bedford (former teacher).
- Secretary* Beryl Bedford helped by Alison Hargreaves and Rosemarie Moore (née Brockway).
- Assistant Sec.* Mary Wehner (née Crane).
- Treasurer* Shirley Whiteside (née Hall).
- Members* Brenda Fathers (nee Owen)
Margaret Rose (nee Bird)
Sheila Garlick
Margaret White (nee Jones)
- Flower Fund* Rosemarie Moore (née Brockway) and Elisabeth Robinson (née Wrigglesworth).
- Catering* Elisabeth Robinson.
- Ex Officio* Marjorie Rivers (née Elcock) Group 4.
Patricia Nash (née Harris) Group 5.
- Co-opted* Alison Hargreaves
May Phillips (nee Tuck)

Newsletter Editor Sheila Kirk(née Ryder), to whom all items for inclusion in the Newsletter should be sent at:

***'West Fortune', Ashford Carbonell, Ludlow, SY8 4DB.
Telephone 01584 831257.
E-mail : sheila@rkstudio.demon.co***

It would be of great help, if ,when sending me an article or information, you could send it by email, or on disc. I can then incorporate it into the text without having to type it out again.