



KIDDERMINSTER HIGH SCHOOL

O.G.A. NEWSLETTER 2006

FUTURE EVENTS

Fri.15/9/2006 7.30p.m Annual General Meeting,

Fri. 23/3/2007 7.30p.m “At Home with the Old Girls”
Entertainment organized by Mary Wehner and quiz
organized by Rosemarie Moore.

Sat. 15/9/2007 11.00a.m. Annual General Meeting
followed by lunch at The Hundred House, Great
Witley.

*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. Kiddersminster
DY10 3AG Tel.01562 752997*

FROM THE EDITOR

When I was a small child, in the late 1930s, I could never understand why my parents were always referring to The War. After all, it had been over for at least twenty years – ancient history. Now, of course, I know better. “Our War” finished 60 years ago, but we still feel as though it happened only last week! In the past year I have been asked to contribute my “War Memoirs” to four different publications or projects. (*Oh dear, I’m considered old enough to write Memoirs!*) I am not alone in this; I know that other Old Girls have also been involved.

One of our members, Margaret Phelan went one better. She answered an appeal for those who lived during the War to speak about their memories of working then. This led to her receiving an invitation to lunch in Buckingham Palace gardens, on 10th July 2005, in the presence of the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh.

OVER TO MARGARET

“It was a wonderful experience. The appalling havoc of the London bombings of 7th July 2005 had not driven the crowds away. There was a security check as we arrived, then over the courtyard, through a corridor and out into the garden where a long line of waiters stood in front of an enormous marquee. We had been allocated to table 173, which was near to the main entrance. We found a sea of white linen, silver cutlery and sparkling glasses, one of which was rapidly filled with champagne. Senior Officers of the Forces and senior politicians arrived, members of the Royal Family and then the Queen and the Duke.

Our meal was quickly served, a salmon salad followed by gooseberry shortbread and cream, with glasses quickly replenished with wine, fruit juice or water – Malvern, of course. Then there was time to wander round the grounds and take photographs, for we were told that this was a special privilege for us.

How did I come to be here? KHS came into that! I had seen an appeal for those who had lived and worked through the war years. I wrote saying what we as pupils at KHS had done, and about my first job as a Milk Tester at the Co-op Dairy. This was part of the Home Front Project supported by the Heritage Fund, the National Pensioners’

Convention and the TUC. I then found that I was also pictured with a quote from my recording at the Living Museum Exhibition in St James' Park. It was all so interesting and memorable. My son Gerard came with me as escort and carer! He was later invited to write of the day in the Old Carolian Magazine."

IN MEMORIAM.

Sadly, we say farewell to a number of friends.

Gladys Angela Blencowe	d. 31/7/2005 aged 101
Elfreda Coates (nee Nott)(formerly Harris)	d.24/11/2005 aged 94
Mary Evans (nee Pinkham)	d.2004
Brenda Green (nee Brown)	d.26/2/2006
Gillian Hume (nee Nicholls)	d. Feb. 2006
Kathleen Hyde (nee Gregory)	d. 24/4/2006
Doreen Swift (nee Bunn)	d.1/12/2005
Claire Goodson(nee Mainwaring)	died of cancer in 1997 aged 41 leaving her husband Richard and three sons. Claire was head of Chad in 1971-72
James Millington (KHS 1946-48)	d.25/2/2006
Margaret Johnson (nee Lyon) Domestic Science Teacher	Sept 1954-Dec 1960
Pie Gethin (nee Clarke) P.E.Teacher	1937-47, 1952-73, Warden of Cyniberht
	d.15/2/2006 aged 92

A copy of the eulogy delivered at Pie's memorial service is available from Beryl Bedford on receipt of a stamped addressed envelope. Address on P.1

NEWS OF OLD GIRLS

Kathleen Bartels(nee Bayes) 1927- 41 is unable to walk properly without a stick, having had two falls and four leg operations. She advises everyone NOT to fall over as she never had any illness before!

Maureen White (nee Dovey) 1945-50 recently had a heart-warming reunion with her Dutch pen friend after an interval of 30 years. She writes, “In August 1947, I spent two weeks in Holland with a party from KHS, escorted by Miss E. Chalk. We joined a group from a Dutch school for the first week and the second week was spent with a Dutch family. Lous Heine invited me to her home in Leiden. We corresponded regularly, and our families exchanged visits, but our last meeting was over 30 years ago. Then in May 2005 I spent a wonderfully memorable day with her in The Hague. How the years rolled away with so much news to catch up on!”

Sarah Bryson (nee Gibson) 1972-79 lives in Oxfordshire with her husband John and two sons. After leaving school she trained as a nurse in Oxford. After her marriage she went first to Australia, then back to Northampton and Kidderminster, where she worked on the children’s ward for a year before moving back to the Oxford area. Her husband is a GP. Sarah works on a locum basis as a District Nurse. Sarah’s mother **Hazel(nee Gasson) 1941-52**, is back living in Kidderminster after a few years in Spain. Hazel’s twin sister **Brenda Talamo** lives in Bedfordshire.

Margaret Phelan, when not living the high life at Buckingham Palace, is a volunteer steward at Hanbury Hall and while on duty there was approached by **Pauline Bibby(nee Cookson)**, KHS in the early sixties. On leaving school Pauline took a degree in physics, migrated to Canada and taught Physics there for 20 years before changing careers to run a hotel with her husband. She now has a third career as a garden designer, based at Rose Hill, Boltongate, Cumbria CA7 1DA. She would be delighted to meet any OGs who are around the area, just north of Keswick.

Margaret’s niece, **Jane Randall (nee Pugh)1959-66**, is justifiably proud of her daughter Abigail(not KHS)who is in her final year at Magdalen College, Oxford and has been awarded a Commonwealth Scholarship to study for two years at Toronto University for an MA in Epidemiology and Public Health.

Margaret Bazley (nee Osborne) 1955-62. Her mother **Hettie**(1923-27) celebrated her 70th Wedding Anniversary on 27/7/2005, and her

95th birthday on 17/8/2005. Hettie still keeps in touch with **Irene (Renee) Hoedermakers** (nee Shutt) , who lives in New Zealand. **Alice Bennett (nee Cookson)** 1967-74. Her farm based school was quoted in the House of Commons as one of the first successful independent Children's Centres. She is now busy developing the woodlands as an educational facility to extend the children's learning and has qualified as a Forest Leader. She has also taken up carriage driving and Scottish Dancing (*in her spare moments, I suppose*) She often sees Alison Hargreaves and cannot believe they are nearly 50.

(On May 21st 2005 after the OGA visit to Madresfield Court, Alice very kindly invited us all back to tea so we were able to see the Early Years Centre. Many thanks, Alice)

Robina Burford (left in 1957) (Based on a report in The Shuttle) Robina was inspired to take an Open University degree in Spanish after helping to translate for visitors from Peru to the Worcester diocese. The link with the Peruvian Anglican Church was established 14 years ago. In August 2005 she travelled with others in the diocese to Peru. In Lima they visited a women's prison, a nursery and various programmes helping poor people in the shanty towns on the outskirts. In Arequipa they joined the congregation of Christ the Redeemer Church and visited a school and a Children's Home. During the tour they distributed toys, toiletries, medical supplies and money donated by parishioners in the diocese.

Betty Caswell (nee Edwards) 1942-49 writes in appreciation of

Doreen Swift (nee Bunn) 1943-50

Doreen died very suddenly on 1/12/2005. "Bunny" was Betty's friend for over 60 years. They were inseparable at KHS. They even tackled their homework together and on one occasion decided to translate the whole of their Latin book so that they would be ahead with their work – but their teacher decided to change the book! They were in school rounders and netball teams together and would plan strategies to defeat their opponents. Doreen introduced Betty to the fun to be had in Cookley. Betty joined the local tennis club and they were both in the Cookley Rangers Company. They went camping and Youth Hostelling. When Betty started to write books on life in Cookley, Doreen's local knowledge was of immense help. Doreen would always see the amusing side of life and they laughed a lot together. Doreen went to Matlock

Training College. She married Roy and they stayed in Derbyshire. They were still able to visit each other or talk on the phone just as though they had only gone into the next room for a while.

It was a very special friendship of a truly loyal friend and she is sadly missed.

Linda Cox (nee Mann) 1955-60 lives at Oxford, Canterbury, New Zealand. Her mother **Irene Shutt** (now Hoedermakers) KHS 1930s, lives nearby and remembers **Annette Jacobs (nee Devitt)**. They keep in touch with Betty Caswell from her days at Birchen Coppice School, and **May Phillips (nee Tuck)**. May's mother had a private nursing home at 1 Adam Street, where Linda and her sister Elaine were born.

Janet Dyson (nee Foster) 1959-66 is working as an educational consultant to schools and LEAs. She has just completed a series of R.E. books "Think R.E!" for Heinemann, as series editor/writer. She is in touch with **Gaye Jacobs, Jane Pugh and Pat Howell** and asks if anyone knows anything about **Margaret Smout, Lynne Coles and Janet Conan-Davies**. They were a foursome from Upper V H.

Diane Ferris (nee Southgate) 1959-64 is still making "headway" in her new career as Milliner – which began when she could not find a hat for her son's wedding. Now she is making such fantastic hats, they are even in demand for Ascot.

Jenny Filby 1964-72 has recently moved to Norfolk and is busy restoring a neglected 2 acre garden, and enjoying long walks and bike rides. Old school friends are very welcome to visit.

Mary Gill 1924-31 attended, on 9th July 2005, a reunion at Franche Middle School, to mark the 50th Anniversary of the school which she opened. A very happy occasion.

Elizabeth Watts (nee Gale) 1952-58 keeps in touch with former school friends **Ann Dodd (nee Lacy)** and **Jill Jackson (nee Badger)**. They all attend OGA meetings regularly, having joined after a successful reunion for their years when they were 60.

Annette Jacobs (nee Devitt) 1934-43 officially retired at 60 from the office at Stanford Hall, Leicestershire, but continued working there doing guided tours of the house, helping on the door and souvenir shop. She completed cataloguing the portraits in the house and continues with research. She was 80 in February 2005 and had a series

of parties – aided by her sister- in –law **Shiela Hodges (nee Jacobs)**. Several OGA members were among those present.

Shirley Keays (nee Green) 1943-53 now has 4 grandchildren who bring much joy. She practises yoga regularly, and sings with the Nottingham Bach Choir, occasionally plays the church organ and works for Cancer Research UK one day a week.

Jean Malbon (nee Lamb) 1937-44 is unable to attend meetings for health reasons, but is in touch with Margaret Phelan and Hazel Moss. She has an email address and would be pleased to hear from anyone. Email: jean_malbon@yahoo.co.uk NB there is an underscore between jean and malbon.

Rosemarie Morgan(nee Pitt) 1970-77 is Deputy Head at Spennells First School. She organizes an annual series of carol concerts involving many First Schools in Wyre Forest District, and other schools' music events.

Diana Osborn (nee Humpherson)1956-63 is a near neighbour at her house in France of **Mary Dolphin(nee Wilkes)** 1950-55, who lives there permanently.

Ann Marvin 1950-57 is now a **J.P. in the Redditch area.**

Naomi Mitchell (nee Bishop) 1971-78 continues as a highly successful and respected Producer for BBC Midlands Today, coupling this with raising her gorgeous twins, now 8 years old. She is aided in this by her parents, **Sheila Bishop (nee Nash)** 1946-51 and Tony, an Old Carolian.

Mary Painter(nee Coney)1929-40 together with her husband John celebrated their Diamond Wedding anniversary at Comhampton. The following Old Girls were there: Sue Martyn-Smith(Joan Read at school), Peggy Roden(nee Job),Sheila Dudley (nee Fieldhouse), Helen Leeming(nee Coney),Jean Talbot(nee Lincoln), Mary Painter(nee Dracass, who taught Maths at KHS) and Bob Painter, Mary's husband and an Old Boy of KHS, Essex Coney aged 91, Mary's brother who was at Hartlebury Grammar School. It was a lovely time for them all. Mary's grandson,20, and granddaughter,18, have both represented their country –New Zealand-at water polo in international competitions. Mary taught them to swim!

Valerie Powick 1943-51 writes that **Sheila Corbett** 1941-47 is now living at Holt Heath. She manages shopping in Worcester and

Kidderminster with her sister Margery, using taxis specially adapted for wheelchairs. She produces the monthly Parish Magazine which covers Shrawley and the Witleys.

Debbie Thomson (nee Chaudoir) 1970-77 writes that her sister Helen van Swaaij (nee Chaudoir) 1971-78 is married to Rene, a Dutch professor. They live in Holland with daughter Louise aged 5. Helen works as an English teacher part-time at an International School and sings in a local choir.

Dora Preston (nee Joslin) 1925-32, approaching the age of 92 and becoming increasingly arthritic and unable to cope on her own, has left Kidderminster and moved to Surrey to be near to her son. For many years Dora was the highly respected Senior Mistress at Stourport High School, but left the area when her husband Ronald became ordained and took up pastorates in the North of England and Brightlingsea. Following his death, Dora came back to Kidderminster and enjoyed meeting up with her old friends.

Glen Walford 1952-59 is returning to Ludlow this summer, 2006, in her role as Director of Ludlow Festival. with a production of A Midsummer Night's Dream..

After leaving KHS Glen gained a degree in English from Bristol University, followed by a Diploma in Education from Liverpool. After a spell of teaching she moved into Theatre and rapidly developed a reputation as a Director of Plays, Opera and Musicals. She is both nationally and internationally renowned in this field, and is much in demand right across the globe—United States, Russia, Japan, Germany, Israel, Hong Kong, Borneo, to name but a few- even without having a working knowledge of the various languages!

In order to help Ludlow Festival achieve its aim of fielding a really high profile production this year, Glen has put off other attractive opportunities. It is a great opportunity to experience one of Glen's productions on our own doorstep and I urge everyone who possibly can, to try and get there. She promises a "really magical experience." (Burberries and blankets recommended!)

Ed's Note: And of course, you get a double treat, because this other Old Girl will be grovelling about backstage organising the costumes. Please send me round some food!

THE ROSE GARDEN

Do you know when the Rose Garden at Hillgrove House was constructed, the name of the architect and builder? The house was bought from the Anton family in 1948 and the Rose Garden was already well established. Any information to Beryl Bedford please. (Address on front page)

Ed's note My generation have fond memories of the day we moved the entire school library over from Main School to Hillgrove House , by Human Chain .The whole school lined up between the old library and the new, passing books from hand to hand. Sadly, the task was completed in less than a day – we had hoped it would take a week! Later, as sixth formers, we enjoyed the privilege of relaxing in the Rose Garden – our own private territory

REUNION REUNION REUNION

We frequently publish reports of reunions held by various year groups. It is heartening to know how many groups of old girls still meet frequently and enjoy reminiscing about their days at KHS. Depending on the timing of your meeting, why not advertise it in advance through the OGA Newsletter?

For example, my own year group is planning a special reunion this September, as detailed below :

SIXTY YEARS ON 1946-1953 REUNION

Did you first set foot across the threshold of KHS, or move up from the kindergarten in September 1946 and join form 3X, 3Y or 3Z? or maybe join this group in a later year ? If so, there is still time for you to book in for the Grand Reunion Lunch on Thursday 21st September

2006, at Grafton Manor near Bromsgrove. Please join us – everyone will be most welcome.

DETAILS FROM THE EDITOR see Address on Back Page.

Or from LIZ ROBINSON, on 01562 75089

1912-2012

LOOKING BACK

LOOKING FORWARD

The year 1912 was a significant one in the history of Kidderminster Girls' High School. In that year the school moved into magnificent new buildings, purposely built, on Chester Road. We all have our own vivid personal memories of the years spent there – the friendships we made, the laughter and traumas we shared and the vast fund of knowledge we amassed with the help of dedicated teachers. I often think their greatest legacy was to teach us how to think and to be independent, equipping us to face the constantly changing challenges which open up before us.

Reading the High School Magazine for 1946-47, my first year, I note that the **Head Girl** was **Edith Robinson**, with **Diana Pheysey** as her deputy. Diana was also Head of the newly formed **Clent House**, **R.Pierce** was **Head of Clare**, with **Stephanie Bidmead** and **J. Fewtrell** as **Heads of Cyniberht and Chad** respectively.

At Prize Giving in November 1946 the assembled girls were addressed by **Mr. Wilson Harris, M.P.** He urged us to look into the future. Some of us, he said, would see the turn of the century. (This seemed so unlikely to an eleven year old, I would be even older than my grandmother by then!) What, he wondered, were we going to make of the years between November 1946 and 2000? We ought to do all in our power to fit ourselves for living, adding that as citizens, women had a great part to play. There had never been so many spheres open to them. Mr. Wilson exhorted us to remember the heritage to which we had succeeded, and to hand on that heritage. He ended by expressing the hope that we would enjoy the year 2000 – emphasizing that he would not himself be here to see it! ***If he could read of all the varied talents, exploits and achievements of our members, as reported in this newsletter, I am sure he would not be disappointed!***

Now, with the march of “progress” our school heritage is under threat once again, with the proposed closure and redevelopment of the old

school buildings. Will they still exist in the year 2012 when we celebrate the centenary of our moving to that site? Who can say?

Surprisingly, there is no official archive material on KHS.

Photographs left in the old school, registers, books, have all gone. Miss Bedford has done a sterling job with saving and storing whatever she could lay hands on. The OGA committee feels we should make a concerted effort to collect together any photographs, papers, letters, old reports, press cuttings and other archive material that still exists, (any old gym tunics, hat bands, white girdles?) with the hope of preserving them for posterity. There must be, tucked away in attics and cupboards, many items of memorabilia relating to the school. Have you any such materials, and would you be willing to donate them, or supply copies so that a meaningful archive can be established? Or why not write down a few memoirs? It would be good to be able to mount an impressive Centenary Exhibition in 2012.

I have suggested an Old Girls' Olympics to tie in with the official Olympics, but have not received any support for this idea. (Fortunately) So please do get searching—this is your chance to finally sort out all those old boxes that have been cluttering up the loft for years.

Please contact Miss Bedford if you can help - address on front cover – or any committee member.

Now, to demonstrate how we are embracing the 21st Century and how forward-looking we are:-

Are you a **Silver Surfer ?** (or maybe not so Silver?)

Do you know your **bits** from your **bites**, or **jpegs** from **gedcoms**?

If so, you probably have an email address, or even your own website??

Would you like to receive your annual Newsletter by email?

On your Membership Application form there will be a space for entering your email address, and space to indicate whether you wish to receive future issues by that means. The choice is yours.

Your email address would not be given to anyone without your express permission, and would only be used for the purpose stated.

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 .

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.

O.G.A. COMMITTEE

<i>Chairman</i>	Beryl Bedford (former teacher).
<i>Secretary</i>	Beryl Bedford helped by Alison Hargreaves and Rosemarie Moore (née Brockway).
<i>Assistant Sec.</i>	Mary Wehner (née Crane).
<i>Treasurer</i>	Shirley Whiteside (née Hall).
<i>Members</i>	Sheila Garlick Margaret White (nee Jones) Alison Hargreaves Meriel Williams (nee Greaves)
<i>Coopted</i>	May Phillips (nee Tuck)
<i>Flower Fund</i>	Rosemarie Moore (née Brockway) and Elisabeth Robinson (née Wrigglesworth).
<i>Catering</i>	Elisabeth Robinson.
<i>Ex Officio</i>	Marjorie Rivers (née Elcock) Group 4. Patricia Nash (née Harris) Group 5.

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.uk