



KIDDERMINSTER HIGH SCHOOL O.G.A. NEWSLETTER 2015

Future Events

Sat. 19/09/2015 A.G.M. and lunch at The Wagon Wheel Inn, Grimley, WR2 6LU.

11 a.m. AGM followed by lunch 12 noon for 12:30 p.m.

Please note that spaces for this event are strictly limited to 55 and will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. A waiting list will be set up if needed. Please reply by Friday 28th August at the latest.

Fri 22nd April 2016 – Richard Westcott, Pantomime Dame, talks about his life. The meeting will be held in the Science Theatre at King Charles 1 School, Comberton Road, Kidderminster, DY10 1XA.

If you are planning to attend the meeting on 22nd April 2016 please notify Anne Budworth, 108, Park Lane, Kidderminster, DY11 6TB. no later than two weeks before so that she can send you further details as they become available.

Sat 17th September 2016 AGM and Lunch – venue to be advised.

Final details for the 2016 A.G.M. will be circulated to all current members of the O.G.A. with the Summer 2016 newsletter due to be published in July 2016.

OGA Contact Information

- Website - www.khsoldgirls.org.uk
- OGA website Alison Hargreaves web@khsoldgirls.org.uk
- Items for newsletter – Anne Budworth, 108, Park Lane, Kidderminster, DY11 6TB. budwortha@blueyonder.co.uk

From the Editor

Welcome to this, the 2015 edition of the K.H.S. O.G.A. newsletter. Thank you for the contributions I have received for this over the past year. As ever I am quite happy to accept contributions for the newsletter at any time of the year. At the A.G.M. last September, Rosemarie Morgan was elected as Chairman when Miss Bedford resigned after an amazing 38 years in post. I am sure I speak for everyone in thanking Miss Bedford for everything she has done for the O.G. A. over the last 38 years. In recognition of her efforts she was given a cheque for Disability Action Wyre Forest, one of her favourite charities. A collection was also made at the A. G. M. and she was later presented with theatre vouchers. I hope to report which plays she has been to see in a future newsletter. Miss Bedford's retirement was reported in the Kidderminster Shuttle complete with picture.

As her first year as Chair of the O.G.A. Draws to a close, Rosemarie Morgan has sent the following contribution to the newsletter.

At the beginning of 2014, I had a plan. This involved taking early retirement in July from teaching, thus enabling me to spend more time visiting places, begin my family history research, knit more

This was not to be !

In June 2014, our eldest son, David, (who some of you will remember as the organist at the 2012 church service) married Vickie. They are both at Ripon College, Cuddleston, a theological college, training for the Anglican ministry, and married in the beautiful college chapel, having had to get special license to do so as they were the first couple to marry there. It was a wonderful day, and made us instant grandparents to Jake(8) and Freddie(6). I had to get used to being "Granny" very quickly!

Then, in September, on the retirement of Miss Bedford as Chairman of the OGA, I found myself being elected chairman. I felt very humble, taking over from someone who had given so much to K.H.S. and then to the O.G.A. It has been a steep learning curve, and I would like to thank everyone for their patience with me.

The highlight of the O.G.A. year has definitely been the centenary lunch at 'school'. Despite all the headaches along the way everyone seemed to enjoy not only the meal, but the whole occasion.

Over the last few months, I have taken on some piano pupils, become an exam invigilator at King Charles I School, and become part of the Education team at the Severn Valley Railway. I never thought I would get paid for riding through our beautiful countryside on steam trains !

Finally, at the beginning of July, my husband and I were privileged to be

delegates at a conference in London marking the 150th anniversary of the founding of The Salvation Army, of which we are members in Kidderminster.

(Since 'retiring' I now run the ladies' fellowship, and help with the children's work). Over 15.000 people from all around the world gathered at the O2, giving us the opportunity to meet with Salvationists from countries as far flung as Rwanda, Alaska and Indonesia, to mention a few. It certainly was an amazing experience.

As you can see, my plan for a leisurely retirement is not exactly working out, although I have managed to knit more, and visit many more places than I would otherwise have done – perhaps I'll start that research next year!

A.G.M. 2016

In previous years it has been customary for any Old Girl reaching her 80th birthday to be invited as a guest to the A.G.M. and lunch in September. We would like to continue that tradition. Please could any Old Girl, who is a member of the O.G.A. who will celebrate her 80th birthday between September 2015 and September 2016, please advise the editor or any other committee member so that she may be invited.

In Memoriam

Sadly, we say farewell to a number of old girls and friends.

If anyone would like to send an obituary or memories of any Old Girl for future editions, please email or send details to the editor.

Heather Starkey date unknown.

Gillian Webb 2015

Dorothy Humphries died July 2015

Mrs Rosemary Cropper (née Winning) died on 6th December 2014 in Tunbridge Wells. When Miss Wood and Miss Wells retired in the 1960s, Mrs Cropper became Head of Music. Despite a major car accident, she continued to teach almost until her death.

Jane Morris (née Tatlow) died at the beginning of December last year aged 61. She lived locally and had taught at several local schools, including Sladen, Stourminster and Holy Trinity. Jane was a member of St George's Church in Kidderminster and was a founding member of the Ladies Fellowship there. A service of thanksgiving for her life was held on 15th December.

Margaret Moir died on 2nd December 2014 aged 68 Margaret was a past pupil of both Cookley Primary School and K.H.S. She was recognised for her services to sport in 1993 when she was awarded an O.B.E. She was also the chairman of the education committee of the International Paralympic Committee.

Mrs Hudson (née Stoker). Anne Nailer, a long standing friend of Mrs Hudson has written the following tribute.

Phyllis Hudson (née Stoker) 4th May 1914- 3rd July 2015

Her home was in the South Riding of Yorkshire in a village called Emsall. She had one older sister, Alice, born in 1911. Phyllis' father died in 1924 when she was ten. Her family moved to a cottage in Badesly and her mother taught in the village school.

In 1930, Phyllis went to Manchester University to read classics. Her sister pursued a business career in the steel industry.

After university, she taught in Selby for three years and then moved to Wakefield where she was very happy and had a wonderful headmaster.

In 1947 she applied for the post at K.H.S. But when she received the offer she did not want to accept until her headmaster informed her that he was leaving and she "jolly well must accept the position at K.H.S."

So, in January 1947 with snow on the ground she left her beloved Yorkshire and came south to teach classics at K.H.S. She had a room in The Firs where other members of staff also lived. Phyllis was responsible for the rent collection!

At K.H.S. She was a most efficient librarian and trained many pupils in Librarianship.

She became Head of R.E, and in her turn second mistress. She served under Miss Oldfield and Miss Renwick.

She played the cello in a chamber orchestra and was an enthusiastic member of "The Three Choirs (Worcester)" for over 25 years. She was also a member of her church choir at St John the Baptist until her 96th year.

She was a keen member of a working group called The Hemp Club and gained her navigation certificate.

In 1958 she bought a house in Birchfield Road, Kidderminster and her mother and aunt came to live with her. She looked after them until their deaths in 1963 and 1960 respectively.

In the 1960s and 70s with her friend Edna, (also a centenarian), she went walking and climbing both in the U.K. (Ben Nevis by the very difficult north route) and in the Lake District and in the Pyrenees.

She retired from K.H.S. just before it joined with King Charles School.

In 1983 she married "Will" Hudson. He was an industrial chemist but was also an acclaimed academic. They had nineteen very happy years together.

Phyllis kept in touch with many of her former pupils and colleagues and the O.G.A. meant a great deal to her.

She supported so many charities especially Christian Aid, Mission to Seafarers, Musicians Benevolent Society and Guide Dogs for the Blind.

I was privileged to accompany Phyllis to St James' Palace to meet the Earl of Wessex, Prince Edward, in recognition of her support for the work of the Church Army.

We enjoyed walking "Literary London" and made many most interesting discoveries. She thoroughly enjoyed plays at the Globe Theatre.

Wherever we went, she was interested in people and hearing about their lives.

She continued to attend concerts in Birmingham and Worcester up to her 100th year.

If she had to choose only one piece of music it was to be Bach's B Minor Mass – but a close second would be Beethoven's 7th Symphony played by the C.B.S.O. conducted by Andris Nelson.

In April 2014 she broke her hip about ten days before her 100th birthday. However, undeterred she was able, with help, to attend three birthday parties. She gave of her best in all her activities whether on the hockey field in the annual Staff V 1st eleven match or other school events or caring for her girls. One example of the “extra mile” she gave is when I was going to read Theology at university, she spent lunchtimes giving me a basic grounding in New Testament Greek. I am sure other Old Girls could report similar kindnesses.

She died at home on the 3rd July 2014 with friends at her bedside. Her funeral was very well attended on 22nd July. R.I.P.

Rita Hardiman (1957-1964) enjoyed regular visits from Mrs Hudson and two of her classmates. Rita attended the funeral of Mrs Hudson, where the following poem was read aloud.

Sadly it arrived too late for inclusion in the 2014 newsletter.

Phyllis was a dedicated Christian
All through her life
And in her Autumn years
Became a loving wife.
She taught R.E. For many years
At Kidderminster High School
Her love for God in Acts and Luke
Shone out like a jewel.
A number of girls remember her
For the wonderful lessons they had
High A-Level results were the norm,
That surely can't be bad.
Classical music was her passionately
Which she enjoyed all the time
With radio, concerts and cello
To her it was most sublime.
God was the centre of everything
She worshipped him every week
And tried to encourage others
His holiness to seek.
She travelled around extensively

And could remember every place
To share with younger people
When talking face to face.
She had an indomitable spirituality
Which never let her down
She achieved all she attempted
In and around the town.
Her aim was to reach 100
And she obtained her goal
We all celebrated with her
As it made her life whole.
We shall miss Phyllis greatly
Surely a light has gone out
On a remarkable woman
Of that there is no doubt.

News of Old Girls

If you would have any news of Old Girls that you would like included in the next newsletter, please send details to the Editor.

Amanda Worley (née Mills) 1971-1978 now lives and works in Redditch. She has been a teacher since 1982 and is married to a newly retired police officer. Her 24 year old son is an army officer and her 21 year old daughter is about to graduate with a BA in Acting.

Sue Wilcox (née Morgan) 1971-1978 lives and works in Birmingham. She has her own business providing medical secretarial and medico-legal services to doctors in private practice. She has been married to Peter for 30 years and has a 26 year old son, Jonathan.

Mary Johnson (née Bradley) 1948-1956 continues to enjoy history, walking, singing, going to the theatre and meeting her school friends. She intends to do so for as long as she can. She plans to revisit New Zealand in 2016 if possible.

Celia Humphreys (née Morgan) 1972-1977 is married with two adult daughters. She works for an international missionary organisation – Operation Mobilisation and also provides local IT tuition and technical support.

Amanda Hipkiss (née Hodges) 1966-1973 has now retired from her role as English teacher and SENCO and has now embarked on a PhD at the University of Manchester researching into access arrangements at GCSE.

Norma Heath 1950-1957 has now retired after 7 years in the TA and 31 years in the regular army. She currently lives in the house where she was born but is hoping to move north to be nearer her family.

Janice Gillam (née Blake) 1958-1963 joined Barclays Bank when she left school. After 25 years she became a receptionist at Veldon Printers and

Accounts Manager for a local garage before her retirement.

Linda Davis (née Minkjan) 1963-1970 retired from primary teaching in 2012 and now enjoys travelling, lunching and volunteering at Kidderminster Museum of Carpet where she has met up with many old friends.

Linda Crockett (née Tibbetts) 1956-1963 is grandmother to a 7 year old boy and nearly 9 year old girl. She is a governor and volunteer helper at the special school her granddaughter attends.

Eileen Balmforth (née Evans) 1941-1946 began her school life at K.H.S. As an evacuee in 1941. She was very happy at the school and was delighted to stay for the sixth form before starting her nursing training at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham. She will be 88 this year and considers herself a "very old Old Girl" indeed. She has lived in the Forest of Dean for the last 26 years and is a cousin of Elizabeth Watt who is also an Old Girl.

Elizabeth Skelding 1957-1962 is now back in touch with her best friends from school thanks to social media.

Sue Smith (née Cartwright) , Jenny Booth (née Brookes) and Anne Budworth (née Amies) all 1967-1974 have met up several times this year for tea and cake followed by lunch. There are always photos to share of travels or weddings or grandchildren.

Chris Goggin (née Brook) 1969-74 made her annual visit to England from the USA this June. While here she met up with Jenny Booth (née Brookes) and Anne Budworth (née Amies). Her son Sean, who spent part of his school life at King Charles was married last September in America and Chris was able to share photographs of the day with both Jenny and Anne.

Janette Woolley (née Ricketts) 1957-1964

After leaving K.H.S., Janette trained as a Secondary School teacher but taught all age groups including adults at Further Education Centres. The last seventeen years of her career were spent in a Primary School. She is married to Richard who is President of the Old Carolians' Association. Attending Old Carolian events has brought her into contact with "girls" she was at school with. She enjoys meeting up with them on a regular basis. Janette and Richard have three children. Claire is a lecturer at The School of Jewellery in Birmingham She is married to Mark and they have a four year old daughter. They also have twins- Julian and Alison. Alison is a Specialist Trauma Nurse Co-ordinator at King's College Hospital in London while Julian is a landscape architect based in Birmingham. He is married to Sally and they have an eighteen month old son.

Rita Hardiman 1957-1964

After leaving K.H.S. Rita obtained a music degree at Birmingham School of Music. After teacher training at Bretton Hall in Yorkshire, she taught at a school in Llandovery in Mid-Wales. It was one of the first comprehensive schools in the country and was a split site school. Music and History were her subjects. As the choir and soloists were entering junior Eisteddfods, Rita

learnt Welsh at evening classes, gaining a top mark at O-Level. She became organist at the local Church of Wales church. As she was involved in all its activities, the vicar suggested she trained to become a lady Lay Reader soon after women were allowed to do this. She was the second licensed Lay Reader in Wales. After twelve years, she returned to Kidderminster where she became a piano teacher. She has recently retired due to ill health.

Editor's note – Rita regularly sends poetry contributions for the newsletter. Her latest offering about keeping fit at K.H.S. has been held over for next year due to lack of space.

Julie Ekman (née Kynaston) Julie lived in South Africa for over 20 years and then moved back to the U.K. with her three sons in the mid 1990s. She has recently lived in Guernsey with her fiancé, Dave. They were planning a world trip before moving back to the U.K. Julie is as enthusiastic, life-loving and hard-working as ever. She is now a counsellor.

KHS OGA CENTENARY LUNCH Gloria Phillips (née Galloway) 1968-75 has sent the following report.

On Saturday 18th April, 87 Old Girls gathered at the school for the O.G.A. Centenary lunch. Entering via the “new building”, I was struck by how much the school had changed since my time (1968-75), but, on entering the Oldfield Hall, we felt the school’s familiar atmosphere very strongly, albeit in smartly redecorated surroundings. Some of us were shocked that the 1970s patterned curtains were no longer there! However, the Hall is tastefully decorated with attractive blinds displaying the badges of the three schools, K.H.S., King Charles 1, and Queen Elizabeth, Hartlebury, which made up the new King Charles 1 school. We were pleased to see the honour boards from all four schools, many of them bearing the names of members and their families and friends.

Each member was presented with a special commemorative leather coaster in blue and gold and a laminated copy of the school song. There was plenty of cheerful chatter as members found their seats and were reunited with old friends. After saying Grace, we all enjoyed a wonderful lunch and everyone was impressed by the delicious food and the high standard of service provided by the caterers, Plyvine. Beautiful table decorations in the house colours had been kindly supplied by Monica Bashford and Elisabeth Robinson. Lunch was followed by much more chat and many took the opportunity to take photographs, which will be treasured in the months and years to come. Members of the Committee then read extracts from the 50th Anniversary magazine. In Miss Renwick’s message to the O.G.A. on that occasion, she hoped that at its Centenary, the O.G.A. would be “as vigorous, as faithful, and as talkative and cheerful” as in 1964! I don’t think she would have been disappointed!

The afternoon ended with everyone singing the school song “ Land of our

Birth”, accompanied by Rosemarie Morgan, after Monica Bashford gave us the familiar reminder to sing “ *Head, Heart and Hands*”! Monica then led us in saying three cheers for the school.

Afterwards many took the opportunity to walk in the grounds, take more photographs and, on this beautiful sunny day, appreciate once more the wonderful environment we were so lucky to grow up in each day.

We would like to express our thanks to Rosemarie Morgan and all those whose efforts made our Centenary such a splendid occasion.

At the lunch, Old Girls were invited to write down memories of their time at school for possible publication in the future. If anyone not at the lunch would like to share memories of their school-days please forward them to the editor or any committee member.

Over the last few months several Old Girls have found themselves in print.

Sheila Bishop. In 1983 Sheila Bishop featured in the Express and Star when she discovered a novel way of baking meringues by leaving them in the back seat of her car. This picture was re-run in the Picture from the Past feature in the same paper on 18th June 2015.

Barbara Hughes (née Handley) 1945-1956 was mentioned in the Express and Star in March 2015 when she was made life president of Home-Start Wyre Forest having joined the organisation in 2001. Home-Start chairman, Megan Weaver said she was very pleased to see Barbara get this award. Barbara was presented with a photographic record of her years at Home-Start. Barbara is currently a volunteer with the Wyre Forest Talking Newspaper but has previously been a school governor and worked at Kidderminster Hospital for 34 years.

Betty Caswell (née Edwards) was adamant that she had written her last book about Cookley until she spent the last year putting together stories and memories of the history of Cookley School. The book is being sold by the Friends of Cookley School. The launch of the book was celebrated with a picture of Betty with the current Head of the school Martin De Vine in the Kidderminster Shuttle. (P.S. there are rumours that another book is in the pipeline, this time about the history of Westley Court when it was known as Clee Hall and was part of the Westley estate).

Lindsey Granger was pictured in the Express & Star on 7th May 2015 when she was helping to organise a reunion for pupils sitting their GCEs in 1973. The event was due to take place on 20th June but if anyone reading this was there perhaps they might consider writing about it for the newsletter next year.

Alice Bennett, was pictured in the Kidderminster Shuttle on the occasion of her award in the Queen's birthday honours. Alice was awarded the MBE in recognition of her dedication to early years learning at the Madresfield Early Years Centre. Her delight at winning the award was tinged with sadness as

her father had passed away earlier in the year. Alice told the paper that she was “absolutely thrilled and honoured” to get the award.

(Editors note – congratulations Alice from the O.G.A. on your award – might we get a write up of the award ceremony for the newsletter next year?).

Angela Potter has appeared several times in both local papers due to her work at the West Midlands Safari Park. The latest occasion was a picture of Angela and her co-worker, Sue Day, after the Safari Park scooped both the “Best Animal Attraction” award and the “Sustainability Award for their continuous commitment and positive approach to “being green” at recent award ceremonies.

Ann Mullard had her article about her experience of planting poppies around the Tower of London published in the Guardian.

I never met Private George Cantrell. I know shamefully little about him; just that he was my mum’s great uncle and never came home from the First World War. I’ve no idea how he died or where he is buried. But I’m pretty sure he and his volunteer comrades were never issued with safety spectacles as they went into action a century ago. Safety, however, was high on the agenda on the warm Sunday this month when I joined 200 volunteer poppy planters at the Tower of London. Kitted out in red volunteer T-shirts and gardening gloves, we were doing our bit for the [Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red](#) commemorative installation that has captured imaginations worldwide.

In accordance with our emailed orders, we had dressed comfortably, chosen stout shoes and brought gardening kneelers. We had watched a training video and been warned to take care with the mallets and steel planting rods. Our team leader reminded us again: planters must wear safety specs. Someone had cut their face yesterday. Planting ceramic poppies is, it seems, more hazardous than you might think.

Watching the Queen as she visited the flower-filled moat this week, I wanted to see if she walked near “my” bit. But it looks different now, just as the acclaimed theatre designer Tom Piper had envisaged, a dramatic illustration of the hideous mathematics of the [Great War](#)’s carnage. Eventually, one poppy for each of the Glorious Dead.

I couldn’t see mine. But I know he’s in there. An ordinary chap from Kidderminster, amateur, frightened and further from home than he could ever have contemplated in peace time. His particular bloom is part of the blur round the Tower, a total now nearing the 888,246 death toll of British and Commonwealth Troops, by November 11.

Before my shift, I wondered how I would feel. I was keen to do a good job for this iconic public artwork. And I wanted to recognise the sacrifice of all those who died. But I couldn’t think of them too carefully, for fear I’d end up blubbing in public like a fool. The organisers seemed prepared for this, focusing us on

the task ahead.

While others began planting, I started with the stalk assembly crew, sharing tips on how best to stretch stubborn washers to fit while comparing travel notes.

People had come from across the country but no one beat our team leader's tale of the two American ladies who had crossed the pond specially the week before to volunteer for a shift.

When I finally got on to planting, the poppies themselves were a surprise. Issued in cardboard crates of three dozen, I'd expected mass-produced uniformity. But each is a unique creation by ceramic artist Paul Cummins and his team in Derby, shaped freehand from a pair of cookie-cut clay trefoils before firing into scarlet glory. Chunky in my hands, they were altogether tougher than I imagined. Some, packed while still tacky, were stuck to the box by blobs of gore-coloured glaze, reluctant to leave their safe little compartment.

Only as I write do I think of those men forced over the top by officers with whistles and guns. Earlier, thankfully, I was too busy muttering to myself "small washer, big washer, small plug, big stopper" as I persuaded each poppy out and followed the drill for fixing it to its steel stalk.

Team leaders encouraged us to use our artistic imagination as we planted, keeping poppies close together but varying stalk length every so often for interest. And though they wanted us to enjoy ourselves, they also asked us to remember what it was about.

This was far more personal. Placing a poppy felt like settling someone in for the long haul, making them comfortable, with others nearby for moral support in the cold, muddy days ahead.

My little regiment of 100 or so poppies occupied a triangular notch on the very edge of no-man's-land. Later, I gazed on it as I listened to that evening's Roll of Honour – a selection of names submitted weekly by family members of those who died – followed by the Last Post sounded at dusk.

Somewhere in there is the special poppy I chose for Uncle George – a particularly neat flower of blazing uniform red, its central black stopper wiggled smartly into optimum position. I gave it a surreptitious kiss before easing it gently into the soft ground, wondering what he would say if he knew how well we still remembered.

Rosemarie Moore (née Brockway) was spotted in a picture in the Shuttle in an article about Brockway Carpets.

From the editor.

I keep cuttings from both the Kidderminster Shuttle and the Thursday edition

of the Express & Star both of which are distributed free in the Wyre Forest area, but if anyone spots something about an Old Girl in a different newspaper, I would be most grateful if they could let me know the details for our next newsletter.

OGA Flower Fund

During the year Old Girls received flowers, tokens or cards for a variety of reasons, mainly celebrations, illnesses or bereavement. They have relied on Miss Bedford very much as she is in touch with so many people and passes the information to us.

If you know of any Old Girl who would appreciate flowers please contact Elisabeth Robinson (01562 750891) or Rosemarie Moore (01562 67546).

O.G.A. COMMITTEE 2014 – 15

Chairman	Rosemarie Morgan (née Pitt)
Vice Chairman	Anne Budworth (née Amies)
Minutes Secretary	Rosemarie Moore (née Brockway)
Treasurer	Margaret Bazley (née Osborne)
Newsletter Editor	Anne Budworth (née Amies)
Committee	Sheila Garlick 2013-15 Rosemary Gibbs 2013-15 Monica Bashford (née Hall) 2014-16 Shirley Whiteside (née Hall) 2014-6
Newsletter Editor	Anne Budworth (née Amies)
Flower Fund	Rosemarie Moore (née Brockway) and Elisabeth Robinson (née Wrigglesworth)
Co-opted	Judy Neale (née Beddoes) Gloria Phillips (née Galloway)
Friend of the Committee	Mary Wehner
Web-mistress	Alison Hargreaves

Please send any correspondence regarding the O.G.A. to Anne Budworth, 108 Park Lane, Kidderminster, DY11 6TB or budwortha@blueyonder.co.uk who will forward it to the correct person.