



## KIDDERMINSTER HIGH SCHOOL O.G.A. NEWSLETTER 2016

### Future Events

Sat. 17<sup>th</sup> September 2016 A.G.M. followed by lunch at King Charles 1 School, Comberton Road, Kidderminster, DY10 1XA.

Spring Meeting to be confirmed – details will be circulated after Christmas.

Sat 16<sup>th</sup> September 2017 AGM and Lunch – venue to be advised.

Final details for the 2017 A.G.M. will be circulated to all current members of the O.G.A. with the Summer 2017 newsletter due to be published in July 2017.

### **OGA Contact Information**

- Website - [www.khsoldgirls.org.uk](http://www.khsoldgirls.org.uk)
- OGA website Rosemarie Morgan  
[ramorgan@btinternet.com](mailto:ramorgan@btinternet.com)
- Items for newsletter – Anne Budworth, 108, Park Lane,  
Kidderminster, DY11 6TB.  
[budwortha@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:budwortha@blueyonder.co.uk)

## **From the Editor**

Welcome to this, the 2016 newsletter – I have tried to include a variety of news and items of interest and have now started collecting items for the 2017 newsletter. If you would like to share any information about yourself or fellow Old Girls, please send items to me for inclusion in a future issue.

### **As her second year as Chair of the O.G.A. draws to a close, Rosemarie Morgan has sent the following contribution to the newsletter.**

They say that time flies when you are enjoying yourself – well that certainly seems to be true for me, as I cannot believe it is a year since the last newsletter !

The O.G.A. continues to flourish, with new members joining throughout the year. Last year's A.G.M. and lunch was again at The Wagon Wheel, Grimley. The manager was so helpful when we discussed the problems with the previous meeting, and it was certainly a much improved arrangement, followed by a lovely meal. You can't beat a good dessert trolley, can you ?

It is always lovely to hear the chatter between members on these occasions, and especially so between ladies from different eras of the school, discussing what changed, and what remained the same over the years.

We also had a great evening with Richard Westcott, and his "Confessions of a pantomime dame" in April, and are now looking forward to the next A.G.M. and lunch in September – this time at school.

On a personal level, it has been another busy, but enjoyable year.

Our eldest son, David and his wife, Vickie, have now both completed their theological training, and are both serving as curates in the parish of St. Faith's, Havant (near to Portsmouth). As part of his training, David (never one to shirk a challenge), took up the option of doing an Oxford University theology degree in one academic year instead of three. It was a very proud Mum and Dad who attended his graduation ceremony in March. As has been the case since the 1300s, the whole ceremony is conducted in Latin, and although English translations were provided, I did manage to understand about one word in ten, which was very gratifying - thank you , Miss Bedford!

Thomas has just completed his graduate teacher training, and has

secured a post teaching music in his training school - Holte Secondary School, Birmingham. It is a very challenging school, although Thomas appears to be following in his Mum's footsteps of enjoying the rewards of really making a difference in the lives of young people who are so disadvantaged.

Our daughter, Ruth, continues to work in the HR department of Wyre Forest District Council. I am continuing to enjoy the freedom that semi – retirement brings. The work I do as an exam invigilator, a teacher on the Severn Valley Railway, and my piano teaching is certainly varied, but nowhere near as demanding in terms of time and stress. I feel really lucky to have the opportunity to pursue more of my own interests, including knitting, visiting places of interest, (particularly National Trust properties), meeting up with friends, and spending more time with my family. However, we are resisting all efforts by our grandsons to persuade us to move nearer to them. Explaining to Freddie that all of my friends were up here, he swiftly replied, in the way that only eight year old boys can, "But you told me I would make new friends, and I have done, so why can't you, Granny?". I really should have known better, shouldn't I?

In recent months I have started to do some research concerning the history of The Salvation Army in this area, although it is so very easy to get distracted when reading through copies of the local press in the 1800s. Added to all of this, I have just started a distance learning theology degree! Life is certainly not boring!!

### **A.G.M. 2016**

This year the A.G.M. is to be held in the Oldfield Hall at King Charles 1 School (previously Kidderminster High School). The meeting is to be held on September 17<sup>th</sup> with coffee at 10:30 followed by the A.G.M. and lunch. We have booked Plyvine to do the catering as there were so many positive comments following the last meal they produced for us. Please see the booking forms enclosed with this newsletter.

Next year the A.G.M. will be on the 16<sup>th</sup> September. The committee are currently looking at venues and further details will be available nearer the time.

### **Increase in subscriptions**

The last increase in subscriptions from £1 to £2 had been in 1992 when according to the constitution subscriptions "were due for payment by the A.G.M. or at the latest, January 31st the following year". If not paid by that date it was deemed that the person wished to cancel her membership. It

was agreed by the committee that the membership fee should be increased to £5 per annum for members in Great Britain and £10 per annum for overseas members. New members joining for life via the internet would pay £25. This was agreed at the 2015 A.G.M. (See A.G.M. minutes ). Please remember to contact your bank to increase your standing order to us if appropriate.

### **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.

**Miss Helen Roberts**, piano teacher at K.H.S. 1965-1977, died on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2015 aged 85.

**Hazel Moss** (née Hingley) K.H.S. 1933-44 died on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2015 aged 88. She and her husband were sheep farmers near the County Ground in Malvern. Hazel was a committee member and she came to O.G.A. Meetings regularly. After her husband's death she moved to Pylle, Shepton Mallett where her daughter and son in law farm.

**Irene Hoedemakers** (formerly Shutt), (née Mann) died in New Zealand on 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2015 aged 96. Irene had lived in New Zealand for many years and had been in residential care since April 2014 when her sight was failing and she was unable to care for herself. Since Irene's daughter, Linda Cox, who also lived in New Zealand, died in 2011, several members of the O.G.A. have been in contact with her.

**Elsie Owen** (née Yarnold) died on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2016 aged 91. Elsie trained as a nurse at Queen Elizabeth hospital in Birmingham. She married a solicitor who became a judge. She was Pat Yarnold's (former member of the teaching staff and currently a governor at King Charles 1 School) godmother and aunt.

**John Painter** who was in the Kindergarten at K.H.S. 1926-1929 died on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2016 in Oxford. Sadly, his wife, **Mary** (née Coney) who was at K.H.S. From 1929 until 1940 died on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2016. Mary was born on 15<sup>th</sup> May 1922. She was educated at Kidderminster High School for Girls and Anstey College of Physical Education and spent several years teaching sport and dance at K.H.S.

**Muriel Jones** (née Lee) K.H.S. 1930-1935 died on 18<sup>th</sup> April aged 97. She

grew up in Wilden. She left the area after the war when her husband, Bryn Jones became headmaster of the West of England School for the Partially Sighted in Exeter. Muriel was domestic bursar/matron at the school until she retired.

### **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.

Happy 90<sup>th</sup> birthday to **Jean Ovens** who has played Jerusalem for the Wolverley WI since she was 12!

**Isobel Stanley** sent the following memories:

I transferred to Kidderminster High School in 1950 when my father became Superintendent of Police there and we moved from Halesowen.

I was put into Lower V A and other girls in the form included Jennifer Goodman (mentioned in the history articles on the web site), Angela Goodman, Susan Hill, Pam Richards, with whom I became very friendly (we still correspond at Christmas), Pam Rowley, Ceridwen Griffiths, Pam Rowley, Margaret Bowen, Pat Murgatroyd, Elizabeth Lurring who followed her father into General Practice in the Kidderminster area and, of course, many others. I used to cycle to school with Peggy Summers (who wrote the paragraph about music in the history pages). She, like me, lived in Aggborough Crescent and we used the short cut via the footbridge over the railway line near the football ground.

I was perfectly miserable for several weeks – in fact some of the girls used to say “It’s raining again.” when I cried. It was my maths teacher, Miss Leigh, who finally made me realise that misery would get me nowhere, and I began to enjoy school again.

Uniform was a slight problem. My mother decided that changing the pocket badge on my old Stourbridge High School blazer would make me feel more part of the school. The trouble was that this blazer had a green and gold cord trim whereas K.H.S. blazers were plain. The uniform supremo (and French teacher), Miss Billingsley, hauled me over the coals and I was suitably mortified! A new blazer was bought! Another memory of Miss Billingsley was as our French teacher: we were, as a class, very reluctant to answer questions orally so Miss Billingsley appealed to the headmistress, Miss Oldfield, to take a lesson. We found it even harder to respond to her as she inspired such awe.

I think our lack of responsiveness, though we were bright, made us a difficult form. I remember poor Miss Stoker trying in vain to get us to discuss things in R.S. lessons; even in the upper VI she found us apparently without ideas or opinions, though we were happy enough to chat during lunch hours or free periods when we even played table tennis in that privileged room that was the Upper VI form room. Another member of staff whom we plagued was our form mistress and history teacher and, sometimes, from the back, we would push forward all the desks (with their attached seats) so that she was pinned against the blackboard. Miss Everett, on the other hand, brooked no indiscipline but did inspire me to continue my study of Chemistry at university. Mrs Prescott-Clarke taught us Physics and, when she was off sick for some time the A level Physics group were dispatched to do their lessons at Hartlebury Grammar School. It was a bit of a novelty and led to a cricket match between our VI form and theirs. (I think they won.) Other staff to whom I owe a lot were Miss Whittaker (English) and Mrs Hough (Maths).

Miss Oldfield (Polly behind her back) was a splendid character and I corresponded with her until her death. Towards the end of our Upper V year we were all interviewed by her to determine what subjects we would take at A Level. When I said "Science" she suggested I could make the three necessary subjects by taking Chemistry, Physics and Biology. I immediately said "Not Biology." Miss Oldfield said, "Maths then." My future was decided in a matter of minutes! Like another of your writers I was too young to take O levels in the fifth year (a ridiculous government regulation) and had to continue with English, French and Latin in the Lower VI alongside my A level studies. It means my school academic record looked thin but, like all the girls, I had benefited from doing a broad range of subjects across a varied curriculum as well as a number of extra-curricular activities.

Miss Oldfield was a great support to me, even if I did not realise it at the time. It was a surprise when I was made head of Cyniberht House when I entered the Upper VI, then became Head Girl in my third year in the Sixth Form. Miss Oldfield also suggested that I applied to Birmingham University in my second year sixth and when I was offered a place she said, "Right, leave that to one side and stay on to try for Cambridge." Some of the entrance exams for Cambridge were in half term and I did the papers in that "holy of holies", Miss Oldfield's study. She plied me with sweets – I could hardly believe it!

My mother admitted later that she had thought the fee for the entrance exams to Newnham (Miss Everett's old college) was a waste of money but

I did get a place, even gaining an exhibition. When the news came by telephone to school Mr Harry Cheshire, the chairman of governors, happened to be there, and I was summoned to Miss Oldfield's study to be given the news. Mr Cheshire got out his wallet and gave me £1, a truly generous sum which paid for the first volume of Beethoven piano sonatas that I still use.

Peggy's account of music at K.H.S. brought back many memories. I did not learn piano in school but was enrolled into violin lessons with Mr Farmer in my Lower VI year. Like Peggy, I remember Mr Benoy, the county music advisor coming in. I had a trial for the county youth orchestra and, in addition to playing first violin in the school orchestra, I joined the second violins in the county youth orchestra.

Sport was yet another opportunity at K.H.S. The Goodmans and Susan Hill in my form were all very talented and belonged to both hockey and tennis teams. I was part of the netball team and enjoyed the practices, and house and inter-school matches. Gym, too was enjoyable and with Miss Hudson (Mrs Warner – have I got the surnames the right way round?) we took part in the gym competition and were proud of our white gym girdles.

Hillgrove House has many happy memories: the beautiful library with its pale wood shelves and rush-seated chairs; the upstairs art room; the music room where Miss Wood encouraged our appreciation of classical music and the orchestra rehearsed; the two Lower VI form rooms, one for the “academic stream”, one for those intending to continue on into nursing or secretarial work. All this and glorious grounds too, including the sunken garden where sixth formers and staff could enjoy a sunny lunch hour. Then there was the squash court, something hardly heard of in a state school: what fun we had there thwacking the little black ball at the walls.

It was a privilege to have attended K.H.S. There were so many opportunities, academic, sporting and cultural. Yet the school was a product of education at the time. Of the three streams only the A stream took all their subjects at O level, the alpha stream did some and usually the beta stream did none. Yet these were all girls who had passed the eleven plus! How much better is the comprehensive ideal which, at its best, allows all to prosper and succeed.

**Harriet Robinson** - Sometime ago I was contacted by **David Skidmore** who was trying to piece together the life of a distant relative, **Harriet Robinson**, a past pupil of K.H.S. I gave him what information I could and thought no more of it until I received a 59 page biography of Harriet. I have

given a brief overview below but if anyone is interested in seeing more of this, please contact me and I will either email it to you or print out a copy.

1887 Born 20 May in Amblecote, Staffordshire  
Baptised 23 June at St Mark's Parish Church, Stambermill, Worcestershire  
1898 - 1909 Pupil at Kidderminster High School for Girls  
1909 - 1910 Student at Municipal Technical School, Birmingham  
1910 - 1913 Student at Birmingham University, graduated with B.A.  
1913 - 1914 Secondary Teacher's Diploma, Birmingham  
1914 - 1918 Taught at the Central Secondary School for Girls, Hull  
1915 Elected Fellow of the Linnean Society, London  
1919 - 1924 Taught at Wolverhampton Girls' High School  
1924 - 1932 Headmistress, Durban Ladies' College (later named Durban Girls' College)  
1933 - 1944 Headmistress, Herschel Girls' School, Cape Town  
c 1945 Taught at St James' School, West Malvern  
1946 - 1950 Headmistress, St Mary's Hall, Brighton  
1951 - 1958 Lived in Pietermaritzburg, Natal. Occasionally served as relieving Headmistress or taught Biology and Botany in various schools  
c 1959 Returned to UK and lived with her sister in Bewdley, Worcestershire  
1962 14 April, died aged 74, in hospital in Kidderminster  
17 April, buried in All Saints, Wribbenhall near Bewdley

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

**Heather Flack** (1957-1964) has written her first novel, telling the story of Edmund Ironside who was king of England 1,000 years ago. The book is called "Ironside" and is available as a print copy direct from Heather (contact the editor for address details).

(Note from Editor: I discovered yesterday that Heather is speaking at the Wyre Forest Historical Research Group at Kidderminster Town Hall on October 25<sup>th</sup> 2016)

**Barbara Hughes** has been given a 15 year service award for her support of the local charity Homestart. Barbara joined the scheme's Board of Trustees and is currently vice-chairman.

**Angela Potter** regularly features in the local press as she works at the Safari Park. A picture and write up of fathers at the park appeared just before Father's Day earlier this year.

**Elizabeth Ireland** (née Allen) K.H.S. 1967-1974 appeared on the front page of the Kidderminster Shuttle on 5<sup>th</sup> May. Sadly it was not good news ,

Elizabeth announced the closure of her town centre shop, Topstitchers, after nearly 20 years following decreasing trade due to ongoing roadworks in Kidderminster town centre. (Note from editor: on a personal note I am sad to see the closure of Liz's shop having been a customer of hers for many years).

**Sian O'Neill** (née Farmer) was pictured in the Express and Star in November celebrating her third “outstanding” Ofsted rating. She has been a childminder for 20 years and currently looks after 3 under school age children. The picture shows how much she enjoys her job.

### **From the editor.**

I keep cuttings from both the Kidderminster Shuttle and the Thursday edition of the Express & Star both of which are distributed at 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.

### **K.H.S. O.G.A. Archive**

We have over the years been given a number of old school photographs and other memorabilia. The problem of storage and actually remembering who has what is ongoing so the committee are considering lodging these items at The Hive in Worcester as an official item. If you have any items you would like adding to this archive, please bring them to the A.G.M. or take/send them to a committee member by the end of October.

### **My Life as a Pantomime Dame – April 22nd – a report by Rosemarie Morgan**

As members of the O.G.A. and their guests gathered in the Science Theatre, we began to wonder. We had been promised an evening with a pantomime dame, and yet, standing in front of us, was a smartly suited gentleman introducing himself as Richard Westcott.

We were not to be disappointed, though, for step at a time he transformed himself into a typically outrageous pantomime dame, complete with an engaging and hilarious commentary. Quite how many members take up the tips on make up, or indeed costume design and choice remains to be seen!

We were also treated into insights into the magical world of pantomime, from the other side of the stage. Not the least of these was the necessity for quick costume changes at times. Whilst ‘tricks of the trade’ can make this process easier – who would have thought of attaching one’s hat to one’s wig? – the assistance of a dresser is still invaluable, and Richard, as

is his custom, chose someone from the audience for this role – me! Nothing had prepared me for this stressful and onerous task, not made any easier by Richard's constant asides, which provided much added amusement for the assembled company !

After looking at a further selection of costumes and accessories that only a panto dame could love, our evening drew to a close in a traditional manner, with audience participation in a pantomime song. In true K.H.S. tradition it was enthusiastic, if not exactly of Madrigal choir standard in other respects.

Over light refreshments it was evident that everyone had thoroughly enjoyed the evening, and our thanks go to all involved with the arrangements for the evening, which made a small profit for O.G.A. funds as well.



### **Can anyone help Eileen Boden?**

I hope this is not an irregular request, but we are trying to trace a friend, **Pauline Grundy** and were directed to your website, though I don't know whether she is definitely the same Pauline Grundy who went to Kidderminster.

Pauline Grundy your old girl is listed in your O.G.A. Newsletter for 2010 as being in correspondence with Sheila Brindley (née Brettle) (1956-62), and possibly Mary Pike (née Hall), and is said to live locally.

I knew "my" Pauline Grundy at Exeter University in 1963-4, so the time would be appropriate. If you do have her contact details but are prevented by data protection from supplying them, could you kindly tell her that another friend is also interested in contacting her, Barbara Baughan, who met her when they were both schoolteachers. Pauline supplied Barbara with her email address, but Barbara lost touch.

I should add that we wanted to contact her purely out of friendship, having identified her as a mutual acquaintance whom we both liked.

I do hope you can help, or else forward this to someone who might.

Yours

Eileen Boden (née Eileen Shasha, as she would have known me)

### **A Gathering of '59+' ers**

On 31 May, the Swan Inn at Blakedown was the venue for a noisy, happy get-together, of 15 of the year-group which began at KHS in 1959. As many of us had not met since our previous reunion 10 years ago, there was much to catch up with, and some old photos to exclaim over, including snaps of a skiing trip and several views of the V1th Form entertainment! We realised that those present had all been from either 3M and 3X, with nobody from 3T - where are they all? The Old Girls present were: Pamela Cole, Ann Cronin, Pat Dark, Janet Foster, Valerie Holmes, Pat Howell, Lorna Howson, Susan Jones, Di Masters, Christine Morris, Linda Morrison, Judith Poole, Margaret Pownall, Jane Pugh, Su Torode. We hope to meet again in maybe 3 or 5 years' time, but as an email list has been circulated, it's possible that more local get-togethers could be organised. Meantime, we would love to hear from any other members of this year-group who have not been in touch already.

### **Spotted on Facebook – a post started by Christine Titley**

I volunteer at the League of Friends coffee shop at Kidderminster Hospital, I thoroughly enjoy it and have met lots of people and made a load of new friends. We are desperately short of volunteers, so, if you or anybody you know could spare a couple of hours to serve coffee and sandwiches please get in touch. Many thanks.

[Joan Page](#) added that she recommends it. There are 3 different shifts in a day each is slightly different. Lunchtime can be really busy so if you like the action, that is for you. There are more volunteers on that shift. Mornings can be a little steadier. Good for those who like to get up.

So any Old Girls living locally who would like to volunteer at the League of Friends Coffee Shop, please contact the editor for details of how to volunteer.

### **Charity Knitting update**

Although at present, hats are no longer needed for returning servicemen, there are a number of other charities currently appealing for knitted items. After discussion at a committee meeting, it was decided that perhaps as a group we could focus on premature baby items next. There are plenty of free prem baby patterns online including from the following links -

<http://www.bliss.org.uk/knit-for-premature-babies>  
<http://www.blacksheepwools.com/free-premature-baby-patterns>  
[http://news.bbc.co.uk/local/stoke/hi/people\\_and\\_places/newsid\\_8674000/8674298.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/local/stoke/hi/people_and_places/newsid_8674000/8674298.stm)

Other charities currently appealing for knitted items include -  
**Knit for Peace** - currently appealing for teddies for rescued refugee children – see link for pattern [http://www.knitforpeace.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Tiny-Teddy---charity-pattern.pdf?dm\\_i=DXG,4BZW8,BIJW0,FVMYP,1](http://www.knitforpeace.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Tiny-Teddy---charity-pattern.pdf?dm_i=DXG,4BZW8,BIJW0,FVMYP,1)

**Shoe box appeal**- information and knitting patterns available at <https://www.samaritans-purse.org.uk/what-we-do/operation-christmas-child/>

**Twiddlemuffs** – made for sufferers from Alzheimer's – pattern available at <http://www.sath.nhs.uk/twiddlemuffs/HowTo.aspx>

Continuing with the knitting theme – if any Old Girl belongs to any Knit'n'natter (or Stitch'n'bitch) groups that they would like publicising, please send details to the editor.

### **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. So far this year seventy-seven Old Girls have been recipients.

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 2015 – 16**

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 Monica Bashford (née Hall) 2014-2016 Shirley Whiteside (née Hall) 2014-2016 Judy Neale (née Beddoes) 2015-2017 Gloria Phillips (née Galloway) 2015-2017
Flower Fund	Rosemarie Moore (née Brockway) and Elisabeth Robinson (née Wrigglesworth)
Co-opted	Alison Hargreaves Sheila Kirk
Friend of the Committee	Mary Wehner
Web-mistress	Rosemarie Morgan

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