



NORWICH HIGH SCHOOL OLD GIRLS' ASSOCIATION

Chairman's Report 2012-13

This year your committee decided to break with tradition and arrange a buffet lunch on Saturday 29th June, instead of a summer supper on a Friday evening. The overwhelming response from those who came was that this was a popular move and the numbers attending showed that our members from outside Norfolk found this more convenient in every way. Large year group re-unions for 1962 and 1992 leavers made this event extra special but we always value the support from those who make this an annual event and a good opportunity to meet old friends. On a personal note, I was especially pleased to welcome the 1992 leavers as I first met them when they came into Lanchester House when it was the Lower Fourth house and I continued to teach some of them until they left in the Upper Sixth. Those who were able to have a tour of the school were envious and admiring of the new Sixth Form Centre and were surprised by the extension to the "C" corridor and additional rooms. Norwich High School never ceases to move forward and details of the latest new projects will be outlined by the Headmaster in his report on the School Year.

This year I am making an appeal for you to come forward and serve on the Old Girl's Committee. At our September committee meeting we were delighted to welcome Hattie Temple who left in 2008. We especially need people who left between 1990 and 2012-13. We hold only two committee meetings a year, in March and September, both take place in school. Please contact me by email if you can help. (jomarbens@yahoo.co.uk.) We are hoping to have at least three new committee members.

At the AGM in November, our Treasurer and Membership Secretary, Mrs. Sue Prutton will be retiring after a very lengthy term in office. The Old Girls' Association has been blessed by having Sue "at the helm" for many years. She has been unstinting in her support and in giving her time to the administration of every aspect of the Association. Sue is a very busy person involved in many areas of Norwich life and we thank her for all she has done for NHSOGA. From November, we will need a Treasurer and I would hope that one of our members would be willing to take on this role.



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Have you visited our website? (www.nhsoga.btck.co.uk) So far we have had 5,000 hits. If you are arranging a year group reunion at the buffet lunch of 2014 now is the time to get started. Many of you will be reading this on line. in fact 250 of you have said you are happy to receive information this way. This is a great help to us but we appreciate that this is not possible for everyone and we are happy to send out the Newsletter in the usual format to those who have told us that you require it in printed form.

Our Autumn Meeting and AGM takes place on Saturday, November 23rd at 2.30pm in the Jameson Library at Eaton Grove. The business meeting is usually brief so there will be time for tea and conversation. Please let me know if you will be coming so we can cater for you all. (Replies by [email- jomarbenns@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jomarbenns@yahoo.co.uk) or by post to -183 Plumstead Rd.East, Thorpe St.Andrew, Norwich, NR7 9LN) I look forward to seeing you there.

Margo Benns.
Chairman.

Prizegiving

Congratulations to Surina Fordington who has been awarded 'The Old Girls' Prize for Mathematics' this year. Surina is in the current Lower Sixth. The prize will be presented at Prizegiving on November 8th.



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Headmaster's Report

As always, it is a pleasure to have the chance to share with you some of the highlights from the past year in school. One of them was undoubtedly the Old Girls' Summer Buffet Lunch and it was lovely to be able to welcome over 100 former pupils back to school; the new timing and format seemed to work well and I hope will enable even more members to attend this year. We are always so happy to see former pupils and I would encourage you to contact the school if you or a group of peers would like to arrange a visit or tour.

The past year has been particularly busy in terms of the ongoing investment in providing an inspiring setting in which to work and learn. Every classroom in the Senior School has now been refurbished based on the design and vibrant colour schemes of the staff and pupil working group. The old cloakroom which had previously served as the school air raid shelter has been transformed into a modern and flexible teaching space called 'The Hub' and it is already proving extremely popular with staff and girls. Norwich High is the first school in the Trust to have all of our science labs refurbished and modernised and we will next work on the Art Room in Eaton Grove. The Dining Hall has been transformed into a bright and welcoming space, even being compared favourably to the John Lewis café – high praise indeed!

Perhaps the most dramatic changes have been in Stafford House, where the girls now have a fantastic new adventure and discovery playground to explore and enjoy. All the classrooms in the 1970s extension have also been completely redesigned and re-organised to allow for more group and investigative work; each room also has as a centrepiece a beautiful mini library ark which helps to reinforce for the girls the importance and joy of reading for pleasure.

As I write, we are also about to take possession of a new outdoor theatre on the Christchurch Road side of the school site and I am sure that will become a focal point of the burgeoning creative life of the school. I take this opportunity to extend an open invitation to you to come along and support the girls involved in our Performing Arts programme. There is a copy of the full



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programme under the Performing Arts section on the new website www.norwichhigh.gdst.net. I would particularly highlight a few forthcoming events.

The Sound of Music	Norwich Playhouse	Thursday 14 th and Friday 15 th November
Carol Service	Norwich Cathedral	Thursday 12 th December
Winter Arts Festival	School	Monday 10 th to Friday 14 th February
Choral Concert	Norwich Cathedral	Friday 28 th March

The summer also produced another exceptional set of examination results which enabled the vast majority of the girls to progress to their chosen course at university, including over 60% to Russell Group institutions. The A Level results were the best in the school's history with our Upper Sixth leavers defying the national dip in top grades to record 89% A* - B, a jump of over 8% and the first time the figure has gone above 85%. These results placed the school in the top 50 nationally in The Times A Level league table published in August, the highest ranking of any school in Norfolk or Suffolk. The Upper Fifth were also in trend-defying mood as they increased the percentage of A* by 2% to 39% and the proportion of girls securing straight A and A* grades rose by 10% to over 40% of the cohort. Once again 9/10 of all grades at GCSE were in the A* - B range; such consistency of high performance is testament to the expertise and dedication of the staff in enabling each girl to achieve.

I hope to have the chance to see more of you at events over the coming year as we seek to strengthen further the links across the wider Norwich High School community.



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From the Treasurer

When I joined the OGA committee 48 years ago we used to have great fun stuffing meeting notices into envelopes twice a year. Some things never change (i.e. the fun) but over the years the preparation for this exercise has altered slightly. Back in the mid-60s Helen Read's mother used to spend many hours addressing sets of envelopes by hand so that when we arrived at their home another fresh set awaited us.

Things moved on and in the mid-80s Ian Richmond, father of Gillian and Sally, (if my memory serves me correctly), made a very generous proposal: if the OGA would consider using his IT company, which offered a service providing pre-printed labels, he would get them inserted onto the database free of charge. We did. I don't think any of us realised back then what a life-changing world this "IT" would bring about – but some six or seven years later I entered that world and it certainly changed my life.

Later on, the label-production was taken in-house, initially at Eaton Grove and subsequently onto my laptop, where it has resided for several years protected by three different backups (an external device on my desk, a memory stick in one of my kitchen cupboards and a memory stick some 4 miles away). From start to finish I can set up and run off a set of labels in under 15 minutes, and I never, ever, fail to remember Mrs Read and her hand-written labour of love. Now the OGA has its own website and when I go to OG gatherings at Queen Anne's Gate I am conscious of the move towards Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and whatever else is to come. This is inevitably the way ahead but I feel it's too late to teach this old dog any more new tricks and so I am leaving the committee after the AGM this autumn.

Needless to say I shall remain a member of the OGA and I shall enjoy the gatherings even more, knowing what has gone in behind the scenes to make them happen, but that all I will have to do is to say "Thank you" to someone else.

Sue Prutton

NHS 1953 – 60



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2013 News

Karen McAulay (nee Manley) left NHS 1976. Karen saw her doctoral thesis published as a book – with a new additional chapter – in March 2013. *Our Ancient National Airs: Scottish Song Collect from the Enlightenment to the Romantic Era* was published by Ashgate in their 'Music in Nineteenth Century Britain' series.

Disproving any suggestion that librarians should be seen and not heard, Karen's book launch took place in the Whittaker Library at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. Karen's talk was illustrated with a saxophone quartet, classical and folk song settings, clarsach (Celtic harp) and – pride of place – a bagpiper. He was bribed with the assurance that he would be the only piper ever to be allowed to play in a library – and was exceedingly loud! Karen can be followed on Twitter@ Karenmca or her blog, <http://TruelmaginaryFriends.blogspot.com>

Charlotte Wicks (nee Wells) 1987-1993. Charlotte now has three children Hannah (born 2005), David (born 2008), and Florence (born 2012). With a mixture of relief and regret she has now given up working as a solicitor so she can spend more time with the family. Looking after three children is definitely a full time job! Charlotte was looking forward to meeting up with old classmates at the annual lunch.

Rachel Knight (nee Cadman) left NHS 1993. In September 2013 Rachel and her husband Joe decided to embark on a new business venture, and the Take Note Music Company was born. With a shop in Lowestoft town centre, and a website at www.takenotemusic.co.uk we have taken the plunge into retail. With daughters Esther (6) and Anna (3) still requiring much of Rachel's time her daytime commitment to the shop is limited, but evenings are regularly spent with bills, and VAT!

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Elizabeth Taylor (nee Spalding). Left NHS 1950. Following on from the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in 2011, and performance in the East, plus an appearance at The Place, London, and Lichfield Music Festival in Spring 2012, the Smith Company embarked on a tour in October 2012 with their dance/drama 'Agnes & Walter – a little love story'.

The company visited fifteen theatres, ranging from Bridport, Bournemouth and Frome in the South up to Newcastle and Edinburgh in the North. At many places there were question, answer and comment sessions for cast and audience after the performance.

They were well received everywhere; they also took part in a recorded session at Lancaster run by Age Concern, which concentrated in the inter generality of the cast – ages 30 – 80. The whole experience of being in this show has been very exciting. The tour finished on November 22nd in Lincoln, where three of Elizabeth's grandchildren were able to see the show.

Mary McCosh (nee Wiltshire) Left NHS 1970. Mary has decided to retire from supply teaching. She has had weddings in the last year for her two oldest daughters, both held at home so was pretty busy!

Jasmine Miller 5th December 1928 – 4th July 2013

Jasmine Miller was born Olive Jasmine Sidney in Norwich on 5th December 1928. Her parents had recently lost their first child, baby Jack as a toddler, to TB-Meningitis - a loss that Jasmine felt throughout her life. She was particularly close to her father, her name coming from his initials "J.A.S." and the word "mine".

Growing up at Thorpe St Andrew in Norwich, she enjoyed her school days at Norwich High School for Girls immensely. She was particularly fond of maths and music, and captained her lacrosse team (playing centre). She used to play the piano for school assembly, and would up the tempo a bit when she thought she could get away with it!

She attended Bedford College in London to study Zoology, where she was part of a group of friends called The Druids - they stayed in contact throughout their lives.



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After completing her degree, she worked at London Zoo, contemporary with Gerald Durrell and David Attenborough who she used to see in the library there, whilst teaching at Birkbeck College in the evenings. It was here that she met her husband, Kenneth Herbert Miller, with whom she lived in Abington from 1960 until his death from cancer in 1987. Her parting gift from the Zoo was an orphaned Bush-baby named Pip, who kept the newlyweds busy digging up juicy larvae and, on the weekly exercise day, thoroughly cleaning the kitchen!

Jasmine was keen on zoological research, and worked towards a PhD on limnology, using radioactive isotopes - which were a new thing at the time - but when she was working away for a year, a lab technician washed up all of her slides; her research was ruined, and as she was getting married shortly afterwards, she never completed her PhD - something she always regretted.

Before they were married, Ken spotted a job advert in the newspaper, which resulted in the trip of a lifetime for Jasmine. She spent a year in the late 1950s travelling around Africa surveying and documenting the distribution of large African mammals. The trip could have been daunting for a woman travelling alone, but Jasmine loved the adventure. She nearly came a cropper once whilst filming a rhino, as it was only when the guides ran across in front of her lens that she realized it had started to charge at her!

After helping to rescue animals at risk from flooding when a new dam was constructed, Jasmine watched as the dam was completed and promptly jumped into the lake – becoming the first woman to swim in Lake Kariba [Car-EE-baa], now the world's largest artificial lake, which straddles the border between Zimbabwe and Zambia!

Jasmine and Ken settled in Little Abington following their marriage in 1960, as it was halfway between their parents' homes - and here they both stayed until their deaths. Their complementary personalities meant that they found creative solutions to life's challenges, such as accommodating their different approaches to gardening by physically dividing the vegetable plot in two, so each could indulge their own particular horticultural techniques!



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Jasmine was Clerk of Little Abington Parish Council for 24 years, only retiring from the role when Ken was taken ill. She took these responsibilities very seriously, from campaigning for a gas supply to the village, opposing the expansion of Stansted airport, and ensuring all local planning applications were reviewed conscientiously. She was also active in many other aspects of village life. Jasmine held the positions of Treasurer and Vice-President of the WI for a number of years, and took an active role in NatureWatch as reptile and amphibian recorder (shortly after her death, we found the shed skin of a snake which had been collected in 2007 as part of this!). She had also at one time run the Abington Singers group, and over the years had actively participated in The Abington Group, Gardening Club, Keep Fit, Institute Management Committee, WI Walking Group, and the Forget-Me-Not Club.

During the Abington Feast revival in 1978, she decided she would run a gingerbread stall. Never one to do things by halves, she thought it would be best to find EVERY recipe she could containing the ingredient “ginger”, and then to test every recipe extensively on her family before the date of the feast. It was years before any of them could face a ginger biscuit again!

Once Jasmine's two daughters, Karen & Alison, were at school, she started working again, this time as Assistant Librarian for Downing College Cambridge. She loved college life, and used to take the family cocker spaniel, Becky, into work with her. Since dogs were not allowed in College, Becky was an honorary Cat! Jasmine used to worry about what the students thought when one of the fellows would visit her office, rolling about on the floor saying “darling you're beautiful”, meaning the dog of course, and not her!

In the early days of computing, she found out the hard way that you should regularly save your work, as one day she walked into her office carrying her lunch - the dog jumped up excitedly, and landed on the power switch for the computer - she lost her whole morning's work!

Whilst at Downing, she was invited to a fancy dress party to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the Storming of the Bastille. Her acceptance took the form of a papier-mâché model of her head, with a note to say that “the rest



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will follow on the night". Her French aristocrat costume which included a false torso, with holes for her to see through, jacket and breeches, with the papier-mâché head under her arm, proved incredibly convincing – as afterwards she commented on how many people had automatically talked to the space above the torso, despite the voice coming from the region of the chest!

Following Ken's death, she embarked on some further adventures, travelling to Australia, New Zealand, and North America - always with a trusty video camera to hand.

She had a life-long love of learning, and became an active member of the University of the Third Age in Cambridge. This was something she was extremely passionate about for very many years, taking part in activities ranging from choir to jewellery-making, to botany, to sketching, to Geodysey - a geological odyssey that resulted in her going on a trip to South Africa with her classmates.

Throughout her life, Jasmine maintained her links with Norfolk through the family bungalow at Waxham. It was a beautiful secluded retreat next to the coast. Right up to her death, every time the sun was out, she would say how lovely it would be at Waxham!

In March 2010, once the law had finally been updated, she and her daughters became Lady Freeman of Norwich, happily following in the family tradition, as her ancestors had acquired their Freeman status from being carpenters.

Jasmine was a very proud Granny to Jessica and Alexander, who some of you might remember as the diminutive waiters at Jasmine's 80th birthday drinks in 2008, and she went to her first Grandparents' Day only a few weeks ago.

Here are Alexander and Jessica to say a few words of their own:

A: Granny was brilliant.

A: She was kind and patient.

A: She was always there for us and tried to help wherever she could.

J: At times she could be a little forgetful but no matter what, she was always our Granny.