

# St. Elphin's Newsletter

May 1998

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Dear Old Girls,

I am so looking forward to seeing you all at the reunion in June held at St. Elphin's this year. Many of you came to the one held in York and organised by Peter Pollard which was a great delight, but I hope that you will not consider that this gives you leave to miss out the summer gathering!

The King William College was a stately and welcoming setting for a very lively group, full of news and fun, with Peter at the centre. I was able to give news of the latest happening in school life, and sad reports of the deaths of Ron Pearce, James Burgess and Jack Soppitt.

Just recently I have visited Hong Kong for the second time since I joined St. Elphin's. I went with Mrs. Mavis Hunter, and while most of the aims of the visit were very similar to last time, seeing new parents, new pupils, discussing career plans and problems of current pupils, we had as a climax to our agenda a grand party to which had been invited all the former pupils of St. Elphin's who had remained in Hong Kong. Forty came, and what a time we had! They were so proud of being part of the St. Elphin's tradition, and just as careful to enquire whether we are keeping all the essentials, the Sponsored Walk, One Tree Hill, "sock up" before chapel.

Some of our musicians joined in the Woodard 150th celebration concert in the Albert Hall which was a wonderful experience for them. While a group went skiing at Half Term another three participated in the Huddersfield Music Festival and one of the Sixth Form pianists gained a second place in this most prestigious competition. We shall watch

Jessica's progress with great interest. Now preparations are afoot to have a similar event celebrating the Central region of Woodard. At the moment girls are preparing for the opera Dido and Aeneas, and A Midsummer's Night Dream for the end of the summer term.

William has returned! The Museum of Childhood in London has given the Graham Ibbeson statue of "Just William" to the school and he will feature in the coming day organised by Mrs. Hodgson in April. "William" enthusiasts from all over the country will come for a conference, and I hope, enjoy the exhibition which we are putting on for that occasion. Richmal Ashby will come for the dinner in the evening.

Christine says that this year she really must resign as Secretary to the Old Girls and of course I see that after so many years, and the change in her address, the position has become very difficult for her. She has asked that I encourage someone else to take her place by including a comment in my letter to you all. It is so important that the Old Girls records are scrupulously kept and this Christine has lovingly and carefully done for a long time. The school assists with typing and communications so this sort of work is always done in cooperation with the secretary to the Old Girls. I do hope that someone will be recommended or will put herself forward for the post at the next meeting.

I wish you all a very happy few months until we meet again.

Yours sincerely

*Valerie Fisher*

Dear Old Girls,  
I know many of you have been wondering where the newsletter has got to this year.

Unfortunately I have been unwell since November and have also had to move house yet again. I can only apologise for the delay in sending out the newsletter and the details of the reunion and hope that this will not deter you from attending in June. In view of the difficulties I have been experiencing and given the fact that I now have a full time position of Secretary in a local hotel I feel that I will have to resign as Secretary. I have held this position since 1990 when Katrina first started at St. Elphin's and for the most part it has given me great pleasure receiving your letters and organising the reunions. I will always remember the reunion of 1994 and the four hundred or so Old Girls who attended. I really feel that this is the time for someone else to take over. It would be nice if one of you from the 1970 era, or even later, of St. Elphin's girls would consider the position, but of course the Guild would be grateful for any help or suggestions on how to move forward into the 21st century I know you will all be thinking that it involves an awful lot of work, but in actual fact this is not the case and as the Guild now owns its own Word Processor the job is really quite easy. As you will read later in the newsletter one or two of you have used the internet to contact the school. It would be wonderful if we could find a secretary with the knowledge and the equipment to bring us really up to date with modern technology. I would be very pleased to help anyone who took the position. So please someone come forward and help run the Guild.

We spent last summer in a lovely house situated on the sea front and we particularly enjoyed the beach and the sea during the long hot August. Every Sunday I sat and listened

to the Salvation Army Band which performed on the promenade directly below our balcony. Katrina and Thomas, both keen surfers, would have liked to have made the house our permanent home, but unfortunately this was not to be and the owners returned to Sheringham and so on the 1st April we had to move. As most spare houses in Sheringham become holiday homes in the summer months there was very little choice of three bedrooomed accommodation and we were lucky to be offered, by a very old friend, a flat above a butcher's shop on Sheringham's main street. The accommodation is fine but the smell from below can be rather pungent and most mornings I am awakened by the sound of chops being cut directly below my bed, also the traffic and the people going home from Sheringham's many public houses can be rather noisy. However it is amazing how quickly one adjusts and I shall have to put it down to another experience in my rather nomadic life over the past three years. Katrina is finishing her A levels and has been offered a place at Portsmouth University this September subject to her results. She has just passed the National Beach Lifeguard exam and hopes to become a lifeguard this summer on the Norfolk Coast. All those swims in Carsington Water and her years in the Air Training Corps in Matlock helped her immensely with this exacting test. Thomas has just started Sheringham High School so I have still got several more years of nagging about home work and school uniform etc.

On reading through the minutes of the last meeting I was horrified to see that it was voted that an evening function would take place at this year's reunion. I am afraid it is too



late to do anything about this but perhaps you could bear this in mind for next year and let the new secretary have any ideas. The Book of Remembrance is currently being made and I hope to bring it with me in June.

Once again many thanks for all your letters and friendship over the past eight years and I wish S.E.O.G.G. the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely  
*Christine Codling*

Dear Old Girls,  
Although I've actually visited St. Elphin's only once since I wrote to you - I was present at the reunion in June - the school has in various ways remained much in my thoughts. During 1997 I enjoyed the choir's singing at an Evensong at Lincoln in March, I've exchanged visits with Bishop Michael and Mrs. Henshall who are relatively near neighbours and I've been present at weddings of former pupils. Sadly, I also attended two funerals that of Miss Margaret Thouless (former member of staff) who died in Exmouth not long before her 99th birthday, and that of Mr. Ron Pearce, a much respected current member of staff, who first joined us in the early 1980s. Because I was away at the time I had to miss the Memorial Service for the Rev'd James Burgess last July. Mr. Burgess taught at St. Elphin's for almost twenty years and his scholarship and unique personal qualities were valued by everyone.

Here in North Yorkshire my life remains busy and fulfilling. Last year I was appointed a governor of our local primary school - no sinecure these days, as governors are encouraged to "get involved". So far I've been pond dipping and undertaken a traffic survey with six year olds, I frequently go into the school to help with reading and number work. More recently to my surprise I've been appointed Chairman!

I have also been elected Chairman of the Thornton Dale Players. Last year's production was "Lord Arthur Savile's Crime" a comedy based on an Oscar Wilde short story. Once again I played the part of a German - a bungling anarchist on this occasion.

And there is always music. I was thrilled to realise one ambition unfulfilled while at school, by passing my Grade 8 Associated Board piano exam. Since I last wrote to you I have sung in Stavanger, Norway, in both St. Paul's Cathedral and Westminster Abbey, and also in Mirfield, Sheffield and Shrewsbury. Other travels have taken me to Budapest, Toulouse and Tours and to Salisbury and Scotland (Edinburgh) where my younger son was performing in a Festival Fringe Production. All these travels were greatly enjoyed.

My very best wishes to you all.  
Yours sincerely,  
*Peter Pollard*

P.S.  
This letter was originally drafted in November 1997 just before the York Reunion (see details elsewhere and many thanks to everyone who supported this so well). Soon afterwards I received a phone call from Spain, where my elder son had been studying, telling me that he had had a serious fall. As a result of this I spent almost seven weeks in Barcelona, and only returned to England towards the end of January. Hugh then spent seven weeks in Pinderfields Hospital. Fortunately he is now home and walking well with the aid of crutches, there is still some way to go, but he has made excellent progress so far, and we hope this will continue.

Those of you who normally hear from me at Christmas will perhaps understand why I could not be in touch last December. I, too, was unwell for a time - and still contending with an eye problem that may eventually need surgery - but feel much more cheerful than

I did at the start of 1998. Doubtless my recent acquisition of a Senior Railcard has helped in the recovery process!

### **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 28th June 1997**

Following coffee in the Thornton Suite and the distributing of name badges we all went to the Common Room for the A.G.M.

Mrs. Fisher welcomed everyone and then continued with prayers remembering those Old Girls who had died during the previous year Esther Jackson, Clare Froggart, Miss Thouless, Betty Hood (Turner).

Apologies were received from Anna Rendell Knights, Sandra Harcus, Shiela Allen, Teanie Dornan, Olga Putnam, Dorothy Edwards, Mary Cordor, June Gibson, Mrs. Kitchen, Rosemary Taylor, Phoebe Milton, Rachel Launay, Elsie Pang, Fay Smith, Margaret Thompson.

The minutes of the meeting held on 11th May 1996 were read, approved and signed.

### **MATTERS ARISING**

The Book of Remembrance. Christine had been in touch with a book binder in Norwich and had been given two options. One to have a complete new book incorporating the original book donated by the late Margaret Carmichael and two, to tidy up the original book and have a completely new book donated by S.E.O.G.G. She had been in touch with Margaret Thompson (the daughter of Margaret Carmichael) to ask for her opinions. She had requested that the original book be retained and restored and that a new one be started dating from the last entry in the original book. After some discussion it was decided to go ahead with this plan and the words "Book of Remembrance St. Elphin's School, donated by

S.E.O.G.G. 1997. The book cover would be of blue leather with gold lettering and would be of the type where extra pages could be added so that we would not find ourselves in the same situation in ten years time.

Proposed Mary Scudamore,  
Seconded Ann Entwistle.

Pictures of Heads on the Stairs. This was discussed again and Mrs. Fisher agreed to look into finding pictures of all the heads and having them reproduced in black and white with wood frames.

### **SECRETARY'S REPORT**

Christine reported that she had visited the school for the Commemoration Service in St. Helen's Church where she had read the prayers on behalf of the Old Girls. As she had held the position of Secretary for seven years she felt that she would like to resign but agreed to carry on until the next A.G.M. when hopefully someone else would come forward to take up the position. The number of Old Girls had increased and now stood at over eight hundred. Despite this, very little Old Girls News had been received and she appealed for more people to keep in touch.

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Liz passed round the balance sheet which was self explanatory. Members were pleased to see that the Guild's financial position was very sound.

### **HEADMISTRESS'S REPORT**

Mrs. Fisher told the members about the outside functions which were being held at the school which brought in welcome revenue. The Nursery was on the increase and the numbers were steady with only natural wastage. The Common Room had been redecorated and the library updated with more Computers and information on careers. For the first time boarding numbers were up. Back Landing had been revamped with private facilities. There had been a very



successful trip to Canada which had been sponsored by Thorntons and Slacks Coaches. Pupils from Stancliffe and Hollygirt school in Nottingham had also joined in the trip.

#### NOMINATIONS

Treasurer Liz Rixson proposed Mary Goodman seconded by Elizabeth Waters.

#### A.O.B.

Florence Mahoney nee Peters had travelled from West Africa and had stayed overnight in the school. She praised the warm welcome she had received and said how much she had enjoyed talking to the boarders. She told us of memories of the school in 1946 where she had possibly been the first coloured pupil. She hoped that she would be able to visit again.

Rachel Cooper suggested that the Old Girls could donate some books for the library and Mrs. Fisher expressed her gratitude and said she would look into what was required.

A discussion followed about trying to attract more people to Reunions and Rachel Dawson proposed that next year there would be an evening function. This was seconded by Rachel Cooper.

Peter Pollard reported that he had attended the funeral of Miss Thouless and had represented St. Elphin's. His connection with Miss Thouless was twofold as she had taught his late wife at St. Mary's Calne. She was ten days short of her 99th birthday.

The next A.G.M. would be held at the school on 27th June 1998. Accommodation would again be on offer.

The meeting closed at 1.15

Those attending were:

Mary Aitchison (Davidson), Flora Baber (Bisset-Smith), Laura Bennett, Barbara Brooke-Taylor (Barrow), Ruth Burgess (Doxey), Maragaret Cadge, Christine Codling (Tew), Rachel Cooper, Rachel Dawson (Farley), Kathryn

Dickens (Betterton), Mary Dodd (Banks), Margaret Elliott (Stewardson), Ann Entwistle (Lyon), Jean Fisher (Hutchison), Marjorie Gardener (Longden), Mary Goodman, Pat Harding (Wigfull), Alyson Hartley (Bradfield), Freda Hawkes (Plant), Samantha Hay, Sylvia Hooley, Stephanie Jones, Jean McGregor (Beauchamp), Kelly Margets, Avice Lee (Barrow), Florence Mahoney (Peters), Patricia Mayne, Murial Onac, Peter Pollard, Liz Rixon (Flemming), Mary Scudamore (Jones), Helen Stokes (Sands), Susila Thrubon, Judith Wheatfield (Smith), Jill Whitten, Diana Wilkins (Seldon).

The assembled company then went to Stopford Hall for a delicious lunch followed by tours of the school and a sung evensong service in the chapel and tea, after which goodbyes were said. The usual raffle took place for S.E.O.G.G. funds.

#### NEWS FROM OLD GIRLS

*Letter received from Miss Robinson.*

Dear Christine,  
I have been meaning to write to you for a long time but during the last six months I have moved house from Parkstone Avenue to the address below. I am so thankful to have gone from a big house into a flat and am blissfully happy, it is so cosy and so easy to run and NO GARDEN to weed.

Also in the last six months I have been in and out of hospital with a blood clot in my left lung. I was a very high risk patient ("HR" displayed on the ward board for all to see) and I was only saved by a wonderful surgeon who stayed until nearly midnight so that I could start treatment. I am having hospital treatment now but in my own home for which I am truly thankful. Also I am being looked after so well but NO DOGS alas! but I have a lovely Blue Persian CAT called Rumpole (of the Old Bailey of

course) and he is a great comfort and companion except when he does a WAR DANCE on a sleeping body at 1am.

You have been so kind in sending me all the literature. It is now nearly twenty five years since I retired and I shall not be able to take part, so save yourself trouble, but if you think I should be interested in anything ..... The Headmistress sends me her annual report on Speech Day. She visited me here (in Parkstone Avenue) nearly two years ago and I did like her so much. I am sure the school will flourish under her. Thank you once again, my dear O.G.!!

*Philippa Robinson*

6 Lindum Court, Poole Road, Poole, Dorset BK12 9AS

P.S. Please let the O.Gs. know (my girls) that I so often think of them and recall happy times.

*Letter from Frances Anderson (de Voil) Powys House 1948-1950*

*"Lacon", M/S801, Munbulibera, Queensland 4626, Australia*

To those who are interested my name now is Frances Anderson but St. Elphin's knew me as Frances de Voil, a small, and rather insignificant junior in 1948-49 and 1949-50, when I left and came to Australia with my family. What a change in lifestyle that was. From a Lancashire mill town and Derbyshire countryside to a small Queensland country town. My parents were convinced that Australia holds great opportunities for young people - and so it did.

So many things have happened in my life; some were funny, but life has been by no means easy. We became stud cattle breeders - one of the lesser known breeds - and because of drought and cattle depression I had to return to teaching while my husband put his energies and what money we had into developing the property and stud. This is a

very raw country with a lot of development to be done. My two sons, of whom I am very proud, had a most difficult passage through school; other children can be very cruel to teachers' children and in our country town there is only one school. The droughts of this land are legendary; I thought my heart was big enough to cope with them but I don't feel that way any more.

During 1995 during a long awaited holiday in England I actually visited St. Elphin's. It was during the summer holidays so I was allowed to wander through both classroom and boarding areas. I was most impressed.

Since I came home I have been looking at photographs. I am sure that these I am sending you - to keep - will find a good home with you, particularly the long one. Perhaps some of the customs I know - like speech days with not only speeches and awards but sports competitions and displays also, still exist - In over forty years many other traditions will have developed.

I never joined the Old Girls Association, it was almost a complete break. I wrote briefly to Georgina Coe, but I was friends for a longer time with Mary Swift and I greatly regret having lost touch with her.

It was a long time between visits 1950 - 1995 and I doubt whether I will get a chance to visit again, but I haven't forgotten you and I wish you and the school the best of everything.

Frances Anderson

*The photographs mentioned in this letter have been put with other school archives.*

#### NEWS UPDATE

Flora Baber (nee Bisset-Smith) has joined the Old Girls Guild having attended the last reunion. She was a paediatrician in Uganda and Hong Kong from 1962 - 1986



(Child Development Study of Chinese children in Hong Kong 1967-76 and 1982)

Sarah Brain (Straw) got married in February 1994 and now has a little girl called Charlotte who was born on 1st January 1995. She is still in touch with Melanie Thompson who is her daughter's Godmother. After she left school in 1984 she did a Physics with Astrophysics degree at Royal Holloway College, University of London and graduated with a 2(ii) Hons degree in 1987. She then worked as an Assistant Manager for Marks and Spencer for five years. She gave that up to return to college the last four years and is just about to start a new job teaching maths and physics at Heathfields School in Ascot. Sarah's sister Helena left St. Elphin's three years later and is now a teacher in Kuwait, she can be contacted through her parent's address - Eastfield, Chatsworth Road, Rowsley, Matlock, Derbyshire DE4 2EH.

Mary Corder (nee Beeley) wrote with the news of the death of Betty Hood (obituary printed elsewhere) and wrote that she had been on holiday in Thailand to visit her daughter Rosemary who teaches English there. Her son is just about to finish his Doctorate on Industrial Laser Safety at Loughborough. Since attending reunions in London she has been very pleased to be in touch with school friends again.

Catherine Eadie (nee Barr) wrote to St. Elphin's on the internet. She was a pupil from 1982 - 1987 and a boarder in Powys, she married in April 1995. She would like to see a guest book that could be signed not only by visitors but by old and present girls from the school and even staff. As the internet is fast expanding she is sure that there would be a steady influx of people, as access to computers at work and at home become the norm.

Maybe at a later date, the Old Girls Newsletter could encourage girls to access the site and leave messages for friends who have lost touch, communications between girls from long distance and even new friendships could be made. As she lives in Edinburgh she finds it hard to get to reunions but would love to keep up to date with everything that's going on. She would like to find a few friends that she has lost touch with. (I think that the internet is definitely one way forward for the Guild to move).

Margaret Elliott (Stewardson) now runs a small bed and breakfast at Wensley.

Jennie Gamble has moved but unfortunately is almost housebound as she suffers from osteoporosis.

Sarah Holme is working for the Financial Times and has done so since 1993 and will be getting married in the Spring. She is still in contact with Jo Martin and Lucy Stephenson who both live in London. Jo bumped into Nicky McGee and Tiffany Morris and they are all meeting up for a drink.

Helen Hudson wrote on the internet from South Africa she is married and has a four month old daughter who she is thinking of putting on the Old Girl's Scholarship list. She would also like to get in touch with Mrs. Job her maths teacher. Rachel Launay (nee Petty) is living in Hong Kong at present.

Helen Mashinchi (Patton) has been in hospital having keyhole surgery and was very pleased to receive the flowers the Guild sent to her.

Mary Scudamore was unable to attend the York Reunion but hopes to be able to come to the June one.

Dawn Stenhouse (Hives) has moved as her husband has become Bursar at Priorsfield Girls Boarding School and she

is his secretary.

Sarah Thomas (Mann) left St. Elphin's in 1987 having been there since she was seven years old. She was married in the school chapel on 18th August 1992 and had her first baby on 8th August 1996 called Emma Jane. When she left school she did her RGN training at Derby School of Nursing qualifying in January 1991 and went into intensive care nursing for two and a half years. She is now specialising in Occupational Health Nursing at Rolls Royce Aerospace who have sponsored her in a Diploma in Professional Studies in Nursing Occupational Health which she has successfully completed after a two year part time course.

Margaret Thompson (Carmichael) hopes to be able to attend the June reunion. Her husband Mark died in January after a long battle with cancer.

Shirley Thirman (Thornton) wrote that she met up with Rosemary Runciman (Hadfield) 1941-1948 Powys while she was on holiday in Petra. She wrote the following: I started at St. Elphin's as a five year old day girl in 1940 and was a boarder in Wilson from 1945-1948 (one of the troupe of Stanley Thornton's family). Rosemary stayed on in the sixth form whereas I had one year in the sixth form, we were not in the same year I was one year below her. I left St. Elphin's to do a science based A level programme at Lady Manners School Bakewell and got a BSc. Hons degree at Kings College London, this is how I met my husband. Rosemary also went to London University and read French at Westfield College. Her husband read Engineering at Kings (London) - Rosemary met him at a social function - I never met up with Rosemary in London. Rosemary tells me that there had been no university entrants from St. Elphin's for several years when she went but Miss Stopford's arrival generated increased success. The first to go was

Betty Martin probably in 1947 and Ruth Hibbert followed by Florence Peters, the first African pupil at the school. All these were Westfield students and Rosemary "fagged" for Flossie Peters when she took her finals in the summer on 1951. Rosemary has recently been widowed. She was on a holiday to Petra and St. Catherine's monastery when my husband and I met up with her. We really enjoyed meeting again and I enclose a photo of the two of us on a camel riding through Petra.

Rosemary Taylor was not at the reunion as she had lost her mother in April three weeks after her 100th birthday. She was in our thoughts and prayers on the 27th June.

Tracey Tremaine (Thompson) wrote from the Bahamas with news of herself and her three sisters. Tracey went on to attend Yale University and then Columbia University, again the United States, completing a first degree in history and a second in law. Since returning to the Bahamas, her main work has been in administration and historical research at the College of Bahamas. She is married to Terrence Tremaine.

Camilla Cheong (Thompson) went on to attend Pennsylvania State University in the United States, majoring first in agronomy and then in English. She returned to the Bahamas and worked first as a journalist and then in the insurance industry. She is married to Donald Cheong and has two children.

Kristel Bethel (Thompson) went on to attend Northeastern University and Boston University both in the United States. She majored in communications. Having returned to the Bahamas she worked in various areas of the tourism industry. She is married to Owen Bethel and they have two girls.

Tracey would like to be in touch with Penelope Staufenberg



(Hill-Wilson) and any other friends from St. Elphin's. All three sisters can be contacted through PO Box F-42424, Freeport, Bahamas.

Natasha Whawell married Matthew Shaw on 20th September 1997.

Elizabeth Lavender has retired from teaching maths and is now living beside the Trent and Mersey Canal in Stone. Her principal hobby is cruising around the inland waterways in her narrow boat.

Has anybody the address of Janice Mitchella who lived in Zambia and was a pupil at St. Elphin's in the early 1970s?

I can be contacted either at 01263 822401 or 821058

### Is there life after St. Elphin's?

College is a great opportunity to have some fun, highlights for me being organising (and participating in) the university entry to the equine competition section of the British University's Sports Association and representing England at a martial arts convention in Italy. Money is required for all this of course, I worked in a greengrocer's for a while

After leaving college, I was invited to do some work for the Natural History Museum, I went along and ended up becoming involved with the sorting, preservation and cataloguing of palaeontological finds.

Still without much clue as to future career, I applied for various posts without success. My father unwittingly provided the solution when he dropped a selection of Royal Air Force leaflets onto my bed one day. Nine months, several interviews, aptitude tests, practical leadership exercises and theoretical problems later and all that remains is a final medical and fitness test - wish me luck!

*Sarah Chambers*

### Westminster Abbey

Dear Mrs. Hodgson,  
I did enjoy our conversation yesterday afternoon; undoubtedly the world gets smaller as time goes by.

Certainly my career has been fairly eclectic. As far as the Abbey is concerned, the high was handling the media following the announcement of the removal from here of the Stone of Scone. The major Royal events generally produce the largest numbers of press - at the Duke of York's wedding I had 24 TV cameramen, 26 press photographers and 200 reporters! A recent major project was the three-part series on the Abbey with Alan Bennett, with which I was much involved and in effect co-produced.

I was at St. Elphin's from 1959-66 in Gresford House most of the time. In those days I only used Smith and not my full name.

#### *Emma St. John Smith*

Since leaving St. Elphin's Emma's career has been:  
1966-69 Derby and District College of Technology: BSc in physics and mathematics  
1969-70 Post graduate research in protein crystallography  
1970-72 Senior research technician, Royal Institution of Great Britain, London  
1972 Assistant Exhibition Officer, National Museum of Wales, Cardiff  
1973 Public Relations Officer, Science Museum, London  
1983-85 Museum Manager, Helmshore Textile Museums  
1986-97 Press secretary, Westminster Abbey. The duties of this appointment include the following main areas of responsibility: All media relations in connection with Westminster Abbey and St. Margaret's Church. Co-ordination of all radio and television broadcasts. Publicity materials. Liaison with the tourist boards.

PS. And also Princess Diana's funeral (Ed).

### What I did at college - Oxford

Dear Mrs. Hodgson,  
How are things? - busy as ever I'm sure. I'm enjoying the school calendar Miss Crook gave us as part of our wedding present, especially the pictures in and out of chapel which are coming up. Here is a brief summary of "What I did at college".

1992-93 1st year - Assistant Organ Scholar (until 1994).

1993-94 2nd year - President of Music Society (College). Work progress prize. Honour Moderations 2:1. Ladies 1st VIII (College). Classics travel grant for a month in Greece.

1994-95 3rd year - Work progress prize. 1995-96 4th year - Work progress prize. Greats 2:1. Stirling Boyd prize (College) "for outstanding contribution to college life".

That's it really, apart from the usual choir/orchestra/hockey/punting/essays etc. etc. It seems a long time ago now! - it's very weird still being in Oxford but not at College any more, though I'm just about used to it by now!

At the moment I'm waiting to hear from UCL about the archives MA course I'm hoping to do: Andrew has just got a job with Coopers and Lybrand to start in September in London so we'll be moving anyway. Hopefully by then he will have completed his DPhil.

My job as archivist is going well, and I'm enjoying being covered in dust as there is the compensation of glorious views from the office windows; it's the Bodleian Tower so a bit of a climb first thing in the morning but well worth it!

Hope things are well, and the U6th getting settled with University offers - and revision. With love to you all.

*Sarah (Rawling)*

### A Grand End to a Grand Family Outing

Jane Gerard-Pearse (nee Clarke - Powys 1974-76)

Some of you may remember the Clarke sisters, Sally, Mary and Jane, who were in Powys in the 70's under the rule of Miss Robinson and Miss Mayhew. On April 4th this year they all travelled to Aintree for a special day out - accompanied by their parents, brother, husbands, children and friends. Mr. Stan Clarke, their father, had a runner in the world's greatest steeplechase - The Grand National. The whole family were not going to miss a chance to cheer him on.

As the excitement built and the start of the race drew near, we all now know that there was a major security alert and 60,000 disappointed people were evacuated quickly onto the streets of Aintree.

Jane, who was watching the horse being saddled, had left her 5 month old daughter Emily asleep in her pushchair, in the care of a friend. With the evacuation under way it was five and a half hours later that Jane found out that her baby was safe.

However the Clarke Clan returned to Aintree two days later - determined to defy the terrorists along with many thousands of others. The day turned into a dream come true and Lord Gyllene - Stan Clarke's horse - romped to victory in tremendous style - with the Clarke girls cheering him on.

*Rosemary Chambers*

Life after St. Elphin's has been both exciting and challenging as well as being truly enjoyable. In October 1993 I went to Leeds University to study medicine. The first two years of pre-clinical training involved lectures and laboratory work with an introduction to the general public. In the name of medical science I drank two litres of water and demonstrated the efficiency of the human kidney. The first blood sample swiftly followed: the lab. clown wandered by with mop and



bucket!

After my second year the Medical Council offered to provide funding for a period of intercalated study. I chose to do a genetics degree, joining the final year of the genetics programme here at Leeds. A frantic but fun year followed - I produced my own web page; won an award for an introduction to genetics written for the non-scientist; completed an extensive research project into alpha-chemokines and their evolution; and gained a First Class Bachelor of Science degree with honours.

1996 saw my first extensive contact with patients. I was thrown into the deep end, working on a cardiology ward and the Jimmy's (of TV fame) Coronary Care Unit. I saw my first operation (and managed not to faint!), progressing to assist with "stitches and staples". By the end of the year I had learnt to take a history, perform an examination and assess a patient's needs. I am currently resident in Airedale, a district general hospital doing my psychiatry clerkship. This really highlights the trust placed in medical staff when people share their innermost thoughts and distress. I hope that I have learnt to empathise and understand before judging. Medicine is a career where one is privileged to share some of people's most intimate moments, the joy and sorrow that this brings has made the past four years interesting and rewarding.

*Laura Bennett*

### **Newark**

Sometimes it seems hard to believe that it is ten years since I left school. At others it seems so long ago I find it hard to sum up what I have been doing since. My apologies for everything omitted.

In 1993 I was very fortunate to have the opportunity to return to Leeds to undertake 3 years of postgraduate study into mathematical/computer models of geographical

systems. I am currently awaiting my PhD viva, and hope to graduate with my friends at Christmas. For the past 12 months I have worked for Nottingham County Council in the Advisory and Inspection Division of the Education Department as a data analyst.

On a more personal note I am still living happily in Newark, and have managed to keep in touch with some of my old friends from school.

Carolyn Cartwright (now Walleans) and Sarah Mann (Thomas) both nurses are now busy mothers. Alix Farley stood for election as a Liberal Democrat MP at the last election. Louise Hill is married and working as an Occupational Therapist in London. Kate Scott (Williams) has been working with Victim Support in Milton Keynes. Sarah Randel lives in Edinburgh and works promoting the new GNVQ qualification in schools and to businesses. Sarah Ronald is a designer living in Glasgow. Sarah Ashmore has been involved in TV make-up at the studios in Birmingham and has recently worked on Question Time showing the best side of Paddy Ashdown and Michael Portillo!

This summer has seen the marriage of Sarah Ronald, and the arrival of Kate Scott's (now Williams) first child (Joseph Thomas):

Many congratulations.

PS

This year has also brought the sad news of the deaths of two of my previous teachers. Both of whom made a profound and vivid impact on me, even after my time at school. Mr. Burgess taught me Religious Studies and Logic, but more than anything, that the desire and enthusiasm to learn all types of things need never fade. Mr. Pearce taught me A level economics with an intelligence and wry humour which is unforgettable. Even writing my thesis recently I was aware that

I was still listening to his advice about clarity and simplicity. My thoughts and warmest wishes go to Mrs. Pearce at this sad time.

*Becky Michell*

### **The York Reunion**

The decision to hold the November 1997 Reunion in York proved most successful and about 65 people - a number of present and former members of staff in addition to former pupils - gathered at St. William's College, next door to the Minster, on Saturday 15th November. We were very well looked after by the staff and enjoyed excellent food and drink in most elegant surroundings. It was a particular pleasure to see a number of younger old girls many of whom had not been in touch for some time. As always on these occasions it was the chance to talk and reminisce which mattered most: so much to be said in such a short time! Although it seems appropriate to go south again this year, there was a general feeling that another York meeting, would prove equally popular at some time in future. Organisers, please note.....

*Peter Pollard*

Those attending were:

Sheila Allen (Mosley 1960s, Nicola Allen 1977-92, Sally Ambrose 1977-88, Barbara Brooke-Taylor (Barrow) 1933-39, Sarah Brain (straw) 1977-84, Ann Carson 1942-51, Rachel Cooper 1985-93, Joyce Dawson (Cartmell) 1933-41, Rachel Dawson (Farley) 1981-88. Kathryn Dickens (Betterton) 1971-80, Dorothy Edwards 1934-40, Georgina Elder (Upper sixth), Margaret Farley (Smart) 1951-56, Margaret Fielding (Cousens) 1948-53, Marjorie Gardener (Longden) 1925-34, Sally Gedye (Hitchen) 1947-54, Mary Goodman 1934-39, Mollie Harwood (Barsby) 1949-55, Jacinth Wright (Hayles) 1977-82, Michelle Francis (Hemley) 1980-84, Fiona Hibbert (Upper sixth), Sarah Holme 1981-86, Kay Huddy 1977-84, Elizabeth Lavender 1943-51, Pat Long

(Hodgson) 1947-53, Sharon Lusty (Wilby) 1966-80, Kelly Margets 1984-93, Jennifer Marsden (Dearnaley) 1949-55, Jonanna Martin 1981-86, Nicola McGee 1981-86, Phoebe Milton (Melville-White) 1935-40, Tiffany Morris 1979-86, Victoria Pickering (Gordon) 1983-90, Pam Prestwich (Cartmell) 1939-44, Olga Putnam (Mort) 1934-40, Lucy Redhead (Stephenson) 1979-86, Anna Rendell-Knights (Watts) 1951-56, Amanda Russell (Palmer) 1974-83, Eileen Smart (Whittaker) 1925-30, Melanie Thompson 1977-84, Helen Tyler 1979-90, Claire Walker 1983-92, Betty Wareham (Carson) 1940-45, Natasha West 1983-91, Pauline Whitehouse 1983-90, Elizabeth Woodhouse (Turner) 1960-65, Rachel Woodhouse 1984-96.

Former Staff. Mr. Peter Pollard, Col. Ken Hobbs, Mrs. Joy Blackwell, Mr. Andrew Jackson, Mrs. Muriel Onac, Mrs. Anne Phillpot, Mrs. Shirley Shaw, Mrs. Audrey Woods.

Present Staff. Mrs. Valerie Fisher, Miss Judith Crook, Mrs. Rosemary Cuff, Mrs. Elizabeth Wass, Mrs. Margaret Renshaw, Mrs. Mavis Hunter.

### **LONDON REUNION**

Unfortunately it has not been possible to book the R.A.F. Club this year for the November Reunion so once again I am appealing for help to organise a Reunion. Please could you contact me if you have any ideas for venues, dates etc. and then this can be discussed at the A.G.M.

### **New Members -Leavers July 97 Old Girls**

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Chola Chilufya  
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## Where are they now?

Arabella Sm,allman would like  
to contact DIANA SYLVIA  
SHEPHER who was at school  
in 1960-66.

Does anyone know the  
whereabouts of ROBERTA  
MARCH-PENNEY Head Girl  
in 1964?

## OBITUARY

In Memory of ESTHER  
JACKSON, 1916 - 1997 .....  
"a very valuable life".

Esther was Head Girl at St.  
Elphin's in 1935, and in the  
school photo taken that  
summer she is standing  
immediately behind Miss  
Hudson, the headmistress,  
looking very stern, almost  
grim, obviously very conscious  
of her responsibilities.

Miss Hudson once described  
Esther as "worth her weight in  
gold", and this was no small  
praise, as she was quite a hefty  
lass in those days! You found  
this when she tackled you on  
the hockey field, getting the  
ball away by sheer weight, her  
long fair pigtailed flying round  
her. The praise was probably  
for her complete loyalty and  
reliability, and her clear cut  
ideas about what should or  
should not be. In a reprimand  
to her juniors, for instance, she  
might say that certain things  
were "just not done" ..... no  
need to explain

Esther qualified as a doctor and  
later went to Aden. She told a  
friend that when she first went  
abroad she once had to chop off  
a man's leg by the light of an  
oil lamp! Afterwards she  
worked for years in Tanganyika  
(now Tanzania), but came  
home after injuring her back,  
and had to lay flat in hospital  
in London for about six  
months. She was told then that  
she would never practice again,  
but still with her usual  
determination she refused to  
accept this, and for some time  
she was Medical Officer of

Health for Hampshire, living in  
Romsey.

After retirement, and having  
nursed her parents till they  
died, Esther left Mappowder in  
Dorset, where her father had  
been rector, and moved into an  
upstairs flat in the Close at  
Salisbury, looking out onto the  
Cathedral, where it was her joy  
to attend the Holy Communion  
as long as she was able.

Latterly Esther became very  
frail and nearly blind, but her  
spirit was strong, her sense of  
humour as keen and her  
opinions as firm as ever. At the  
very beautiful Requiem Mass  
celebrated for her in the  
Cathedral chancel on February  
6th 1997, the preacher spoke  
with deep appreciation of the  
wise advice and encouragement  
Esther had given to many  
people, and added this  
wonderful tribute, that she had  
represented "the prayer side of  
the Cathedral's life".

May she rest in peace!