



Sports Centre
& Swimming Pool

OL Newsletter

ADVENT 2021

From the Headmaster



Dear Old Leicestrian,

'The Year that Refused to End' was the title of our main drama production this year – filmed, compiled and then broadcast remotely – and I think that description is also apt for the drama that has unfolded in all our lives since early in 2020. Yet there is much at LGS for which we can be very thankful.

I have been proud to lead a school community whose response to the many challenges we have faced has been nothing short of remarkable. Throughout the pandemic, we have been determined to do our best for our pupils and their families, both academically and pastorally - and we have been very impressed by our young people's response. All lessons were via MS Teams video during the second lockdown, and we were very excited when we could use break-out rooms and see more than nine faces on the screen - although some pupils remained more self-conscious than others and I am sure that some also spent the day in pyjama bottoms! The HM's generosity knew no bounds when he cancelled periods 6 and 7 to enable fun and games in the snow on a beautiful, sunny day in January when the weather was otherwise pretty bleak! Keeping our community together and supporting individuals were every bit as important as their academic progress, and our online newsletter, LGS Together, kept us all in touch. An incredible weekend effort by our nurses and many parent and staff volunteers meant that all pupils could be back in school at the first opportunity on 8 March, enjoying face-to-face lessons, seeing their friends, and preparing for concerts and sports fixtures again. However good the technology, there is no real substitute for the dynamic of the classroom and the very productive and happy relationships forged between pupils and staff – very much a key to their success.

Exams were cancelled back in January, only to be replaced by a form of.....exams – as schools were tasked with gauging their candidates' performance as reliably as possible through high-level control and recent assessments. Since the end of March, we have basically been doing the work of exam boards – and this has been a hugely important task, as we were determined to give our pupils every opportunity to shine. The vast majority of our Year 13 students have gained offers for exciting courses of their choosing

and our Cambridge tally (the 'Cambridge Eight' as we called them) was most striking when we know that the offer-rate at comparable schools has diminished this year.

I hope that one of the positives of the last year is that we have become more considerate as a society, and that has certainly been reflected in the acts of kindness and charitable fundraising within our own community. We also now have a Pets as Therapy dog, Cilla, who began to visit the school in strokeable, in-dog rather than virtual form last term.

We encourage our pupils to be world-changers, engaging intellectually and wholeheartedly in the issues of the day. We have therefore been encouraged by their positive response to the discussions which ensued after the murders of George Floyd a year ago, and, more recently, Sarah Everard. Members of our Diversity and Inclusion group led some of the activity on our Heritage Day, when we celebrated the rich racial and cultural diversity of our community and aimed for a greater appreciation and understanding of our differences, as well as equality of opportunity and consideration for others. There has also been an emphasis on respectful relationships, as we address the concerns amongst young people around sexual harassment and violence; the boys are very much part of the solution.

We are an academic school, which will continue to aspire ambitiously to the highest standards, but such standards are underpinned by care for our pupils' well-being and care for the world around us. We shall soon complete the Well-being in Schools Award and plan for the development of a new Well-being Centre which we hope to build by September 2023.

This academic year we shall celebrate the 40th anniversary of a school which began in the centre of Leicester with 96 pupils. Two of our retirees this year, Mr Howe (33 years) and Mr Willis (34 years) have been a truly major part of our story. However, all of our pupils, staff and parents – past and present - are part of a thrilling journey, and I hope to welcome you soon, and most warmly, to one of our reunion events.

Caroline Rigby

Headteacher of Leicester Grammar Junior School 2013-2021

Mrs Rigby's mindset has always been to do her best for her pupils without seeking any approbation. Indeed, throughout the pandemic, she has consistently wanted to give as full an experience of education as possible, always questioning and pushing at the bounds of any restrictions in place. The children and their happiness and development are what matter most.

Mr Dobson, one of the deputies when Mrs Rigby came for interview, recalls meeting her for the first time in the café. He was so impressed that he proceeded to spill half his latte on his trousers. Shaken but not stirred, she coolly accepted the job. Continuing with that theme of 'shaken but not stirred' and knowing Mrs Rigby's linguistic talents and sense of adventure, Mr Dobson has wondered whether she is really leaving to become the next 007.

Mrs Rigby, daughter of a Head, was, of course, already a Head when she joined us from Ratcliffe College. Yet, as we all know as heads, every school is different and brings its own opportunities, challenges and surprises. There is never a dull moment, but, whatever the pressures, her delight and joy have always been the children.

Come rain or shine, she is there every morning to greet them and their parents as they come into school. She knows and cares for them as individuals, as is very evident in the reports she writes. She has the unusual skill as a head of combined infants and primary to feel equally at home with all year groups - with children of all ages feeling equally at home with her. She has brought her love of gardening to the gardening club, she has enjoyed leading rambling and photography clubs, and she is prepared to 'muck in' on residential. She also runs a knitting club at Friday lunchtimes. I am told by her deputies that they call it knotting club because the first 15 minutes of the leadership meeting are often spent unknotting what the children have lovingly created! She loves to stand in

for staff when she gets the opportunity, whether in French lessons or in Year 1 RE this year, where she apparently dressed as a fairy godmother.

She has a great sense of fun, and children from Kinders to Year 6 will not forget the frequent appearance of Maximus Mouse in her assemblies.

I have known Mrs Rigby for just over two years. I know how important the success and happiness of the Junior School are to her and how much that contributes to the vibrancy of the Senior School and indeed the whole Trust. The Junior School this year is at its largest since it was founded and, despite all the challenges of the



pandemic, Mrs Rigby has been keen to leave the school in as strong a position as possible. As heads, we are relentless optimists, and this has been very evident in our Executive meetings as we have sought to encourage and support each other as we adapt afresh, often at very short notice, to yet another set of Covid-related government guidelines. It has required enormous energy and resilience, but Mrs Rigby has got on with it, quite selflessly, and I have known that the Junior School is in excellent hands. I know how much she was personally affected by the death of much-loved

Mr Andrew, whom she had known for a very long time, yet she has always been strong for others, forever leading her staff positively and considering their needs and happiness too. I promised to her when I was appointed that I wouldn't say 'I'm coming down to the Junior School' but 'across to the Junior School'. I have mostly managed to keep that promise and she has always ensured that the Junior School is to the forefront of our minds in our planning and considerations. Indeed, we are partners in the happiness and development of our children and staff and the whole LGS family, and I am personally very grateful to her for her support, and grateful to all the Junior School staff for their outstanding dedication this year.

It is time now for Mrs Rigby to devote a bit more attention to her own family, as her second son is married this summer. She is keen to continue with some supply teaching, as she loves being with children and will not be able to keep away from the classroom for long. However, she will know what I mean as a fellow linguist when I say 'Il faut cultiver notre jardin', the last line of Voltaire's 'Candide ou l'Optimisme'. She will not, I am sure, agree with the satire on optimism, but it is time to look after her own garden.

Continuing with a literary theme, two of her favourite fictional characters are Winnie the Pooh and Paddington Bear. She has dedicated eight years of her life to LGJS, and I know she would agree with Pooh Bear's words:

"How lucky am I to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard."

And I think we could apply Mrs Bird's words about Paddington from 'More about Paddington' to Mrs Rigby: "Bears like Paddington are very rare. And a good thing too, if you ask me, or it would cost us a small fortune in marmalade."

(Tribute from John Watson, Principal, given at LGJS Speech Day)

Duncan Willis Retires.... *It simply won't be the same without him!*

Having spent 3 years "teaching" children who didn't want to be taught in Wembley, I had pretty much decided that Teaching wasn't for me. In 1986 I reluctantly agreed to a request from John Higginbotham to cover some Biology maternity leave for the then Head of Biology, Sally Wragg.

It was a bit of a revelation to discover children who actually had their own pens, pencils and books on them and who actually wanted to learn, so when the opportunity to take up a full-time position occurred in 1987, I took it..... and the rest is history!

I have no idea how many pupils I have had the pleasure of facing during my 34 years at LGS, but it has been a privilege and, for the most part, enjoyable and I have made many friends over the years. Staying at one school for so long wasn't really part of my plan, but when you have a settled family life that you love, everything else is just "icing on the cake". Fresh challenges throughout my time at the School have also helped, as I morphed from a Biology specialist into a "Utility Scientist" - covering all 3 sciences but with particular responsibility for Years 6 and 7 (Prep and 1st years to those of you who pre-date the jargon).

Taking on Vice-Chancellor's House in 1989 and then becoming Senior Housemaster in 1998 also added to the variety of experiences that I have had, and then things changed once again with the move to Great Glen in 2008.

Apart from being the very first person to trigger the fire alarm at the new site, with my smoke machine, I will probably be remembered mostly for six things:

1. Being the biggest Queen fan at LGS and regularly introducing (brainwashing) new generations to the magnificence of Messrs Mercury, May, Taylor and Deacon.
2. The Challenger Missions to the Space Centre that I introduced in 1999 and which ran until 2018, where Year 7 pupils had to "Rendezvous with a Comet".
3. House General Knowledge Competitions that I've been doing since 1997 and Friends of LGS Quiz Nights that I've been doing since 2000.
4. Making people smile (hopefully) by having my classes sponsor me to dress up on Comic Relief Red Nose Days - probably raising around £400 each year on average.
5. Introducing karaoke and 5-a-side soccer to the House

competitions and then Staff after-school football.

6. The Fire & Ice shows that Sara Green and I performed on Open Days (I certainly remember the one occasion that I "burnt" myself with a splash of liquid nitrogen)

Besides the Royal Visits of 2008 and earlier in 1999 (where I met the Duke of Edinburgh in my lab), school-related things that stand out as being most memorable for me would be:

1. The Election Circus of 1987 with Margaret Thatcher (and Denis) in my lab
2. Performing in all 3 of Fred Clayton's Blue Parrot Variety Shows of 2007, 2009 and 2014
3. Falling full length in two consecutive years as I dipped going over the line anchoring the Sports Day Staff Relay team against the Senior Boys (we did come 2nd!)
4. Many of the trips I've been on, but particularly kayaking the Ardèche River descent with Neil Rivers in 1987 and 1988 on the Watersports Trips, and practically sinking at every stretch of white water as we were so heavy!
5. My best day's skiing ever (with Chris Howe) on the 1992 school trip to Serre Chevalier - perfect weather, perfect snow, open pistes with no crowds, no queues and phenomenal mileage.

At this point I should also give an honorary mention to my vivid memory of bumping into an LGS pupil at the Knebworth Silver Clef Awards Concert in 1990. Great concert, 120,000 crowd and what were the odds of coming face to face with a certain fellow Queen fan and now OL - Matt Brunning (I wonder if he remembers)?

The last 18 months have been very challenging for everyone, but you know it's probably time to retire when (with increasing frequency) the pupils in your classes take great delight in telling you that you taught their mum/dad. Then in my very last parents' evening in June, one parent gleefully informed me that they were 4yrs old when I started at LGS.....that certainly confirmed my status as a dinosaur. I'm now officially an OL too, so I might see you at some future events, but I can't promise that I'll be dressed as Madonna, a baby, a fat fairy or a Teletubby (to name just a few of my outfits). Thank you to those of you who took the time to send me good wishes - it means a lot to me and is very much appreciated.





Chris Howe

retires after 33 eventful years as Director of Sport



When I arrived at LGS in 1988 I never imagined that I would be saying goodbye at the close of my career from the same school in 2021. I was very grateful for the confidence shown in me by our founding Headmaster, John Higginbotham, when he appointed me, and my initial plan was to stay for 5 to 6 years. On arrival I was presented with a box file, which had 4 sheets of paper in it and an Academic Year Diary. No work scheme, fixture list, department handbook or policies. LGS was developing from very humble beginnings, but it was soon obvious that its special atmosphere was to have a very profound effect on my teaching career.

I joined a small department (just 3 of us) and a school with a real pioneering spirit and an aim to provide the very highest standards both academically and in the personal development of its pupils. I am often asked why I have stayed at one school for 33 years and the reason is that there have always been new challenges and opportunities to develop; everything was new, fresh and exciting. Over

many years I have been fortunate to have superb colleagues to support me. It was always my aim to appoint staff of the very highest quality and I am proud to say that they are people who I both admire and am immensely proud to call lifelong friends.

As some may remember, my first 20 years at LGS was mainly spent on buses. I have some great memories of those days: the Alan Smith double-deckers (up to 12 buses a day arriving and leaving school for lessons, fixtures and co-curricular activities); cadging a read of the Sun on the way to Games and travelling all over the city to 23 different venues to drive forward Sport and PE. (while clearing out my office I even found my set of keys to the various facilities); Games at Western Park, arriving to find that someone had crashed a stolen Ford Escort into the changing rooms and set it on fire, or watching the sport of the local Police chasing youths on stolen motorbikes across the rugby pitches; the jog to John Sandford Sports Centre; the walk to St Margaret's Baths or St Margaret's Pastures when the buses hadn't turned

up; Cross Country at Bradgate Park; Games at Glenfield Hospital and dealing with naked in-patients joining your lessons; the memorable journey to the University fields at Manor Road when we saw a young man driving his uncle's yellow Ferrari 360 at 95 mph down Manor Rd, whilst being chased by the Police and submarining it underneath the bus; the indoor nets at Grace Rd with Tim Cawston teaching the art of leg spin; Sports Leagues at Freeman's Common which became a second home; and of course Staff Cricket, competing as Greyfriars in the Leicestershire Midweek Leagues which provided great entertainment. Starting up Campcraft and Hill Walking for GCSE and A Level in the Peak District was also a great favourite with staff.

I hope you will allow me to touch on some great memories of tours. The very first LGS sporting tour in 1989 took the school's first County Rugby Cup

FAREWELL TO LEAVING STAFF



Robert McLean

Robert McLean joined LGS in 2012 as a teacher of Classics and became Head of Classics in 2016. He has led the department with vigour and enthusiasm, promoting Latin and Classical Civilisation as equally important subjects within the school curriculum. He introduced and established the Linguistic Olympiad as a school competition and extended the range of Classics trips significantly to include a residential to Hadrian's Wall for Year 8 students. He also led the Oxbridge candidates' club and worked incessantly to guide young people as their Sixth Form tutor, many of whom were inspired by him to study Classics at University. During the coronavirus pandemic he was responsible for the pioneering role of the department in using Microsoft Teams for all lessons as soon as on-site provision had become unavailable. He invited many prestigious speakers to offer Classics lectures in the school, many of whom attracted interest from students across all year groups. He has been committed to the highest standards, ensuring impressive GCSE and A level results, whilst boosting the interest in Classical Greek as a second language option in Year 9. Robert McLean is now moving to West Yorkshire leaving behind a strong and flourishing department and very appreciative students who will miss him and remember him fondly.

Anastasia Vassiliou-Abson

winners to Shropshire and North Wales, followed shortly afterwards by the school's first overseas sporting tour in 1991 to the Netherlands for Rugby and Hockey. I also still remember leaving school at 5am to drive up to Birkenhead to enter the North of England 7s. Our first southern hemisphere tour to Australia in 1996 was a huge step forward for the school and I know Troy still remembers the hours spent being a car park attendant or digging out cellars as part of the fundraising effort. This was followed by sporting tours to South Africa, Canada, Sri Lanka and a particular favourite – the school's first international cricket tour to Barbados in 2014 alongside Potts. There was also the joy of leading multiple ski trips to France, Italy and the USA, fantastically supported by Duncan Willis.

1990 saw our first international representative (Paul Aucott in Swimming) and then Lucy Bevan provided us with our first schools international in one of our major games (Girl's Hockey) in 1996. This was quickly followed by a very youthful Harry Ellis as our first Schools Rugby International in 1998. He then went on to a stellar rugby career and returned to become a colleague at LGS, alongside Nikki Ward (now Laybourne). To have contributed just a small chapter to those successes gives me great pride. Finishing as runners-up in the first National Finals reached in Mixed Tennis in 2005 at Bolton certainly started to get us noticed as a school. I was grateful for the faith shown in me by John Sugden, supporting me to become an ISI Team Inspector in 2001, which provided yet further motivation to develop our sporting offer.

I was particularly proud when Sport England introduced their benchmark system in 2003 and we became the first independent school in the country (and one of only 8 schools nationally) to be awarded a Sportsmark Gold with Distinction for the quality of our Sport and PE provision. This was a great reflection of the hard work, time and commitment shown by staff. It would of course be remiss of me not to mention the most enjoyable school trips I have done – to France with the Prep, superbly organised by Jo Mould

and particularly the amusing postcards home.

The move to Great Glen has of course taken the school forward with a huge leap. High quality facilities all on one site, no buses and the future opportunities for expansion. The PE department now has 9 full-timers and 3 part-time specialists, supported by so many colleagues from the academic staff, whose time and commitment have been hugely valued. It also allowed us to host Leicestershire's inaugural School Games, involving schools from all of the educational sectors competing against each other. Having been both educated and taught in the state sector, this continued one of my aims when I arrived at LGS – to establish strong working relationships with all schools locally. Dave McCann at Lancaster Boys was hugely supportive in those early days after my arrival and I was delighted when he subsequently joined the staff at LGS. However, part of me still remembers with great fondness the old site in the centre of the city and marvels at how we actually made things work.

A final thank you to my colleagues. I've had great fun, I am immensely proud to have worked with you. Without you, nothing would have been possible. The main reason for the schools success has been the staff – your knowledge, commitment and professionalism in providing our pupils with such fantastic opportunities. An excellent staff is a school's greatest asset and I hope you all understand and appreciate your worth in that respect.

Their dedication, excellence as teachers and professionalism have inspired our pupils to compete and achieve against schools with far greater history and sporting heritage. For me that is the essence of why the school has been so successful in such a relatively short space of time when compared to other more established independent schools and local rivals; fantastic staff who have been able to inspire and develop pupils to give of their very best.

I look forward to the school enjoying a long and prosperous future.

CWH

FAREWELL TO LEAVING STAFF



Clare Jess

I have been fortunate enough to work with Clare Jess for the past three years. As she is leaving LGS to relocate in Dorset, I asked her a few questions about her time here:

TELL US ABOUT YOUR CAREER AT LGS

I joined LGS in September 2010 as a teacher of Spanish and French, having just got married and relocated to Leicestershire. I felt very lucky to be working with such ambitious and driven young people and to be welcomed into such a supportive department in MFL. I was keen to contribute more fully to the school community and, in time, was given the opportunity to be Head of House for Masters, then Head of Year, before becoming Assistant Head a few years ago. I have been very fortunate to be able to take on new roles along the way, and have learned a great deal from those I have worked alongside. I will be really sorry to be leaving LGS but I do so knowing, for me at least, that the school has never been in better hands.

WHAT ARE YOUR BEST MEMORIES OF LGS?

I will have so many wonderful memories from my time at LGS and will miss the community enormously. House events, Sports Day and School trips will all feature, as will individual conversations with pupils and their families, where it has become clear that the partnership between school and home has been of real benefit.

WHAT WILL YOU MISS THE MOST?

It is undoubtedly the people I will miss the most, whether they be pupils or colleagues. My classes can cheer me up even on more difficult days; I have huge admiration for the dedication

and loyalty of fellow teachers and the Support Staff are second to none. My Assistant Head (Community) role over the past couple of years has been a great privilege, as it has afforded me the opportunity to go out and look for all that is good within our School and to celebrate it....and there is a great deal to celebrate. I will miss being part of such a vibrant, diverse and positive community.

WHAT WILL YOU BE DOING AT YOUR NEW SCHOOL?

I will be moving to Canford School in Dorset, where I will be taking up a Housemistress role, teaching Spanish and supporting their very well-established community service programme. My husband is currently a Housemaster at Welbeck College so, essentially, we'll be changing roles. My son is really excited to be going to live right next to the Canford golf course! I've heard great reports about the school from people whose opinion I value, so we are hoping this will be a good move for us.

FINAL WORDS?

Just a big 'thank you' for the welcome I've received and for the friendship and kindness I've been offered here. It is amazing how much Leicester Grammar School has evolved in the last forty years and how much has been achieved by its pupils and staff in that short time; it has been a privilege to be part of that over the past eleven years.

I know that anyone who has worked with Mrs Jess, or has been taught by her, will greatly miss her. She has been a tremendous asset to the school, and she will no doubt be a big loss. I am not only losing my main Spanish teacher, I am losing a great colleague. She will hate me writing this, but she is an incredibly intelligent lady, and I have always admired her for her excellent language skills, amongst other things. Above all, I will miss her kindness, patience, ability to always look for solutions, and her great sense of humour.

I wish her all the best as she embarks on a new adventure at Canford School. They will be lucky to have her.

¡Hasta pronto, Señora Jess!

Mrs Lopez-Correia, Head of MFL



Dave McCann

Dave has had a long career in education, having worked for many years at Lancaster Boys School where he was both Director of Sport and Deputy Head. He then went on to work with Loughborough University and Sport England. He has been a hugely valued member of the LGS staff for the last 16 years since his arrival in 2005 and is an excellent teacher, delivering lessons of the very highest quality.

Dave was Director of Sport at Lancaster Boys and that school was one of the few that was highly supportive of the Grammar School in those early days, offering us fixtures across all sports. Over the years, he kept telling me that he was thinking of retiring and asking if there were any jobs going at the Grammar School and I was absolutely delighted when he subsequently joined the staff at LGS.

Despite his vast experience, Dave has never imposed this on colleagues and has been particularly supportive of NQT's and younger members of staff who have benefitted greatly from his knowledge and experience. Dave set up our Sports Leaders programme and this has been of huge benefit to the students – both those selected as Leaders and Advanced Leaders and also the pupils they have supported in lessons and the co-curricular programme.

Dave has been of invaluable assistance to me over many years. Not only as a great friend but professionally as a sounding board and someone to turn to for both advice and when ideas and developments needed the once-over. I can't thank him enough for that.

We wish both him and Jacky a very long and happy retirement.

C W Howe - Director of Sport

Obituaries



Andrew Needham

Andrew Needham, our much-loved Junior School Caretaker, passed away in December 2020 at Leicester Royal Infirmary, with his family at his side and having lost his battle with the corona virus. Although Andrew was primarily based at the Junior School, many of us at LGS knew him as part of the wider site services team - always cheerful, friendly and happy to help. He was very well known to pupils and parents and had been with the Trust since 1992; he previously worked for Mrs Rigby's father, who was also a head. When asked by pupils in an interview for the LGJS Review in 2017 (celebrating his 25 years' service) what his favourite part of the job was, he responded: "Probably directing the traffic because I enjoy chatting to the parents." He was therefore a natural choice to manage the 'left-turn only' rule at the end of school. He will be remembered with huge affection by all of us. An on-line book of remembrance was opened and a bench was dedicated to Andrew. A Just Giving page was also set up in his memory, to raise funds for the intensive care unit at Leicester Royal Infirmary.

John Watson - Headmaster



Steve Thomason

Steve joined the Biology Department in 1998. He soon integrated into the school, becoming a popular form and personal tutor. His enthusiasm for the outdoors made him an ideal candidate to lead the school's Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, which he did with distinction. Soon, however, his experience and management skills took him into further roles within the school and he went on to run the pupil assessment scheme, entrance exams and data collection and reports.

Steve was much more than a calmly efficient administrator. He was an inspired and inspiring classroom teacher who was willing and able to embrace change and developments in curriculum and technology. He really thrived on the annual field courses to France and Snowdonia making the environment a special place for those lucky enough to be taught by him. He was responsible for many initiatives within the Biology Department and never stopped improving and developing his own teaching. Above all he was a very self-effacing and private person. Which of his pupils would have guessed he was a nationally famous folk singer much in demand for festivals and concerts? He was an expert on English traditional songs and the composer of many successful pieces. The voice that could quell a restive Year 9 class could also hauntingly take you back to the tribulations of rural life in Napoleonic times. Steve was more than a colleague he was a friend. He retired from LGS in 2009.

Tony Duffield - Retired Head of Biology



James Bamber

OL '00

James was a loyal friend to so many people around the world, always smiling, happy-go-lucky, and fun-loving. He was a very successful police officer, spending over 18 years in the Leicestershire Police Force, and a proud former member of Belgrave RFC.

James always loved to travel, and made the most out of any opportunity to see the world and enjoy life. He was an ever-present supporter of me during my rugby career, and was there with me to share the experience in 2009 on the British and Irish Lions tour to South Africa (photo attached).

James has left a hole in the lives of so many people, but will always be remembered with great affection as a truly lovely, humble man, always with a huge grin on his face.

Harry Ellis

WELCOME



Clare Scott

Our new Careers Leader

I am delighted to introduce myself as the new Careers Leader for the Leicester Grammar School Trust. I am a qualified careers professional, with nearly 20 years' experience in the role. I trained via a postgraduate Guidance and Counselling Diploma at Glamorgan University, followed by completing an industry-based NVQ4 in Advice and Guidance and began my career working for Careers Wales, before moving to England and securing a position with Connexions Leicestershire as it was in 2004. In both of these roles, I was linked to schools in my local area, offering information, advice and guidance to students aged 11-18. More recently, I have been employed as a Careers Co-ordinator and Sixth Form Administrator at Lutterworth College and then as Careers Leader at Brooke Weston Academy in Corby, before making the exciting move to LGS. I hope I bring a wealth of experience and knowledge with me to support and scaffold the career decision-making of students across the Trust.

I am currently in the process of understanding how the land lies here at LGS and reviewing where there may be gaps in the Careers Education programme and how this can best be updated or improved. Despite the difficult year we have had, I am working towards the revalidation of our Quality in Careers Award, which it strikes me is well deserved by LGS, given the comprehensive careers programme offered here. I'd like students to feel that my door is very much open and that they can utilise me as an important element of the many excellent resources accessible to students at LGS and I try to tailor each meeting to the individual as far as possible.

Since arriving in January this year, I have co-ordinated a few (virtual!) careers evenings for which I called upon OLs to speak to students about their occupational sector and the individual journey they took to reach their current position. I have been very pleasantly surprised at the enthusiastic response from OLs to my plea for support and it has been fantastic to see the pathways some of you have trodden; your stories are so inspirational to the students and really open their eyes to the world of work and the vast range of opportunities that exist.

With this in mind, I have started to build up a database of OLs, who would be willing to give up their time to support a variety of careers events and activities within the Trust. If you are reading this article and would be interested in being part of this bank of potential alumni, I would be most grateful if you could get in contact with me. I truly believe that the contact students have with alumni, showcasing the fantastic careers they have progressed into having left the school, is one of the most powerful tools I have in helping students to make realistic and informed career choices. So please do consider supporting this endeavour if you are able to. You can email me at careers@leicestergrammar.org if you would like to support in this way.



Philip Millward

The new School Chaplain explains his role

I am really thrilled to have been appointed as Lay Chaplain and Youth Worker for the Leicester Grammar School Trust. A role of this nature is something I have been considering for years, and it is not very often that the perfect job set in the perfect area in the country comes to be!

To give you a bit of background, I am married to Shona, and we have two children, Clara and Theo (and two dogs as well!). I come to the role from a teaching background (Music), and have held leadership roles within music departments, and pastoral positions as well. I became a Christian when I was at university, and throughout my teaching career I have assisted in Chapel life with leading services, running Christian Unions, and leading at Summer Camps geared towards children from independent schools.

There is a proud Chapel tradition and history at LGS, and whilst this role (and my particular churchmanship) is a departure from what has gone on before, I really want to build on the dignity and importance that is placed on Chapel life here. I am sure that all the OLs who read this article will have a varied memory of Chapel, based on how significant it was to them.

I have two principal aims. Firstly, I want to be seen as somebody across all three schools who is approachable and available for help, counsel and support in whatever form and secondly, I never want the Chapel services or assemblies to be events that the students just sit through. I really want them to engage with the message that is delivered and to consider the relevance it has for them. No part of school life should be done 'because it's what we do', and that includes Chapel - it needs to be vibrant and living. I hope to come to the end of my time here (whenever that is) having maintained those two priorities.

When we are out of these pandemic times, I would welcome the opportunity to meet or be in contact with any OLs who were involved in the Christian life of the school while they were here. You would be most welcome to contact me at millwardp@leicestergrammar.org.uk.

Philip Millward

Chaplain - Leicester Grammar School Trust

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

40th ANNIVERSARY: The story of a Visionary and Vandals

Tim Cawston, founder member of staff, looks back to the days before the school opened.

The 40th anniversary of the opening of Leicester Grammar School is an appropriate moment to look back and remember how it all began. However, there is far too much to mention in a short piece like this, so I've decided to focus on just one person and one major incident. Both were, in their own way, critical in the establishment of the hugely successful school we know today.

It is only right and proper that the late Ann Middleton should be that person.

There is no dispute that Ann was a visionary. Her experience as a History teacher in one of Leicester's highly regarded grammar schools, that under reorganisation had become a sixth form college, convinced her of the need for an independent grammar school in the city. However, it is one thing to have a vision, but to have that drive, determination and passion to see it realised takes a very special person. Fortunately Ann was such a person.

It was Ann who set wheels in motion to acquire the old Alderman Newton's building adjacent to the Cathedral (later named the St. Nicholas Building). It was her approaches to a number of like-minded individuals that led to the formation of a steering committee, which in time formed the nucleus of the

first board of governors. None of this was easy for Ann and it was made more complicated by the fact that her husband was, at the time, leader of both Labour groups on the City and County Councils that supported comprehensive education! For many this conflict within their own household would have been too much, but Ann was not to be deterred. LGS opened its doors to 94 pupils on 3rd September 1981 with Ann its first Deputy Head.

I had the privilege of working alongside Ann in that extraordinary first year, but it was not to last as her husband's job move out of the county saw her leave in June 1982. A great loss to LGS, but throughout the rest of her life she maintained close contact with the school of which she was immensely proud and rightly so.

The incident of vandalism I mentioned at the start had a great bearing on the establishment of LGS and in its own way could have undermined everything Ann strove to achieve.

I am a great believer in fate and many times in the comparatively short history of the School fate has indeed stepped in. Probably the most important example of this was a break-in by some vandals one weekend in December 1980. They got into the already dilapidated Alderman Newton



building, which the Trust had only just leased from the County Council.

A great deal of damage was done when pipework was removed and lead was stolen from the roof. Leaking water from the top of the building went unchecked until discovered some time on the Monday. Not a cause for any celebration, given that the proposed opening in 9 months time was already in doubt due to severe lack of funds!

The Trust was advised to take out its own insurance on the building independent of the County Council and this had only just been put in place when the vandals struck. The subsequent cash pay-out of over £100,000 proved to be little short of a miracle and enabled the opening to go ahead as planned. There is little doubt that this money saved the project and set the School on course to where it is today. So LGS, started by a visionary and saved by vandals – happy 40th birthday!

Tim Cawston

Retired Deputy Head



Tim Cawston

A Knighthood for William Adderley (OL'90)

Will Adderley, who left LGS in 1990, received a Knighthood for Philanthropy in the Queen's Birthday Honours in June. Will is married to Nadine (née Rose), who also attended LGS and left in 1995. We spoke to Will and asked him a few questions about his honour and how it came about.

HOW DID YOU GET INTERESTED IN PHILANTHROPY?

When I left University in 1993 I joined our family business, Dunelm. Over the next 30 years or so Dunelm managed to grow from a very successful local business to the business it is today. Being part of a successful business, myself and my family started to have capital beyond 'normal' investment needs and so increasingly started to think

about investing in charities and other not for profit causes. We eventually tried something small which went well and so one thing then led to another. Without the success of Dunelm we would never have been able to do what we have.

SO WHAT PHILANTHROPY ARE YOU AND NADINE ENGAGED IN?

We have 2 main interests. Firstly we support medical research. We usually partner with universities and support really good scientists and researchers. We aren't particularly bothered what areas of medical research we are investing in but we are bothered about the quality of the team doing the work. We try to invest in winners. Secondly we are interested in education,

particularly backing really smart students who cannot afford to be in the best schools or universities. I spend maybe half my time in the Dunelm business these days. The rest of my time I spend on Charity and other businesses I'm interested in.

DID YOU ENJOY YOUR TIME AT LGS?

Yes. Nadine and I both had amazing times there. It got us both to university, gave us both brilliant memories and we made some life-long friends. As a 6th Former I thankfully wasn't going out with Nadine in her 1st year but a few years later when we met the connection helped me ask her out for our first date!

The School sends congratulations to Will on this prestigious award.

Flashback to the 1980's

A rock band to remember

Standard Form was LGS's first rock band. Founded in the dark days of 1984 and named after Phil Holloway's Maths homework, they were legends in their time, even if known for repeatedly practising Johnny B. Goode. Their high points were unexpectedly winning a national school music competition in 1986 (according to co-founder Guy Moxey), and the £2 1988 "jig" (featuring the return of Dino Morelli), ironically at the Mission for the Deaf.

With Steve King completing the original line-up, another five musicians joined and left over time. Sadly I wasn't cool enough to be one of them. I admired their gumption in those early days, when LGS was focused on proving it could produce good exam results, and most extra-curricular activity was teacher-led.

There was no fan club until one appeared on Facebook, mainly attracting members of the band's cohort. With us all reaching a half century this academic year, and parties ruled out in lockdown, a virtual reunion seemed like a good plan. Eleven of us got together on Zoom for three hours one Saturday night.

It was fun, reflective, and mainly not about Standard Form. We talked of long covid; of feeling a misfit and lacking confidence at school despite appearing otherwise; of the benefits of not following an expected path - changing career, or not even getting a degree. Did being one of the first years to go right through LGS make us innovators after we left? Did my late-life diagnosis of autism make it easier to organise the call?

It worked well because everyone had a chance to talk. Though not the same as a reunion in person, a video call was easier to get to. People were up for doing it again. But will more than two of the band turn up next time?

David Hawker (OL' 89)



Kate Lander née Buckingham (OL'90) was guest speaker at the Celebration of Achievement in June 2021

When John Watson became Headmaster at LGS he was keen to introduce some leadership training for all the Sixth Formers and had heard about the Ivy House Award from another Head. He was delighted when he discovered that the CEO of Ivy House (Kate Lander) was an OL and so he invited her to distribute the prizes and to speak at this year's Celebration of Achievement.



In her address Kate observed that some things felt very different to the LGS of 30 years ago, but much was still the same, particularly the sense of community and the core values of the institution. Kate's message was that it is worth taking the time to work out our own core values because it will help us to be true to ourselves through life and will help with decisions about the paths we choose to follow.

This is Kate's account of her career path to becoming CEO of Ivy House.

I left LGS in 1990, and headed off to Nottingham University to study Economics, which I loved (particularly the tennis and social side!). Upon graduation, I joined one of the Big 6 accountancy firms (when there were 6 of them!), qualifying 3 years later. I knew being a partner was not my goal, so when the opportunity to teach finance came up, I jumped at it, training across London and travelling to Russia, Asia, the Middle East as well as many parts of the US. I also met my husband, Mark, in 1997, marrying in 1999.

By 2005 I thought it was probably time to 'do', rather than teach, so went to work for a US bank. Over the next 10 years I learnt so much – through the global financial crisis and the growth of tech. In 2013, I was lucky enough to receive 1:1 coaching as part of a leadership programme, and I started to understand that I wasn't really happy (deep down happy) in banking – it just didn't fulfil my values.

So, I decided to go back into education, where I'd had some of my happiest working days, running 2 training businesses in the City. But there was still something not right – London, and travelling, was now exhausting me rather than energising me. So, in 2018, after 25 years of working in London, I left to join a small start-up called Ivy House as CEO. We deliver the kind of training I had as MD of a bank to people starting out in their career and even at school. We now have about 50 big corporate clients (from NatWest to L'Oréal) and work with about 60 schools (and I'm very proud to say LGS is one of them!) and by using tech, we even managed to go global during Covid.

Jon Woodhead (OL '93)

Challenge Sustainability – a career in consultancy

After completing my A-Levels, I knew that the subject I took most natural enjoyment in was Geography, and specifically Physical Geography. Following some wise counsel and assistance from Richard Longson, I went to University of Wales, Aberystwyth, where I undertook a BSc in Physical Geography, and then an MSc in Environmental Impact Assessment. I have to say that at no point in this process did I have a good idea about how I could form a career around these subjects!

Nevertheless, it was clear that new opportunities were opening up. Whilst nearly 30 years ago now, environmental issues were already making headlines. Oil pollution by Shell in the Niger Delta, the Rio Earth Summit, the adoption of the Kyoto Protocol: these were all in the news as I completed my studies. During my MSc I met a representative of an environmental consulting company, and shortly afterwards I joined that firm, then called Aspinwall, which was the first multi-disciplinary environmental consultancy in the UK. Surrounded by technical experts in landfill

design, wastewater management and landscape architects, the 'corporate services' team that I joined were the odd ones out. Amongst my first assignments was working on the corporate environmental report for British Airways. Going into their corporate headquarters, interviewing the CEO, Bob Ayling, and learning about the way they accounted for their climate change impacts in the mid 1990s was a fantastic experience. Around the same time, I went on a tour of many of Unilever's factories, gathering and checking their environmental performance data. From margarine oil refineries in Belgium, to soap factories in central India, to washing machine powder manufacturing sites in Brazil: I built a good early understanding of industrial processes and industrial environmental protection methods.


In 1999, along with the same person who first recruited me, we left Aspinwall and set up our own consultancy, called CSR Network. Over the next decade, we worked on a wide range of projects for companies including BP, Balfour Beatty, Bacardi, Airbus, John Lewis,

Vodafone and Toyota. Much of this work involved either advice on the development of corporate sustainability strategy (goals, targets, plans and governance arrangements), benchmarking corporate sustainability performance, writing corporate sustainability reports, or providing independent assurance and audit services. After merging with another small firm in 2009, building up to 30 staff and offices in the UK, USA and South Korea, re-branding as Two Tomorrows Group, we eventually sold the company in 2012 to a multinational risk management company called DNV.

Over this time the corporate agenda had shifted, from separate consideration of environmental and social issues, to a more holistic view. Sustainability now covers so many different aspects of corporate life – from diversity and inclusion, to human rights, to rainforest protection for example. Companies now have to be aware of all the inter-connections. After working an earn-out with DNV for five years, including completing an Executive MBA at INSEAD in Paris, I left in 2017 and set up my own business again, now called Challenge Sustainability.

Consultancy work can have considerable upsides: I have travelled all over the world to some fabulous places. The best of which was being invited on a couple of occasions to an island resort called Bawah, in the South China Sea, to advise on a sustainable tourism initiative. I have interviewed numerous CEOs and been at the forefront of the way that many large companies have sought to respond to societal pressures to change. However, consultancy often involves working with companies that are having major negative impacts on society and the environment, either through the nature of their operations or their products. Right





from the start, you need to decide whether you prefer to stand outside the gates of a company campaigning against them, or working to achieve change from the inside. Back in the mid 1990s, the annual carbon emissions of the entire British Airways fleet was around 19 million tonnes of carbon dioxide. Recently I was visiting a steel manufacturing site in Kazakhstan, and the carbon footprint of that one site was over 15 million tonnes carbon dioxide per year. You need to keep a healthy perspective on the realities of the world. Consultancy is also about sales. You have to be able to find new customers and win work, using your personal network and ability to convince clients that you have the skills and experience and can deliver the added value they are looking for. Working at Board level inside multinational companies is not a comfortable ride, but the ability to play a role in changes at that scale is hugely rewarding. I have just completed the development of a new sustainability strategy for a FTSE100 company, including targets and plans to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2030 and action across a range of other issues. When the Board signed it off a few weeks ago, it was a moment of personal pride but also relief as it had been quite a battle to get such a significant financial investment approved.

When I am asked about what makes a good consultant, I always point to the basic skills of listening, being able to discuss subjects in a logical and coherent way, and having an instinct for what makes other people tick. All skills that I started to learn at LGS! The technical nature of the subject can be learnt, but these skills will be natural to you if you are to thrive as a sustainability consultant.

Jon Woodhead

www.challengesustainability.com

Not so much a career... **David Paice** (OL'86) muses on the many projects he has undertaken

I was one of the founding pupils at LGS, joining midway through my secondary school years. This staccato approach has been a hallmark of my career too. I've not stayed in one job for long. I graduated with a degree in Business Studies which I think is a sign of someone who doesn't really know what they want to do. I still don't. As it happens that's not such a bad thing. Variety does indeed turn out to be the spice of life and the flavour of my career has benefitted from living and working in places like London, Paris and Doha. OK, there's been time in Grimsby, Blackburn with Darwen, Kirklees, and a host of other less internationally acclaimed places that I've frequented over the years too, most recently the very beautiful Pembrokeshire where I like to think my presence improved the quality of Welsh rugby. I was of course, on the school rugby team, as indeed was pretty much every boy in the school, given that we only had one side across three year groups. I believe things have developed a bit since.

Having trained as a teacher, most of my work has something to do with education. From teaching in South London, I've run schools across the country and even been a director of education a couple of times, both for FTSE listed companies like Serco as well as Local Authorities in the public sector. I've also built lots of schools and created tech platforms and apps that thousands of educators and students still use today. A team of mine upgraded the central government HR system for all the teachers in England, which I think is still responsible for them getting paid (mostly on time and broadly the correct amount).

My latest startup, www.includmi.com is designed to try to address the current mental health and wellbeing crisis, particularly for those children and young people with additional and special educational needs and disabilities. Of all the projects I've been involved in over the years this is the one I'm most proud of.

It hasn't always been education that I've dabbled with. I started out selling instant mashed potatoes and various foodstuffs for a very large international manufacturer across the UK. Indeed during my time there I had the pleasure of introducing Mars ice cream to Britain, going on tour with a large articulated lorry of the stuff to various wholesalers around the country. Not content with food alone I've tried space tech, railways and even managing the bids for an airport construction. At the height of hubris and self-delusion I wouldn't get out of bed if the bid was not over £50 million. Much to my amusement I am still a supplier to the European Space Agency. More recently bathos has taken over and I feel distinctly master of the universe if I roll out of bed without cricking my back or tripping over my German short-haired pointer. So stellar career or space cadet? Perhaps it (my career) ain't over until the slightly portly 53 year old bloke sings? There's a thought. And I have form. I played the triangle in my primary school orchestra.

David Paice



Sarah Morris (OL'01) has founded a charity to save street dogs in the world's poorest places



Nine years ago, I started a career as a Science teacher, working in international schools. I was in Nairobi, Kenya for four years, followed by Sierra Leone, Cuba and the Cayman Islands.

In 2017, I had been carrying out some teacher training in a local school in Freetown, Sierra Leone, one Friday afternoon and as I walked out of the school gates I came across a puppy stuck in a drain and in very bad condition. She was emaciated, with her entire skeleton visible and she was full of skin parasites. People had been throwing stones at her and she was extremely scared.

Street dogs were ubiquitous, but I noted that this one was in particularly bad condition and I didn't think she would survive more than a few days. I took her back to my house and gradually got her back to health. My aim was to re-home her, but I couldn't find anyone I trusted. Seven months later, Jenny travelled with me to the UK.

A few weeks later, I started work at the International School of Havana, Cuba. I soon came across Percy. He was living in a park with distemper, a highly contagious and life-threatening virus. I took him in and, after several weeks of careful nursing, he survived. In the following months I began taking more abandoned or sick animals into my apartment or organising veterinary treatment for them in situ. It was overwhelming as dogs and cats that



needed urgent help were everywhere. It was often impossible to find the medications needed because of the US embargo in Cuba. On one occasion I was forced to buy a chemotherapy drug on the black market to save a dog that had a cancerous tumour. I was able to re-home all of those I rescued but I couldn't bring myself to re-home Percy. He and his sister, Jenny, live with me here in the UK.

In July 2020, I co-founded Compassionate Paws International, a UK registered charity that provides veterinary treatment to street animals in locations where there is a high level of poverty. In the first six months of operation, we have already been able to provide care, and in some cases homing, for over 150 street dogs.

In Freetown, Sierra Leone, there is one of the highest densities of street dogs in the world: estimated to be between 100,000 and 500,000 for a city of 800,000 people. With no vet school, and only one full-time veterinary surgeon in the entire country, the situation for street dogs is horrendous. 75% die before the age of one, and for those that survive infancy, their life expectancy is only four years. We are the only organisation in Sierra Leone that actively provides

veterinary treatment to these dogs.

This year, we will be bringing out a team of international vets to carry out our first mass CNVR (Catch, Neuter, Vaccinate, Release) programme. With social media use rising rapidly in Sierra Leone, we also provide daily animal care education through a Krio language Facebook page that is managed by one of our trustees who is a UK-based vet.

Through trusted local partners, we also fund the sterilisation of street dogs in Malaysia and India. By sterilising a dog, it improves its health and lifespan and prevents litters of puppies that would go on to suffer.

We urgently require more monthly donors so that we can increase our impact over the next year. 100% of donations go to veterinary costs and animal care – overheads are covered by the trustees. We are also searching for sponsors who would be able to sponsor Sierra Leonean school-leavers through vet school abroad.

Sarah Morris, OL '2001

Follow us on Facebook:
@Compassionatepawsinternational and
Instagram: @compassionate.paws
www.compassionatepaws.org



A dog recovers after being hit by a train in India



Charlotte Rhodes née Smith (OL '91)

An artist specialising in dog portraits who loves to create contemporary artworks in rich, bright colours that bring happiness and joy into people's homes.

Interest in pet portraits has grown immensely over the last year or so & I really understand the love people have for their dogs. My own dog, Doris, is always by my side whilst I work & I enjoy capturing the individual personalities of the pets that I paint. As an OL with children at both LGS & Stoneygate, I also feel lucky that I can pursue my career as an artist only a few short miles from their schools.

From an early age I loved Art & I have to thank my LGS Art & Textiles teachers (Mr Lynch, Mrs Thornton & Mrs Rose) for their talent & inspirational approach that gave us all the confidence & freedom to express ourselves.

My path to making a career as an artist has been fun and varied. After leaving LGS I first took the Art Foundation course at De Montfort University before going on to complete a degree in Fashion Marketing at the University of Northumbria in Newcastle.

After University, I worked for a number of years as a lingerie designer at some of the major UK & Overseas brands including Knickerbox, Marks & Spencer, Next & Wonderbra. Living in London in the 90's & early 2000's was an exciting time and I was lucky to have to regularly travel to New York and Los Angeles as part of my role.

This led to an opportunity to work for a year for Wonderbra & Berlei in Sydney, Australia which was a fantastic experience. We later returned to Australia for another 3

years & it was here that I first started to teach Art, regularly supporting the art classes at my children's primary school.

This was something that I found very rewarding and have carried on doing back in the UK, helping out with junior Art classes at Stoneygate School. At the other end of the scale I was also recently asked to teach a portrait masterclass for corporate clients in Amsterdam which was great fun and it was fantastic to be part of such an enthusiastic team.

One of the best pieces of advice I think I could give is to not be afraid to make mistakes. This has definitely worked for me as it takes away the fear of doing something wrong & makes the process more enjoyable. I feel it is better to celebrate your mistakes as it shows you are progressing.

If you are thinking about a career in Art or Fashion, I would say go for it & spend your life doing something you love! A foundation course is a great way to experience many creative aspects so that you can decide later which area to specialise in as a degree.

My daughter Mia will leave LGS this year after completing her A Levels. She has had wonderful teachers who have been such an inspiration to her. I too have so many great memories of my time at LGS. I was so lucky to have a fantastic year group & there are many of us who are still such great friends today!

www.charlottesrhodesart.com

Daniel Lin (OL'00)

explains how he came to
found an online Maths
teaching website

On leaving LGS I studied Management Science at Lancaster University. After also gaining a Master's degree in Applied Research Consultancy within the hospitality industry I realised that a career in this area would mean I could no longer really play rugby and was finding it very difficult to decide what to do next. Throughout my time at university, both in terms of elements of my courses and various business schemes used to fund my time there, I had realised just how important maths was and how disadvantaged people could be in life if they did not have a good understanding of it.

I decided that I wanted to try and help and so I pursued a career in secondary mathematics teaching. It was during my time as Head of Year at Browndedge St. Mary's Catholic High School that I really started to realise the importance and challenges of teaching. Dealing with numerous, often heart-wrenching pastoral issues for both children and families was tough, and I always felt as if there was more that needed to be done. I always focused on trying to inspire my pupils with schemes to help them work together, unique rewards and some pretty crazy assemblies (which were often inspired from my time as House Captain of Dukes at LGS)!

After having two children of my own I realised that, due to family commitments, I could not offer the time required for my current role and sought a part-time job at Runshaw College, teaching GCSE Maths. This also gave me some time to pursue some voluntary support work in which I would try and help parents and children in the local community with mathematics. The inspiration for this started when I took my then 3-year-old son to pre-school and his teacher was commenting on how he knew a lot of shape names. She added at the end of her praise that the only one he did not know was diamond and that he kept calling it a rom-rom. I explained that 'diamond' was not actually a correct shape name in the UK and that the shape that everyone commonly called this was a rhombus.

Amazingly she did not believe me and started referring to the song 'Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star' as her evidence for the contrary. I knew I had to do something and thought that parents were the key, so I started up 'Help Your Kids: Maths'. I put on regular workshops in local libraries, where parents and children could come along and develop their problem-solving skills as well as ask for help with mathematics for their children. The aim was to empower parents to help their children develop during their mathematical education.

I then started up a Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/hykmaths/>) and started to gain a number of very active followers. Then, when the first lockdown hit, my numbers spiked as I decided to try and offer free live lessons to different age groups. Lots of parents tried to offer me money, but I refused to take it as in my opinion no child



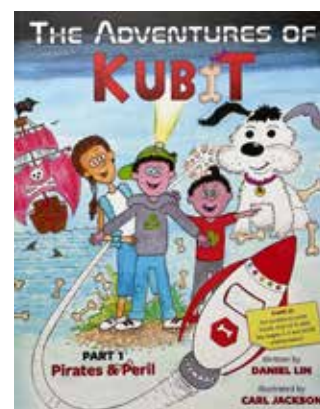
should have to sacrifice their education because of what is going on in the world and I wanted everyone to be able to access my service, whatever their own situation.

The lessons were a great deal of work and were all designed to be as interactive and engaging as possible. I used a huge array of silly hats, 'hilarious' jokes and practical teaching ideas to get the kids moving about at home as well as learning. I need to officially state that I started this before Mr Joe Wicks and whilst I am not accusing him of copying me, I certainly cannot rule that out. I also put on special events such as a virtual Easter Egg Hunt, a Christmas 'Naughty Elf' story and a Halloween Escape Room where children had to search for clues in their own houses. I put the children and their personalities in the story to make it special for them. We even had an awards evening at the end of the term where we celebrated some of the children who achieved well during the lessons or had managed to overcome personal Covid- related issues.

I now have over 25000 followers from all sorts of places and my lessons have been viewed thousands of times, so to me all the effort has been worth it as I have hopefully inspired children and parents to learn and improve their mathematics during a ridiculously difficult time for the world.

I have also written a maths adventure book which builds on a similar motivation to get children to learn mathematics. The story itself includes maths puzzles that the characters must solve which tie in with areas that I have found children struggle with. The layout of the book gives children the chance to solve the puzzles along with the characters, not because they must, but because they will want to. It is a fully illustrated book aimed at ages 8 – 12 years and can be viewed and purchased for £8.99 at my website: <https://www.helpyourkidsmaths.com/kubit>

If you need any help at all with maths for your children, then please have a look at the Facebook page and send me a message. I am here to help!





Rozanna Madylus (01'04)

A Career in Opera

Described as having “an engaging stage presence” (The Daily Telegraph) and giving “compelling performances, offering fluid line and gripping conviction” (Opera Magazine), Rozanna has appeared on international stages including Garsington Opera, Birmingham Opera Company, Wexford Festival Opera, Festival d’Aix-en-Provence, The Royal Opera House and Carnegie Hall. As an active recitalist, she has performed at The Holywell Music Room, Oxford, Kings Place London, The Mendelssohn-Remise Berlin, The Prokofiev Hall in the Mariinsky Theatre St Petersburg and the St Petersburg Philharmonic. Rozanna tells us below of her journey so far.

It was my mother who said to Mr Shaw one parents’ evening, “She has a good singing voice, you know” And so, the seed was sown. With encouragement from both Mr Shaw and Dr Whittle, I began singing lessons with the wonderfully charismatic and vivacious Sarah Norris, the peripatetic singing teacher at that time. I was also incredibly lucky to witness my first opera - Verdi’s *Un Ballo in Maschera* (A Masked Ball) - at the Bregenz Festival in Austria, where the stage sits on Lake Constance and, at that time, with a giant moving skeleton protruding out of the water as part of the set. Quite a spectacle for an impressionable 14-year-old to behold.

After graduating in English Literature and Philosophy from The University of East Anglia, I took the “do different” motto to heart and made the decision with my (thankfully somewhat maverick) parents to “give the singing a go”. It was a world that I wanted to be a part of; my Everest to climb. I then began almost four years of private vocal studies with the internationally renowned British-Ukrainian Bass-Baritone, Pavlo Hunka, as well as enrolling onto language courses abroad, watching as many opera performances and recitals as my budget would allow whilst intermittently temping for the NHS mental health service.

In the winter of 2010, I auditioned for The Royal Academy of Music and was offered a scholarship to continue my studies there with the legendary Anne Howells. I was also fortunate to gain more experience as a Young Artist of the Berlin Opera Academy, Georg Solti Accademia, British Youth Opera and Oxford Lieder Festival.

At times, the road can be extremely tough (and that’s even before you throw in a pandemic) so it’s vital to surround yourself with a strong support network to help keep you grounded and motivated. I always say to people that opera is the Olympics of singing; it requires years of training, discipline and sacrifice. But in return, you get to work with some of the world’s best conductors, directors and musicians and perform some of the greatest works ever written, whilst visiting some pretty incredible places.

The tragedy and chaos of the last year has thrown many things into disarray and has had a detrimental effect on the performing arts industry. However, going forward, I believe it also means that people will be more hungry for, and appreciative of, live performance than ever before. For me, the music, the passion, the drama and the very act of singing is a celebration of humanity that has the ability to move you to the core. And when you witness first-hand an opera singer performing with exceptional, refined technique, their voice soaring above a finely tuned orchestra, it is a triumph of what the human mind and body is capable of.

My engagements this year include the role of Forester’s Wife in Janáček’s *The Cunning Little Vixen* at Longborough Festival Opera as well as Cordelia/The Fool in John Casken’s world premiere of *The Shattered King*, based on Shakespeare’s *King Lear*, as part of the Buxton International Festival. As current City Music Foundation Artist, my recording of Kokoschka’s *Doll* with Sir John Tomlinson and Counterpoise is now available on Champs Hill Records.

Learning from experience

Jo Renshaw (OL'89)



OL AWARD

Ruchir Shah (OL '12) samples the life and experiences of a doctor in South Africa



I left LGS in 1989 after GCSEs for Sixth Form, and then a BTEC in Photography. I spent some time after college as a nanny before I met a couple of photographers who were establishing what was in the early '90s the largest drive-in studio in the Midlands. My role was studio secretary and stood me in good stead for future creative ventures.

University happened later for me, at the age of 36, following redundancy from my teaching post at Brighton Steiner School. The country was going into recession and it seemed like a good time to get a degree. My Steiner teaching qualification, whilst highly specialised and sought after, was not university accredited, and I believed that this stood in my way of career progression. As a Life Coach today, I understand that it was my self-belief that stood in my way, not the lack of a degree at all. Nonetheless my university years were some of the best I had experienced up to that point.

I longed to study photography and the best degree in the country was on my doorstep. I loved every moment of university and threw myself with vigour into the photographic industry. I went on to produce children's advertising campaigns for Huggies and Tesco and the home page for Top Shop. I also ran a studio for Ewen Spencer who documented the UK Garage and Grime scenes in the 90s and shot album covers for The White Stripes and The Streets. I produced shoots, exhibitions and photobooks for him. It was great fun but very stressful!

To the outsider my career looked successful and it was, but I was struggling financially. Not long after the end of my degree I declared bankruptcy and had to take a long

hard look at my life. Going bankrupt was the greatest opportunity of my life. I took it upon myself to change my relationship with money, work, relationships and my physical and mental health and well-being.

Throughout my 20 years of financial difficulty I finally recognised that no amount of consolidation loans or help from the Bank of Mum & Dad would really resolve the problem. I was required to think very differently about money if I was to come off the Insolvency Register and have any sort of chance at financial success.

I committed myself to finding a new way. I read every money mindset book I could get my hands on, listened to hours of podcasts and studied Law of Attraction. I could see that the tools I was learning from the books and audio were having an impact and I wanted to bring structure to these, thinking that if it was successful I could teach other people about what I was learning that was making me feel so much better about money. So I began to train as a Life Coach, and since Christmas 2019 I have dedicated myself to my coaching business. I ran courses throughout the pandemic and built an email list and the beginnings of a client base. Today I have coached over 100 clients and now run a bespoke 6 month 1:1 coaching programme where I teach people the intricacies of making money and creating wealth without hassle or stress, but through joy and fun. I offer a free consultation to anyone who wants to find out more about how coaching can help solve money worries, and any other worries, and help us get unstuck and find our way again. It's the most worthwhile and enjoyable thing I have ever done.

In my final year of medical school I had the chance to travel to Johannesburg as part of my elective. I spent 6 weeks working in Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital Emergency and Trauma departments. The hospital is located adjacent to Soweto township. The patients who attend can be very unwell compared to what I was used to, as they would often ignore the problem for as long as possible. In addition, the trauma seen was very different with many more gunshot and stab wounds compared to the UK.

The placement was full of learning opportunities and the experienced doctors and nurses at Bara were excellent teachers. Learning from them, I became more comfortable managing critically unwell patients and patching up basic stab and gunshot wounds.

It was also insightful to see how different healthcare systems operate and how they approach different clinical situations within the constraints of the facilities available. The staff were inspiring in their approach and attitude towards looking after people in such challenging circumstances.

Highlights included meeting and living with other medical students from around the world who came to Bara, as well as making friends with some of the student nurses who showed us around Johannesburg.

After my placement had come to an end, I managed to spend some time traveling around South Africa and visiting adjacent Botswana and Namibia which was a great way to spend my last few weeks before starting work as a junior doctor... especially considering what ensued!

I would highly recommend anyone looking for medical elective opportunities to consider Bara hospital. I became much more confident in my technical skills and management of unwell patients and took these experiences with me when I started working back in the UK. Thank you to the OL Committee for their generous donation towards this wonderful opportunity.



Commander Philip Newell (OL'88) explains how the Royal Navy has helped him to fulfil his potential

Joining the RN in 1992, I have had a variety of assignments both at sea and ashore including 3 command assignments, 3 posts in MOD in London, 2 foreign exchange postings and a training role in Plymouth. I am currently working in UK Strategic Command based in London and managing the delivery of services for Defence from the Met Office and United Kingdom Hydrographic Office. After 3 years on exchange in Oman, I was recently recognised by the award of a 4 star Vice Chief of Defence Staff Commendation for my work with the Royal Navy of Oman, directing hydrographic operations, including policy and equipment delivery. So, how did I achieve this?

Leaving school and starting university I had great hopes for the future and at the time had little idea what I wanted to do. As I look back now over nearly 30 years in the Armed Forces, it is clear that the Royal Navy has allowed me to fulfil my potential and has offered me exciting opportunities for the future.

Just 6 years ago as a hydrographic surveyor in command of HMS ECHO I had the extraordinary opportunity to take part in the search for the missing Malaysian Airlines flight MH370 in the Indian Ocean. Responding to requests for assistance and in an attempt to find wreckage from the lost aircraft, we set off towards the last known location of the aircraft, off the west coast of Australia. "Head South" was the simple instruction I received as we began searching vast areas whilst trying to find the aircraft's emergency transponder with our onboard sonar. The vast scale of the area and a lack of detailed understanding of the environment was a significant challenge. But we had hope that with our training, use of our onboard surveying systems and the ability to get to the area quickly we could help find the transponder before its battery faded. Luckily the weather and sea conditions were kind to us as the southern Indian Ocean can be a wild and unforgiving area at the best of times. However, the full extent of the obstacles which

we were going to face soon became clear. With little or no idea of the depth of water, coupled with unknown water column characteristics, it was our professional training coupled with onboard sensors which would allow us to build some understanding of the oceanographic environment. It was our discipline which allowed us to spend long days searching vast areas with just binoculars to assist in the surface search efforts. It was our inter-operability skills which allowed us to work seamlessly with our allied partners and provide useful insight into the search area. Although the search continued for years to come, it was my ship's company's ingenuity, hard work and enthusiasm which I remain so proud of today.

To be part of such a team, and indeed to lead it, is the culmination of years of training and experience. The Royal Navy today is the most modern and technologically advanced it has been for some time. With a wide range of new capabilities including Queen Elizabeth carriers, Astute submarines and the F35 advanced fighter, the RN has a wide variety of jobs to offer. Starting at Dartmouth, officer training builds the leadership skills needed, which are critical in working at sea across the globe in challenging environments. I have been lucky to visit base stations in Antarctica, lead boat camps in the Maldives and serve on loan in foreign service in Australia and Oman. People with a wide range of skills are at the heart of the Royal Navy and the ability to work together and deliver is key.

My career as a hydrographic surveyor has also allowed me to continue studying to Master's level, to consolidate my experience as a Chartered Scientist and be recognised with 2 commendations. Learning how to fight fires, solve complex engineering problems or cook 3 meals a day needs special people with the right spirit and desire to succeed. Whether upholding the UK's interests around the world or ensuring the safety for UK's critical trade routes, the Royal Navy has certainly allowed me to fulfil my potential.

Cricket

For the first time in nearly 10 years, Leicester Grammar School 1st XI hosted the OL's XI on a sunny Wednesday in June. The OL's side consisted of 5 ex 1st XI captains and received the typical Laurie Potter warm welcome (vice like grip handshake replaced with fist bumps).

Will Hunt won the toss and without hesitation decided to bat first on a good batting wicket. The LGS 1st XI started well and were unfortunate not to pick up an early wicket, the opening partnership of Will and Theo Rashid reaching 111 for no loss. Unexpectedly, Theo decided to run himself out for a well-made 48 before Will was dismissed for 65. A good spell for LGS saw Tom Smith and Robbie Scudamore come and go before a strong recovery between Tim Spencer and Daniel Scudamore who reached an aggressive 50. The OL's finished on 229-5 off their 30 overs.



Top Row (L-R) - Theo Rashid, Will Hunt, Matthew Tutt (non player), Sachin Abeyesundara, Patrick Sadd, Alex Tutt (non player), Daniel Scudamore, Robbie Spencer (non player), Robbie Scudamore, James Scudamore, Alexia Scudamore (non player). Bottom Row (L-R) - Tim Spencer, Tom Smith, Zain Rizvi, James Hunt

Patrick Sadd and Zain shared the new ball and from the outset LGS were behind the run rate and under pressure. The experienced spin bowlers for the OL's took regular wickets throughout the innings, James Hunt the pick with figures of 2-25 off his 6 overs. The rest of the wickets were shared around; James Scudamore, Zain Rizvi, Patrick and Tim all taking a wicket a piece. Notable mention to Sachin Abeyesundara who bowled well without any success but contributed with his unique chat. The LGS 1st XI innings finished on 146-6,

the Old Boys winning by 83 runs.

Post-match beers and soft drinks were enjoyed by the team and Laurie, reminiscing of performances from time gone by. The Old Boys would like to thank Laurie, the ex / present teachers who came down to watch and the current 1st XI for playing the game in great spirit.

If you would like to be involved in the 2022 fixture, please reach out to Laurie or Will who will look to organise a team for this (hopefully) annual fixture.

Anniversary Events

The fact that LGS is 40 years old this year is an amazing fact in two ways. Those of us who have been associated with the School throughout the majority of those 40 years probably feel that time has passed in a flash and the days of squeaky floors in Great Hall and processions into the Cathedral are but a moment ago. However, to the outside world LGS is a highly successful and well-resourced school that people are shocked to learn is a mere 40 years old. Yet the growth and success of the School has made it a unique place to study and work.

To celebrate this milestone in the history of the School, we are holding a number of special events during the course of 2022.

There will be 3 Reunion Lunches at the School and we are inviting OLs by the year in which they STARTED at LGS (please note that this departs from our usual practice):

- OLs who started at LGS in the 1980s are invited on Saturday 2nd April
- OLs who started at LGS in the 1990s are invited on Saturday 7th May
- OLs who started at LGS from 2000 onwards are invited on Saturday 10th September

These events will all follow the same format. Arrival from 12 noon; buffet lunch served at 1pm; disperse by 4pm.

The cost is £20 per head to include the buffet lunch, a glass of wine and soft drinks. Extra wine will be available to purchase. Please note: on this occasion we are not inviting partners to join us.

To book: Go to the OL section of the School website (www.leicestergrammar.org.uk) and click on events. There will be a link to the booking website. Please note that a small booking fee will be charged.

OTHER EVENTS

The OL Carol Service will take place at School on Wednesday 22nd December. Please arrive from 7pm and enjoy a chat before the service starts at 7.30pm. Wine, fruit juice and mince pies will be served.

The London Drinks will be held at the Betjeman Arms on St. Pancras Station on Thursday 28th April from approximately 6.30pm. Join a group of staff for a drink and a chat.

Calling all OL musicians and singers!! Orchestra and Choral Society Concert at School on Sunday June 26th. You are invited to bring your instrument or your voice and to join this special event. Rehearsal will take place in the late morning and refreshments will be provided. The concert will be in the afternoon. Details will be put on the School website.