

Alfredians

A NEWSLETTER FOR KING ALFRED SCHOOL ALUMNI

Spring 2007



Alumni Reception on Saturday 30 June



It was a great pleasure to meet Margery Hinchliff, a pupil between 1922 and 1926 on 2 May while watching Year 3 students dancing round the maypole, part of the Hampstead Garden Suburb Centenary Celebrations. I look forward to welcoming you back to K.A.S. on Saturday, 30 June (see enclosed invitation), for this year's Alumni Reception. Cathy Meeus (1957-1971) has suggested that those who were in her year group make a special effort to attend being, for some, 50 years since you first crossed the school gate!

This term has got off to a good start, especially with summer weather in April. Looking ahead this term the school is getting ready for camps, the boats are out and the upper school is preparing for exams. Our big production this year is *Bugsy Malone*, which will be running from 12-15 June.

It is time to say farewell to a number of staff, including Patrick Le Berre and Montserrat Robinson, Vicki Ball, Helen Machet, Charlotte Whitmore (Langham), and Jamila Yousaf. Jamila is currently on sabbatical but will be joining the Namibia expedition this summer.

Dawn Moore
Head

New Upper School Deputy Head

There's a vision about a new world where all is peace and lions lie down with lambs. Some chance! Yet one fine spring day in the grounds of King Alfred School before my eyes was a rabbit lying down in the sun next to a duck, not quite the same thing, but oddly impressive.

It reminded me of my childhood at Mill Hill School (which I'm leaving to come to King Alfred) when I ran the young farmers club. We kept all kinds of creatures including forty chickens, fed on mealtime scraps as well as a goat and donkey who mastered all kinds of escape techniques, keeping the local constabulary on its toes.

I'm looking forward to joining a school where there's such a clear emphasis upon the quality of our human encounters but somehow the presence of animals is to me reassuring! More seriously I am impressed by the courtesy and care of all those I've met at the school and believe the ethos of the school rests well with my own convictions. I studied Linguistics, then Theology at Edinburgh University, but it was when I went on to study in New York that my interest in therapeutic work was kindled. I've worked in parishes, hospitals and schools, in a range of settings, so it was good to be interviewed by sixth formers who appeared to have such a balanced and sensitive hold on things. It will be a priority for me to see how we can enhance the status of the Sixth Form at King Alfred.

I enjoy travel and have a real love for all things nautical. There remains for me a hankering for the ocean wave, preferably



on vessels of not less than 70,000 tons. I still travel regularly to Glasgow, my parental home and city of my birth.

I've come to the view that a genuinely progressive approach to things may involve resisting some of the odd assumptions that are made these days about what it means to be truly human. I met by chance a wonderful ninety year old former pupil of King Alfred. Her thoughts were not dissimilar. She spoke of her school with enduring affection.

I look forward to meeting the alumni. I'm sure you will have insights to share as I set out on this next chapter of my journey, a journey better shared.

James Fields

Paris in the spring

On Thursday 29 March our party of forty students and staff set off at 7.30am for the city of light, Paris. A bus journey down the A2, a ferry crossing and down the A1 on the French side had us arriving at our hotel in the 19th arrondissement at 5pm.

Our first evening was spent discovering our new residence and gastronomic delights. Then we made our way to the Eiffel Tower for a late evening visit. The glitzy articles sold by street vendors and the scintillating display of the Iron Lady proved magical for our students. We were lucky not to leave Sandrine behind forever in a malfunctioning lift, though!

We started the second day near the Pompidou Centre and ... Off we went to the Picasso museum to appreciate the most impressive collection of art left by the Spanish artist to his host nation. The



medieval streets and designer shops of 'Le Marais' area were a favourite, as usual. In the evening half the students went to the local cinema to watch '300' while the others relaxed at the hotel.

On Saturday, our party walked to 'La Villette' to discover the futuristic science park and it proved so popular that we decided to cancel our visit to the Pompidou Centre. After celebrating Rosie's birthday at Flunch, it was time to make our way to Opera and its Empire architecture. After

dinner, we went in a coach to Montmartre and got a taste of Paris traffic jams, thus preventing us from spending as much time exploring as we would have liked.

The last day, April 1st, was Rosie's day again, as she discovered on an otherwise enjoyable boat trip that she had left behind her photography coursework. We sampled the joys of Paris traffic again, almost having to remove a 'Mini' from a bus lane. We arrive too late for our booked crossing and arrived back at K.A.S. two hours later than expected.

It was an enjoyable trip. Our students got an excellent understanding of Paris life and architecture while driven around by coach, no doubt enhancing their many photographic projects. They had a good go at speaking French, and were praised by shop owners for their polite ways!

Patrick Le Berre
Head of Languages

Class of '57

This year marks the 50th anniversary of my association with K.A.S. At this year's Old Alfredians' reception on Saturday, 30 June it would be lovely to meet up with as many as possible of those who joined Robey's class in September 1957 – remember afternoon story time resting on sandy safari beds? Also, any who joined our class in later years in the Lower, Middle and Upper School. Some of you will receive this newsletter directly, but sadly many have fallen off the mailing list. If you are in contact with any former pupils in this class, please pass on this invitation to them! I look forward to seeing you all and sharing many happy memories.

Cathy Meeus
1957-1971



New School Architect

I am very excited about working with King Alfred School. I have a lifelong interest in design and education, including experience I have gained of designing and working in schools and on refurbishment and maintenance of buildings. Particular interests are education, sustainability, new technology, design and management. My new job, school architect, sounds like my ideal role.

From childhood, I had a fascination with buildings, structures, cultural history and design. My father was Professor of Design at the Royal College of Art and the family lived for two years at the Hochschule für Gestaltung at Ulm, Germany where he taught industrial design and design theory. I trained at the Bartlett school of Architecture in an era when students were privileged to be exposed to a very broad architectural education with hands-on

experience of the practical side of building. I subsequently worked for various London architectural practices both large and small, for building contractors as a site engineer, and I was part of a design and build company. Together with partner, Steve, we designed and built our own energy efficient house. I have written on the subject of Architecture and design history, and my book, Architects' London Houses was published by Butterworth.

My teaching started with lectures on architecture and cultural history to various undergraduate and special interest groups. In 1997, I decided to take teaching further and studied for the Post Graduate Certificate of Education, qualifying as a teacher of Design and Technology. For the past 8 years, I have been teaching at St Albans High School for Girls, which has an extremely strong Design and Technology department. I worked with pupils in years 6 to 13, teaching graphics, resistant materials, textiles, and information and communications technology.



I am delighted to have the opportunity at the King Alfred School to combine the experience gained in the fields of education and architecture, working with staff and students to create and maintain the environment which encourages and supports learning. I will be based in the new CDT building, and hopefully will be able to work alongside pupils studying design and technology, making the work of the school's architect part of the learning experience for the pupils.

Miranda Newton



School photograph 1960

OA News & Correspondence

Elizabeth Jenkins (staff 1929-1939) still enjoys Jane Austin, Shakespeare, and listening to poetry. If former pupils would like to contact her by letter or visit, please contact the Alumni Office.

Chris Barber (1936-1946) was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Music by Durham University for his enduring influence on British Jazz and other contemporary music at Durham Cathedral on 28 June 2006.

Sylvester Bone (1946-1951) can be contacted via email 100556.154@compuserve.com

Julie James Bailey née Heyting (1947-1951) "I believe I took the two class photos circa 1951 in the autumn 2006 *Alfredian*.

I am therefore not in them! As someone who left the stage to work behind the camera I am used to it!

It is very nostalgic for us in Australia to read about our fellow students of over 50 years. In 1998 I organised a centenary reunion dinner in Sydney. Brian Davis came from Melbourne and from Sydney Gilda Baracchi, Barbara Joss, Virginia Speight, and Julian Pringle who were all involved in media and the arts. Brian organised another gathering in Melbourne, my sister Frances and Julian's sister Barbara, both musicians, came.

Frances and I came to K.A.S. straight from a state school in Australia in 1947. It was the best thing that could have happened to us. Not only did Renee Soskin (the drama teacher) set me on my career but I can still astound my grandsons with my leg breaks! Not too many girls were encouraged to play cricket in those days and there were a number of schools who would not play our team because we had girls. Frances was also encouraged in her career, playing the flute, by the music teacher, Johannes Tryggvesson.



Dr. Chris Barber with Durham University Chancellor and author Bill Bryson, and Vice-Chancellor Sir Kenneth Calman

We were also given a sense of service to others and now in retirement I go as a volunteer into remote Aboriginal Communities in my 4-wheel drive campervan and teach video camera and editing.

I would be happy to hear from any Alfredians who are passing through Sydney. This year after 51 years I had lunch with David Waterman (Wasserman) who was "passing through!"

Andrew Frowd (1951-1963) is a plant pathologist – an international project manager and policy analyst in the Canadian federal government (department of health). He is planning his retirement in Canada.

Peter Petzal (1953-1965) is now a management consultant specialising in organisational development across cultures.

A party was given in October 2006 by the Boyle family at their studio in Spitalfields to celebrate the 50th birthday of **Sebastian Cody (1966-1974)**. Sebastian enjoyed seeing friends from all parts of his life, in particular K.A.S., represented by former Head Nikki Archer and his school friend

Zoë Campbell (Tufnell). The talk was of Sebastian's (small) collection of letters from Alfredian and long-standing K.A.S. teacher, the late Margaret Maxwell. If other readers have any letters from her which they would like to share, perhaps a selection could be published as a way of honouring Margaret's life and work. Contact Sebastian via openmedia@aol.com

Rachel Heady (1967-1976) Rachel did her O Levels at the International School in Geneva and A Levels at Camden School for Girls. She did an art foundation at Brighton Poly and a BA in interior design at North London Poly. Since 1986 she has worked in TV as an art director. She divides her time between home and work in London and Bristol.

Daniel Coleman (1973-1979) works as a stockbroker. He also co-chairs a charity called Rays of Sunshine, that grants wishes for terminally and seriously ill children.

Suke Wolton (1974-1981) is a university lecturer in politics at Regents Park College, Oxford University. Macmillan have published her two books: *Marxism, Mysshism & Modern Theory* (1996) and

Lord Hadley, the Colonial Office and the Politics of Race & Empire (2000). She has two children, 1 and 5 years old.

Daniel Towb (1980-1985) is teaching in a private primary school in Country Victoria, to the east of Melbourne. He is settled with his partner, Michele, in a quiet town surrounded by farmland and new developments. "Please send my best wishes to the staff at K.A.S. I have a lot to thank them for over the years. And, although I might not have been their best student, their style of teaching and the school ethos has helped me to get to where I am now. And it's a good place to be."

Oluwatoyin Abiodun (1981-1982) writes: I was a pupil at K.A.S. along with my younger brother Ajibola Bakare while our father was stationed in London as a Nigerian diplomat. We were only there for about one and a half years, January 1981 till summer of 1982, but I wanted to let you know what a profound effect those months had on my life.

I often reflect on my time there and count

them among my most joyful and carefree. I remember not being able to contain myself on the drive in to school for the sheer excitement of all the incredible new things I knew I would learn each day. And while I was glad to go home at the end of the school day, by evening I was again pining for school. Of course I was only 8 years old, but I do think the atmosphere of the school and the attitude of the teachers definitely contributed. I remember fondly my class teacher Bernadette, my brother's teachers Audrey and Christine, the Headmaster Guy and the Librarian Olive.

Of course other segments of my life have modified my King Alfred-imbued perspective. I would describe myself as a devoted Christian first and a conservative Republican last. I am also a medical doctor, a Board Certified Paediatrician, in my 1st year of fellowship, training to be a Neonatologist at Albany Medical Center, New York, USA and I know you guys had something to do with that. My brother is completing his PhD in telecommunications engineering at UCL. I just wanted to say "thank-you."

Zoë Kaill (néé Goldbart) (1983-1988) qualified in leisure management at Southampton University. She works in chocolate product development in Marks & Spencer.

Jack (1986-1992) and Michael Mann (1987-1992) have both graduated from university. Jack with a first in genetics from UCL is now a doctor, and Michael graduated with a double first from Cambridge in Anthropology. He is working in London in management consultancy. Their youngest brother, **Duncan (1990-1992)** is at Manchester, studying economics.

Simon Kirk (1987-2001) Simon is living and working in New York. After K.A.S. he went to the University of Sussex followed by an exchange year at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. He graduated in 2006 in American Political Science.

Carl Silverstone (1994 - 2003) is currently studying business at UEA after taking a gap year.



Mann brothers

Hitchhiking to Spain: Memories that remain

Sylvester Bone (1946-1951), Peter Norland (1947-1952) and Peter Seglow (1945-1953)

After World War II Europe became accessible to children who had not had holidays abroad during or immediately after the war. In 1952 I hitchhiked to Spain with two friends from KAS: Peter Norland and Peter Seglow. My memories of this trip have disintegrated. Only incidents and impressions are retained, the long distances between them are beyond recall. Here, with the help of my two friends (*PN and PS*), I record the memories that remain; perhaps in contrast to the trips now organised for children to Africa and China there is some interest.

Sylvester Bone

Chartres

We went into the cathedral and had an argument about the stained glass. I seem to think Peter Norland objected to it and I thought it was OK; now I have no idea why we disagreed – something to do with God and religion. Then we camped on a site near the cathedral under a stone viaduct. In the early hours God set off a tremendous thunderstorm, almost continuous lightning, a ferocious wind and a terrible downpour. Peter N and I were sharing a tent and had to hold the corners and tent pole from inside to keep out the elements. The storm subsided, the sun rose and we peeked out. The campsite was chaotic. Many of the tall poplars were snapped off. The fallen treetops were draped in tents. Peter S was wringing out his clothes and bedding, sitting on his own flattened tent. But the weather was nice, we had survived - so we cheerfully argued on towards Spain.

PN My private myth was that we set off with one tent between us – a vague recollection of a dramatic storm with us holding onto the tent poles and the flapping canvas flying. I don't remember the Chartres argument but I can well believe it was about God and religion – which I didn't believe in.

Clermont Ferrand

PN Somewhere nearby Sylvester and I tried to flag down cars unsuccessfully for hours with a gaggle of local kids shouting "fou! fou!" and making 'up yours' signs at the cars which never stopped for us. Sylvester suggested we might have more luck if we split up. I was very reluctant to split I remember, nevertheless we did. Sylvester walked on and I got a lift to the border.

Bordeaux

Sometimes we hitched separately. How we met and parted and met again is a mystery to me now. From Bordeaux to Biarritz I was on my own and was picked up by a mad driver, determined to show that his black Citroen 'tirage' was the fastest car on the road – particularly round corners. Why did he keep looking at me on those corners? Luckily that road is fairly straight and I managed to slip away in Biarritz.

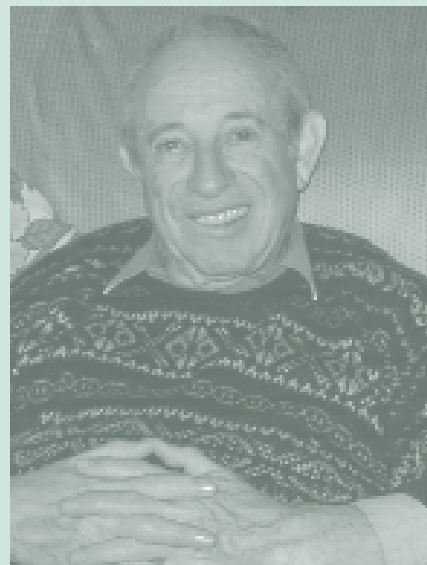
PS Sylvester and Peter Norland largely hitched through France separately from me. The main reason was because we thought it would be difficult to get lifts as a threesome. I vaguely recall that we all met up at the Youth Hostel in Bordeaux and again somewhere near the Spanish border (Hitchhiking in Spain was strictly illegal in those Franco days so we continued our journey from the border by train).

PN Did I stop at Carcassonne or was that on the way back? I don't remember. I remember crossing into Spain alone. An old bedraggled lady sold me a very cheap (I thought) bottle of cloudy white wine which ruined my next day.

Salamanca

The number of grand old buildings was impressive, leftovers from what was once a very rich country. I had been told to look out for the typically Spanish plateresque (or goldsmith's) style of ornament. Perhaps because directed to admire it - I didn't. It looked to me like patches of scrambled eggs stuck onto perfectly good stone buildings.

PS I don't recall Salamanca at all.



Peter Seglow

Burgos

PS I am fairly sure we stayed in Burgos with its splendid cathedral.

Avila

Impressive walls and towers. We had walked up to them from the station and then back down. A bit of a comedy turn. Peter was medium size and pushed a red face out from under his rucksack like a tortoise, I was freakishly tall with sloping shoulders that let the straps of my pack slide off every hundred yards or so, Peter was small and hardly able to stand under a huge pack. While we waited for the train in the burning sun, a hogskin of red wine started to leak. The owner invited all on the platform to have a drink – and another – and another. It was a long wait and a very big hogskin - then the most agonising stomach ache of my life.

PN I remember Avila and being very impressed with its red stone towers and walls and heavy oppression.

PS We all stopped at Avila. Then (as now) very impressive. (apart from Carcassonne, the only remaining fully walled city in Europe).

Toledo

PN I remember Toledo, its beauty and the El Grecos.



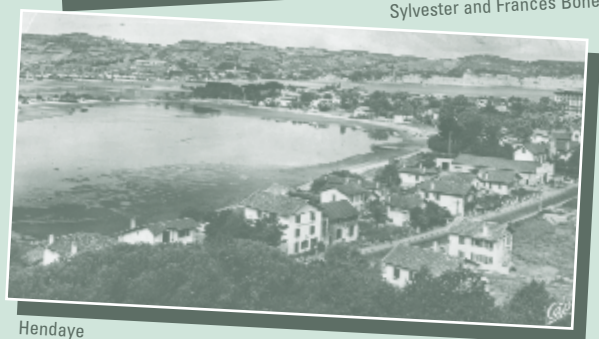
Sylvester and Frances Bone



Ibiza



Norland brothers



Hendaye



The Escorial

Not a nice place. Huge, grim and boringly classical; that was my impression - so I haven't been back since.

PN I was most impressed by the fearful symmetry of the Escorial and its unbelievable regular rows of stone balls.

PS We went via Escorial (impressive paintings) on to Madrid.

Madrid

PS We found a small hotel where all three of us shared a room for 6 shillings (30p) or so a night. I think we split up again after a few days together in Madrid. I went on alone by train to Valencia. Sylvester and Peter were much more seriously interested in art (at that time) and I couldn't quite share their enthusiasm.

Barcelona and Valencia

I sat on a park bench to eat my bread and cheese. A tramp with a big black battered hat, a beard and ragged clothes sat down next to me. He started to drink from his wine bottle. I offered him a piece of bread. No he would not take it. He offered me his bottle. I refused, then I understood - we happily shared our wine and our bread and cheese.

In Barcelona all I remember is Gaudi's great cathedral half finished and rather spooky. Was it a stone reptile that crawled up one of the towers?

PN I've been to Barcelona so often that I can no longer remember which of my memories was the first. But I do remember setting off from Valencia harbour in a small vessel with all the Spaniards on board being sick over the side of the boat even

before it had left the harbour.

PS From Valencia I caught a train via Barcelona to the border at Port Bou. I remember Spain as very poor compared even to England in those days not so long after the war. From Spain I hitched all along the French coast as far as Nice, perhaps even into Italy staying in Youth hostels. In Cannes I paid a visit to Tommy Vanderschmidt who was staying with his parents at Martinez - a 5 star place. I entered full of embarrassment. It's still a pretty fancy place now.

Ibiza

Till's German grandmother lived in Ibiza. She had escaped there from the Russians when they advanced through Czechoslovakia and Germany. We stayed in her little house in San Antonio and tried to keep up with her

as she led us over mountain tracks to an inaccessible village where the people still lived in primitive iron age houses – one room with a hole for smoke in the thatched roof – white walls outside but completely black inside. On the last night I was there she held a party for the German expats. We all went to the shore and stood in groups on the rocks while a solo violinist played to the full moon.

PN *I walked ahead with my aged grandmother, Gertrude, in the midday sun and Sylvester lagging behind while she told me about her son – the only male in her brood of nine (of which my mother was the oldest). He was called Peter (my name also) and he had volunteered to be a storm trooper in the Nazi SS and had died at the front – a hero in Gertrude’s eyes (I hoped she was not thinking I was him reincarnated). Meanwhile she pointed to Sylvester flagging behind and said something like “these English they do let themselves go – lassen sich gehen” which meant she thought he was a typical English wimp! – in contrast to her heroic German son and by implication in contrast to me. I wasn’t flattered and thought about my mother and how she never wanted to see Gertrude again after she left Nazi Germany with her Jewish husband and me growing in her womb. The last night of romantic German culture in the moonlight didn’t help either!*

Pyrenees

On the way home I hitched through the foothills of the Pyrenees. I was offered a lift on condition I helped the van driver and his mate with their work, which turned out to be collecting the hides of slaughtered animals (a folded up horse hide is heavy). We worked until it was dark; the driver had a last visit to make in a dark narrow street. His mate beckoned to me to follow him up a black tunnel between the houses and out into the

vineyard beyond. When well away from the houses he took his coat off to spread out on the ground. He pulled a long knife from his belt and gestured to me to crouch down. Paralysed by fear, I couldn’t shout out. Then he started to cut the grapes and pile them into his coat. The three of us shared them sitting in the front seat on the way down to the main road.

Zero

In central France I was set down outside a village. It was dark, dogs were barking. I climbed through a hedge and set my tent in the field. The sun came up and cows came into the field. I scrambled an egg in an empty soup can heated over a methylated spirits pellet, and then I folded my tent and climbed back through the hedge.

An old man appeared while I waited for the next lift. He wasn’t easy to understand but he was persistent. He wanted me to follow him into the village where he would introduce me to the girls in the local brothel. They were pretty, they were willing, they were cheap “et tu sais - zero.” He bent his thumb and finger to make a circle. Just then a car stopped to give me a lift to Paris.

Coming home

PN *I can’t remember where we parted and how I got home except one night somewhere in France in the pitch dark, looking for shelter and somewhere safe to unroll my sleeping bag, I stumbled onto a concrete corner to sleep and found on waking in the morning that I was at the bottom of a public swimming pool! On coming home I boasted that the whole trip had cost me £20 and that I had lived on bread, tomatoes and cheese. Yes – sure, send ‘Alfredians’ our memories. I am all in favour of contributing to ‘The Myth of History.’*

Diary

All Alfredians and their families are warmly invited to the following events.

For further information contact the Alumni Office **020 8457 5282/5200** or **oa@kingalfred.org.uk**

Saturday 30 June

Open Day: Noon-4pm
4-6pm Alumni Reception,
Main Hall (RSVP on enclosed form)

Autumn Term 2007

Saturday 10 November 6pm-9pm
Bonfire Night, drinks in the old library for Alumni, 6.30-7.30pm

Summer Term 2008

Saturday 28 June
Open Day and Alumni Reception

Deaths

Nita Celia Franks (Celia Franca), pupil 1934-1936.

Dr. John Malcolm Bolton, pupil 1929-1936.

Dorothy Mattuck Edgar on 19 February 2005 aged 90, pupil 1922-1930. Sister of Robert Mattuck, and mother of Robert Edgar, pupil 1950-1962, and Gillian Lacey née Edgar, pupil 1946-1960.

Robert Mayer Mattuck on 11 April 2005 aged 93, pupil 1922-1928.

Barbara Lee on 31 December 2006, kitchen staff 1961-1994.

Roland Levinsky on 1 January 2007, in an accident involving a power cable. Husband of Beth Levinsky, staff 1983-2001, and father of Nicola, Josh, pupil 1984-1992, and Sarah.

Alfredians Spring 2007. **Alfredians** is a biannual newsletter distributed in May and October.

The copy deadline for the next issue is 1 September 2007.

We always welcome news and memories from Old Alfredians for publication. All copy should be sent to:

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