

Alfredians



A newsletter for King Alfred School Alumni

January 2015

Travels around the school

My offices are on the first floor of the admin building and with their multiple outlooks I think you'll find I don't miss a trick.

I can see the wonderful farm, what's going on in the Fives Court Building Library and all the senior students entering and leaving their exams. Nearby, children are skipping happily in and out of classrooms and, on the field, small Year 3 students are playing football, as are larger Year 13 students (and every now and then the Year 3s play football with the Year 13s!). The

prepared for upcoming rowing and camping events. During Village Week I saw foragers, archers, bush craft folk and story tellers. From time to time I see book characters in full costume, pirates, Year 6 French Resistance workers, Year 4 Safety on the Streets campaigners with plaques, tame ducks, wild ducks, yogists and Summer Fair flags. Whilst sifting through 33,000 emails, I have smelt coffee from KASbucks, school lunches, wood smoke from the Village, aromatherapy products during Choice, and air fresheners from the

toilets; all in the last few weeks and without leaving my chair.

On my travels around the school, I've seen things as diverse as the hatchings from quail and butterfly eggs to the GCSE Art and Photography exhibition and a charity sale of

juices and cookies. The Sixth Form monologues gave me Stephanie (from *The Age of Consent*, aka Hannah Owen), Alferi and Eddie (aka Elan Crocker and Alfie Beecher) and Leah (Josephine Zamek in *DNA* by Dennis Kelly). There have also been the writings of Year 7 journalists, the Carnegie Book shortlist, the story garden, the climbing frames, the Anderson shelter,

a forge, beehives, vegetable and herb patches, minibeasts and pond life, and the sounds of African drummers, a didgeridoo or two, parents visiting the café, and the happy chatting, cheers and laughter through my window.

With so much happening perhaps it is no great surprise that we have 'leavers' who don't leave, eg ex-students who



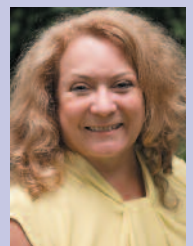
come to use our DT facilities, staff who 'retire' but still teach and students who don't go home at home time. Last night I had a parent tell me they can always get good behaviour at home by threatening not to let their child come to school the next day!

● Dawn Moore

Head Retires after 29 Years at KAS

Dawn Moore will be retiring as Head in August 2015, at the end of this academic year. Dawn first came to the school in 1986 as a Biology teacher and became Head in 2002.

More next time...



Year 8 rounders' girls, looking very smart in their kits, are joining in another football match with some Year 7 and 12 boys, and in between all this, frisbees, rounders, skateboards, cyclists and mini scooters abound. In a quieter corner, some students are combining last-minute revision with a chance to soak up some sunshine, whilst the school boats are being maintained and



Photos of the school from the KAS archives

Retirements

LIZ CROKER, AKA LIZ-IN-THE-OFFICE

Liz joined KAS in 1980 as a receptionist, and having been here for 34 years, was one of our longest-serving and most popular members of staff.



Liz has been a central part of KAS.... often the first person parents, students and staff had contact with here. She saw literally thousands of students through the school and her office was always at the hub of the KAS community. Despite being incredibly busy, Liz always provided a safe haven for pupils and staff to turn to when they needed someone to talk to – it is hard to imagine King Alfred without her.

On hearing the news, Gerda Oblath, née Blum, wrote: 'Being now 89 I am afraid I knew Hibby in the office but I wish anyone who helped KAS in the spirit in which it was founded well indeed. Good luck, Liz!!!'

CHRISTINE PROWSE

I spent my childhood in the 'great' Australian outback, a far cry from North London and KAS: a land of far horizons, snakes, kangaroos, wild boars, spiders, grasshopper plagues, floods, bushfires and magnificent sunsets. Schoolwork was sent out to me by post from the correspondence school in Sydney. Child-centredness meant I opened the mail and taught myself because the governesses lasted two months before the isolation got to them and they took the train back to Sydney.



My teaching career started in high schools in the Australian bush and then moved on to Sydney, before coming to London. This led to a few tough but fascinating years in an East End school. The Kray twins were well-known to many of the parents. Being threatened with a knife was par for the course, as was being offered all the money I wanted for the French Department if I went home with the head teacher.

After having children and going back to teaching in an Archway school, I became a KAS parent. The Lower School French teacher had recently left so, one day, I asked Mike [Young] if he would like me to cover while he was looking for a replacement. To my amazement, he said no, he'd like me to apply for the job, the aim being to 'make French fun'. Well, you can't beat THAT for a brief!

I taught for many years in a cupboard – well maybe it was a box room – then

graduated to a storeroom, and finally to a magnificent classroom a few years ago, which has become our mini-France with its floor-to-ceiling posters.

I felt that kinship with KAS from the start. As a teenager at boarding school myself, I broke all the rules because they seemed so trivial. It was great to find, first a school for my children and then a workplace, with more meaningful priorities than lists of rules. I always felt we only need one rule in life: not to harm yourself or others. From this, all other rules follow naturally. The KAS philosophy has provided a wonderful anchor on which to hook both parenting and teaching style. I feel that, in my 26 years here, I've been on a constant learning curve with never a dull moment.

It has been the Dream Job: the small classes, the child-centred philosophy, the lack of top-down rules, the informality, the close relationships. I've loved the sense of community, the field and the woods, the muddy children rushing in from break looking as though they've been doing what children should do: building camps, playing in trees, getting lost in their fantasy worlds. My other family, in short. I even remember saying I felt guilty being paid because it didn't feel like a job. It was fun! More than a job – it was a hobby and a passion.

Things have changed in the 26 years here. Paperwork has quadrupled and systems have tightened up. I hope that languages continue to be an important part of the curriculum. I hope KAS continues for many hundreds of years more to be a school that puts the children first – before appearances, before exams, before league tables, before paperwork, before box-ticking, before hierarchies and before politicians' demands. Above all, Mike was right way back: happy kids learn better.

What is not to be missed? Four things: report writing, staff meetings, inspection, the 6 o'clock alarm... but I will miss you all: the teamwork, the camaraderie, the collaboration, the constant exchange of ideas, the friendships – and of course, all the children. They have been my 'get-up-and-go' for 26 years. King Alfred has never been 'just a job'. It's been my other life.

Three senior and long-serving members of staff semi-retired in the summer of 2013 – in true KAS style, relinquishing their 'senior' roles and continuing on regardless.

STEPHEN DE BRETT

joined KAS as Head of DT in September 1988, a mere 26 years ago. He has stepped down as head of that department, but he too is remaining at KAS as a part-time DT



teacher for one year until he retires at the end of the summer term in 2015. During this time, Stephen will spend one day a week developing primary crafts and a possible foundation curriculum.

Stephen's DT teaching has been absolutely inspirational, earning him huge respect from both students and colleagues alike. Projects and designs are highly respected in the industrial sector and have gained the school an excellent reputation for innovative and exciting ideas and final products.

Together with John Peisley (former Head of Science) he designed and built a fleet of three KAS boats, which not only gave our students the opportunity to build and sail the boats themselves, but also allowed less fortunate children to participate in sailing activities. Stephen has also run the Middle Years PSHE programme, running workshops on drug awareness and alcohol abuse, as well as nurturing the spiritual well-being of the students in his pastoral role. But perhaps his most amazing legacy to KAS is the Village Project which he introduced to the school some 25 years ago. The project was highly acclaimed as one of the most exciting the school has been involved in and has earned much public interest.

LASZLO HORVATH

came to KAS in 1979 as a Maths teacher and was appointed Head of Department in September 1987. Therefore, with some 35 years, he is also one of our longest-serving members of staff.



Laszlo has now relinquished his head of department role and gone back to teaching Maths full time for just one more year until he retires at the end of the summer term 2015.

Even though Maths is not everyone's favourite subject, Laszlo has managed to inspire so many students with a fascination for working with numbers, enjoying themselves in the process. He has organised extra-curricular Maths Challenges and raised the profile of our students outside our immediate community. Laszlo will continue working on the Middle and Upper school timetable. This is a mammoth task in every school, but even more so at KAS given the considerable constraints imposed by small class numbers and Laszlo's determination to ensure that as many pupils as possible are able to follow all their chosen subjects.

His never-ending patience with last-minute changes and permutations to the timetable has been remarkable and all the pupils and his colleagues have much to thank him for.

RITA MURRAY joined KAS in 1976 as a Geography teacher and, 38 years later, is one of the school's longest serving members of staff. Rita was very soon appointed Head of Department and subsequently became Head of Middle School in September 2000. She has now reverted to teaching Geography, part time.



Rita has instilled in so many children a keen interest in her subject and organised countless geography field trips on their behalf.

As Head of Middle School she has helped our Year 6 Alfredians take that big leap across the field to start their secondary education – and has eased the transition for non-KAS students joining the school in Year 7. She has overseen, organised and participated in Middle School Camps to various venues, when friendships are forged and fond memories created for the students for years to come. She has also regularly joined the Lower School children on the annual trip to Le Touquet. And of course, Rita has always been deeply involved in the Village Project for Year 8 students, when the children build and live for a week in a self-contained Village on the school site.

Farewells

HANNAH ISRAEL

I hate farewells so I'd really like to sneak away under the radar without saying much at all... However, suffice to say that during my time at KAS I have met all sorts of lovely people from across the school community. I'll miss chatting about literature with my classes, talking nonsense with my form, discussing moral, philosophical and political issues with my debate club, but most of all I'll miss the informal camaraderie which exists between the staff and the students. I won't miss the terrible coffee (the staffroom stuff that is, not KASbucks). Cheers!



JOHN JAMES

After 12 years, I say a fond farewell to King Alfred School to take up my new position as chief potter in the countryside. My thanks to Will and the others who have made working in the Art Department so rewarding, and fond farewells to the friends I have made, especially Linda, Liz, Jeremy and Bob. This has been a special place to work.



DYLAN VILJOEN

When I started here six years ago, King Alfred was very different in comparison to other schools both in London and in South Africa. I was drawn to the school based on its ethos, and that ethos is what has kept me here and why I'm sad to be leaving.



The pupils of the school are very

special. They are confident, well-spoken and logical thinkers. They truly are independent learners and are an inquisitive bunch. The students really make the school what it is, and I will miss teaching them. I have seen many students pass through the school, and a vast majority of those have been in my class at one point or another. My form tutees have always held a special place in my heart.

I have made many true friendships among the staff, and will miss them terribly. I'm going to have to work up a new lunch crew in my new job, but they won't be as great as I have now.

And my department? They have been amazing to me over the last six years. I have made long, lasting friends from there, and will miss seeing their faces every day. A special thanks to Jo, who has helped me this last year with Biology and with keeping a smile on my face when times got tough.

In closing, I am really going to miss King Alfred's and am just happy to have been a part of the school life for such a period of time. It truly is a special place to work, and teachers are very lucky to get an opportunity to teach in such an amazing environment.

JEREMY WILKIE

I've spent just over nine very happy years working at King Alfred School and I have had the privilege of working with so many talented and fun people.



I've been a form teacher for many of you, I've taken more of you on Camp and some of you I've even managed to get thinking a little bit about Maths.

It is a sad time for me to be leaving King Alfred and it was a difficult decision to make but it's time for me to move further afield. I know I will miss everyone that is part of our school.

Take care all and I hope you keep having fun.

Diary



ACADEMIC LECTURES

At the Phoenix Theatre.

Please contact: sheilah@kingalfred.org.uk

25 February, 2:10 – 3:05

Shouting Back; The Everyday Sexism Project

With Laura Bates, founder of Everyday Sexism.

11 March, 2:10 – 3:05

The Psychology of Doing Nothing

With Helga Drummond, Professor of Decision Sciences, Liverpool.

25 March, 2:10 – 3:05

The Digital Human

With Aleks Krotoski, journalist, academic and podcaster.

KAS AGM

Tuesday 10 February 2015. 7:00pm.

The Annual General Meeting of the King Alfred School Society will be held at Manor Wood, North End Road, London, NW11 7HY.

SUMMER FAIR

Saturday 13 June 2015. 12 noon – 4pm.

The Old Alfredian reception will be from 4:00 – 6:00pm.

BONFIRE NIGHT

Saturday 7 November 2015.

4:30 – 8.00pm. Reception 6 – 7:30pm

KASS EDUCATION CONFERENCE 2015

Saturday 10 October. 10am – 4pm.

Topic to be announced.

PARIS – THE EXHIBITION

2 – 13 February 2015.

Years 12 and 13 Art and Photography. The exhibition includes a range of work produced by King Alfred School Sixth Form Art & Photography students, following a visit to the city in October 2014. Viewings by appointment only. Please contact seanp@kingalfred.org.uk or cliffb@kingalfred.org.uk

Deaths

David Julian Greenfield

Born 26 May 1935, died 2012
(KAS 1948–51)

Jonathan Elichao

Died 12 November 2014
(KAS 1963–75)

Snap shots from the 2014 school

Articles from the school's newsletters...

Confident, Independent and High Achieving

KAS appeared in the Camden New Journal this week. Here's an excerpt from the piece.

King Alfred School sixth formers thrive academically and socially. The King Alfred School is proud to offer a rich learning experience that prepares students for university or any career path they may choose. The teachers instil confidence and it is widely acknowledged that students emerge from our sixth form as the most impressively mature, tolerant and articulate adults who are ready to take responsibility for planning their own lives.

A sixth former at The King Alfred School will excel academically. During 2013/14, 86 per cent of the A2 results were A to C grades and the vast majority of leavers secured places at their chosen universities.*

This year, The King Alfred School's sixth form will be the biggest yet with 95 students.

In their recent ISI report, the quality of teaching and the warm nurturing environment that students



experience were judged to be excellent. 'A feature of lessons observed in years 12 and 13 was the level of questioning, which challenged pupils to think beyond the point

they had reached, enabling them to use their initiative and critical thinking skills and ensuring that they made excellent progress in their knowledge and understanding.'

Utopias: A Year 13 CCS Study

Year 13 Critical and Contextual Studies students have been investigating the concept and reality of Utopias. As part of their study, they have undertaken a series of field work trips to look at Utopian social housing schemes and architecture as part of their public art project.

The students are investigating the aims behind the original plans, and how perspectives have changed around those ideals, with reference to The Barbican, Alexandra Road Estate in Camden, Hampstead Garden Suburb, and Holly Village in Highgate. They have made visits to all of these along with their art teachers.

● Will



chool year

Callovers

We had two Callovers this week! The first, on Wednesday, involved music entirely. First of all, Liberty played an amazing piece for us on the piano. Then the orchestra performed two pieces of music, one of which they had written, which was all about introducing the various sections of the orchestra. This was superbly done. We then had Nick and his drummers who really shook up the Lower School Hall! Fantastic! Finally we had John and his new Lower School Rock Group of four guitarists. They performed three songs and they were excellent too. I look forward to even more music next year. I would like to thank all our peripatetic music teachers who do a wonderful job with the children. About 70% of the Lower School are learning at least one musical instrument, sometimes two, and are also often studying music theory as well!



I would also like to thank Hannah, ably supported by Camilla, who has so successfully resurrected the Lower School Orchestra this year. They are brilliant and such a vital part of our music-making.

The second Callover, yesterday, was our final one. At the end of the year we get all the Lower School children together and celebrate the year, thank everyone, say goodbyes and wish everyone happy

The Vikings



Year 4 topic work this term is the Vikings and on Wednesday last week they visited the British Museum. Here is some of the artwork they saw and below is a photo from their play last week.



School Lunch Indian Style



Thanks to the kitchen staff for this special lunch treat and decorating the hall for the occasion.

Year 7: The First Week in Review

I've only been in Year 7 for about a week, and believe me, I'm not going to be the one to scare anyone about it. I'm not completely used to the middle school concept yet, but I can already tell that at some point I'll get there.

At first I was a little scared that I wouldn't manage because it is so different from lower school. For example, we now have each lesson in a different class with a different teacher, plus we have three forms instead of two classes. Over the summer holiday I was worried that I'd get lost, but surprisingly I have already gotten used to the building and I can tell that everyone else has too.

I feel that we have a much bigger responsibility because we have been given keys for our lockers. I think that some people have had some key issues, but problem solved. I have just put mine on a necklace around my neck. It feels good that we finally have a responsibility for something apart from putting our socks in the washing.

Now about the homework. I find it scary how I get homework every day. The teachers get quite mad at you if you don't hand it in, but fortunately nobody's gotten into trouble about it yet. Stagebooks are helpful and when my parents help keep me organised, I'm OK.

Overall, I really enjoy every day of school and I never really find anything too stressful or overwhelming.

● Erifili, YR7



School Photo 1953

In response to the request in the latest Alfredian for those in the 1953 photo, I'd like to attach a scan of the photo showing my father John Handford (staff) and myself (Karen Handford) sitting at his feet (circled in blue).

I also was delighted to recognize my piano teacher, Johann Tryggvason to the right of my father, and just maybe? his daughter Dody Tryggvason (circled in green) who became the wife of Vladimir Ashkenazy. Perhaps one of you can confirm this to me? Or was she not a KAS alumna?

In red I circled Zoe Wannamaker whom I recognize.

How are you going to allow us all to see who's who and recall, or is that an impossible task?!

I do so appreciate all your work on the Alfredian. Although I was there only four or five years, and over 60 years ago now (wow!), I still have little memories of the huge brass-bottomed slide on the grounds (and burning my tummy as I slid down in maybe just my little serge knickers! because the metal had heated up in the hot sun); Squirrel Hall; my first piano recital; my jumping down out of bounds off the fives court wall and tearing my left thigh in two places on barbed(?) wire, the scars of which still remain! Living in Washington, DC, I don't get to London now very much, but maybe one day my travels will coincide with a reunion at KAS!

Thank you again for all your good work!
All the best for 2014,

Karen (Handford)

Re the 1953 photo. You ask for people who recognise themselves. I'm in the top photo, 2nd row down, 4th from the right.

I recognise about a dozen others including Raph Samuel who is the third child from the right along from me in the same row. (He was my best friend at school). I also recognise several of the teachers.

Brings back so many (good) memories.

Peter Seglow

Yes there I am in the middle looking as mean and as moody as I can next to my tennis partner Trevor Wright. My brother Derek is in the front just a mop of white hair. The Alfredian is a pleasure to read and each issue is a testament to an idea that blossomed and for that, Monty must take much credit all those year ago. For me the

Detail of the photograph published in the Alfredians 2013



memories are etched forever of happy endless sunny days though I know the teachers thought otherwise. Today, to see the projects that the school is now involved in is to understand the progress that has been made from those austere days of the late 40s, early 50s. I remain in contact with many of my old class mates and friends and though I could not afford to send my children to KAS I am pleased to report that jumping a generation my two grandchildren did attend. Keziah Cheek left last year but Zac at 11 is still there.

I have now retired and live in the New Forest with my wife after many years as a director of a multinational packaging company. I spend years living in both Sweden and Germany working to set up their businesses across Scandinavia and Europe before coming back to the UK in 1987 and now spend my time still involved with sport. Yes KAS was an important part of my life and looking at that picture I can remember so many names both of pupils and teachers.

Howard Cheek

In response to an invitation to the school's Summer Fair, several Old Alfredians emailed in. News from a few:

I wish I could!! But in fact as a retired volunteer I am assisting in a school in remote Australia where the Aboriginal children desperately need help with English. The two teachers and I are the only white people in the community of 10 houses and 25 children. 300 kms to the nearest town. The lorry comes out from the store once a fortnight as do the nurses.

I have been driving my camper van north every winter for 15 years to volunteer in schools, women's centres and art centres in remote communities where help is desperately needed. Australia calls itself a

First World country and yet 58% of Indigenous primary school children in the Northern Territory come from families where English is not a first language in the home and there is no special training for the teachers. I am very grateful for my drama classes with Renee Soskin 1947-1951 which inspired me to go to drama school and learn where to put my tongue, lips and teeth to pronounce vowels and consonants. Have a great OA reception.

Julie James Bailey (nee Heyting)

Would love to be there but unfortunately will not be in the country at that time. I live in Las Vegas now and don't get to England too often. However, I shall be thinking of you all and wishing I were there to see old friends and have happy memories of my time at King Alfred's. Thanks for letting me know.

Best to you and all my Alfredian friends.

Judy Bryer

Thank you for the organisation of this and I really enjoyed my time.



From left to right; Laszlo (Horvath), Roy (Greenfield), Arnab (Banerjee), Bill (Hall), and Dawn (Moore).

Please find attached a photograph with some of my old teachers. Not great quality as it was only an iPhone. Thanks again again and have a good summer.

Arnab Banerjee

Jessie Harris

Jessie left King Alfred's in 2010 after A levels. She went to Byam Shaw for Foundation and left with a distinction in 2011. She has just completed a BA in Fine Art at Goldsmiths and has achieved a First Class Degree.

We always welcome news and memories from Old Alfredians for publication.

All copy should be sent to: Alumni Coordinator, King Alfred School, Manor Wood, 149 North End Road, London NW11 7HY
Email: oa@kingalfred.org.uk Tel: +44 (0)20 8457 5282 Fax: +44 (0)20 8457 5249 PLEASE KEEP US INFORMED OF ANY CHANGES OF ADDRESS.

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Obituaries...

DON EGNER 4 April 1930 – 24 May 2014

A famous government campaign in the 1990s claimed 'You never forget a good teacher'. For me that teacher was Don Egner, who taught at KAS from 1969 to 1971. Officially Don was in charge of music but he infected us with his love of – and ability to communicate the love of – the avant garde, poetry, films, paintings and the life of the mind. If I hadn't checked the exact dates I would have said Don was at the school for at least twice as long, such was his impact.

Don's family was originally from Germany but he was born in Jarrow, where his father ran the butcher's shop. After studying music at Kings College (part of Durham University) he moved eventually to North London, working as a teacher and a church organist and choir master, including at 'St Luke with St Paul' and Haverstock Hill Presbyterian Church. I possess a copy of his useful book from those days, *Help Your Child At School*.

By now part of the Hampstead coffee house set of artists and intellectuals (sadly long gone), he had been teaching at another North London school when he joined KAS at the age of 39 as Head of Music. The previous head of music, Tonie Berger (who last visited KAS for the 2014 Alumni Reception in June), stayed on during Don's time at the school and they went on to marry in March 1972 (they have one son, Martin, now living in Canada). Of all the relationships formed at KAS over the years, Don and Tonie's had one unique characteristic: they first met when Tonie interviewed Don for his job.

Don sang tenor, was a fine pianist and accompanist, wrote extensively on music (including for *The Musical Times*) and composed many works including the music to a ballet, an organ suite and an opera, *Lonely Hearts*.

As multiple sclerosis took hold 30 years ago, Don's teaching and performing gave

way to more home-grown projects and he produced a series of music self-help tapes on composition, exam preparation and so on, sold in music shops throughout England.



In 1995 a benefit concert was arranged in his honour at which many of his compositions were performed. In recent years, as his disability became ever more onerous, he managed to remain cheerful and uncomplaining against incredibly difficult odds. As his brother-in-law Leon – whose fine eulogy for Don I have drawn on extensively here – said, 'though his physical body was letting him down, his intellect and interest in the world remained as keen as ever... He was known by many as a gentle man – indeed a gentleman – in a wheelchair'.

It is no exaggeration to say that all I have done in my working life has been inspired by the world he showed me.

● Sebastian Cody

LEVI-YITZHAK RAHMANI 1919 – 2014

Levi-Yitzhak Rahmani, an expert on ancient Jewish burial practices, died in Jerusalem at the age of 94.

Born in 1919 in Zurich, he spent his childhood in Frankfurt am Main and moved to British Mandate Palestine in 1933, where he finished his secondary education and began his studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He received his MA in archaeology in 1961 and his PhD in 1978, with a dissertation on 'The Decoration of Jewish Ossuaries as Representation of Jerusalem Tombs'.

In the late 1940s, Levi-Yitzhak Rahmani served in the Haganah intelligence and in 1948 in the Israeli army. In the early 1950s, following the Israeli War of Independence, he served as a liaison and staff officer to the Christian communities in Jerusalem.

In 1953, he began work at the Israel Department of Antiquities and Museums (later the Israel Antiquities Authority) as a field archaeologist, and he continued to work there until his retirement in 1984. From 1961 to 1968 he served as district archaeologist for Jerusalem and the Judean Hills, and from 1968 to 1984 as chief curator of the state antiquities.

Levi-Yitzhak Rahmani conducted archaeological excavations in Jerusalem's vicinity and necropolis. He published a total of 117 articles (in Hebrew and English) on excavations of burials and on coins, art

objects, stamps, and lead sarcophagi and their ornamentations (46 of his articles were published in IEJ). He authored three books: *Jason's Tomb* (Jerusalem, 1964; Hebrew); *A Catalogue of the State of Israel* (Jerusalem, 1994); and *A Catalogue of Roman and Byzantine Lead Coffins from Israel* (Jerusalem, 1999). He is best known for his 1994 catalogue, which has become one of the primary sources on Jewish burial practices.

In the course of his archaeological career, he held several key positions. In 1972, he was appointed member of the Council of Israel Exploration Society, a position he held until his death. From 1969 to 1975, he served as chairman of the Associations of Museums and ICOM Israel. From 1969 to 1981, he was a member of the Archaeological Council of Israel. Since 1985, he was a corresponding member of the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut.

Levi-Yitzhak Rahmani, who was fluent in several languages, had a wide breadth of expertise and knowledge in many Jewish and non-Jewish subjects. His profession was never merely a job, but a passion. He was reluctant to give interviews or appear in the media, but nevertheless earned a place as one of the most prominent Israeli scholars of the past century.

Few colleagues were aware of his quiet quest to right wrongs. One case concerns a worker, Abu George, who had begun



working at the Rockefeller Museum as a teenager during the British Mandate and was employed there for 50 years, under the rule of three countries – Britain, Jordan and Israel – yet was not eligible for an Israeli government pension because he lived in nearby Ramallah. Levi-Yitzhak Rahmani quietly took upon himself to secure a pension for this co-worker, who had devoted half a century to archaeology.

Levi-Yitzhak Rahmani's wife Basia, whom he married in 1945, passed away three years ago. He is survived by two daughters, five grandchildren and one great-grandchild. His love for his family was fundamental to his personality. On a professional and personal level, he was totally accessible to each and every individual – colleague or lay person. Present and future generations will remain in debt to Levi-Yitzhak Rahmani for his contribution to the field of research, his guidance and his warmth.

● Amos Kloner and Joe Zias

The KING ALFRED SCHOOL Conference

This year the KAS annual conference was on the topic of homework. The King Alfred School Society, which sponsors our annual conferences, always intended them to be embedded in the life of the school community and to form part of a cycle of research, debate, self-reflection and subsequent action which would have a real and lasting impact on classroom practice. 'Homework' seemed a suitable and relevant topic for our 2014 conference and one likely to arouse strong views within our community and beyond.

Current Homework Guidelines

At KAS, we have always walked our own path with a sense of confidence in our rational, child-centred approach. In the Upper School [Years 7 – 13], we have no fixed homework timetable – teachers are encouraged to set homework at a point where it is useful and relevant. Students negotiate with their teachers and Form Tutors to ensure that there is an appropriate balance and spread of work. We believe that this enhances the teachers' sense of professionalism and enables students to develop independence and self-regulation. In the Lower School [Reception – Year 6], no formal homework is set, with the exception of reading with a parent and learning spellings and times tables.

King Alfred School Homework Research

We asked **Elizabeth Dawson**, formerly a primary school teacher, now Senior Lecturer in Education at the University of Cumbria, to produce a 'scoping paper' that would synthesise current academic thinking on homework. The paper she produced is a wonderfully clear and concise summary of some very complex ideas. One of the key statements is sometimes lost in the business of school life – for homework to be effective it should be planned and designed with even greater care than classroom activities.

We also asked Elizabeth to design a questionnaire for pupils [Year 6-13], staff and parents and to conduct a series of focus group interviews with pupils, staff and parents. The results were interesting! Parents and pupils, particularly in the GCSE years, agreed that homework can be a cause of family tension and argument – 76% of Year 10/11s stated that they argued with their parents about homework and half of parents believed that homework does not help their relationships with their children. There was a difference between how helpful parents think they are being and how helpful children feel their parents are being – only 4% of parents think they don't understand their children's

homework compared with 33% of Year 10-13 pupils who know they don't! Interestingly, only a third of pupils felt that homework leaves them insufficient time for other activities and over half the pupils surveyed think they are able to organise their homework schedule, although parents were not so sure.

There was complete agreement amongst pupils, parents and staff that, even at GCSE or A Level, pupils should receive no more than 15 hours each week and that more would be counter-productive. Staff and parents agreed that pupils should have homework in Year 6, but there was less consensus surrounding how much. Interestingly, the majority of pupils and parents believed that homework promotes independent learning and the development of study skills, a view not well supported in the research literature.

“Why should children work a double shift?”

Homework Conference Speakers

Our speakers were a mixture of academics and classroom teachers.

Professor Susan Hallam of the Institute of Education placed research into homework firmly within the context of current thinking about learning in its widest sense. Developments in neuroscience have helped us gain some understanding of changes that take place within the brain when learning takes place, but these changes are highly specific to what is learned and how it is learned. Learning involves the development of expertise, a complex process of the acquisition of entwined knowledge and skills, and this paradigm challenges notions of ability. Researching homework is problematic because of difficulties inherent in measuring outcomes and in determining accurately what is actually happening at home. At primary level, there is no consistent causal link between time spent on homework and attainment, whilst at secondary level there is a link, but it is curvilinear. Research on the impact of different types of homework is limited and results lack clarity. However, we can say that homework should allow for individual initiative and creativity; it should promote understanding and self-confidence; teachers should provide sufficient guidance and support; homework clubs can be useful; as can approaches that encourage self-monitoring on the part of pupils.

Mark Creasy, primary school teacher

and author, presented his concept 'unhomework', in which students are given great choice over the format and nature of their homework as well as its assessment, with the aim of making their homework more purposeful and inspiring. Mark proposes three key elements:

- **The '5Rs'** – Respect, resilience, relationships, rights and responsibilities.
- **Three ground rules** – Work can be presented in any format; work should meet a target for improvement or applying an approach in a new way; pupils set the deadline and must meet it.
- **Three questions** – What is the focus of the work? What is the purpose? What are the success criteria?

Alfie Kohn, American academic, author and guru of the progressive education movement, presented a brilliantly argued polemic completely debunking any arguments presented in favour of homework at any age level. "Why should children work a double shift?" he said. Alfie's basic premise was that there is no good evidence for homework having any of the positive effects its proponents claim for it and that schools have no business in dictating what happens within the family home. The audience, depending on their preconceptions, were inspired or exasperated, but certainly challenged!

Our final speakers were two more classroom teachers, both from Caterham School – **Kim Wells**, their Director of Learning and Teaching, and **Adam Webster**, their Director of Digital Learning. Adam and Kim, using Caterham's iPad 'rollout' as their starting point, presented a fascinating, technically up to the minute, interactive account of one of the hottest topics in educational circles at the moment – 'flipped learning'. The basic premise is well established – that class time is valuable and should be spent on interactions between learners and teachers, with the pupils using homework time to ensure that they have done the work in advance to make these interactions as meaningful and creative as possible. The speakers showed just what is possible when the notion of the 'flipped classroom' is married to the latest iPad technology. Teachers and students can record lectures or presentations and in a moment share them in a safely monitored environment with their pupils or classmates. Electronic distribution of high quality research materials and texts allows pupils to manipulate these materials creatively and then communicate them further.

**Edited from a Report by
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