

Alfredians



A newsletter for Old Alfredians

Spring 2022

Stella Magarshack Exhibition

Every year the King Alfred school art department hold an Open Art Exhibition for the KAS community to submit their entries, exhibited in the Areta Space. This year we were approached by Old Alfredian Justin Parsons to coincide the exhibition with a celebration of the life and work of Stella Magarshack, Head of Art during the 1970s and 1980s at KAS. With the help of Stella's niece, Emily Morris and her brothers and sisters we gathered at the opening night of the exhibition in honour of Stella. It was a wonderful evening and many memories of Stella and her inimitable influence on her students love of art were shared. It was a great turn out of Stella's colleagues and former staff of the school, as well as many of her students and Stella's best friend Pat Burton who told us she briefly taught in the print room at KAS.

Below are the tributes made to Stella by her former students:

Kate Taylor (OA 1995) "Ah, I was taught by Stella... she's one of the reasons I got into art as she totally let me explore my mind instead of putting limitations on my work... and funnily enough, I started an evening art course yesterday at my local college to reignite the fire that was started back when I was a kid..." from LinkedIn.



Charlotte Holloway, Cat Santos, Gabrielle Seymour, Tiggy Exton, Justin Parson & Sophie Dackombe

Sophie Dackombe (OA 1980) commented on Facebook, "Stella was an amazing teacher, I am not a natural artist, but she made you think you were."

Justin Parsons (OA 1979) "Stella was a great art teacher. She initially taught us pottery and then art. She inspired me to follow a career in the arts and helped me build my portfolio for art school. Drawing and painting in a warm corner of the studio with the contented chatter of other aspiring artists was such a wonderful retreat from more academic subjects. Following an arts foundation course and degree in interior design I have forged my career very much thanks to Stella's teaching and encouragement. It has taken me around the world with long stints working and living in Japan and Brunei and then back to London where I continue to enjoy working and designing. I will really look forward to seeing a selection of Stella's art and re connecting with many happy memories. J"

Nadia Roden (OA 1979) "Stella had a huge impact on my path as an artist and a designer. She encouraged me to paint and had faith in me. I have so many memories of hanging out in her art room during break times; it opened up a world of possibilities. I've been able to enjoy a satisfying career in the arts because of Stella's approach. Nadia"



Jonathan Cohen, Justin Jenks, Charlie Creed-Miles and Christian Davies with Stella in class

Continued overleaf...



Cat Santos, Rita Murray, Christian Davies

David Howard (OA 1978) "Stella taught us pottery when she took over from Julian. I always liked it and then took classes at the Suburb institute where oddly Liz the geography teacher went to as well. She was a lovely woman and it was nice to see her on a social basis. I moved up to sculpture and spent a year there making three nude models over three terms, and was half way through A level art when I wasn't let back for year 2 as I didn't know about the registration day. But Stella was a step on that route I continued soon after I left KAS as I didn't want to miss pottery after."

Christian Davis (OA 1990) shared a wonderful photo of Stella in the Art Room with Christian and his class mates and some paintings he had painted under Stella's tuition. He explained, "I feel very fortunate to have been taught by such an accomplished painter!"

Gabrielle Seymour (OA 1979) Stella 'was a much loved art teacher at school who inspired me to become a painter. My year group are all delighted this exhibition is being put together as a tribute to her, as an artist and a teacher and the way she gently encouraged and inspired all of her pupils."

Stella's family hope to put together a bigger exhibition of Stella's work in the future. In the meantime, Emily and her siblings welcome you to contact them through Stella's website www.stellamagارشack.co.uk



Bill Hall, Rita Murray and Sophie Dackombe



Justin Parsons and Emily Morris



Leo Larche Hitchcox, Sam Shelmy and Nic Bevers



Pat Burton and Emily Morris, Stella's niece

KAS Reunions and Events

A Festive Lunch for Old Alfredians and budding historians

Back in early December we hosted a small lunch for Old Alfredians who had attended the King Alfred School from the fifties through to the sixties. Leon, Head of History invited along his year 11 history pupils to join Old Alfredians to talk and interview them about their own time at KAS and to compare the similarities and differences.

Valerie Saunders (OA 1967) wrote to us after the lunch. "Just to say thank you for inviting me to share in the 'memory day' at KAS today.

Talking with the girls was a privilege - they were interesting, intelligent and possessed direction and appropriate confidence which made our time together quite special.

I loved sharing my memories with them and felt they not only listened but heard what was being said - thus provoking unprepared questions from them and allowed me to search their experiences too."

Hugh Sheridan (OA 1957) reflected on the day with us, "Thank you and your team for a very interesting day, I do hope I contributed in some way. It is amazing that Diana had all her school reports from day one, really, who saves school reports, let alone every report for 70 odd years! I think your whole exercise makes it worthwhile just to get them donated to KAS.

Your students came across as very interested and excited to meet us oldies, it was a real pleasure to listen and chat with them, I feel sure they could have put up with us for another hour or two, I certainly could have."

Diana Hardman née Kabadi (OA 1958) also joined us for the lunch. She brought along her school reports from age 4 to 17 and $\frac{3}{4}$ which she kindly donated to the KAS Archives as well as a beautiful ink stained KAS school badge



Old Alfredians, Robin Jacobs, Peter Ross formerly Shack, Hugh Sheridan, Diana Hardman née Kabadi and Valerie Saunders with history pupils in the Old Library

complete with the six pence Diana's mother had stitched into its lining for luck and was only discovered by Diana and her daughter recently.

Encouraged by Jill Russell, Diana went on to study at The Chelsea College of Art after her time at King Alfred School. She then went to travel and work in Afghanistan and India during the 1960s.

Diana wrote, 'I visited KAS on 8th December 2021 by kind invitation of Heather.

It was a great surprise and I had a fantastic day. My daughter came too, so she did the driving from Harrow where I live. My good friend Hugh Sheridan was there. Hugh and I have known each other since we were 4 years old in Nursery School with the wonderful Robey.

Peter Shack was there, and I remember watching him play Cricket. He was such a talented player. He said he did not do much studying, just wanted to play Cricket!

We met in the library which brought back memories of private work and exams. I also used to sit with Moira Tate and watch her write

her beautiful handwriting.

The new students were great and had questions. The first question was: What was the most exciting thing that happened? Difficult, but what came to mind was the duck who had her nest under the hedge at the far side of the field. Every summer she would hatch 6 or so ducklings and when they were big enough, she would lead them across the field and out of the gate. Someone (usually in Fred Johnson's class) would see her and say, "the duck family are coming!" and Fred would say "go and ring the bell" and everyone would run down to the drive and up on the fence and cheer! She didn't mind and would walk past with her ducklings behind. Monty or Fred would stop the traffic and she would walk calmly across the road up to Golders Hill Park to the pond. That was my answer to exciting. I did find it exciting and with the whole school together - it was marvellous.

We had our photographs taken and I saw part of the Photography department and realised how much the school has grown.

Heather and Tamlyn were so hospitable, and we all enjoyed lunch together. I will definitely go back to help if asked. Until then I will keep going on the KAS memories that have sustained me all these years and all the wonderful pupils and staff I met from the age of 4 to 17 $\frac{3}{4}$ years old.

I am a product of the school. I am 80 years old now, confident and a humanitarian with great affection for my fellow beings. I am loyal and I fight for people less fortunate than myself. I owe such a lot to the school, and to my father who sent me there for all my formative years.

All I can say is thank you.'

Leon commented after the lunch that he '... was quite impressed by the job they all did, and it would be great to involve students in future projects like that. They turned out to be quite skilled interviewers.'



Students interviewing Hugh and Robin about their time at KAS

Recent Leavers Drinks

Shortly before the school closed for the festive break, we welcomed our most recent Old Alfredian Leavers back to KAS for drinks on the terrace of the Old Library. It was such a lovely evening and gave Old Alfredians the opportunity to catch up with one another and for teachers to learn how

things have been going for our youngest OAs in their chosen directions.

From art foundations, an Oxbridge degree to a trainee electrician and corporate lunches in Cheltenham - it is so wonderful to see the varied paths OAs have taken after KAS.



Eve Blekkingh, Beau Langmead and India Warshaw



Ania Herbut, Takako Yeung, Dan Love and Old Alfredians catch up outside the Old Library



Calum Brake, Will Thorneycroft and Liv Hogan



Eve Blekkingh and Mimi Belity



Oliver Van Sonsbeek, Oli Elliot, Sam Shelemy and Dan Love



Liv Hogan and Will Thorneycroft



Head of Sixth form, Takako Yeung, Georgina Cooper – Friedlos and Jamie Toeg

Drinks Reception for Old Alfredians who are also current or past parents of the school

One of the many exceptional things about KAS is that so many Old Alfredians choose to send their children to the school. In early March, Robert and Karen hosted a drinks reception in the Old Library for Old Alfredians who currently have children attending the school or whose children are also Old Alfredians. It was a lovely opportunity to share memories as Old Alfredians

and as parents. Looking at old school photos served as a great talking point. **Xenia Bowlby (OA)** was even able to spot her son in some of the photos and reminisced with **Sam Sanson née Kaye (OA 1988)**, who recognised Xenia as a parent from her own school days. It was lovely to hear that many parents maintain their connections at KAS long after their children have left.



Sam Sanson née Kaye, Seb Hoffner, Jill Salmon and Hayley Fornara



Karen Thomas and Xenia Bowlby



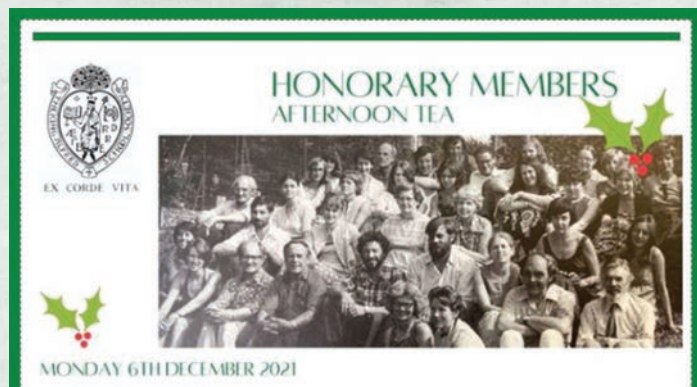
Old Alfredians examine the school photos

Festive Honorary Members Afternoon Tea

It is always a pleasure to gather online with our Honorary Members, although at the time there was concern around the

new Covid variant. At the moment where some were finally able to think about travelling again, this was a blow.

Sharing news from KAS brightened the afternoon, and everyone was looking forward to seeing families at Christmas.



Honorary Members Afternoon Tea Invitation



If you would like to hold a reunion for your year group, please do let us know at oa@kingalfred.org.uk. Your help in contacting OAs and linking them with our office through this email address or the website, is crucial to these lovely reunions.

The KAS fireworks went off with a bang

Saturday 13th November 2021 saw the return of the KAS fireworks. This popular event in the school calendar was a joyous occasion that brought so many of the community together after so long.

We were able to host Old Alfredians and Former Staff in the newly opened Sixth Form Centre which saw our best turn out for an Old Alfredian event yet.

The King Alfred School Fireworks hold many memories for pupils, parents and staff alike and it is clear that they are such a special part of the school. In our Autumn 2020 issue of the Alfredians we featured a poem written in the Twenties about the KAS bonfire. We spoke to Kara Conti about when she and Parent Staff reignited fireworks as an event at KAS:

"I had been researching the school's history and found that KAS often had fireworks in the past. So, we planned one. I think I was head of Parent Staff at the time. I collected wood for the bonfire in the school minibus with the head of drama Tony Grounds and the deputy head Roy Greenfield. I made soup for five hundred in the school kitchen. Ah those were the days!!"

Recent leaver, **Georgina Cooper Friedlos (OA 2020)** told us about what the KAS Fireworks means to her.

'When I was younger, fireworks night used to be the most exciting event of the school year. I have gone to the KAS fireworks every year since I was four years old and I can instantly remember the carnival-like atmosphere of people walking around on stilts, glow-sticks and light-up toys waving around, the enormous bonfire that was the centre of the action and excitement, the food stalls, and, of course, the incredible fireworks. When I was in the secondary school, it became fun in a different way – an evening to spend with my friends with the freedom to run around the school, transformed from how we knew it by day. When I came back last year as an OA, I felt exactly how I always had, I felt a part of the school just as much as I had as a student, I saw teachers I



Fireworks light up the KAS grounds

had really missed, caught up with classmates, and I had the same feeling of excitement watching the bonfire that I had every year. Fireworks night brings together people from all areas

of the school, everyone is welcome, and it gave me the chance, as an OA, to have fun again in the school I love and feel involved in an event that always shows off KAS at its finest.'



Catie Taylor, Katie Hannan, Alice Hannan and Charise Niarchos



Cosimo Mannocci, Eve Burke Edwards, Noah Schneiderman, Liam Michaels and Lulu Cooper



The school field during set up



Alfie Friedman and Robert Lobatto



Leo Codran, Sam Dolling, James Boardman and Alexander Price



Angus Van Pelt, Ella Maude and Alex Price



Anna Morrissey and Alice Hannan



*Edward Dowling, Lulu Cooper, Eve Burke
Edwards and Claire Murphy*



Ella Hohnen Ford and Leon Barody



Justin and Ethan Jacobs



*Dan Parker, Cosimo Mannocci and
Lucas Stockman*



Nikita Nerozin and Polly Salmon



Felix Rothenberger and Charise Niarchos



Cara Naidoo and Leah Foster



Harry Wingate, Lola Grainger and Wini Charity



*Lulu Cooper, Pauline Maloney, Ed Dowling and
Eve Burke Edwards*



*Nadia Rodin, Nicole Albert, Antigone Exton
White and Gabrielle Seymour*



*Tara Naroozi, Stanley Dunmore, Alix Polcher
and Olivia Simai-Kral*

News from Old Alfredians

Greetings from Wonderful Wales

Josie Steer retired from KAS last summer and moved to Wales to be nearer her daughter. She recently wrote to the school to update us on how she's getting on.



Josie and her daughter, Sibyl in the Rheidol valley near Aberystwyth

Dear KAS,

Greetings from wonderful Wales. I hope you've had an excellent half term and a restful half term break.

I've been holding on to my gratitude and cherishing it and now I'm ready to communicate it...

The goodbyes from you in the summer, and the gifts and messages were heart-warming and enough to sustain me through all the days. They were wonderful, especially the messages, so kind. Thank you all.

Look me up if you are wandering about in Wales,

Much love from Josie

Reconnecting with an Old Alfredian

It is always such a joy when we hear from an Old Alfredian who has lost touch with the school through the contact form on the website. Last month, **Setara Pracha (OA 1987)** did just that. She reflected upon her KAS experience and filled us in with what she has been doing since she left KAS.

'When I attended KAS in the 1970s it was a hive of creative and passionate teachers who inspired pupils with what were then unorthodox teaching methods aimed at reducing the distance between adults and children. I rejected Channing School after my KAS visit and was very happy with my time

there. Thinking about it now, I carried this educational enthusiasm with me into my own teaching practice at university level, where I continue to guide PG students towards a cross-fertilised approach to intellectual life.

I went on to become an academic specialising in English Literature which I have now taught for twenty years.

Guy was headmaster when I was there; I had music lessons with Mary McCartney and had no idea who her dad was... we made a school record called 'big g' for a performance of David and Goliath.'

Do get in touch if you remember the David and Goliath performance or have photos and video recordings of your KAS performances.



Michael Hurwitz featuring Neil Williams and Jonathan Webb and the Wooden Man at KAS circa 1965

Who Carved the Wooden Man?

Old Alfredian, **Michael Hurwitz (OA 1966)** shared this fantastic photo on The King Alfred School Facebook page in late November and we would love to know more about the fabulous wooden man. Please let get in touch if you can share some light! We'd love to hear from Neil and Jonathan too.

Michael wrote, "I was hoping we could find out who made the wooden man, let's see if anyone reading the newsletter will give us an answer.

Picture Perfect

Stanley Dunmore (OA 2021) is featured in Mission Statement Magazine with his series of images titled 'Doom Town'. These images were part of the A level Show in June 2021, when Stanley put on a staggering end of year show, painstakingly styled, cleverly colour-graded and smartly lit photographs. Stanley has gone onto study film in London



Stanley Dunmore has gone on to study Film in London



Stanley Dunmore work featured in Mission Magazine



Recent leaver, Stanley Dunmore's work was featured in Mission Magazine

The Telegraph Young Jazz Finals

James Lockett (OA 1998) messaged us on Instagram and shared this fantastic photo. James wrote, "C. 1995 from the heady heights of the Telegraph Young Jazz finals. Liam



Old Alfredians, Liam Fletcher, Joe Leader, Dominic Green and Oli Rockberger for The Telegraph Young Jazz Finals in 1996

Fletcher, Joe Leader, Dominic Green and Oli Rockberger" The band, Catherine's Lodger went on to win the competition.

Saxophonist, **Joe Leader (OA 1996)** has recently released his debut live album, *Healing the Heart*. After winning the Telegraph Young Jazz Finals in 1996, Joe says "I was offered an

opportunity to perform at Andrew Lloyd Webber's Sydmonton Festival, alongside Dame Kiri Te Kanawa and Linda Brava. This opportunity was provided by Arlene Philips, whose daughter, Elana, also went to KAS."

You can find out more about Joe's album at www.joeleader.com



Joe Leader playing saxophone in Leicester Square

Sarah Eyles (OA 1973) reflects upon her time at KAS

In your last newsletter you mentioned about finding pictures of historical KAS items. Here's a picture of a magnificent owl candlestick holder, made by my sister **Jane Wilde née Eyles (OA 1969)** at KAS when she was about 10 years old. Being a couple of classes lower than her I remember being over-awed when she brought home this shiny pottery she had made, coloured and fired.

And here's a ceramic pot I made, using slab and coil techniques I think, when I was 11 in 'transition' (I think it was called) in 1967.

We must have had an amazing teacher. At one point in my life I helped to run a pottery (but not as a potter) for several years. Slab, coil, sgraffito... quite impressive! Although I could never master the wheel back

then, or ever for that matter!

I really enjoyed KAS and it gave me a great foundation in academic subjects, creativity and sports. I was there from 3 years old (I joined a year early) until 12 years of age. I left to go Monkton Wyld boarding school in Dorset, which was mainly because my best friend had left KAS and, although I was popular, I couldn't seem to find someone to replace her. I begged my mum relentlessly for over a year to send me to a boarding school, and finally she agreed. I greatly enjoyed Monkton Wyld, but because lessons were only vaguely compulsory, I really appreciated the foundations, and thirst for learning I gained from KAS.

After Monkton Wyld school, I didn't go to university, became a single parent, and went on to work in IT as a

trainer, programmer and data analyst, skills I picked up as I went along. I ran an IT consultancy for many years, working for various banks, insurance companies, telecoms, and for the Office for National Statistics. When I started in IT in the 1980s the ratio of men to women was about 10 to 1.

I moved to West Wales about 20 years ago and have a smallholding, where about 5 years ago I built a 175kw PV solar farm (enough electricity for about 85 households) and planted over 10,000 trees. I am currently setting up an Energy Local co-operative so that local residents can purchase cheap, green power direct from my solar farm. I gained an interest in renewable energy from my father, who was a member of the Centre for Alternative Technology in Wales in the 1970s.



A beautiful vase made by Sarah as a child



Sarah Eyles stripy pot made at KAS in the Sixties



The owl candlestick made by Jane Wilde née Eyles

Marta Essinki (née Sabbadini) (OA 1997)

I am delighted to share a little about my journey as an alumni, since I left KAS in 1997. Together with a classmate we installed KAS' very first paper recycling bank, and I am curious if it is still there! I gained a place at Oxford University, with the support of Francis Moran who was Head at the time. My two brothers were also at KAS and Lorenzo also studied at Oxford after that.

I did a 4-year BA and MA in Modern History and Modern Languages, with one year teaching at the Lycee Champollion in Grenoble. I then went on to train as a teacher, working with the British Council as a trainer and examiner in Senegal and Cameroon, and then back to the UK with my husband and where we had our two sons. I worked for many years at West London College in a variety of functions, including as cross-college Head of English and Maths.

Back in 2018 my husband and I were head hunted by a new international school in Gabon, and we moved here to Libreville as School Bursar and Deputy Head of School, respectively, and together with our two

school-aged sons, Leo and Sam. We have all adapted brilliantly to being on the equator, enjoying the incredible facilities available and benefiting highly from the bilingual and highly international environment and school community.

I was promoted to Head of School this January, and now lead the International School of Gabon ERV. It is an inclusive through-school from 2-18, with a very strong student-centred ethos, and I often speak about my own education at KAS as the springboard for the journey that has led me here.

We are in Libreville most of the year now, and only come back to London for a few weeks in the summer. I am unlikely to be able to join any alumni activities at KAS for now, however I would be delighted to partake in any virtual events relating to KAS' 125th anniversary, especially any relating to education, or any opportunities which might enable an exchange between the two schools.

In the meantime, do send my greetings to any older KAS community members who may remember me from 1989-1997.



Marta Essinki (née Sabbadini)

Willow Wonder Wall

Design and Technology technician **Chris Raymond (OA 1999)** has been working with students from Years 6 and 7 to create this beautiful living willow hedge which will form the entrance to the treehouse. Complete with 'igloo' areas to play in, it should prove popular with students for years to come as it grows and the new growth will be used in The Village Project to create more sculptures.



View from the Tree House

The Willow structure taking shape

Old Alfredian visits

Julian Anderson (OA 1956)

It was a moment to lift the soul. As Julian drew the bow (he quite rightly did not trust me to do this properly!) across the strings of his delicate, and very fine violin, which was tucked under my chin, I felt the vibration – the music. I understood immediately what Julian had said about his first experience with a violin. It changed his life. Julian's appreciation for music was a big part of life at KAS, as he tells us

later in this newsletter, but Julian also credits his schooling with preparing him in the best way possible for life beyond: university at Oxford, work, farm life, and even teaching in a local comprehensive! Once again, visiting an Old Alfredian, and hearing of KAS school days provided rich stories of life at Manor Wood. Julian, as editor of the school magazine, has kept his copies of the Alfredian, and we spent a peaceful couple of hours at his home in Devon reminiscing.



KAS magazines



Julian and his sister Shirley on the farm

Lowden Valley

It was boiling hot in Lowden Valley, and the sun was glaring down out of a cloudless sky, from almost overhead. Down in the valley the small village of Lowden roared serenely. One or two thin trickles of smoke climbed up into the azure sky.

On the village green was the only sign of life, for it was the day of the annual cricket match against a team from further down the valley. Even so, because of the heat the crowd was small, and the players could not do any strenuous running.

Wandering past the pitch edge was the sparkling river. Down its shady banks at various intervals small groups of people bathed, or sat talking. One or two canoes or punts drifted here and there.

In the woods the birds were only singing softly; it was too hot for them to sing their best.

A water vole slipped out of its burrow and swam slowly across the river; then it uttered a low whistle. It was answered by its mate, and together they played around for a while, and then swam down the river out of sight.

A rabbit stirred from its sleep and looked over to a patch of grass, took a bite or two and lay down again. "Too much trouble to eat much," he thought; and went to sleep again. The bunch of children who came by later thought he was dead and hurried on.

A fox sneaked into sight, carrying a chicken in his mouth—he had taken it from a yard further up the valley. "Silly old hen, that!" he mused. "No trouble catching her and a lot of enjoyment eating her!" and on he hurried to find his wife.

There was a splash from down the river, and a moment later an otter came splashing up, turning and tumbling about, his cheerful nature bubbling over, as the river was bubbling over the weir.

Down on the cricket pitch the players had adjourned for lunch, and the picnickers had wandered up on to the moors.

The rabbit woke with a start. He was hungry, very hungry. He hopped out of the wood into a cornfield, where he soon disappeared. The water vole had returned to his burrow, and the otter had

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Lowden Valley extract from Alfredian magazine 1951



Carly and Claire at callover

Carly Moosah, née Lorenz

(OA 2000) spoke to the Sixth Form during callover about her experience of breast cancer. Carly is a Breast Cancer Awareness advocate, and joined Claire Murphy, staff member to share their survivors' story. Carly appears in a Victoria's Secret campaign to encourage people, men and women, to check regularly for any changes. Both Carly and Claire are ambassadors for the breast cancer charity Future Dreams and CoppaFeel.

Caroline Messecar

(OA 1988) made an impromptu visit back to school and Tamlyn was on hand to show her around. Caroline had her photo taken outside the Main Hall and in front of the columns which she remembers so vividly as a child. Caroline still lives in London. If you would like to visit KAS you can let us know by emailing oa@kingalfred.org.uk and we can make sure we are on hand to walk you down memory lane.



Caroline Messecar outside the Main Hall on her visit

KAS and The Neustatter Family



Walter Neustatter at KAS, Summer Term 1913. The KAS Archives

Did you know that The King Alfred School has strong connections to the suffragette movement? The school was opened by suffragette Millicent Fawcett and we welcomed Angela Neustatter, the granddaughter of suffragette Lillian, and daughter of Old Alfredian Dr Walter Neustatter to talk about her father's formative education at KAS. Walter was an eminent forensic psychiatrist and a first-class fives player!

Angela is a journalist and recently wrote a piece for the Guardian newspaper about her grandmother. Here is an excerpt of the article.



Angela Neustatter on a visit to the King Alfred School

"Summerhill school has been in the news this month while celebrating its 100 years as an idiosyncratic, self-governing school. It started life in 1921 with the idea that children thrive when they are given maximum freedom to do what they want and be who they will.

Nobody thought it would survive once its head and founder AS Neill died in 1973, but they reckoned without his daughter, the charismatic Zoe Redhead, who took over as head and continues to keep her father's dreams alive with ferocious dedication. Nobody could be more pleased than I am that Summerhill lives on, but there is one big gap in the history of the school, and that is my grandmother. Neill did not found the school alone.

Lillian Ada Neustatter met Scotsman Neill in the early 1900s when her son, my father, Walter, was a pupil at King Alfred School in London. One day my father brought Neill, his teacher at KAS, home to tea. Neill stayed for four hours, then followed this up with more visits, telling my grandmother his dream of running a school where children could be free and happy, where emotions were not neglected in order to develop the intellect – a contrast to the pupils at the Scottish school where he had been a primary teacher and had been ordered to be the boss and use the tawse.

Lillian had recently been released from Holloway, where she was sent as a suffragette, punished for breaking a post office window after becoming a passionate believer in women's

emancipation. It was a time that had changed her dramatically from the frustrated wife of a doctor (Otto Neustatter) with no way to use her education and musical skills, living in Dresden among women who, she said scathingly, would rather discuss the perfect recipe for apfelstrudel than opera and theatre. She also had an interest in human rights and education. The lanky pedagogue, with his huge square-toed shoes and vibrating excitement, enchanted her."

The Guardian



Image: Georg Brokesch, Leipzig

Lillian Ada Neustatter

A History of Music at KAS

Music is such a huge part of life at KAS and it is often the musical concerts and performances that Old Alfredians and former staff remember so fondly of their time at the school. It is with this in mind that when Hannah, peripatetic flute teacher approached us about her marking 30 years of teaching music at the King Alfred School, we decided to reach out to Old Alfredians about their memories of music lessons at school. Here are the responses we received through emails and across our social media pages.

Alice Biddulph (OA 1998) "I didn't have private lessons but did a lot of chamber music and orchestra....my teachers were Andy Hampton, Sue Hilton, Robert Hersey, Liz Mellor, Richard Wade, Anna Broad....played cello!"

Robert Hersey former Drama teacher at KAS "Such a wonderful time working with Sue, Hannah, Andy, Jamie, Richard, Roddy ..."

Anousha Hutton (OA 2005) commented on Facebook, "Yes, I learned to play the flute at KAS, my teacher was Hannah Lang."

Naomi Hull (OA 1951) That's what I was taught, briefly, but got no joy from it. By whom, I do not remember. However, at home we had a pianola, and a great many rolls of classical music: Schubert, Beethoven, Mozart. When I was upset by anything at school, I would cycle home and hammer away at the Appassionata. I was also taught the recorder briefly, and enjoyed singing, and music appreciation. I remember Mr Tryggvason and his daughter, but was busy with exams when they were there."

Paul Davis (OA 1952) "I played trumpet in Johann Tryggvason's school orchestra, for a short period after I left in 1951. He was the music teacher, very capable and popular. I remember his son-in-law, Vladimir Ashkenazy, trying to conduct us, with very doubtful results! Needless to say he soon learnt his trade,

becoming a world-famous conductor (already a pianist of renown). Also in the orchestra was my brother Jonathan, a talented bassoon player. Best wishes to you both"

Julian Anderson (OA 1956) wrote, "When I was there - 1949 to 1956 - there were no resident or peripatetic instrumental teachers. But there was a more than useful School Orchestra conducted by Johan Tryggvasson, the very energetic Music Master whose daughter, Thorun - Dody to her friends - already a virtuoso pianist attended the School and played the violin - badly and reluctantly - in the orchestra. I remember her playing the Schumann Piano Concerto with us and I gave at least one recital with her in the Hall. She later married Vladimir Ashkenazy, the internationally renowned pianist and conductor and had 5 children!"

Ros Johnson - French Teacher - played violin in it and her new husband, Fred (History) took up the cello so that he could join in as well. Mrs Herzog, mother of Freddie then a pupil and ACE woodworker, led the cellos with great vigour. I was the leader (having learnt the violin privately) and Nick Busch, later a very successful professional, played the Horn. Julia Child was another of the violins but I can't readily remember any of the others.

Earlier still Chris Barber, son of the then Head Mistress, Hetty, had great fame as a professional trad jazz trombonist and only recently died. Earlier still, when the School was at Royston in the war, Janet Craxton, the famous oboist, was starting her musical career."

With warm wishes,
Julian.

Valerie Saunders née Levy" (OA 1967) "Whenever I think of music at KAS my everlasting memory is of lessons spent under the watchful eye of

our music teacher Johann Triggvasson - and the concert his son-in-law gave in the school hall - a then little known pianist named Vladimir Ashkenazy!!

Little did I know then just what an eminent force he was to become within the wonderful world of music.

Pupils played around in music lessons and I think Johann had a hard time controlling the class - but I loved it and can still remember the red covered books we sang from, joining the choir and performing Mozart's Ave Verum under the baton of Johann

I learned the violin under Kay Hurwitz and



Mrs Boulter's Pipers, 1930 KAS Archives

enjoyed orchestra life - but piano was my favoured instrument and I did take part in school concerts.

Christmas time at KAS was also filled with music - a huge Christmas tree in the Hall and the singing of carols round the tree - candles alight and a gift for every pupil!

One other memory that comes flooding back is when I hear the song 'Little Children' by Billy J Kramer & the Dakotas - a big group of the 60's - when Billy J Kramer visited KAS in the thick snow and he was filmed singing with the KAS children for the then super popular 'Top of the Pops' - as he drove into school there were masses of us screaming as if the Beatles had arrived!! Headmistress Nikki Archer was not amused!

I give you this snapshot of my memories of music at KAS.

Samantha Tigner - Orchudesch (OA 2006) "I was at KAS from 1999 - 2006 and was always really involved in music at KAS. Andy Hampton was Head of Music when I started and I absolutely loved music lessons with him. It was Andy who inspired me to compose for more instruments than just piano and voice and shaped my career into music and composition. When Andy left, Anna Broad taught me for GCSE and A-level music which again I absolutely loved and was of course part of all the school concerts and shows. Charlotte Lumb was my singing teacher and she helped my technique and style as well as massively improving my confidence.

I went on to study composition at The Royal Academy of Music and I now work at Sony Music Publishing as a Senior Copyright Analyst but I also compose and orchestrate songs and write music for short films and animations. One recent composition was a song I wrote during lockdown for the NHS.

I've found some old photos of me performing at one of the jazz concerts at KAS as well as the pianist as part of our jazz ensemble "Primoviations" who went on to perform at the Royal Albert Hall as finalists in the Music For Youth Competition. They're screenshots from old videos so sorry for the poor quality!"

We will be hosting a reunion with Hannah Lang, members of the current music teaching staff and hopefully some of your favourite former Music teachers. Please register your interest with Heather, oa@kingalfred.org.uk, if you would like to attend our September reunion for those who studied music at the King Alfred School.



Samantha Tigner - Orchudesch performing at Jazz after Dark



A video still of Samantha and the KAS band 'Primoviations' in 2006

A Letter From the Head...

Tucked away in a semi-subterranean space nestled between the Photography Studio and the stationery cupboard is a small air-conditioned room. Inside, you find treasure, not of the shiny sparkling pirate variety, but photographs, documents and artefacts that go back to 1897. This is our archive, neatly arranged, with historical papers carefully tucked into see-through protective wallets.

As with any good archive, it lives and breathes, and Year 6 have recently been exploring its content as part of their Interdisciplinary Enquiry. They have discovered the original school song, complete with musical notation and the very frequent repetition of 'Ex Corde Vita'. Wearing pristine white gloves, they have leafed through the handwritten school magazine of 1914 full of drawings and poetry. They have reviewed the manifesto drawn up by the founders in 1897, analysed the German bombs that fell in this neighbourhood in 1942 and studied the war years in Royston when this site was commandeered by the army.

Two pupils with a particularly artistic bent discovered paintings and sculptures of one of the old headteachers. One has produced a stunning oil portrait of Karen... the other is producing a sculpture of me, which is currently in development. I can't say that I am not a little nervous. I have been photographed from all angles; unfortunately, my plea for more hair on the back of my head was not particularly well-received.

This kind of project will be familiar to Old Alfredians. It gives Year 6 freedom to explore and make sense for themselves of the material they are studying; by producing an exhibition at the end, it creates strong accountability, but not through a paper-based test; and it connects to the real-

world, generating interest, passion, and excitement. Letters have been flooding my way from Year 6 requesting more girls cricket, regular lessons in the treehouse, and the return of the goat!

In the same week as I visited these classes, the Times Education Committee published its interim report, which paints a bleak picture of the state of education in England. Aside from the shrinking levels of investment in the vital Early Years, it highlights a testing regime which automatically condemns a third of all pupils to 'fail' due to the methodology of comparative outcomes. It highlights the narrowing of the curriculum, and the failure to develop broader skills wanted by employers such as communication, collaboration, and creativity. It highlights the lack of deeper learning and individual sense-making due to the unrelenting focus on exam outcomes and the inexorable drilling that accompanies this. And finally it highlights well-being; the OECD found that pupils in the UK suffered the steepest decline in life satisfaction between 2015 and 2018 and ranked 34th out of 35 countries for fear of failure.

When we use the report to hold a mirror up to our experience at KAS, what do we find?

Let's start with the narrowing of the curriculum and the squeeze on creative subjects. Well, there is no question that we have gone in the opposite direction. Art, photography, drama, music, DT are some of our most popular courses in years 10 and 11. And this year, we are increasing the amount of choice students have so they can take more of these subjects if that is their interest. The idea that these subjects are less demanding is a myth. They nurture conceptual understanding, critical thinking and individual responsibility, as much, if not more, than many other

parts of the curriculum.

How about the development of broader skills and attributes much valued by employers, such as collaboration, independence and creativity?

Well, KAS has long defined education broadly, and this is only becoming more explicit and intentional with recent developments.

There is powerful work taking place in the lower school building core skills and attributes in age-appropriate ways from reception upwards. Go into any classroom and you will see staff and children reflecting on resilience, and curiosity, and risk taking.

The 6-8 curriculum places these skills and attributes front and centre in the Interdisciplinary Enquiries, in the work of Crew, and in our signature projects such as the Village.

Moving up the years, although the exam system makes this less easy, the development of these skills and attributes, and creating space for students to find meaning for themselves remains important. New courses at years 10 and 11, such as the UAL performing arts course and our home-grown Global Challenges course, build on the experience in years 6-8. Meanwhile, the HPQ and EPQ create a channel for older students.

And what about well-being? One of the major drivers for child and teenage unhappiness is the feeling of not being good enough. It is interesting how many enquiries we get from students at high pressure schools who, however talented and able they are, often feel they do not measure up to their peers.

Children will always compare themselves to one another, but schools can take a very different approach. Many schools use the fear of comparison as a motivator to work hard, not always aware of the damage they do in the process. In contrast,



avoiding the ordering of children, valuing everyone's achievement on its own terms, being proportional and mindful about high stakes assessment is, and has always been, the KAS way.

Before we get carried away with ourselves however, it is important to recognise that we too have much work to do. Some established areas need development, and other areas are in their infancy. How can we, for example, assess skills and attributes in a meaningful way? How do we move forward on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion? How do we embrace the challenges of environmental sustainability and climate change?

Nonetheless, when we take a step back and compare ourselves to the picture painted by the commission, it is a powerful reminder of the value of a KAS education.

And now we need to take a step further. We are a charity as well as a school. Our role is not only to educate our own KAS community, but 'to turn the dial in the wider system'. This was the intention of the school's late Victorian founders, and it is just as urgent today.

We need to advocate for deeper learning in the classroom, rather than superficial preparation for testing which all the research shows is forgotten within a few months.

We need to advocate for the creative subjects which brings millions to the economy as well as personal and communal cultural richness.

We need to advocate for the development of skills and attributes both for personal development and employability in an uncertain and changing workplace.

And we need to advocate for a child-centred approach to schooling where the needs of the individual take precedence over the external pressure to meet institutional accountability measures.

And how do we play this advocacy role?



We are moving towards becoming an early years' hub on Ivy Wood, which will support staff development for teachers and TAs across the local area. This in itself will not solve all the early years challenges, but it is a powerful contribution to a neglected area.

Through the Rethinking Assessment network, of which we are now firmly established as one of the key leading players, we can share our 6:8 work on a wider scale with schools who are keen but tentative to take a similar step; we start leading our first workshops after half-term.

Our conference in March, Education on the Move, brought together educational innovators for the first time in one place – sharing ideas based on our common beliefs, and inspiring those who wish to embrace our broader vision of education.

King Alfred would love to change the world by itself – though that is perhaps too much to ask. But what we can do is recognise we have an approach, a philosophy and a history that addresses many of the problems that have been identified by the Times Educational Commission. We can use

our experience, our know-how and our passion to join with others, build partnerships and make a difference on the ground. In this way, we will play our important part in turning the dial.

To finish, I would like to return to the Year 6s.

As well as working with the Archive, they also met and interviewed a group of Old Alfredians, some of whom had been here as far back as the 1940s.

"Was it interesting?" I asked a couple of the pupils. "Fascinating" they said, "we loved their stories about school life." "Any surprises?" I asked. "Well, a lot of what they said made it sound quite similar to what we experience today, although I think they had a bit more freedom to roam around." "And did they have anything in common?" I finally asked. "Oh yes," they both replied. "They all wanted to make the world a better place."

Robert



Festive Post

Before school broke up for the Christmas break year 6 students set to work creating beautiful cards to send some festive cheer to a few of our older Old Alfredians. In return pupils returned to school in January to a flurry of post from their new pen pals with tales of what KAS was like when they were 10 years old. Here are a selection of some of the responses we received from our Old Alfredians and examples of the exquisite cards sent by KAS pupils.

We were delighted to hear from **Helen Craig (OA 1952)**, who is children's book author, most notably she illustrated the Angelina Ballerina books and sent a beautifully illustrated card featuring the famous little dancing mouse. Inside she wrote "I was at King Alfred School a very long time ago. It was during World War 2 when the school was evacuated to a farm just outside Royston in Hertfordshire. When the school returned to London I also came to where it is now! It was a great school."

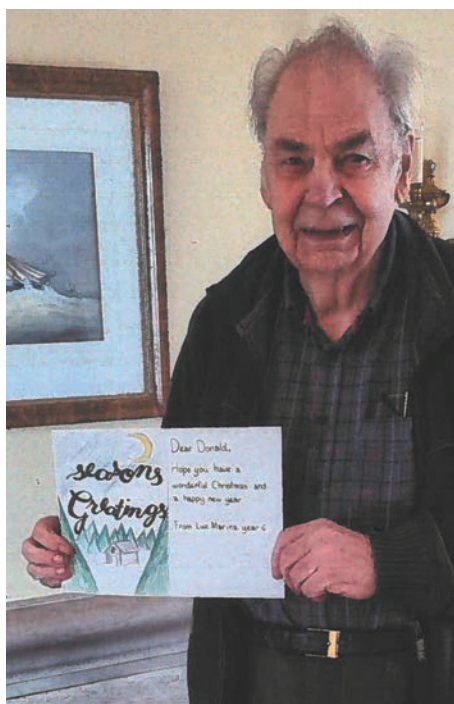
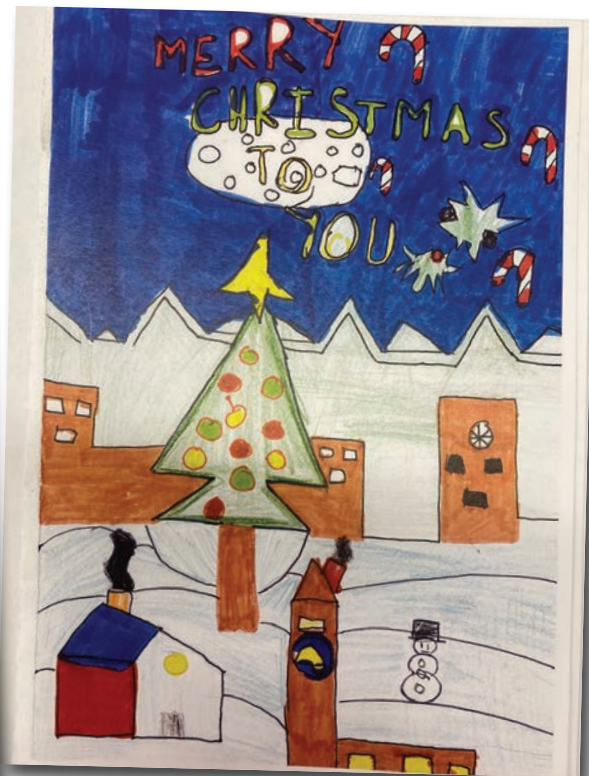
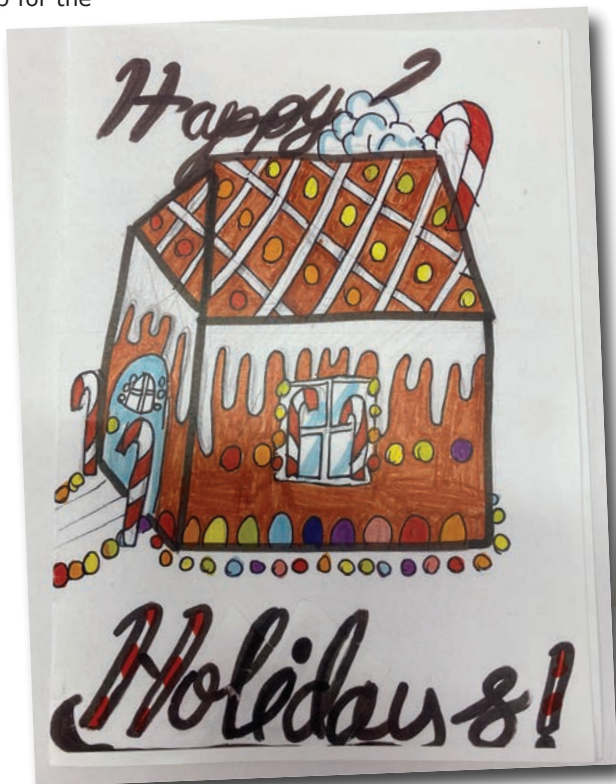
We also received a beautiful letter from Old Alfredian, **Mary Moser (OA 1939)** written by her daughter. Mary

had celebrated her 100th birthday in December but sadly passed away at the start of this year. "Mary had many happy memories of her school days at King Alfreds – back in the 1930s (90 years ago!) One of her favourite things was ballroom dancing."

Pupils received photos and letters from **Paul Davis (OA 1951)**, **Naomi Hull (OA 1951)** and **Lyford Cross (OA 1954)** in response to their seasonal greetings. Old Alfredian, **Gay**

Galsworthy (OA 1950) wrote "It was rather a long time ago that I remember walking across the heath to school and seeing V2 rocket explode ahead of me during the war. In those days there were many Jewish families that had been evacuated at the School. I loved it there."

Anneliese MacMillan née Levy (OA 1942) sent the most charming photo of herself and told of her time at KAS when it was relocated to Royston during the war. "There weren't any proper classrooms, just two barns and some farm buildings for the animals. We boarded there and because there were no bedrooms, we all slept in the little barn. I had drawn the short straw as my bed was underneath the window."



Donald Neal was impressed with the neat handwriting in the card he received



Anneliese MacMillan née Levy enjoyed receiving her festive post



Naomi Hull with her Christmas card from pupils



Year 6 pupils with the festive cards they designed and sent to Old Alfredians

Fresh air was very important in those days, we were told it was good for our health. This meant we had to sleep with the window open even during the winter, and it was freezing cold! Several mornings I woke up with snow on my pillow! I can't remember much of what we did at Christmas but I was in a play at school by Shakespeare called 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' and I played Hermia."

Anthea Goldsmith (OA 1953) started at KAS in 1945 when the school

returned to Manor Wood. She recalls how much she "loved music and had piano lessons and took all the exams – up to Grade 8. I also liked going down and helping in Lower School and this led to me wanting to become a Primary School teacher."

Barbara Ryder née Hawkins (OA 1951) was delighted to receive her Christmas card. "such a cheeky looking reindeer and you can see the lights sparkling in the windows of the houses." She goes on to tell of what

school was like for her. "We had a big amphitheatre, which started my interest in acting under the superb direction of Renée Soskin. We performed lots of plays both outdoors and in the hall.

I attended the school from the age of five or six until I was seventeen, which included the war years.... I had wonderful teachers like, Ros Ryder – Smith (French), Fred Johnson (history and economics) and Mr Fuller (English in the Sixth Form)."



Paul Davis and his Christmas card



Helen Craig sent pupils one of her own beautifully illustrated Christmas cards



Gay Galsworthy's illustration that accompanied his letter to KAS students

A KAS trip to China, March 2005



Sarah Philips and students from the Tian Lia Bing School

It is the special school trips that pupils get to participate in at KAS that often live on in memories of the school. They are always recalled with such fondness by OAs and staff alike. None more so than the trips to China organised by Chris Potter. **Sarah Philips** was one of the adults who accompanied pupils on that first trip to Liuyang, Hunan Province in 2005. She kindly put together her memories of her experience for us to share.

"I was a member of Council at KAS at the time, as I still am, and I had experience chaperoning children in performing arts on overseas trips, but this was still a step beyond.

The students were in Year 9 and

above, although because my son and I were on the trip, my daughter in year 7 was also allowed to take part.

We flew overnight from Heathrow to Beijing and arrived tired but excited. A coach took us to the hotel in the centre of the city within walking distance of the Forbidden City. The road was huge, with more than 10 toll booths just on our side of the road. There was new building happening everywhere we looked, and the air was dusty. We went to eat in the restaurant next door, in some ways very familiar but also strange, we communicated with lots of smiling and sign language. We were keen to eat rice but there didn't seem to be any, later on we learned that rice was

not seen as a smart food and was served as a last resort. The Chinese were friendly and helpful and brought us tea and food.

Beijing was a combination of a modern city and buildings left over from the past. The street food market included deep fried insects on sticks.

The following day early in the morning we flew to Changsha. We were met by a TV crew who filmed and interviewed members of the party both at the airport and in Liu Yang. The footage was shown on local TV that evening. There were banners welcoming us at the airport, on the side of the coach, outside the hotel. In Liu Yang they put us up at the Education Hotel and kindly chose food for us which wasn't as hot as the usual local food. We were allocated a teacher from the school who we knew as Patrick, who spoke good English to be a guide and look after us while we were there. We also had a member of the communist party with us who hardly spoke but understood everything. In town we walked in the shopping area, used the ATM, bought film DVDs and admired the new McDonalds. The local people followed the visitors but kept a polite distance. Again, everywhere we went there were new buildings.

Tian Lia Bing School was a huge concrete building with classrooms off outdoor walkways. The air could flow from the outside into the classrooms, probably helpful in the hot summer but cold in winter. The whole school lined up, like we would for a fire practice, but this was to watch the raising of the flag. The classrooms were tightly packed with strictly laid out desks piled with text books, 50 or more students in each class. We went into classrooms and talked with the students but it was difficult because although they learned English their teachers didn't really know how it should sound. Most questions were quite simple but I remember being asked how we came to be so rich, we couldn't really communicate enough to discuss Economics. The school focus was very academic, they worked long and hard and their test results were very important. They had some break times when they played table tennis, badminton and football with us.

Many of the students boarded at the school, the boarding rooms were long and thin with 6 metal bunk beds on each wall and an open balcony with washing facilities at the far end. The students' possessions were costly but the facilities were spartan.

During our stay we were also taken out on trips to two other schools in the city, sight seeing the area around and historic sights, and a smart meal in the local government offices with civic dignitaries. The offices were brand new and full of marble. The adults of our party also had a formal meeting with the Head of the School. He was keen to set up a separate area within his school



Chris Potter and pupils sightseeing



Sammy Matthewson



A view of the buildings



Students enjoying dinner



Peter Jacobs, Luke Nuttal, Yuval Haker, Sam Parlett, Sammy Mathewson and Izzi Mathewson

where teachers from KAS might come and work for an extended time and bring a bit of KAS to TJB. Later on, one of our art teachers did visit for a term but the difference in approach between the two schools was huge. The Chinese students were driven by the need to succeed in academic exams, get a good university place and support their families. This was during the one child policy so almost all couples only had one child and the future of the family was invested in them. The children were given a great deal of attention but also put under great pressure.

Towards the end of the visit there was a huge concert. We had known there was to be a concert and so the students who played instruments had prepared performances, many in groups. We didn't bring instruments so they were lent by the school which was difficult. On the night it was a much larger event than I had imagined. 2,000 people in the two tier school hall and cameras filming for the TV. The students from the two countries gave alternating performances. There were some very dramatic dance performances, particularly one which has always stayed with me where a huge red flag was passed from hand to hand during the course of the dance, each holder faded away but the flag stayed. Our students were brave and confident even though it must have been very unnerving. I remember my little daughter playing

piano and a TV cameraman climbing on stage to lean over her and film her fingers.

One night we went to stay with local families. Our family lived in a flat which was not large, but they were clearly quite well off (as many of the pupils' families were) they gave us sea food for supper and Liu Yang is a long way from the sea.

On our final night there was a fantastic fireworks display. There were many firework factories in the area and they clearly knew what they were doing.

After 7 days we said goodbye and flew back to Beijing. Back in Beijing we felt more confident than we had done when we first arrived. We had a few days and we visited the Forbidden City, Tiananmen Square, the Summer Palace and the Great Wall. We went shopping and just walked in the streets.

It was an amazing experience which I wasn't really prepared for and even now seems almost like a dream. I was left feeling very warmly towards the Chinese people we had met."

Diane Greenberg left a wonderful comment on Instagram about the return visit "Memories.... I didn't go on the trip but had the Chinese Headmaster and 2 female teachers staying at our house. He kept asking who our Head was as he couldn't accept it was Dawn, a woman!"

Paul Moore (OA 2009) wrote: "Just saw your post about the KAS trip to China... I was on that. I remember it



Chris Potter's notebook and the trip's itinerary from March 2005

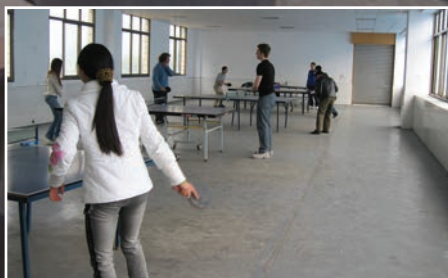
vividly, it was SUCH an experience. I've still got a box full of all the weird and wonderful things I came back with."

Chris Potter popped into the Old Alfridian Office having raided albums and brought in the itinerary from the week spent in Liuyang as well as his notebook complete with notes from the speeches he presented to the Tian Jia Bing school. Snippets about the trips give a real insight into the strong bonds formed with the school.

"The students at TJB and KAS can all benefit from learning to understand each others' culture. The World is a smaller place but without friendship distances can still remain. The King Alfred School considers that every child should be given an opportunity to develop their potential. The school strives to provide an education that makes children confident, tolerant and articulate adults."



Tian Jia Bing School



Building friendships through ping pong



A typical classroom



Getting to grips with chop sticks



The pupils' accommodation during their stay

Connections Series



Olivia and the Class of 2012 on their last day at KAS



David Kovar chatted to Year 13 about life after KAS



Students were captivated by Old Alfredian, Rob's talk

Our Connections Series is going from strength to strength. It is a programme of talks from inspiring Old Alfredians invited back to school to speak to our sixth form about life beyond KAS. Last term saw a highly anticipated visit from **Rob**, an Old Alfredian, currently serving in the military who shared several tips for future success, and his experience of working with the UN Peacekeeping force.

Our students asked insightful questions such as 'What is the gender balance in the army?'; 'In what way has the army changed your moral compass?'; and 'How is class difference in the army distinct from civilian life?'

After half term, we welcomed **Olivia Williams (OA 2014)** who recently graduated from Oxford University and is currently working in the music industry. Olivia discussed useful topics such as decision making and embracing opportunities with current Year 12 pupils. She encouraged them to explore the vast number of subjects on offer at university, and to embrace meeting new people and trying new things. She also gave some great advice about approaching career decisions and how to transfer skills into job opportunities as well as what to look out for at University Open days.

David Kovar (OA 2000) visited Year 13 as part of their form hour in March. David is the Divisional Director of Operations for Surgery, Cancer & Cardiovascular (VSM) at the Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust. He gave an informal and informative talk about decision making, gaining work experience and shared advice on making use of your interests to determine career paths.



Olivia Williams studied French at Oxford University after leaving KAS



Olivia Williams talking to students in the Sixth form Centre

School News

Plant a Tree for 2023

Here at King Alfred School our beautiful wooded grounds are something we're very proud of. Sadly we did lose a large Poplar tree in the recent storms. It had clearly supported a lot of wildlife in its long life and the wood will be used around the school. It will become benches and stools in the camps area, dens and additions to the treehouse.

The circle of life spins quickly at KAS and it was only a week after the storms that Year 2 students and gardening club started planting hedgerow and orchard saplings supplied by the Tree Appeal and The Tree Council Orchards For Schools project.

The saplings will form a new hedgerow along the edge of the Field on the Manor Wood site. They include native species: Crab Apple, Dogwood, Elder, Hornbeam, Rowan, Sloe, Quickthorn and Wild Cherry and will create a haven for wildlife. Our new gardener Andy supervised as the new hedge took shape.

Later that week with the remaining trees, Anna from the KAS Sustainability group and current Year 12 students gave away trees to the KAS community to plant in celebration of the upcoming school's 125th Anniversary in 2023. Trees were given away but donations to the KAS Ukraine fundraising were encouraged! They raised just over £175.



Year 2 learn from KAS gardener, Andy how to plant the trees



Robert joined Year 2 to help with the tree planting proceedings



Year 12 at the stall they set up to give out the trees



Pupils get stuck into planting



Native trees for planting at Manor Wood

Staff Farewell

Dennis Cooke in Lower School retired at Easter.

Dennis has worked at KAS for an incredible 33 years. He was appointed in September 1989 as a Lower School Class Teaching Assistant by Mike Young - Head of Lower School - and Francis Moran - Head of KAS.

Throughout his career at KAS, Dennis has skilfully supported individual Lower School children and has been an invaluable member of Lower School camps for many years, driving the minibus and providing back-up when needed. In 2014, Dennis stepped into Jennie Ingram's shoes in the pivotal role of Year 6

Camp Quartermaster.

A talented Classical and Spanish guitar player, Dennis has performed in Lower School Callovers, inspiring children to take up the guitar. In the Lower School, he is known as the King of Sudoku and a master of both cryptic and word knowledge crosswords; he is the true nonpareil of vocabulary.

Dennis has been a familiar sight cycling to school on his bike - whatever the weather; he is a keen ecology and conservation supporter, and enjoys dancing in his free time. Now he has made the decision to retire, his plans for the future include travelling and developing a piece of land outside his garden.



Dennis Cooke

Education on the Move

On Saturday 19th March The King Alfred School Society and campaign group Rethinking Assessment hosted the 'Education on the Move' conference bringing together voices from across the UK to share ideas on how our education system needs to change.

Conference delegates came from a range of backgrounds and all shared the desire to see change, while acknowledging the difficulties in finding a way to accurately record and represent a student's learning journey.

Researcher and educator Professor Bill Lucas summed up the day saying, "A very broad group of thinkers, parents, employers, educators, students, researchers came together today, all convinced that in different ways we have something of a curriculum emergency and we need to radically rethink the way we evidence the full range of young people's strengths."

Steve Yeomans from outdoor nursery, 'Into The Woods' felt positive about the future, "I find it really reassuring to see people out here doing really progressive things. I didn't know that some schools are already moving away from GCSEs and that's inspiring."

Speakers and delegates

spent time discussing the issues and making connections in the spring sunshine, sharing ideas of how to work towards change for the benefit of all students.

Co-organiser and Deputy Head of The King Alfred School Al McConville said,

"It's been great to host this amazing group of people and there is a real

feeling here today that we are building the momentum for real change to happen. Here at The King Alfred School we are already trialling a new way of delivering a more interdisciplinary curriculum in Years 6-8 and want to start taking the learnings from that, and from speakers we've heard today, into the GCSE years."

You can read the full article on the school website **Education Reform Up For Discussion | King Alfred School**



Robert Lobatto opens the Education on the Move conference

KAS Community Support for Ukraine

As a school community we pride ourselves on helping others whenever and wherever we can. The news of war in Ukraine was something we knew we had to respond to and the students, staff and parents of King Alfred all felt the need to help.

Ljudmila and Ivanna from our amazing cleaning team are both from Ukraine and (with help from school Nurse, Magda) asked us to support the efforts of their Ukrainian community in the UK who were sending items to their home country which were urgently needed. Students helped to



Students help to sort donations

sort and pack the donations (of which there were many!) Through their direct contact with volunteers on the ground, the KAS community was able to send a van load of vital resources including first aid kits, stretchers, bandages, medical supplies, toiletries and small electrical items.

In Manor Wood, Lower School students planned a fundraising fete and concert where village fair style games

and stalls were manned by students during morning and afternoon sessions alongside a concert by Year 5 band Galaxy.

Over on Ivy Wood the youngest members of our community brought in all the change they could find for a coin trail. They placed their coins in a long line to see how far their fundraising could reach.

Together the two events raised over £3471 which was donated to East Europe Foundation's Shelter Project.



Pupils in Ivy Wood made a coin trail

Obituaries

Genna Aboody née Lucas



Genna Aboody née Lucas

My sister **Genna Aboody née Lucas (OA 1997)** tragically died on 12th January this year of cancer aged forty two. Genna attended KAS between the years of 1989 until 1997 (10 - 18 years old). Upon starting KAS, Genna was a little insecure and lacking in confidence. However, over the next decade she found a determination and a will to succeed which enabled her to blossom and flourish. KAS had the nurturing environment that she needed. Genna spent most of her teenage years playing competitive tennis. She was a regular representing Middlesex County and played for South East England. Her skills gave her the opportunity to represent GB at the Maccabiah games which gave her wonderful opportunities to express herself, meet new people and experience the world. And through these teenage years blossomed a more confident and self-assured person with the kindest of hearts and warmest of smiles. It was also through playing tennis which brought her together with Jack - a match which eventually turned to love, marriage and two lovely children.

So, with a love of sports (although not so much for science) Genna went to university and studied both Sports Science and Physiotherapy. With 2 degrees, she was now ready for a career and joined Barnett, Enfield and Haringey NHS Trust as a community physiotherapist. It was here that she served the community for nearly 20

years caring with huge compassion, empathy and dedication for the elderly and housebound; specialising in mobility and the prevention of falls. Genna always felt she didn't have enough time with her patients and it says so much about her that she would spend extra time with them at the expense of her personal time, and her paperwork which, as someone with dyslexia, was particularly challenging.

Genna was on the front line throughout the first lockdown, bravely treating patients who had been prematurely discharged home.

And so Genna's illness, painful for so many reasons, was most painful as it gradually depleted her ability to be the ever-present, dedicated and loving mother and family member that we all knew. Genna was so courageous and gracious through her illness. She took each phase as a new challenge and always found the hope that kept her and our spirits going.

When we think of Genna we think of a beautiful, gentle soul. She was always genuine, always honest, always friendly, welcoming, hardworking, fun, patient and kind. She was a quiet hero, never seeking the limelight, never needing credit. She held an inner strength which belied her soft outward persona. Her laugh and giggle was infectious and this is the sound of Genna that will stay with us. Genna is an unfathomable loss to her family, friends and community.

Roly Boissevain

17th July 1931 – 21st February 2007

Roly died in 2007 of Motor Neurone Disease.

We sent Roland a Christmas card in December 2021 made by one of the Year 6 pupils. Trish, Roly's widow kindly got in touch and explained that Roly would have loved receiving it and almost certainly would have relished the opportunity to have responded with a witty letter.

Born in 1931, Roly attended KAS before the war and his family then moved away and rented a cottage in the country during the war. She described Roly as having been quite mischievous and recalls a tale of where he took it upon himself to snip a little girl's plaits off. After his new village school he was sent to Collyers School in Horsham.

The family returned to London and Roly went to Business College. He then went into the family business, a very successful commercial lighting company. The factory was based near Heathrow.

He married Erika in 1956, she sadly died of cancer in 1972 leaving 3 children, 2 girls and a boy. Trish married him in 1975 bringing a stepson into the family. Roly was a loving and wonderful father to all four children.

When Trish moved after Roly died, the postman has continued to deliver the OA newsletters to her.

We discussed at length Roly's illness, MND and it's devastating effect on those it leaves behind but also how he showed a true strength of character and never asked 'Why me?'

Trish described him as a very special person with great wit and how he often spoke of KAS.



Roly Boissevain

OAs Notice Board

Reunion:

Saturday 17th September 2022

Love music? Did you study music or learn to play an instrument at KAS? Were you in a band or choir? If the answer to any of these is yes, then this reunion is particularly for you. We will be gathering music teachers past and present and musical Old Alfredians for what promises to be a lovely afternoon at the school. Please email oa@kingalfred.org.uk to register your interest.

Class Reunion:

Saturday 17th September 2022

Classes of 1970 to 1972

Please email oa@kingalfred.org.uk to register interest in attending. Invitations to follow.

Dates for your diary:

KASonbury

Saturday 2nd July 2022

All Old Alfredians and Former Staff are welcome. Booking is essential and more details will follow by email.

KAS Fireworks

Saturday 12th November 2022

A Day For Dawn Saturday 7th May 2022



Old Alfredians are invited to join us to commemorate Dawn Moore. From 12.30pm, with speeches at 1.30pm, until 3.30pm. At the King Alfred School
Please RSVP by emailing oa@kingalfred.org.uk

Year Group Reunions

Following on from the success of last year's class reunions please do let us know if we can help to gather your year group back at KAS in person this September.

Please email Heather at oa@kingalfred.org.uk

New College of Speech and Drama Reunion

Saturday 25th June 2022 – The Phoenix Theatre

Don't miss our Old Alfredian communications

OA emails, invitations and newsletters are delivered predominantly by email. Please add oa@kingalfred.org.uk to your Contacts to ensure their safe delivery.

If you aren't receiving our emails or you have moved, please update us with your contact details:
<https://www.kingalfred.org.uk/old-alfredians/old-alfredians-contact-form/>

Recent Leavers Drinks We need your feedback!!

Are you the Class of 2019, 2020 or 2021?

We are proposing Tuesday 20th December 2022 as a date for the Recent Leavers Drinks this year.

Would this date work for you?

Where would you prefer? Bull & Bush or KAS?

Let's Talk Sustainability at The Phoenix Theatre: Rescheduled date to be confirmed



We are delighted to be launching a new series of talks to take place in the Phoenix Theatre.

Our inaugural talk will be delivered by Old Alfredian, Carol Essex (OA 1988).

Carol has more than 25 years experience in international corporate and brand communications – a job that helps shape reputations, relationships, and sometimes change business practices for the better. She has held senior

leadership positions at The Coca-Cola Company in Europe, Africa, Middle East and Asia. During that time, Carol has led

the company's response to emerging issues that impact communities and society and in turn the company's business.

She was selected to be the first ever corporate representative to visit Antarctica – a life changing journey that shaped her view of the environmental crisis and the need for companies and people to make positive changes in their lives.

It is this first-hand experience that has fuelled her passion to use the strength, influence and reach of a company to do good – for both people and society.

Students, Parents, Old Alfredians, Past Parents and Staff are all welcome.

Old Alfredians
&
Development Office

Tamlyn Worrall,
Development Director

Heather Roberts,
Development and Old Alfredian Officer



@oldalfredians



@OldAlfredians



@thekingalfredschool



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