

ST MARY'S HALL ASSOCIATION

Newsletter

No 102

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EDITORIAL

Whether you believe the year 2000 to be the last year of the old millennium or the first year of the new, I hope it has been a happy and fulfilling one for all SMHA members.

Perhaps the most fulfilling moment for the Association was the May 2000 reunion at the school. Over 130 members rallied for an excellent weekend in scorching sunshine. Photos and memorabilia, tours of the school and the boarding houses (including the now privately-owned Babington House), excellent food, a moving thanksgiving service in the chapel, the dedication of the Association's gift of flag-pole and flags, and above all, plenty of time to reminisce and catch up with old friends, made this a very special and memorable weekend. Our special thanks go to Sue Meek and all her staff, and to Association Vice Chairman Penny Gardiner (Buck), for the tremendous hard work they put in to make this such a success. For those of you who couldn't make it, there is a photo report on pages 18-19.

By contrast, the September reunion was, literally, a non-event. Atrocious gales and fuel shortages combined to force us to postpone it and, with no vacant slot in the school calendar, postponement became cancellation. The AGM will now take place at the next reunion, at the School on 12 May 2001. We look forward to seeing many of you there.

In June the school was very grateful to receive from the executors of the late Helen Thompson (née Boswell) a package of SMH memorabilia. Included were some wonderful old photographs, school magazines and a number of press cuttings relating to the SMH centenary in 1936. These are items that might well have been thrown away as being of no interest, but to the school they are indeed valuable. May we prompt other SMHA members to forward memorabilia they no longer wish to keep, or at least to make some testamentary provision to this effect. Mrs Sue Carnochan, who recently retired from teaching at SMH, has taken over the post of School Archivist, and would welcome additions to the School's archives.

One problem with archive material is that photographs rarely carry notes identifying those featured. Notably, none of the official school photos is accompanied by a list of staff and pupils portrayed. At the 2000 Reunion, we embarked on a project to identify as many people as possible in the 1959 school photo, and by the end of the day, over half those in the picture had been named. The people in the photos have been numbered from left to right along each row, starting with the back row and working forwards. If any of you still have your school photo to hand, and can identify yourself and your contemporaries, please let either the School or the Association know.

Kim Cook
Hon Editor

HEADMISTRESS'S LETTER

Dear Friends

This Autumn Term has been besieged by a series of unprecedented crises; a fuel shortage, which unfortunately caused the cancellation of the SMHA Reunion in September and which nearly succeeded in closing the School; a virulent 'flu bug which nearly succeeded in closing the School; torrential rain and flooding which encroached on the School and nearly prevented pupils coming to School; then, after pestilence and flood, we began to imagine that, in true Old Testament tradition, perhaps we should prepare ourselves for, say, a plague of locusts - and then, sure enough, in came the Inspectors! You will all be relieved to hear that they, like the earlier events, most definitely have not succeeded in closing the School! Staff and pupils have emerged from the experience to tell the tale, affirmed and looking forward to a bright, positive future at St Mary's Hall. Although I cannot yet divulge the findings of the Report, the Inspectors' comments have been encouraging. Mr Wells even had enough energy to lead a most fascinating trip to Moscow and St Petersburg during half-term week. He is to be commended for his resilience! As I said in my beginning-of-term letter to parents, it takes more than a few crises to dampen our spirits when the School is celebrating more excellent public examination results.

At A-level, the pass rate was 98%. An outstanding 60% of grades were A or B and in thirteen subjects there was a 100% pass rate. 80% of our Upper Sixth students gained entry to their first choice of college or university. 87% of the year group will be going on to further education.

The School has had a record of steady achievement at GCSE too. This year, there was an outstanding number of A* and A grades - in all, 43% of the total. The overall pass rate at C grade and above was 97%, and all those in Year 11 gained at least 5 A* - C grades. There was a 100% pass rate at C and above in GCSE Mathematics and English.

Lower Sixth A-level mathematicians have also excelled themselves. They sat a total of 32 A-level modules during the year; 16 of these results were above 90% and of these, 11 students gained full marks. We congratulate them and Mrs Crocker and the Mathematics Department on these outstanding results.

Also in Mathematics, in Year 9 Laura Higson and Sonal Desai won Gold and Silver Awards respectively in the Intermediate Mathematical Challenge. They were both invited to take part in the European Competition, where Laura gained a Certificate of Distinction.

Alongside academic achievement, we celebrate success in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, in Young Enterprise, in Music, PE and

Drama. In addition, nearly £5,000 was raised for charity last year, through special events, mufti days, cake and sweet sales and a talent contest.

The PE Department has had a most successful year under the leadership of Miss Whittaker. The joint ski trip with St Leonard's, Mayfield to Alpe D'Huez was greatly enjoyed; and we have celebrated the triumphs of the Under-16 Hockey Team members who won all but two of their games at the National Schools' Tournament. They missed going through to the semi-finals by 1 point. The same team, together with the Under-13 Netball VII, got through to the third round of the Sussex Knock-Out Cup; and in our first ever volleyball match we won convincingly against Brighton and Hove High School.

Lucie Marchant mentions below our success in athletics. We are delighted that several girls are representing the county, both in athletics and hockey.

The standard of the House Play Competition has also improved markedly over the past few years. Mrs Ginny Whitelaw, Head of Drama at Benenden School, adjudicated the competition and awarded first prize to Chichester House for their production *Burn Around the Crem* - directed by Sarah Sage and Sarah Hatherly. The award for Best Actress was shared between Jessica Warner as Alice in the Babington House production of *Alice in Wonderland* and Amy Blackburn as Lloyd the Lad in the Bristol House production of *The Demon Headmaster*. Runner-up was Adelaide House with *Dark Horses*, directed by Lauren Lansdowne and Saphy Ali. We invited parents to the Dress Rehearsal for the first time this year, and I know they appreciated seeing for themselves what can be achieved with just 'bare boards and a passion'.

We were delighted that last year's Young Enterprise company, '@it' reached the **Finals** of the Challenge this year. Their products were attractive and effectively marketed and even caught the attention of the Evening Argus, which is success indeed. They were rewarded by winning the Trophy for Best Accounts and a cheque for £50.00 at the presentation evening at Roedean.

The biennial cultural trip to Greece took place in April. This is always greatly enjoyed and St Mary's Hall was the first British school to visit the ancient mining town of Thorikos at Laurium. There they saw unique silver ore washing tables and the only rectangular ancient theatre in

existence. My thanks as always to Mrs Thomason for her organisation of such a fascinating expedition.

Mrs Vincent-Gill, Head of the Modern Languages Department, accompanied pupils on the annual French exchange to the Lycée St Louis Gonzague in Paris, and Year 6 and 7 pupils again enjoyed a full activity week at Le Château de la Baudonnière in Normandy - despite torrential rain and much French mud!

The Geography Department, under the leadership of Mrs Ridge, has continued to be 'out and about' this year, and all year groups have been involved in field work. The Year 10 GCSE group visited Orielton Residential Field Centre in South Pembrokeshire to study coastal processes, microclimates and urban development. A-level students joined other Sixth Formers at Juniper Hall in Surrey in field-work investigations. Year 7 investigated buildings and services in Firle, and land use of the chalk escarpment. Year 8 visited the Body Shop in Littlehampton. The Geography and Religious Studies departments joined forces to organise a most stimulating 'Development Issues' Forum for Year 9, with a speaker from Christian Aid.

Miss Lovell and the Religious Studies Department have also led visits to the Sikh Gurdwara in Crawley, the Mosque in Regents Park, and to Canterbury Cathedral. Theatre visits with Mrs Fincham have included the Japanese style production of *King Lear* at the National Theatre, and *The Merchant of Venice* by the Royal Shakespeare Company at the Barbican.

The Art Department remains a jewel in the St Mary's Hall crown, thanks to the inspiration of Mrs Lock and Mrs Abbott. We were thrilled to have had the work of two girls selected for the Independent Schools' Art and Design Exhibition in the Mall Galleries, Carlton Terrace. Only two Sussex schools were chosen - St Mary's Hall and St Leonard's, Mayfield - so it was indeed a great honour. Laura Muzzall exhibited two paintings and we were delighted that a piece of ceramics by Jennifer Tsang was also selected.

This year for the first time, our Year 11 pupils have had the opportunity to undertake work experience after their GCSE examinations. I am most indebted to our Careers Adviser, Mrs Judy Hollands, and to many parents for helping to make this opportunity possible. Thirty-two students successfully completed work experience in a wide variety of employment.

For example, Amie Noone was involved in research at the Cell Mutation Unit at Sussex University, Bianca Southwell and Julia Bezanson joined an archaeological dig at Clay Hill. Michelle Moloney shadowed the Clerk of Lewes Magistrates Court, and Kerrie Trembling became a fitness instructor at the David Lloyd Centre; Francesca Parker joined a firm of architects, Alexia Fleming worked at Drusilla's Zoo, and Zulehka Waheed assisted at a doctor's surgery. This is to name but a few. As you can imagine, Year 11 returned to school with many a tale to tell, but no-one doubted the value of that snapshot experience of life in the work-place. Year 9 parents assisted with the 'Take Your Daughters to Work Day' in the summer. Needless to say, if any SMHA member would be willing to offer work experience in June, I should be most grateful to hear from you.

The Millennium Reunion was a very special occasion. It was wonderful to welcome back so many of you from as far afield as America, Australia and New Zealand. Everyone's name was recorded in Pamela James' Visitors' Book and we all spent a very happy week-end together, culminating in the blessing of the St Mary's Hall flag and flagpole on the terrace. Warm thanks to you all for your Millennium gift. We can now quite literally 'fly the flag' for St Mary's Hall!

Last Summer we bade farewell to several members of staff. Five colleagues retired and seven moved on to new posts or took up challenges other than teaching.

Mrs Miles taught Latin at St Mary's Hall from 1998 on a part-time basis. She has gone to Burgess Hill School to take up a full-time post there.

Miss Easterbrook has moved to Harrogate Ladies' College as Housemistress and teacher of PE, after four years in the PE Department.

Mrs Wales joined the Modern Languages Department in September 1995 to teach French. Mrs Wales has left us to spend more time with her family and to devote more time to her musical commitments, but it was good to see her back at the School for Speech Day.

Mrs Lewis retired after six years as Head of the Physics Department. Mrs Lewis was also our official School Photographer and you will remember her gift for 'capturing the moment'.

Mrs Carnochan has also retired, but fortunately has remained a regular visitor as she has taken over from Mrs Jean Roberts as our School Archivist. Mrs Carnochan, who joined St Mary's Hall in September 1994

to teach History, part-time, was also responsible for organising several very successful 'Victorian Days' in the Senior School.

Mrs Bryant, who joined in September 1990 to teach in Elliott House, has retired after ten years at St Mary's Hall.

Mrs Scandian, who taught Spanish from September 1989, has taken early retirement to spend more time with her family.

Mrs Sylvia Lynton retired after 22 years teaching Art. Mrs Lynton also made a highly-valued contribution to the English Department, and to teaching ESL.

After a valiant 24 years teaching Chemistry and Physics, **Mrs Boddington** left St Mary's Hall in the Summer for a very well-deserved retirement. I am pleased to report that she was able to take an extended holiday in November.

I wish to take this opportunity to acknowledge their invaluable contributions to the School - and especially to Mrs Lynton and Mrs Boddington for their long and dedicated service. I hope they will all join us at future SMHA Reunions. Mrs Boddington has not missed an event to date!

In the Summer holidays, I was fortunate to have the opportunity to visit the Far East. On the way home my daughter and I spent a few days in Hong Kong and were pleased to host a reception for Hong Kong and mainland Chinese students and their parents. It was a very happy occasion and St Mary's Hall pupils were most gracious in helping me communicate with their families - there was much smiling, bowing and shaking of hands (my Cantonese and Mandarin are non-existent!)

As I write, we are looking forward to the end-of-term festivities, including Mr Wells' production of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (in Japanese Kabuki style!), which promises to be an unusual and imaginative interpretation; and Mr Jay's presentation of *A Ceremony of Carols* by Benjamin Britten by candlelight with harp accompaniment, taking place between the Christmas Concert and the Carol Service.

Life continues to be full and very rich at St Mary's Hall. Do visit us in 2001 - we are always delighted to welcome you back.

With warmest wishes to you all.

Sue Meek
November 2000

HEAD GIRL'S REPORT

We began the new millennium with the great success of our first-ever poetry anthology, *Light Years*, after much hard work by Mrs Fincham.

The English Department has also been busy organising a very colourful and exciting Book Day, with everyone coming to School dressed as their favourite character. This day, as well as encouraging people to read, raised money by means of a sponsored read. The benefiting charity, called Listening Books, provides audio books to anyone unable to read for any reason, whether illness or physical disability.

Sporting achievement is abundant, with the Under-16 IX getting through to the semi-finals of the National Schools Hockey Tournament . Two girls, Kerrie Trembling and Vivian Onokah, were chosen to represent Sussex Schools for athletics; and three girls, Rokhsana and Atousa Saddighzadeh and Kirsty Carr, were selected for County hockey teams. We were also very pleased that the Under-15 Rounders Team were undefeated last season. As I write this, we have two tennis teams ball-girling for the Samsung Open Tennis Tournament at the Brighton Centre. Consequently, we have some rather excited girls with stories of meeting Greg Rudeski!

Now we look forward to the end of term and this year's School Play. Mr Wells has chosen William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* with a Japanese setting. This promises to be an exciting piece of theatre with an interesting mixture of East and West.

On behalf of all the pupils of St Mary's Hall, I send you greetings and good wishes.

Lucie Marchant
Head Girl, 2000-2001

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RESEARCH PROJECT

Mrs Deborah Langham, whose daughter is a pupil at SMH, is reading for a part-time MA in Life History Research, and with the support of the school is researching aspects of the school's history. Deborah would particularly welcome information from former pupils, and would be grateful for any information Association members might be able to give her. If you would like to be involved, please make contact through one of the Association Committee members.

LETTER FROM OLIVE LESLIE

Dear SMHA Members

My life ticks over busily as usual, with far more holidays than I deserve, thanks to my large and generous family. I still give time to various organisations and to my local church, but I do try to pace myself more as time goes by.

My personal family is small - one son, now a London University professor. That is a great honour, given to very few medical people. He is kept busy with his clinical work and his research projects which take him to many parts of the world. My two grandsons are at boarding school and doing well academically and in sports. The younger one is also a competent musician and still has a lovely voice.

Recently I was in Brighton en route for another holiday and hoping to get to the SMHA supper - sadly cancelled. However, the visit wasn't wasted, since I had arranged to meet two Old Girls, plus one from a previous school, now all three friends because their sons attend the same prep school. They took me out for dinner in Hove and we had great fun mulling over old times.

At last I have a little Amstrad e-mailer, thanks initially to the bullying of various friends! The final catalyst was a call from Anne Stapleton (Gay Gosnell to some of you), who told me she has one and finds it 'magic'. Well I agree! My e-mail address is <horsefair@amserve.net>.

I know there will be many tributes to Jack Liddell, who was not only a wonderful teacher, bringing fun to a subject many fear, but also an outstanding form master and a splendidly upright human being. We could all learn a lesson in loyalty from him.

Let us hope many of us will meet at the SMHA lunch in the spring.

Best wishes from

Olive Leslie
Headmistress, 1973-1981

SMH e-mail COMMUNITY

SMHA members with internet access are reminded that they can keep in touch via the SMH e-mail Community. Simply e-mail your full name, school surname and dates at SMH to penelope.gardiner@btinternet.com

LETTER FROM PAMELA JAMES

Dear Friends

Two years ago, bearing in mind that one thing all SMHA members have in common is that they lived for at least some time in Brighton, I wrote to you about the fire in September 1998 which had seemingly destroyed the Royal Albion Hotel; and about the progress of the restoration of the West Pier. Since the Royal Albion dates from 1826 and the West Pier from 1866, I can safely say that all existing SMHA members must have known these Brighton landmarks!

The Royal Albion, on its magnificent site curving round from the Steine to the sea-front, opposite the Palace Pier, has been magnificently restored and was reopened in September 2000. I haven't yet been inside, though I am told that the restoration has been extremely well done, and I know from first-hand observation that the outside looks splendid. It is very good to have the Royal Albion, known affectionately as the 'Grand Old Lady' gracing that corner once again.

Those who have been in Brighton recently may think that in contrast, no progress has been made in the restoration of the West Pier. However, they would be wrong. Between March and August 1999 work took place to strengthen the sub-structure of the pier and to prepare for the full restoration. Although the timetable has slipped a little (understandable in a project of such complexity), it is now hoped that the full restoration will start in Spring 2001. Those of you who were taught by Lady Bryson (SMH 1974-85) may be interested to know that her husband, Admiral Sir Lindsay Bryson, is Chairman of the West Pier Trust. I shall report further!

A less happy story is the imminent closure of Hannington's department store in North Street. Hannington's was first opened in 1808, so again, I can be sure that all SMHA members will know it. At the time of writing (October 2000), news of the closure has only just broken, and as yet there are no details of what will happen to the building.

These may seem odd items of news to give you, but I find it interesting to think that at least two of these features of the Brighton landscape - Hannington's (1808) and the Royal Albion (1826) - would have been known to **all** past members of St Mary's Hall, and the West Pier (1866) to most. They do therefore provide a link between all past members of the school and all present ones. Although in many ways the life of pupils today is very different from that of pupils who attended in the nineteenth century, I like to think that there is an enduring element, too, linking the girls in the early days of St Mary's Hall who may have bought gingerbread from the gingerbread booths on the Chain Pier, to those who may have

enjoyed the ‘grand display of fireworks’ at the opening of the West Pier, and to the girls of today. And, though the fashions may be very different and the terminology may have changed, I am sure that the pastime of promenading (walking about in the town, and especially originally on the pier and promenade to show off one’s clothes and to meet people) is one that has not changed in essence!

With affectionate and best wishes to you all

Pamela James

Headmistress 1992-97

Sadly, soon after this letter was written, Pamela James took a bad fall while on her way to Evensong one Sunday evening. The injury proved to be much more severe than was first appreciated, and despite bones being set, grafts taken, and a succession of operations, the leg failed to heal. Eventually, Mrs James had to have the leg amputated below the knee, and is currently awaiting surgery to repair damage to her arm caused by the failed graft.

Your Editor has spoken to Mrs James, who sounds her usual bright, confident and determined self, using a wheelchair as little as possible, and walking with the aid of a frame as much as possible. I am sure all SMHA members will join me in wishing her success with the ongoing treatment, and a swift return to full mobility.

SMHA 2000 REUNION

I wonder how many of us, when the time came to leave SMH, made fervent promises to meet up at a set time and place. Whether the arrangement was for five or ten years ahead, or for the anniversary of the exam year, at the time most of us were determined to honour the reunion.

In practice, such reunions usually fail to materialise – but I know ours did!. The pressures of study, work, family and other commitments take priority, and the years slip by. A few stay in touch, but many more don't, and you end up wondering 'whatever happened to . . .'.

Until an event like SMHA 2000! After many months of planning, this special reunion was a resounding success, and the weather was superb. Over 130 former pupils of SMH gathered at the school in May 2000 to find out what really had happened to old friends and acquaintances, and to see how the school had developed since their days.

Initially people gathered in the hall to mingle and chat over a glass of wine, to browse through souvenirs and find themselves and their friends in schooldays photographs. As a result of trying to identify people in archive photos, we managed to name over half of those featured in the 1959 school photo.

Former pupils, ranging in age from 18–84, gasped in delight and amazement as they met up again with people they hadn't seen for years. Our group of seven was together for the first time since 1959! Carol Pink (Mrs O'Connor) and Amy Easter (Mrs Ayling), both from Worthing, Rowan Cawkell (Mrs Fookes) from Rye, and your Editor (from Tenterden), had had easy journeys compared with Sarah Boyd (Mrs Mylne) from Scotland. But even this paled into insignificance compared with the journeys of Shirley Read-Jahn from California, her sister Pam (Mrs Bailey) from Sydney, Australia, and Anne Bearne (Mrs Bell) from Auckland, NZ!

The amazing thing was that we all picked up again as though it had been yesterday! The chat continued throughout a delicious ploughman's lunch - and how we all marvelled at the tremendous improvement in the catering arrangements, recalling the inevitable fried bread breakfasts and the universally loathed macaroni cheese of the 1950s!

After lunch there was plenty of time to go on a guided tour of the school. The old Common Room is now almost unrecognisable, the inner section having been turned into a corridor with classrooms leading off, their windows overlooking the top of the drive. The development of the science laboratories, and the conversion of old dingy basement cloakrooms into a

light and airy dining hall were all favourably commented on. The old ground-floor dining room is now staff quarters.

A stroll outside brought us to the former school 'San', with its memories of coughs and colds (who still remembers the old gargle-and-spit, gargle-and-swallow and creosote queues?), liniment for sports injuries, the 'dis-bed' for the really poorly, and the regular 'signing the book' visits. No longer housing the sick, this building has been converted into a vibrant Art Department, and we all admired the superb quality of work.

Comments on the (comparatively) new Venn House building, where the hard tennis courts used to be, were not all so favourable. While accepting that it serves its purposes excellently, many SMHA members would have preferred to see an exterior more in keeping with the main school building. The school swimming pool was put to good use, as was the far field, where the more energetic played rounders.

For boarders, the highlight of the tour was a chance to visit again St Hilary in Sussex Square and the former Babington House in Chichester Terrace. Babington is now in private ownership, and we were all very grateful to the present owners for allowing us to tour their homes. The tour of St Hilary brought back memories of midnight feasts and trips through the secret passage - but it seems that none of today's pupils or staff know where it is!

After that it was time to prepare for a superb evening with a delicious meal, good music and an exciting casino night, before saying farewell to old friends.

A few were able to stay in the area overnight, in many cases thanks to the hospitality of the PSA. These, and a few others who hadn't been able to come for the Saturday, gathered with present pupils in St Mark's chapel for a service of thanksgiving and commemoration.

This was undoubtedly the most moving part of the weekend. The service was led by Sue Meek and Rev Colin Midlane, the School Chaplain, and the organist was Charles Macdonald of Sussex University. Many had forgotten how the acoustics of St Mark's make the music soar - and what excellent music it was! Our Vice President Penny Buck (Mrs Gardiner) read from Acts 4: 5-12, and the Chaplain read from John 10:11-18. Mrs Meek's address summed up so much of what we had been thinking, of the values and friendships formed at school, and their importance throughout life.

As the last notes of the organ died away, we were out again in the sunshine, gathered on the terrace to unfurl the new school flag presented to

the school by SMHA, and to witness its dedication by the Chaplain. Sadly, it couldn't be hoisted on the new flagpole, as planning consent had been delayed, but we look forward to seeing the flag flying (literally) when we return in May. Commemorative photographs were taken, and after light refreshments we dispersed and made our way home.

But that wasn't really the end, for friendships and acquaintances renewed then have been kept up. Many who had lost touch with the school have now joined (or rejoined) SMHA, and through e-mails, the Newsletter, visits and phone calls we have learned anew that friendships forged at school can withstand even 50 years separation!

For those of you who couldn't make it to the 2000 reunion, I hope you will be encouraged to come to SMH on 12 May 2001. Even those whose memories of school days were not entirely happy, found the reunion more fun than they could have believed possible, while those who had thoroughly enjoyed school were not disappointed when they returned. The many letters and e-mails of thanks show just how much everyone enjoyed themselves, and how much all the hard work and organisation, particularly by Sue Meek and Penny Gardiner, was really appreciated.

Kim Kimmins (Mrs Cook)

NEWS

News has been divided into sections - visits from overseas,, and news of those at SMH after 1945. In each section, news has been collated in alphabetical order of names by which the people concerned were known at school, with current surname in brackets. This has been done at the request of many readers, in order to make it easier to find information about old friends.

Anne Bearne (Mrs Bell) visited SMH from her home in Whangaparaoa, New Zealand, for the 2001 reunion. Anne (1955-59) was fresh from the highly successful Embroidery 2000 she had organised in Auckland just a few weeks previously. This was Anne's first visit to SMH in many years, and she was delighted to be able to revisit Babington, her old boarding house, as well as noting the many changes within the main school building.

Pam Read-Jahn (Mrs Bailey) and her sister **Shirley** were also among the overseas visitors welcomed for the 2000 Reunion. Pam had travelled from Sydney, Australia, and Shirley from San Francisco, and both stayed with **Rowan Cawkell** (Mrs Fookes) at her home near Rye.

Gabrielle Barton (Mrs Taylor) wrote from her home in Wester Ross with memories of her time in Hebbert House. She recalled that 'it opened its doors for the first time when I started, and closed them four years later when I left!' Gabrielle was sorry not to be able to come to the 2000 Reunion, as 'age and distance make it too difficult', but she did contribute to the Millennium Flag Pole Fund.

Mary Chalmers (Mrs Scully) was very sorry not to be able to come to the Grand Reunion in May, but was very involved in caring for her brother, aged 93 and sister aged 90. However, Mary hopes very much to be able to attend the next reunion.

Juliet Stebbing (Mrs Littlewood) wrote from Bradford on Avon of her regret at not being able to attend the 2000 Reunion. Unfortunately her husband has been quite unwell, and she was unable to leave him, but she sent her best wishes.

Before setting off on holiday to the US with **Nicky Currie** to visit **Shana Freshley**, **Libby Ager** (Mrs Thompson) managed to meet up with **Susan Harris** (Mrs Roller) (qv) for a sentimental hamburger dinner at Sampson's Restaurant, close to SMH.

Jane Alsop (Mrs Wharton) wrote from East Grinstead to congratulate all those who helped organise the May reunion, and to say thank-you for a most enjoyable day.

Katyana Appleton (1981-1984) is a dancer with the English National Ballet.

Liz Baker (Mrs Caudle) greatly enjoyed the 2000 Reunion, which she attended along with **Jenny Riley** (qv)

Anne Barr (Mrs Carr-Hill) lives in Battersea with husband Martin and son Oliver, aged two. Anne (1975-81) works at the Lawn Tennis Association, so she and Martin play lots of tennis, as well as playing for a local hockey team every weekend. Anne's younger sister **Carole** (Mrs Walker) with husband Eric and sons Alex, four, and Tommy, aged two, have moved from their former home in Ottawa and now live on the outskirts of Toronto. As the weather is less extreme, they no longer have to dig themselves out of the snow every time they leave their house in the winter! Carole (1977-83) works part-time for Mercedes.

Bianca Berry (1982-85) is working in Kemp Town and is due to be married this year.

Sarah Boyd (Mrs Mylne) travelled from her home in the Scottish borders to attend the 2000 reunion where she enjoyed meeting up with **Anne Bearne** (Mrs Bell), **Rowan Cawkell** (Mrs Fookes), **Amy Easter** (Mrs Ayling), **Kim Kimmins** (Mrs Cook), **Carol Pink** (Mrs O'Connor), **Pam Read-Jahn** (Mrs Bailey) and Pam's sister **Shirley**. It was the first time this group had been together since 1959! Sarah also remembers Jane Clarke, Sue Collard, Jo Cranswick, Penny Fanshawe, Anne Farris and the Strachan clan. While the Strachans are still in contact with SMHA, the others she remembers aren't. Does anyone have any news of them? Sarah continues to enjoy her work as a supply teacher, and is an avid collector of ceramics, particularly Buchan ware.

Ruth Bradbrooke (Mrs Whiffen) booked to come to the 2000 reunion but sadly developed back and knee problems and was unable to travel. However, she asked to be remembered to all the O-level year of 1957.

When **Suzanne Broadley** (Mrs Camp) heard of the 2000 Reunion, she booked up, little expecting to see many of her year (O-level 1957), and

was amazed to meet up with **Jenny Booth** (Mrs Davie), **Pat Chapman** (Mrs Sanders), and **Liz Cockburn** (Mrs Males)!

Jennifer Clarke (1980s) is teaching English and PE at the British School in Kuwait.

Gill Carolin (at SMH in the 1950s) writes recalling the times when **Ann Garnett** used to take a group of girls swimming before breakfast! Unfortunately, Gill wrote on a postcard of Ireland (postmarked Croydon), but gave no current address. Does anyone know her present whereabouts?

In May **Rowan Cawkell** (1954-57) was host to **Pam Read-Jahn** (Mrs Bailey) who had travelled from Sydney, Australia, and her sister **Shirley**, who had travelled from **California**. All three attended the 2000 Reunion, where they met up with **Anne Bearne**(Mrs Bell, qv), **Sarah Boyd** (Mrs Mylne, qv), **Amy Easter** (Mrs Ayling), **Kim Kimmins** (Mrs Cook), and **Carol Pink** (Mrs O'Connor).

Helen Crittall (Mrs Nixon) married in 1994 and is now living in Manchester

Pam Cryer (Mrs Sax) was delighted to be at the 2000 Reunion, even though she was not able to stay after lunch.

Emma Davies is one of many SMHA members who have joined the e-mail community. Emma (1982-1991) says 'hello' to anyone who remembers her, and passed on news of many friends with whom she is still in contact.

Sally Davies (Mrs Tomlinson), whose second son Ethan was born in July 1999, was expecting a third child in November 2000. Sally (1974-83) and her husband were posted by the Army to Lisburn NI for two years from May 2000. Sally writes that her sister **Samantha Davies**, who is now Mrs Oldershaw, is studying sociology and communication studies in London.

Elizabeth Douse (Mrs Feldman) travelled from Warwickshire to attend the 2000 Reunion.

Clare Drew (1980s) is now married (new surname not given), and was expecting her second child last autumn.

Henrietta Duveen (1984-1991) is living and working in Sydney, Australia, and was due to be married in Penang in January 2001 to an Australian. Henrietta, whose elder sister **Claudia** got married last year, has now joined the SMHEmC.

Johanna Dwyer (Mrs Hill) gave birth to her third child, Benjamin, in September 1999

Sue Evans (Mrs Chapman) and her husband Chris have left England and bought a beautiful old farmhouse situated between Limoges and Poitiers. In less than a year they have completely renovated the house from a complete wreck to a beautiful and comfortable home. Sue is godmother to Oliver Carr-Hill who, with parents **Anne (Barr)** (qv) and Martin, enjoyed a visit to the farmhouse during the summer.

Miss Farmer (Mrs Milton) wrote appreciatively of **Mrs Allen** (see Obituaries). She also remembered (as does your Editor) the days of SMH Guide Camps, and asks if anyone has news of **Tessa Jackson** (O-level year 1958).

Fiona Fraser (Mrs Lloyd) is one of many who rejoined SMHA after hearing of the 2000 Reunion, and she, with husband Graham and 12-year-old daughter Grace were among the many who enjoyed the afternoon events in brilliant sunshine. Fiona's sister **Carol** (Mrs Wheatcroft), who left SMH in 1975 is now living in Singapore with her husband and two children.

Claire Grinyer (1980s) is now living in Israel, where she works as a croupier.

Marion Hannaford (Mrs Chalmers) is living near York, where for the past ten years she has been the school librarian at Bootham School, where she has also worked in the girls' boarding house (shades of Babington!). Marion (1959-64), who read French at Lancaster before taking her professional librarianship exams, is married to a consultant gastroenterologist, and they have four grown-up sons.

Susan Harris (Mrs Roller) writes that her husband has been appointed to a new job in Kent. Although commuting from Cheshire has its problems, they are biding their time before deciding whether to make a permanent move. Having completed a five-year term as Governor at SMH which has been rewarding but time-consuming, Susan intends to devote the next two years to her family, and getting her two children settled into school, before thinking about a return to work.

Heather Heald (Mrs Johnson) travelled from Glasgow for the May reunion, and later wrote to thank everyone who had worked so hard to make it such a great and enjoyable day. Heather was particularly interested in the tours of the old boarding houses, and trying to rediscover the dorms! With an abundance of reminiscences, she found that everyone became quite sentimental, and wondered if it is a sign of advancing years!

In March 2000, **Susan Hennings** was surprised by the early arrival of her second child. After a rather tough initial start, they are both now doing well.

Jane Hitchcock (Mrs Bunclark) combines being a teacher of English and Drama with caring for her little daughter Hebe and an assortment of dogs and puppies. Hebe's christening was attended by SMH friends including **Susan Roller** (qv), who found the occasion delightful.

Mary Howell Davies (Mrs Philpott) was unable to attend the 2000 Reunion, but in the autumn made her first visit to the school since leaving in 1958. Mary particularly enjoyed meeting Mrs Meek and the staff, and seeing the many changes made since her time as a pupil.

Lesley Humphreys is Head of Marketing at Millfield School, Somerset.

Nneka Ikedife (SMH 1989-96) graduated from the University of Bristol with a 2:1 Bsc Hons in Sociology, and then spent some months travelling in Thailand. Nneka, who now intends to train as a primary school teacher, keeps in contact with many of her SMH friends including **Chloe Bartle**, **Hannah Crockett**, **Vicky Lewis**, **Katy Scott**, **Natasha Tawel** and **Marium Yousuf**.

Tamsin Johnson (Mrs Kidwell) is still travelling abroad with SmithKline Beecham. Her sister **Veryan** left Allied Domeque to do part-time consultancy work prior to the arrival of her first child, which was due in November 1999.

Kim Kimmins (Mrs Cook) greatly enjoyed meeting up with old friends, including **Anne Bearne** (Mrs Bell, qv), **Sarah Boyd** (Mrs Mylne, qv), **Rowan Cawkell** (Mrs Fookes, qv), **Amy Easter** (Mrs Ayling), **Carol Pink** (Mrs O'Connor) and **Pam** (Mrs Bailey, qv) and **Shirley Read-Jahn** (qv) at the 2000 Reunion. Later in the summer, en route to Perthshire, Kim and her husband Roy spent a very enjoyable few days with Sarah at her home in the Scottish Borders.

Doreen Lai writes from Australia that she is enjoying working for PriceWaterhouseCoopers. Doreen has now bought her own house in Hawthorn, Victoria. Dating from the 1890s, the house had been sympathetically renovated, retaining many of its original features, so Doreen was just left with minor work in the house and a major landscaping job for the garden! Doreen's sister **Donna**, who has two children aged seven and five, is currently living in Malaysia, but may return to Australia when the children start secondary school. Doreen, who is also in touch with Mei Sing and Dong Ching, hopes to visit the UK during 2001, and would like to be remembered to all her classmates.

Philippa Leney greatly enjoyed the 2000 Reunion, which she attended along with **Anna** and **Maria Tinner** (qv)

From her home in Colorado Springs, USA, **Kate Lord** maintains contact with **Kate Fletcher**, **Sheila Hurd** and sisters **Nik** and **Janet Williams**, but would like to have news of others from her era, including Gaile Ashby, Nicola Blackwood, Margaret Ellis and Madeline Holloway.

Lisa Martin (Mrs Andrews) celebrated the 2000 reunion by scoring a rounder in the rounders match - something she had found difficult at school! Lisa's third son, Euan, was born on 13 December 2000.

Farshid Moussavi is working for Foreign Office Architects in London, featured in a weekend supplement as a firm to watch, following their successful commission to design the Belgo restaurant in London. Farshid's mother worked as a housemistress in St Hilary for many years.

After nine years of living in Kent, **Sarah Naish** (1977-84) moved back to Sussex in 1998. Sarah, who now works as a Financial Controller for Woolwich Life in Redhill, has met up with **Jo-Anne Galbraith** (Mrs Wilkinson).

Sisters **Sarah** (Mrs Wren) and **Alison Oates** (Mrs Ellis) both came to the 2000 Reunion. Sarah (1952-58) is now living in Brighton, while Alison is in Angmering.

Katie Overton-Hart is now in her third year of a degree in Event Management at Leeds. As part of her course Katie had to assist with the organisation of a large scientific conference in Brighton, which included a themed evening and a press breakfast.

Juliet Parish (Mrs Smith) and husband Alasdair, who both attended the 2000 Reunion, have moved from Lewes to Steyning.

Margaret Payne writes of her peaceful life in Brighton, where three cats and a large garden keep her busy. Remembering the days when she could 'rush up the main staircase at SMH and all round the four floors of St Hilary, morning and night, to say nothing of long walks on the Downs', she could now wish for more mobility! However, she enjoys keeping in touch with former colleagues and pupils and reminiscing about times past.

After leaving SMH in 1985, **Lisa Phillips** (Mrs Papworth) trained as a nurse at University College Hospital and the Middlesex Hospital, and followed this up by taking a BA Hons degree in English at Anglia Polytechnic University. In 1995 she married Stuart, and they have a son

Alex, now three. Stuart's job as a geophysicist means that they are frequently on the move, and are currently in Abu Dhabi in the UAE.

Jo Podd (Mrs Stubbs) was unable to be at the 2000 Reunion as her baby was due that same week.

A shoulder operation shortly in May meant that **Isolde Rees** (Mme Ricci) was unable to travel from her home in Switzerland for the May reunion. Issie was particularly disappointed, as she had wanted to see Babington again. However, she hopes to fly over for the next reunion.

Jenny Riley (Mrs Wray) was among many who e-mailed their thanks for a very enjoyable time at the 2000 Reunion. She and **Liz Baker** (qv) both enjoyed the day greatly, but wondered what had happened to the Honours Boards which had once borne their names. Jenny is still in touch with her friend **Jeanette Smith**, an exchange student in 1960/61, who is also joining the SMHe-mC

Serena (Snooky) Saunders enjoyed her visit to SMH for the 2000 reunion, and greatly appreciated the effort that went in to organising it.

Caroline Simmons (Mrs Hearne) took a holiday in Hong Kong to escape from the builders rearranging a large part of her home!

Writing from Coventry where she now lives, **Kate Steiner** (Mrs Tordoff) says she has 'escaped from teaching' and is now working as a gardener and tutor, and working on a book about her favourite garden in Yorkshire. Kate, who has three sons, one married, but no grandchildren, also sends news of her sisters **Jill** (O-level year 1958) in Hampshire and **Mary** in Berkshire. Jill, whose husband has just retired, has three married children and four grandchildren so far. Mary, who has two children and two grandchildren, is into obedience training with her two dogs!

Babs Stewart (Mrs Woolf) e-mailed from Sydney, Australia to say how sorry she was not to be able to make it back to England for the May 2000 reunion. Babs moved to Australia in 1965, married in 1967, and has two daughters, Danielle and Lisa. For the last ten years Babs has worked as administrator in the Linguistics Department of Macquarie University in Sydney, and loves her work. She has many memories of SMH, including Doris Conrady (head), Miss Farmer (Geography), Mrs Jackson (Scripture), Mrs Eggleton (sports) and Miss Ritchie (Elliott House). She also remembers Veronica Alsop, Janina Benoit, Liz Cartwright, Tina Cocks, Hilary Cowan, Shirley Foulsham, Anne Kiddle (an Australian), Valerie Midda, Jennifer Pigg, Karen and Brita Seberg, Gloria Wayne, Olivia Williams, and many more. (More memories from Babs on page 27)

Samantha Surridge (Mrs Oakeshott), who married in August 1999 writes that her first baby was due in November 2000. Samantha, who lives in Fulham, London, continues to be great friends with **Lesley Humphreys** (qv)

Gilly Synge (Mrs Fifield) wrote to thank everyone concerned for their hard work in making such a success of the 2000 reunion. Gilly particularly enjoyed the service in St Mark's on the Sunday morning, and said it was 'lovely to have a good sing in the church where I spent so many hours singing in the choir'. Gilly's husband David earned many Brownie points for staying the course for the whole weekend, and admitted that he found the visit to Babington fascinating.

Natasha Taylor (1982-86) has been spotted by some of her contemporaries in the Hollywood film 'Devil's Own'.

Claire Tickner (1980s) is a nurse and working in London

Anna Tinner and sister **Maria**, together with **Philippa Leney**, e-mailed to say how much they enjoyed the 2000 Reunion. 'The food and atmosphere were fantastic . . . our little group certainly enjoyed it, and we will be making a huge effort to get more people along to the next meeting.'

Last summer **Ingrid Tonks** (Mrs Boucher), with her husband Luke and new baby Inigo, spent a month in Australia, where Ingrid's brother Nicholas has a photographic business in Cairns.

Sarah van Carrapiett (Mrs Carter) enjoys reading the Newsletter and would love to hear from anyone from her year. Sarah (1982-86) greatly enjoyed the SMHA 2000 reunion, despite the fact that she was the only one from her year who attended. Sarah, who is doing a Health Visitor's degree in Tower Hamlets, brought her 18-month-old daughter Emma Louise. Recently, Sarah was surprised to see that her contemporary, **Natasha Taylor**, in the Hollywood film 'Devil's Own'.

Memories

Barbara Stewart (Mrs Woolf) recalls her time at SMH during the 1950s and 60s. Once you put your mind to it, it's surprising how many memories come flooding back. Really we were very young to be away from home, and so St Mary's Hall became home away from home, and all the other girls became family. You would arrive at Victoria Station and cry desperately when you said your farewells to your parents, and then, the minute you got on the train, the fun, laughter and stories began.

I remember Doris Conrady well. She was stern, fair, and we were all in awe of her as she swept by us in her mortar board and gown. Miss Farmer, our Geography teacher, I also remember well. We all enjoyed her classes, and funnily enough I can still remember drawing a map showing all the states of Australia - funny because I'm now an Australian citizen. I remember too, Mrs Jackson, our Scripture teacher, and Mrs Eggleton, the sports coach.

The gym/hall was used for many things. We marched in and out of assembly to some magnificent marching music, and were given marks for posture. In gym lessons we climbed ropes and played 'Pirates', on Saturday afternoons we watched old movies in the hall, crying through some of the old weepies like 'Mrs Miniver', and some great school plays were staged in the hall, too.

The 'San' also had plenty of memories. Standing with mouths open waiting for the daily dose of malt or medication, and queuing to 'sign the book'! During one chickenpox epidemic the dorms had to be used as overflow 'sick beds'.

Outside I remember particularly standing in line in Brownie uniform to make a guard of honour for the [then] Princess Royal. In contrast, on Guy Fawkes' night, we stood round the bonfire, freezing cold, huddled in our cloaks, with tomato soup and hot potatoes, clutching sparklers. I remember too, lacrosse on the field across the road (now covered with old houses!), and sports days, also on the same field. Around the other, sloping, field were little garden plots which we were given to plant flowers in and tend, and on the far field were the grass tennis courts. Going to and from the boarding houses, and for weekend walks, we walked in crocodile, two by two, and I remember one very windy day, as we walked round the corner to Babington, hanging on to the seniors to avoid being blown over!

Break was time for milk [a third of a pint] and a sticky bun, and a chat by the old pond. In domestic science we learned how to cook, and then had to eat the end product! Back at the boarding houses we would queue up by the tuck-shop cupboard for our ration of sweets. But the best fun was in

the dorm at night. After ‘hotties’ had been filled and we’d sat round the electric heater drinking cocoa with Matron, the lights would go out. A few minutes later the torches went on as we read by torchlight and enjoyed midnight feasts!

We didn’t get away with everything though. I remember being sent to Coventry for being rude to the matron, and having to work outside Miss Conrady’s study for a day, and then sleep in a dorm on my own. It was so awful! And then Miss Conrady asked me ‘Are you sorry for what you have done, or are you just feeling sorry for yourself?’ I’ve never forgotten that.

Exeats often meant a trip to the Palace Pier and the chance to buy humbugs. Once I went home with Shirley Foulsham for a long weekend. The pair of us cycled round Hayling Island, and suddenly we came across the burnt-out ruin of a house.

The most memorable occasion, though, was prizegiving in The Dome, when we sang ‘Forever England’.

Among other memories are:

- diving and swimming at Black Rock pool and on the beach amongst the tar and pebbles
- walking along the promenade towards Rottingdean
- horse-riding on the Downs on Saturday mornings and doing small jumps
- dripping on toast for breakfast
- games of conkers and hopscotch
- polishing our shoes until they shone
- wearing mufti after prep time
- making beds with hospital corners
- making apple-pie beds for unsuspecting newcomers
- reciting poetry in class
- wearing liberty bodices and suspender belts, with the thickest ever stockings!
- hitting tennis balls against the wall
- making bracelets out of plastic tubing
- winning pencils for spelling
- pulling pom-poms off the berets of new girls
- making handkerchief cases and blouses during sewing class

These are the things that come to mind now, and I wonder, where did those years in between go? I’m glad I went to St Mary’s Hall - it was a pivotal part of my life.

CHANGED AND NEW ADDRESSES

Barr, Carole (Mrs Walker), 159 Karalee Crescent, Cambridge, Ontario N3C 4HZ, Canada.

Buck, Penny (Mrs Gardiner), 4 Station Path, Staines, Middx TW18 4LA

Davidson, Melanie (Mrs Bastable), 14 Willow Park, Haywards Heath, W Sussex RH16 3UA.

Drake, Anthea (Mrs Holland), 154 Hillside Park, Taffs Well, Cardiff, CF15 7ND.

Duveen, Claudia, c/o 95 Montpelier Road, Brighton, Sussex

Duveen, Henrietta 40/512 King Street, Waverton, NSW 2060, Australia.

Evans, Sue (Mrs Chapman), La Roche, 87330 St Martial-sur-Isop, France.

Fraser, Carol (Mrs Wheatcroft), 20 Namly Garden, Singapore 267348.

Fraser, Fiona (Mrs Lloyd), 11 Imber Park Road, Esher, Surrey KT10 8JB

Leighton, Penelope (Mrs Christou), 3 Matching Lane, Bishop's Stortford, Herts. CM23 2PP

Naish, Sarah, 8 The Saffrons, Burgess Hill, West Sussex RH15 8TB.

Oates, Alison (Mrs Ellis) 38 Mill Road Avenue, Angmering, Nr Rustington, W Sussex BN16 4HX

Oates, Sarah (Mrs Wren) 105 Wayland Avenue, Brighton, Sussex BN1

Pang, Yammie 108, 2/F Fanling Lau, 2/F Fanling, New Territories, Hong Kong.

Parrish, Juliet (Mrs Smith), 8 Rosemary Avenue, Steyning, West Sussex BN44 3YS

van Carrapiett, Sarah (Mrs Carter), 101 East Road, Shoreditch, London N1 6AQ.

Where are they?

Does anyone have news of **Catherine Harris** (1982-1991)? **Emma Davies** would like to get back in touch. Emma can be reached via the SMH e-mail community.

Does anyone have a current address for **Josephine Henning** (now Mrs Spary)? Josephine came to SMH from Rhodesia in about 1962, and after leaving married Brian Spary. They have three grown-up children, and were last heard of about three years ago, living in Jersey. **Marion Hannaford** would like to get back into contact.

Newsletters 2000 addressed to the following members were returned marked "gone away": **Laura and Emma Tennant, Deborah Cohen (Mrs Deller), Sarah Nee, Katy Wilkinson, Janan Kassir, Anna Vigerland, Philippa Considine, A Tarrant, Miriam Demirates, Sara-Jane and Jasmine Lo, Holly Mellors.**

If you know the whereabouts of these members, please let the Hon Secretary know.

Births, Marriages and Deaths

Births

Boucher On 11 July 1999, to Ingrid (née Tonks) and Dr Luke Boucher a son, Inigo Tomas.

Law On 12 May 2000, to Alison (née) and Malcolm a son, Thomas George, brother for Hannah

Marriages

Davies-Oldershaw On 28 August 1998 in San Francisco, Samantha Davies to Jesse Oldershaw.

SurrIDGE-Oakeshott On 7 August 1999 at St Peter and St Paul's Church, Hellingly, East Sussex, Samantha SurrIDGE to Peter Oakeshott.

Deaths

Allen, Vera Rose On Saturday 26 August 2000, peacefully in St Mary's House Nursing Home, Seaford, Vera Rose Allen, aged 89. Loved and respected mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and teacher. Head of English at SMH 1957 - 1973

Liddell, John Bernard Suddenly, on Tuesday 15 August 2000, John (Jack) Liddell, beloved husband of Pam, a much loved father, father-in-law and grandfather. SMH staff 1968-1992

Thompson, Helen L On 17 May 2000, Helen L Thompson (née Boswell), widow of William Lee Thompson, and daughter of Rev Harold Boswell. A pupil at SMH 1921 – 1930

Emmet, Dorothy Professor Dorothy Emmet, M.A., D.Litt., author of *Outward Forms*, *Inner Springs* published 1999 (Macmillan), a pupil at SMH 1918 – 1923

Davidson, Julia In January 2001, Julia Davidson (née Wilberforce, BA (Hons) History, pupil at SMH 1926 – 1932, governor at SMH 1947 – 1981, sister of Barbara Wilberforce (Mrs Schooling), aunt of Anne Schooling.

Hill, Susan E On 3 February 2000, tragically in a glider accident in Australia, a pupil at SMH 1965 - 1972

OBITUARIES

MRS VERA ROSE ALLEN

It is seldom that one hears beautiful music being played in the busy staff room of a girls' school, yet this is what took place in the late 1960s at St Mary's Hall. A violin, a piece of property which had strayed from its owner, was picked up by Mrs Allen, who positioned it comfortably under her chin and began to bring it to life. Calmness instantly came over those present as she played a moving tune with great sensitivity.

Perhaps this small word picture conveys much of how Mrs Allen, Head of English from 1957 to 1973, will be remembered by those who knew her during her many years at SMH. At times she was impulsive, always sensitive, and occasionally frustrating, but never dull!

It didn't require a long time of working with her to realise that her gifts and talents were numerous. Her pupils recognised her teaching qualities and some, particularly the younger ones, were in awe of her. The seniors respected the wisdom of the advice she gave them concerning careers and the qualities of character which would be expected of them to achieve success.

For several years, Vera Allen was in charge of Sixth Form Studies, and one of the sixth-formers of the late 1960s said of her recently: 'She accorded respect and space to her sixth-formers, even if some of their views were anathema to her. She was intimidating but always happy to be challenged and then helped you to formulate your own ideas, provided they were soundly based and you could defend them. I found her ahead of her time in that she accepted her sixth-formers as equals'.

When Vera Allen produced the school play we saw her artistic abilities come to full fruiting and, (dare we put this on paper) the histrionics which so often are characteristic of a skilled producer!

On 5 September 2000, at the service of thanksgiving for her life, several friends and colleagues from SMH were privileged to join her daughters, Gillian and Daphne, and members of her family. This was a calm, dignified occasion, with a small selection of her best-loved music played in the background, including some Elgar and J S Bach. The reading, from St John's gospel, chapter 1, verses 1-14, read from the Authorised Version of the Bible, embodied much that she believed.

Vera Allen had striven to give much of great value to those whom she loved and to those whose lives she touched. We trust that she is where 'the still dews of quietness' enfold her, and where 'age cannot wither her, nor custom stale her infinite variety'.

M V Boyes, K M Milton (née Farmer)

Mrs Allen's daughter Gill wrote from Cambridge to thank all those who attended the funeral, and wrote:

St Mary's Hall was a central part of her life for so many years - her fellow-teachers and her pupils were like an extended family to her, and she had many very happy memories. It was sad that she was unable to keep up contacts in her last years, but we are pleased to know she is still remembered.

Mrs Allen was a teacher I remember particularly well. As someone who has since spent most of her life writing and editing, I have particular cause to be grateful for her excellent teaching. Lessons with Mrs Allen were invigorating and inspirational, although those who didn't share Mrs Allen's enthusiasm for English sometimes found her intimidating! She had a quick wit, a dry sense of humour, and the ability to make exam texts really come to life. So many adults remember their 'set books' with distaste, rarely returning to them, but I found such enjoyment in them that I still read and re-read them with great pleasure. We were indeed fortunate to have such an able and inspiring teacher as Mrs Allen.

Kim Kimmins (Mrs Cook)

HELEN M THOMPSON (née Boswell)

Helen M Boswell, daughter of Rev Harold Boswell, was a pupil at St Mary's Hall in the late 1920s and early 1930s. She loved every moment of her school days at SMH.

Helen married my cousin, William Lee Thomson, in 1942. Throughout her married years I knew her extremely well. She was fun, highly intelligent and a devout Christian.

Patricia Malley

JACK LIDDELL

The two attributes that come to my mind when I think of Jack Liddell are his unwavering commitment to high standards and his delightful sense of humour. He was a man of principle. He expected from his pupils high standards of behaviour and of commitment to their studies; he hated to see a girl not doing justice to herself or her own potential. The young people under his care, knowing that much was expected of them, tended to rise to those expectations - often surprising themselves by what they achieved.

I don't think that any girl who spent a year with Mr Liddell as her form master will ever forget that year. Those who initially thought of him as a strict disciplinarian and no more, once they became attuned to his ways discovered the sense of fun behind his formal manner. Jack would often make humorous remarks in a completely deadpan voice, so that at first the hearer was uncertain whether or not Jack was being serious.

When I joined SMH in 1973, I was given a fifth form (the 15+ group about to take GCE). Jack, too, had a fifth form, and he guided me with great kindness through the arcane mysteries of the duties of a form mistress at SMH. I couldn't have had a better teacher.

Jack was also always a considerable presence on public occasions at SMH. He was methodical and meticulous, and would arrange seating and organise the members of the school at public events so that everything proceeded in an orderly manner. I have enduring memories, too, of Jack at swimming galas, first at the Black Rock pool, then at the SMH pool, booming out 'On your marks . . .' before his starting pistol sent the swimmers off in a flurry of splashing water and the shouts of supporters.

Jack Liddell was a man of integrity, who gave much to any community of which he was a part. He was also a good friend and I shall miss him.

May he rest in peace and rise in glory.

Pamela James

Jack was a good friend and colleague, always ready to give a helping hand whatever the occasion, or a cheerful word of encouragement if problems arose. I remember he would always produce a bag of delicious sweets when we were all trying to meet deadlines of examination markings and reports.

Not only was he an excellent teacher of Mathematics and a caring and understanding coach to those who needed extra help, but he was also closely involved in so many aspects of school life. He gave tremendous pleasure to all the members of his popular Photography Club. He gave unstintingly of his time and has given the school so many excellent photographic records of very varied events. Miss Conrady's 90th birthday collection gave her and us so much pleasure. I treasure the framed picture of St Mary's Hall which he gave me when I retired, and many others also received similar thoughtful mementoes.

When Jack retired, he thoroughly enjoyed starting up his very successful bookshop in Shoreham and very much appreciated making new friends and meeting again past pupils and staff when they dropped in. I am so glad that his wife Pam is carrying on the business, though it must be a very hard task without him.

Our sympathies go to her, his son, daughter-in-law and his beloved grandson. He will be sorely missed by so many people.

Margaret Payne

During the summers of 1981-88, SMH Modern Languages staff used to take the third year over to France for the day. Jack Liddell used to come with us, as official photographer, valued colleague and friend.

For the first few years we went to Dieppe, on the four-hour crossing, magnificent on a sunny day, lunched at Le Peskett on the Quai Henry IV, scaled the heights to the Chateau-Musée and sampled the wares of the local shops. In latter years, with no convenient boat from Newhaven, we switched to Boulogne, and I recall in particular one minibus journey with Jack on a beautiful early summer morning along the coast via Winchelsea and Rye.

In September 1987 almost the whole second year spent a short holiday in the Bayeux area, visiting the Mont St Michel, Arromanches and Sainte Mere-Eglise. Again, Jack was with us: he had spoken to the girls before we left of the wartime significance of the area which he clearly enjoyed revisiting; he was at all times a tower of strength to his colleagues and his photographs provide a lasting memory of happy days together.

I count it a great privilege to have known Jack Liddell and, with so many others, I mourn his passing.

Dorothy Woolliscroft

SUBSCRIPTIONS

If you know any former pupil or member of staff not at present a member of SMHA, please encourage them to join by sending a cheque, payable to SMHA, for the current Life Membership subscription of £30, to Mrs Anne Nelson, 15 Slindon Road, Worthing, W Sussex BN14 9LJ.

Contributions to the Millennium Subscription and Gift Funds should also be sent to Anne at the above address. Any Old Girl, or SMHA member who knows of an Old Girl, who would like to join, but whose circumstances make it impossible for them to meet the subscription, may apply to have her subscription paid by the Subscription fund. The Gift fund allows the headmistress to provide small financial assistance to pupils where appropriate.

NEWSLETTER INFORMATION

Please send all material for the Newsletter (articles, photographs, news items, information on births, marriages and deaths) to the Hon Editor, Mrs Kim Cook, Cherry Trees, Ingleden Park Road, Tenterden, Kent TN30 6NS, to **arrive before 1 November** each year. Please note that this deadline is absolute, to ensure that the Newsletter reaches everyone in good time to advise them of reunions and other meetings.

ADDRESSES

A database of names and addresses of former pupils and staff, whether or not they are currently members of SMHA, is maintained by Mrs Penny Gardiner (née Buck). This database is far from being complete. Many details are missing, and many addresses are no longer current. Any information that will help to maintain and update the database will be gratefully received by Penny at

4 Station Path, Staines, Middx TW18 4LA,

or via e-mail to

<<penelope.gardiner@btinternet.com>>.

Enquiries about former pupils and staff should be addressed to the Hon Secretary, Mrs Frances Bearn at 34 Fitzjohns Road, Lewes, E Sussex BN7 1PS. Postal enquiries should be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope, please.

SMHA PRAYER

O God, who art everywhere present, look down in Thy mercy on all those who have gone forth from this school. Grant that by the light of Thy divine inspiration and the gifts of Thy bountiful providence they may fulfil Thy purpose for them here on earth and may attain at length to that blessed home where they shall go no more out but serve and praise Thee continually in Thy temples; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SCHOOL PRAYER

O God, by whose manifold grace all things work together for good to them that love Thee, stablish, we pray Thee, the thing that Thou has wrought in us, and make this school as a field which the Lord hath blessed, that whatsoever things are true, pure, lovely and of good report, may here forever flourish and abound. Preserve in it an unblemished name, enlarge it with a wider usefulness and exalt it in the love and reverence of all its members, as an instrument of Thy glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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This newsletter is published by SMHA Committee on behalf of the St Mary's Hall Association, c/o St Mary's Hall, Eastern Road, Brighton, Sussex BN2 5JF © SMHA 2001