

ST MARYS HALL ASSOCIATION



Newsletter 110 2010

This newsletter is published by the SMHA Committee
on behalf of the St Mary's Hall Association

COMMITTEE

President and Chairman:	Mrs. Susan M Meek
Hon Vice Presidents:	Miss N Olwen Davies Mrs. E Olive Leslie Mrs. Clare Feaver Mrs. Teresa Broadbent Mrs. Pamela James
Old Girl Governor:	Sophie Bowles
Hon Secretary and Hon Editor:	Penny (Titheradge) Harrison
Overseas Members:	Gigi Chan
Hon Treasurer:	Diana (Markham) Sijpesteijn
Committee Members:	Virginia James Robina Methven Akiko (Shaw) Hickey Charlotte Sabel Jodie Graham
Member / Shadow Secretary	Kathy Howard
<i>(Past Treasurer</i>	<i>Susan Roller)</i>
Archivist:	Sue Carnochan

The committee would be pleased to hear from any Old Girl who would be interested in joining them.

There are vacancies for members to be co-opted, pending the next General Meeting

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Dear SMHA member

So much has happened since the 2009 Newsletter that it has been hard to know how to introduce this, our first web-based publication.

We are indebted to those members who have kindly offered to print this for Old Girls who asked us to receive the Newsletter by hard-copy.

Now that new Life Members are dwindling and will soon be non-existent our funds are also finite and the costs of printing and postage for the Newsletter are not realistically achievable.

The Newsletter is also shorter than hitherto since so much of the information which would have been in it has already been available to you via our website.

This has developed from quite literally nothing to a site which we hope is not only easy for you to navigate but also full of interest and information for you. Please do not hesitate to let us know if there are any improvements you would like and please tell us if you have News you would like to share.

Penny Harrison, our Hon. Secretary, web-editor and also editor of the Newsletter, really looks forward to the contacts she has from you. Modesty forbids her from listing the numbers of emails and letters thanking her for the work involved in setting up the site. She writes "It was my great pleasure and privilege to undertake this work and I look forward to developing it further before handing on the baton".

Speaking of this, there have been changes in the committee with some new members being co-opted. In the absence of a General Meeting they continue as co-optees.

Kathy Howard, in particular, should be mentioned as shadowing Penny and keeping in touch with members of the committee who are less internet inclined than others. Diana Markham has also been a great help and has most generously taken over the post of Hon. Treasurer from Susan Roller, effective as at our June Committee meeting.

Penny writes, finally, "I am unable to express properly my gratitude to Sue Meek, Susan Roller and to Olwen Davies ("my" Headmistress") who have guided, supported and helped me every step of this fascinating journey".

Please see page 27 for a report on our work and our recent Committee meeting.

SMHA committee

2009 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Minutes of the St Mary's Hall Association

91st Annual General Meeting

Saturday 9th May 2009

Present: Susan Meek (Headmistress) Penny Gardiner (Hon Secretary), Susan Roller (Hon Treasurer) Charlotte Sabel, Jodie Graham, Sophie Bowles, Virginia James.
63 members as well as many other alumnae.

Apologies for absence – Kim Cook.

The meeting opened with the school prayer and remembrance of those who had died since the previous meeting.

Penny (Buck) Gardiner asked Penny Harrison to present the information pertaining to the proposed SMHA website. She explained that after the initial shock and surprise at the news of the school's closure she wanted to ensure the school name and network lived on. As many of the alumni are geographically distant she proposed the logical way forward for the SMHA was a website. As Penny has experience of this work she outlined how the site would operate and be controlled. It would be data protected with Penny being the point of contact if old girls wished to get in touch with other old girls or staff. She suggested it would enfranchise geographically distant members in being able to vote on any future matters or decisions. It would increase sociability and would help people interact who are not on any social networking sites.

Penny admitted that disinterest with the internet by some members could be a problem but hoped more computer literate members would help those people. both life and associate members of the SMHA.

A member asked if overseas members and associate members can join site. Penny Gardiner said that all would be able to and the site would bring together both life and associate members of the SMHA.

Costs were outlined by Penny Harrison. Initial set up would be an estimated £500/600. Further updates of £15 to £30 would be needed once a month.

Chairman of the Governors, Andrew Russell spoke of the lead up to the closure and tried to explain why the situation had arisen.

He explained that in 1997 pupil numbers were at a peak of 439 but by September 2008 had dwindled to 325. The school in order to operate within financially stable means needed at least 350 to 360 pupils.

High competition with other local schools, strong Sterling causing a fall off in intentional pupils, and the decision by the government to abandon the assisted places scheme meant that substantial revenue was being lost These reasons were cited as the cause of the demise in fortune for SMH.

Private trusts were approached for help, but to no avail.

The school accountants said that something long term would have to be done as there was no short term fix.

Discussions had been held to alleviate the problem.

By 2008 the credit crunch had begun and exacerbated matters. Going co educational was ruled out as was a merger with Brighton College. As links with Roedean were already in place through sharing of subjects, it was suggested a merger with them was the only solution. By February 2009 it had been decided to merge with Roedean. It was agreed that clergy daughters, St Marks Scholars and daughters of the armed forces personnel would be guaranteed places. Those in the middle of their GCSEs would also be guaranteed places so as not to interrupt their education. On the 24th February 2009 there was a formal announcement of the decision. The Junior School would remain as it was under the current head. Decisions over the site premises had not been taken but it was thought nothing would happen for 4 years. A question was asked by a member as to what measures had been taken in 1997 when assisted places had been abolished. The answer was that it was an unknown factor but had resulted in perhaps 10 pupil losses a year.

Mrs. Meek spoke of the sadness of the closure. She however said that it was in the best interest of the vast majority of the pupils who otherwise would be suffering from further and further cutbacks and staff shortages. She said the building may be let out for hospital or university facilities. The Chapel funds would be used as they were intended. To conclude, she explained that 34 of the current SMH staff would go to Roedean. Mrs. Ridge would go as a transitional manager to ease the merger. 15 staff had taken voluntary redundancy, 12 staff had been made redundant and 6 had resigned. Catering staff would have a job if they so wished. She said it was a positive hope for the future, as everyone would be out of job or school place had the school merely shut down.

Penny Gardiner outlined the three options for SMHA.

I - To close SMHA for good. Give funds away.

II- To continue in the current form until funds had run out.

III – Move SMHA to electronic format. Website and emails.

Question was asked, if SMHA continued as before how long could it last for?

Answer: perhaps 10years.

It was suggested by a member that more computer literate members could 'buddy up' with the less computer literate members in order for them to participate.

A vote was taken and there no abstentions and a unanimous vote of 70 in favour of the motion of option III was made.

Agreed - SMHA would move to an electronic format in shape of the website as proposed. Proxy votes also indicated this was the best way forward.

Revision of the Constitution was discussed.

Life members would determine associate members' subscription.

Communication as per clause 10 was approved.

Data protection issues were discussed.

An opt out was available to those who wished it.

Agreed - SMHA to adopt constitution as circulated.

Honorary Treasurer's Report.

Susan Roller said that in 2008 26 out of a possible 42 girls had taken out membership.

£57 for life membership was agreed by a unanimous vote as stable figure although someone did suggest £60.

Agreed - Associate members would join at £0 but could donate via the website for extra benefits.

Penny Gardiner suggested it be impractical for collection of money any other way.

All guests at the reunion that day would be asked to join. Honorary Secretary offered to manage additional recruitment.

Penny Gardiner retired from the committee and Susan Roller presented her with a gift and thanks for all the hard work she had put in.

Charlotte Sabel and Jodie Graham were ratified as members of committee and seconded by Yalda Saddighzadeh and Katherine Hasson.

A tribute was made to Kim Cook and her work as newsletter editor. SMHA was thankful for all her help.

Susan Roller proposed Penny Harrison to take over as database manager of the new website. Julia Duncliffe seconded the proposition.

Susan Meek gave special thanks to Penny Gardiner for all her fabulous work and effort.

Penny Gardiner suggested that if SMHA was to continue electronically then money from the £18,000 (est) funds could be donated to a suitable charity. Frank Buttle Trust was suggested as ethos of helping underprivileged young girls in educational endeavours in line with school ideology.

Comments from the floor that until the funds needed to move to new virtual Association were accounted for this should not progress.

New committee would decide this matter at a later date but was largely approved and well received.

The meeting concluded with the School Prayer.

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

FROM THE ARCHIVIST

Archive information is regularly posted on our website.

Our archives are in the Old Reference Library at Roedean and Sue Carnochan is in Roedean School Library (01273 667574) on Tuesday mornings from 9.30 – 1.00, to deal with any queries from old girls and their families.

Other contact details for Sue Carnochan are: Roedean 01273 667612 (Archivist Office) email: jsu@roedean.co.uk

Sue found this article in a 1956 Magazine:

"Miss Meades has written a brief history of the Hall to commemorate this special year (120th anniversary) and it was on sale at the meeting for 2s-6d per copy" ie. 12.5p!

Our later edition, (covering the period 1836 to 1992) written by Mr Martin, an ex Bursar, is selling at £2.50, including postage! An interesting example of inflation over 50 years!

We have 70 copies which can be sent to anyone interested.

Please contact Sue if you would like one.

Sue also has notelets showing St Mary's Hall.

Coloured = 5 for £1.50 inc postage

Black and white = 10 for £1.50 inc postage

We have 10 spare copies of the school photo for 1949 & various spare magazines.

We're pleased to report that the Head's desk and chair are to be used by Chris Hargreaves, former Head of English at SMH, who has joined the staff at Roedean.

The grandfather clock and bookcase have gone to Olive Ridge's new study in the Junior School. The archived objects include the goblet which Victoria Brown gave to school when she left in 1980.

Sue wrote recently that she had discovered 2 photos taken in 1910 or 1911 showing the 2nd Brighton Guide Company receiving badges from the local Guide Commissioner and, even more interesting, this took place in the old cloisters!

She continued "I also found an envelope with original badges and certificates which had belonged to H A Baron. I am now in touch with the archivist for guiding in Sussex and she used these in an exhibition held in Eastbourne in April.

I have recently spoken on local radio about the history of St Mary's Hall and now have a CD to put in the archives.

During the war my uncle Charles Butlin, was stationed in Roedean, whilst it was HMS Vernon. He was a naval rating and assigned to a girls' dormitory. On the wall was an ivory label which read "Press the button if you need a mistress during the night". The irate CPO who answered promised "unspeakable punishment" if it happened again!!

I am now "stationed" in the Old Reference Library, at Roedean and walking in my uncle's footsteps!

Incidentally, one of our "old girls" Cecile Edgley, née Cooper, (SMH 1931-1938) was a Wren in HMS Vernon and has written a small booklet about her experiences.

"A Hove Wren's – Eye View of Life" by Leading Wren Buxey Cooper is available from "FotoFax", Portland Road, Hove, priced £5. Cecile is soon to publish an updated version

Recently I was in the Main Tanner Library when a lady walked in wishing to speak to the Roedean Archivist. On seeing my identity label she exclaimed that her sister had been at St Mary's Hall in 1946 and that her father became St Mary's doctor, a Dr Beynon! Anyone remember him? Her mother, also Dr Beynon, became doctor to Roedean girls!! (Ed. See Sue Meek's letter on page 12)

During 2009, the Archivist for St Catherine's Girls School, Bramley, Surrey, wrote to ask if I knew the names of the girls who left SMH in 1940, to go to St Catherine's. I replied I did not but sent him some articles from the magazine for 1940 which named one or two girls who had become house captains and prefects at their new school.

This term I received a letter with a list of all 30 girls' names, including Elizabeth Beresford of "Wombles" fame. He had found it at the back of a Fees Book which he had been perusing! That is the fascination and excitement of this job – finding information in unexpected places!"

Sue Carnochan
SMH Archivist

IN MEMORIAM

Alison St John

1963-1992



Talented, warm-hearted, but frequently misunderstood, Alison's naturally rebellious nature didn't always endear her to the staff. The friend I remember, however, was a gifted mimic, singer and actress, with a mane of glossy brown curls, china blue eyes and a wonderful smile. One of my earliest SMH memories was of a nine-year old Ali on the stage one night, singing "Ragtime Cowboy" with all the confidence of an X-factor finalist.

I tried to trace her recently, and was really sad to learn from Trudi Ransom that she had succumbed to a sudden, short illness aged just 29. She left a husband... and some unforgettable memories.

May she rest in peace.

Jenny Child

SMH 1972-1981

ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2009, ST MARY'S HALL ASSOCIATION

ACCOUNTS						BALANCE	SHEET
INCOME		2009		2008	Current assets		
M'ship Subscriptions		£1,368		£1,539	Scottish Widows		
Donations:		£100		£215	Deposit Account	-	£20,127
Re-unions, including 2009 lunches		£3,413		£133	Standard Life Fixed Rate Bond	£15,000	
Interest:						£15,000	£20,127
Bank premium account	£4		£18		Cash at Bank		
Scottish Widows acct.	£205	£209	£949	£967	Premium Account	£5,688	£2,684
TOTAL INCOME		£5089		£2853	Current Account	£703	£438
EXPENDITURE						£6,391	£3,121
Printing/postage costs:					Total Assets	£21,391	£23,249
Magazines	£1,410		£1,396				
Website	£622		-		Representing:		
		£2,032		£1,396	General Fund at start of year	£23,249	£21,931
Friends Reunited Sub	-				(Deficit)/Surplus of income over expenditure	(£1,858)	£1,318
Stationery/postage		£1,500		£13	General Fund at end of year	£21,391	£23,249
Bank charges		£4		-			
Reunions, including 2009 lunches		£3,335		£106			
Other expenses (retiring gifts)		£76		£20			
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		£6,947		£1,535			

The above accounts agree with the financial records maintained by the Honorary Treasurer.

Chris Elkins, Retired Bursar
28th February 2010

Hon. Treasurer's Report on the Accounts for the year ending 31 December 2009

This has been a year of transition for obvious reasons and so a number of exceptional items of expenditure were incurred which are unlikely to be repeated in future years.

Magazine costs

The magazine was printed and posted to all Life Members as in previous years at a cost of £1,410 (£1,396 for 2008). As well as the usual news and articles this gave news of the demise of SMH and an invitation to a final reunion to be held on 9 May 2009. This was the last year that the magazine will be in hard copy – all future editions will be via the new SMHA website with hard copies of the website material only being sent to Life Members who have specifically requested this. This will significantly reduce costs moving forward.

May reunion

The 'final' May reunion at SMH was attended by approximately 400 members, old girls and former staff. We were very grateful to SMH for the help they gave in organising the day. As the number exceeded those permitted inside the Main Hall for insurance purposes we had to hire a marquee to provide shelter should it have been wet on the day. As it happens the weather was glorious but Committee members had had experience of driving rain on the same weekend in previous years and dared not leave things to chance. Although the cost of the event was £3,335 we actually managed to cover costs and made a very small profit of £163 (including a very kind donation of £100 towards the costs of the event and after postage costs relating to refunds to those who were unable to attend lunch due to catering constraints).

Subscriptions

These were again set at £57 for Life membership. Relatively few of the 2009 leavers have taken up Life membership but a number of other old girls have now become Life Members following the success of the Reunion, the new website and a renewed interest in SMHA given that SMH as we knew it no longer exists. Subscriptions for the year were £1,368 (£1,539 in 2008). Associate Members can join for free but have limited access to the new database etc and are encouraged to become Life Members.

Website and database

The new website is now up and running thanks to the great work of Penny Harrison. The costs incurred in 2009 of £622 were largely set up costs and similar to the estimate of £500/600 agreed by Life Members at the AGM in May 2009. Ongoing monthly costs are in the region of £20 which is felt to be extremely reasonable.

Mailing to Members

In order to hold data and make it available to Life Members and for them to be able to access the new Website a mailing was sent to all existing Life Members following the AGM requesting them to return permission forms. This cost £1,485 showing that it is essential that if SMHA is to survive Members need to agree to receive all communications electronically if at all

possible. A further (final) mailing has been undertaken in early 2010 and no further hard copy post will be sent to Life Members unless they contact the Hon. Secretary to request this.

Retiring Gifts to Committee Members

Retiring gifts were made to Kim Cook and Penny Gardiner costing £76 in grateful thanks for their work over many years for SMHA, not least in editing the SMHA Magazine.

Accounts to 31/12/09

The accounts show that expenses exceeded income by £1,858 in 2009 (£1,318 surplus income in 2008). This was mainly the cost of a second mailing to all Life Members in relation to the new website as other activities largely broke even. As a result the retained funds at the end of the year were £21,391, down from £23,249 in 2008.

Thanks are due to Chris Elkins, retired SMH Bursar, for again reviewing the accounts prepared by the Hon. Treasurer to confirm that they are in line with the supporting documentation.

Investments

We had £20,000 invested in a Scottish Widows account at the start of 2009 which had previously paid a good rate of interest. As the interest rate had reduced substantially in line with base rates this account was closed and once the costs of the May Reunion were known the Committee approved the purchase of a Standard Life Fixed Rate bond paying 2.9% pa and maturing in April 2010. The best advertised interest rates are not always available to associations such as SMHA and this was the best rate on offer at that time. £6,390 was held in the Barclays accounts as at the year end and as the interest paid on these accounts is minimal a slightly larger fixed term deposit may be made in due course.

Interest received in the year was £209 (£967 in 2008) as a result of the large fall in base rates over the 2 year period.

Moving forward

After the final hard copy mailing in early 2010 ongoing costs of running SMHA should be relatively low - say £400 pa. This would enable us to continue for a further 50 years which would cover the life span of the bulk of our members.

However at the 2009 AGM Members did voice an interest in considering donating 'surplus' funds to a charity with similar aims to SMH i.e. to provide private education for girls who would otherwise not be able to afford it. Other possible uses of SMHA funds include purchasing SMH heirloom assets for SMHA, St Marks or the archives (now held at Roedean).

In due course Members may wish to decide whether to use funds in any of these ways or to continue to hold them to cover the future cost of running SMHA.

New Treasurer

I have enjoyed my two terms as Hon Treasurer, although when I agreed to take on the job I had no idea that it would include helping to organise such a large reunion and processing 400 cheques and application forms!

I am grateful to Diana Markham for agreeing to be co-opted to take on the role when I resign and hope that Life Members will approve her appointment in due course at the next General Meeting.

Susan Roller
SMHA Hon. Treasurer
11 March 2010

Letter from Sue Meek; SMHA President & Chairman

Dear Friends,

It is really wonderful to have the opportunity and privilege to write to you again in our very first "virtual" Newsletter on our very own Website! My gratitude is boundless to all those who have loyally supported the SMHA over the difficulties of the past year and have helped to give our Association a future. In particular, may I thank Penny Harrison, Honorary Secretary of the SMHA, for all she has done to help us move on to the next phase and Susan Roller, who has been a superb Hon. Treasurer - and, for several years, Chair of the Governors' Finance and General Purposes Committee. In both roles she has been exemplary and we shall miss her wise contributions to the Committee. We wish Susan well for the future and hope she will continue to keep in touch with us.

Although I still retain the title of President of the Association and Chair of the Committee, you will remember that I have remained in these roles purely to give some continuity through these troubled times. We shall be meeting as a Committee in June in order to plan for a General Meeting to elect Susan's replacement and my own. I shall be happy to continue to serve on the Committee, but it is only right and proper that in due course you should elect your own President and Chair, rather than having her 'thrust upon you'!

I hope you have read my report for the final year of SMH, which I presented at the Awards Ceremony at St George's Church in November. This poignant event celebrated the tremendous achievements of the last cohorts of girls and staff, in the face of the upheaval they had faced in the final months at SMH. It was wonderful to welcome back a former Head Girl and clergy daughter, Captain Alice Rawdon Mogg, whose thoughtful words on 'The Legacy of St Mary's Hall' touched us all.

Through the banter of Facebook I have been able to keep in touch with a number of pupils - those who transferred to Roedean, those who joined other schools, and those who have moved on to college or university. The link has been maintained and although they all miss the warm and unique atmosphere of the SMH community, it is greatly to their credit that they are, for the most part, moving on positively and courageously to the next stage of their education, acknowledging their gratitude for all SMH meant to them. Staff also keep in touch with each other regularly - some also via Facebook - and there have been several informal reunions.

Now I am retired, it has been a particular pleasure to meet former staff for coffee or lunch to hear their news. I have also been invited to concerts and plays where former pupils were performing and it has been a great joy to see them flourishing. I recently attended a concert at St Lawrence's Church, Falmer, where long-serving stars of the Music Department, Mr. Jay and Mr. Roser will be performing duets!

I have not only been a 'lady of leisure' since I became a Senior Citizen! I do have several projects on the go, which keep me very busy. I am serving on the Committee of the Frank Buttle Trust, which supported so many girls through SMH; I am a Governor of our neighbouring Church of England Primary School, St Mark's, and I am also eager to complete the project in St Mark's Chapel (which, as you know, was well underway when SMH closed) to provide an additional place of worship and a Community Arts Centre for East Brighton. There have been several meetings to discuss the future of St Mark's and I shall keep you updated as soon as we have definite news, but we are optimistic that the phased plan for refurbishment will be completed, although perhaps not entirely as we originally envisaged. It is marvellous that Margaret Ellis and her band will have rung the bells on Easter Sunday to reassure the local community that St Mark's has not been abandoned. Father Andrew at St George's is storing the St Mark's parish records and the SMH honours boards are still in situ. When the work is completed, the Chapel could become a venue for future SMHA reunions.

As far as the School land is concerned, the Junior School occupies the West end of the site and uses the field and the tennis courts. The rest of the buildings are to be let out and final arrangements for the lease are now in hand. I will let you know who the tenants are once it has been officially announced. Our groundsman, David MacElvenny, was retained by Roedean, and the gardens are looking as lovely as ever under his care.

Our Archivist, Sue Carnochan, has done a brilliant job in collating and safeguarding the SMH records and memorabilia in the Reference Library at Roedean, so if any of you wish to visit her to look through our archives; she is there on Tuesday mornings and would be happy to welcome you.

I was interested to read Sue's contribution to our Newsletter in which she mentions a 'lady' who visited her in the Tanner Library. Sue requested identification and here it is!

The lady's name is Sheila Fowler-Watt, Vice President of Roedean and wife of a previous Headmaster of Brambletye Prep School. Her mother, Dr Beynon, was Roedean school doctor; her father, also Dr Beynon, was the school doctor at SMH for many years - and my doctor, too! His surgery was at 24 Eaton Place, opposite my house. His portrait hangs in the reception area. Sheila grew up at 24 Eaton Place and she attended Roedean. Her parents were married at St Mark's and Sheila was also christened, confirmed and married there. So Sheila is particularly concerned about the future of St Mark's - and she is, herself, an interesting link between the two schools. An even stranger coincidence - my son is just about to leave for Sri Lanka to teach history in the British School of Colombo where Sheila's son, Andrew, is the Headmaster! The networks go on...!

And isn't this what we most hope to achieve in our Association - to encourage and maintain a network of friendship and support amongst the pupils and staff of SMH, for as long it is needed and appreciated?

I hope you continue to enjoy browsing the Website, sharing news and discovering or keeping in touch with past friends and colleagues. We are very much in the early stages of the next phase of SMHA and any thoughts or suggestions on how you would like to see the Association developing in the future, would be gratefully received by the Committee. If you wish to volunteer to help on the Committee, even better!

I send you all my warmest wishes and affection.

Sue Meek
Headmistress of St Mary's Hall (1997-2009)

THE FRANK BUTTLE TRUST

Where are you now?

The Frank Buttle Trust is often contacted by former beneficiaries and we are always delighted to hear how they are getting on – and to tell them about the exciting work of the Trust today!

If you were assisted by the Trust in the past, and would like to get in touch again, please email: hello@buttletrust.org

NEWS OF FORMER HEADMISTRESSES

MISS OLWEN DAVIES

What a sad year it has been for St Mary's Hall, and I can only imagine how difficult it must have been for the Governors, Sue Meek, the staff and for all the pupils in the last academic year. As one of the oldest girls' schools in the country it had a long and distinguished history of service in the interest of girls' education and was something of a pioneer in the 19th century.

But how splendid it is that so many 'Old Girls' (I always did deplore that term!) have rallied to the cause and kept the Association going. It has meant a great deal of technical know-how, time, effort, goodwill and patience and I am sure we are all very grateful - particularly to Penny.

As for myself, I paddle along very happily if not very actively these days. I tend to hibernate in the winter but Spring is on its way and I am always pleased to hear news of "past pupils" (!). So keep sending it in and help to keep the name of the school alive.

My greetings and best wishes to everyone,

Yours affectionately, Olwen Davies

SMH Headmistress 1965 – 1973, SMHA Hon Vice President

MRS. OLIVE LESLIE

Olive Leslie is still living in Deddington, near Oxford, and is always interested to hear news about old girls and St Mary's Hall. Unfortunately, she is not well and is now sadly blind. However, her thirst for knowledge has not diminished and she continues to have an amazing memory for certain subjects. Her sister has told us that Olive recently had a discussion about the difference between Milton and Wordsworth. Perhaps some old girls reading this may remember Olive teaching them, and possibly also have their views on these poets as well!

SMH Headmistress 1973 - 1981, SMHA Hon Vice President

MRS. CLARE FEAVER

Clare Feaver still lives in Chichester close to the cathedral (been there for 12 years) , where she is currently a guide and is loving this role particularly as it fits in with her medieval history interest. She is sad that St Mary's Hall has been absorbed by Roedean, and would love to see anyone who remembers her. However, she asks do give her a call before turning up!

SMH Headmistress 1981 - 1988, SMHA Hon Vice President

MRS. TERESA BROADBENT

Dear All

It was really wonderful to be able to join so many of you for the final reunion. Although we were all feeling very sad that we were witnessing the end of an educational era, we revelled in meeting so many once more. The highlight for me was the afternoon's sing-a-long in the Music Room, led with amazing joie-de-vivre by the staff. I wonder what happened to all those music scores built up so carefully over the years? So many old girls were still able to share together in pieces which had become part of themselves whilst at school. A great tribute to the staff!

Many of you who were at SMH during my term of office will remember that my husband was single-sighted as a consequence of a childhood accident. Fortunately, the eye gave him no trouble whatsoever until 2008. Laser surgery proved unsuccessful in dealing with intense and non-stop pain. In April last year he had his offending eye removed (he did not have to 'pluck it out' bible-style!) In September he was fitted with an artificial eye. It represents the amazing skill of the prosthesisist who made it. I watched every stage of the production and am staggered by the wonderful result. The new eye moves in tandem with his other one and looks entirely natural. The NHS and its skilled staff are owed immense gratitude.

Some of you may remember our son, Chris. He and his wife and sons are moving to Switzerland. He continues to work for Unilever in logistics.

We shall miss our two younger grandchildren, and are glad that we live in the age of web-cams and skype, to reduce the effect of the distance.

Our older grandchildren live in Bath, so it is very easy for us to see them frequently.

This summer we are all going to holiday together in France to celebrate my birthday. By the time this reaches you, summer will be upon us and I end by wishing you all a very good summer.

With best wishes to all.
Teresa Broadbent

SMH Headmistress 1988 – 1991, SMHA Hon Vice President

MRS. PAMELA JAMES

Pamela James sends her best wishes to everyone. She is still living in Brighton and is churchwarden at St Paul's Brighton, which is keeping her very busy. At the moment the church is having a completely new floor, and this major project is due to be completed by Easter. Recently she told us that she is taking a "day off" and looking forward to going to London to the Henry Moore exhibition at Tate Britain.

SMH Headmistress 1991 – 1997, SMHA Hon Vice President

NEWS OF FORMER STAFF

(see also page 25)

Kathy Howard has sent these photos, taken at the reunion, last year, of Cynthia Fabian (Palmer), Pamela James (with Kathy) and Mrs. Thomas.



Obituaries

Dr Peter Ashdown.

Dr Peter Ashdown, who was a popular History, Psychology and Law teacher and a member of senior management until his retirement in 2006 died suddenly in September 2009. Sue Meek attended the funeral and the Headmaster of Slindon College, where Peter taught for 20 years, gave a tribute to him.

Archdeacon William Filby.

William Filby died at home on 31st December 2009.

He was curate at All Saints Eastbourne, then returning to be Vicar of Bishop Hannington, Rector of Broadwater, Worthing and then for 18 years Archdeacon of Horsham.

William was an outstanding Governor of SMH, standing uncompromisingly for its Foundation and ethos

Val Withers, former Housemistress of Hilary House and Venn House.

Val died in the Martlets during the night of 3rd May. Val was so brave in her long struggle with cancer and we know those who knew her will be saddened that she has passed away but relieved that her suffering is over. Val was a staunchly supportive and devoted housemistress and many girls will remember how much they benefited from her care and commitment. Sue Meek was very glad she went to visit Val the previous week, in the Hospice, with Olive and ex head of RS and Sacristan Jenny Lovell. Val recognised everyone, Sue said, and still had her sense of humour in spite of her suffering. Val donated her body for medical research and so there will not be a funeral, but there will be a memorial service on Saturday 3rd July at 2pm at St George's church. If any former pupils or staff would like to know more then please do contact Sue Meek.

Miss Joyce Gosney, Pupil of SMH, 1929-1935

Joyce died in May 2010 age 92 after a long illness. Her niece was kind enough to let us know and we were able to pass on thoughts, prayers and good wishes to Joyce's family.

Kathleen (Marshall) Lacey, Pupil of SMH 1933-1940

Jane Ramirez, Kathleen's daughter, contacted us recently to let us know that Kathleen died, age 86, on 2nd May 2010. We passed on our commiserations and prayers to her family.

2nd Brighton (St Mary's Hall) Guide Company

I was an Assistant Guider at the above Company from 11th March 1975 to 23rd September 1975 and appointed Guide Captain on 30th September 1975. I was warranted on 6th January 1977.

The guides met every Tuesday during term time in the basement of Elliott House. They were all boarders. We enjoyed various activities including badgework, first aid, emergency helper, craft, laundress, homemaker, friend to animals, speakers etc.

In the summer we had campfires below the tennis court on the sloping field, singing campfire songs and baking potatoes in tin foil. Each November we went to the Dome in Brighton to see the Gang Show, an excellent evening of entertainment put on by local guides and scouts. We also went camping, once joining a district camp at Nutley from 11th to 13th June 1976.

The Guide Company was part of the Kings Cliff District and at that time, Shirley Stevens was the District Commissioner. The Divisional Commissioner of Brighton was Pat Boyce.

When I was an Assistant Guider Penny Wade was awarded her Queen's Guide. While I was a Guide Captain we had three Queen's Guides. I believe two of them were Susan Harris and Miriam Batten. I cannot remember the name of the third, but I do remember that, just before her sixteenth birthday (by which time all badges for the Queen's Guide must be completed), she was rushed into hospital with appendicitis. It meant hospital visits to ensure she completed and passed the last badge needed - Commonwealth Knowledge.

When I gave up as Guide Captain I believe the girls joined a local guide company as opposed to having their own.

Margaret Ellis - Former Guide Captain and SMH Old Girl 1967 – 1975

SMHA CHOIR

<http://www.smhachoir.webs.com/>

At the final SMH reunion, Tony Jay led an impromptu sing-along in the music room. The Choir also sang at the last Founder's Day service.

The music was among that which was performed at the singalong, including Mendelssohn's Laudate Pueri, Op 39, no.2. and Howard Goodall's setting of Love Divine. Emily Smith has a contact list for the Choir and we are actively engaged in networking with them and hopefully in adding a Choir page to our own website. Tony hopes to arrange a performance in 2011. Keep an eye on our website for information as and when we can report developments.

A plea from the editor – please do let me have your news and that of your old-girl-friends; it's always a pleasure.

Please would those of you who "Facebook" also mention our website and encourage alumnae to get/keep in touch with us?

www.smhassociation.org.uk
secretary@smhassociation.org.uk

News from Roedean

Most of the students from SMH quickly adapted to their new surroundings at Roedean and continue to thrive both academically and in extra-curricular activities.

Students who transferred for their final year have been receiving encouraging offers from a wide range of universities.

I shall be joining Roedean and ex SMH sixth formers at the end of the month for a social trip to Bicester.

A small group of U5 (Year 11) students have found it more difficult to adapt to a new school at this stage in their education. It was agreed that I should become their tutor this term in order that I could meet these students on a daily basis and support them.

We are planning to have a celebratory meal together at the end of the GCSE examinations and I know they will be keen to invite their former teachers to join us.

Olive Ridge
Transition Manager

Mary (Howell-Davies) Philpott

I've been doing some sorting out over the holiday & come across a 78rpm record made by the school (the choir led by Miss Wynn I expect). A company called "The Master's Sound System" produced the record; side B1 has Jesu Joy & B2 St Mary's Hall (both handwritten on the label). I think it must be from the mid/late 1950s - Does anyone else have a copy of this masterpiece?

Katherine McGlinchey

I was at SMH from 1993 to 1998. I am currently the content editor for the Chichester Observer series of newspapers. I married Nathan in April, in Florida, and I live in Shoreham.

Anne (Bethell) Valentine

Here is a photo of a great meeting four of us had last December.

Morny Pritchett (Pike) and I have kept in contact over the years and see each other on a reasonably regular basis. Not so **Jill Soundy (Steiner)** and I, who till a few weeks previous to this meeting, hadn't seen each other since her wedding on 12 October 1963!!



(Out of interest, Jill and Morny were both married on the same day). Morny, following the last Old Girls meeting at SMH this year, got in contact with **Anne Slaughter (Milly Martin)** by phone. The four of us met at The Queen Inn in Dummer. Jill and I hadn't seen Milly since we all left school in July '59. Morny and Milly had both trained at GOS, but because they were sequential sets, their paths rarely crossed. We had a lot to talk about and plan a second meeting, possibly in March next year at the same venue.

Do we have any more of our form living in the area who would like to join us? We were 1953-1959.

Anthea (Drake) Holland

I was at a Christmas party in Doha, Qatar recently, and was handed by a lady, a notelet of SMH. Hilary (whose maiden name I do not have) was at SMH's last reunion. She reminded me sweetly that I should respond to your email. So here it is.

I was Anthea Drake and was at SMH from 1967-70. Over the years I have kept in touch with **Rachel Hewitt**, who still lives in Sussex, near Ruspur and has 3 children and a small holding. My step-niece Nicola was at SMH tho' I don't remember which years I am afraid. I think she still keeps in touch with friends from SMH.

I keep hoping that one day I will receive news about a **Madeline Green** who was at SMH when I was there, along with **Anne Fridal** who is an opera singer and **Jane Smithard** who is now a politician!

Julia (Banner) Meysner

I am still living in the Alsace and working as a school nurse at the International School in Basel. It's a lovely place to live.

Pat Carr wrote as follows:

"I lost contact with my school friends as my father, a member of the London Stock Exchange, went back into the army at the start of the 1939 war and we never returned to Hove. I wasted five years in the WAAF and as I had learnt ice skating at the S S Brighton Ice Rink it was the only thing I was qualified for so I became a teacher in England at Streatham and later Liverpool Ice Rinks until I joined the "Holiday on Ice" company.

I then travelled round Europe for about two years and was then offered a teaching post in Basel, Switzerland, during the Winter Season.

In the summer time I filled in time as a tour guide. This led to contact at Basel Airport which led to a position as a ground hostess with Swissair sister company Balair.

I lived in Basel until Swiss retirement age when I returned to England. Not to be idle I then became a tour guide at Leeds Castle for nearly 15 years. The castle is about a mile away from where I now live.

Having retired at 75 I now work as a voluntary guide occasionally at a private trust property near Ashford.

My friends at SMH were **Vivien Claudel, Cecile Cooper, Nanette Woolf** and **Betsy Marsh**.

I thought you might be interested to read what one "old girl" - in both senses—had done with her life."

Post scriptum: We traced Cecile from the database and she and Pat are now in touch and may try to meet, subject to travel difficulties (Pat writes as she will be 90 next birthday she does not like long distance travel) Sadly Vivien died three or four years ago.

Jane (Alsop) Wharton

I find looking at the website fascinating, finding out where friends are living now, from my school days!

I received a Christmas card from **Margaret Habershon**, who is finding it all great fun too! We visited St Mary's Hall the Monday after it had closed. Some students let us in and we had a wonderful last look around. It was sad but we are glad that we did it. So many old memories came flooding back, especially when we visited the art room, which was the San. I spent many days in there and the feeling was not good! However, I have kept in touch with many of my old friends and we try to meet each year.

Jess Jones

I was at St Mary's Hall from 1983 to 1990 (I think). I now live in South West London and have four children including baby twins. I keep in touch with **Amanda Robins (now Mandy Clarke)** plus a few other people on facebook including **Rachel Nixon (was Padfield), Nowal Al Shaikley** and **Meryl Sturdy**.

Lynn (Benjamin) Tulip

Miranda Grace [nee Edwards], Elizabeth Jeffery [née Hayllar], Veronica Walker and I meet regularly in mid Sussex for sustenance and solace. All are busy with our lives, working and caring for family. My eldest daughter, **Lauren Lloyd [nee Hoskins]** has moved to Rendelsham, Suffolk with her husband and 4year daughter, Jessie and 18 month Sam.



She misses Sussex and school friends but attended **Emma Stagy's** wedding in January 2010.

Youngest daughter **Selena Sandeluss [nee Hoskins]** is living in London with her husband, and is lead cancer nurse at the University College London Hospital. She manages the female oncology ward.

Jenny Child

I was at SMH from September 1972 to June 1981, as a weekly boarder for all of that time. I am now a consultant microbiologist at Worthing Hospital, am married with one daughter, now aged almost 13, and who, as she continually reminds me, is as tall as me now, and has bigger feet. I still play the violin, and am a member of a local orchestra, and sing, most recently as a member of the Brighton Early Music Festival Singers. I'm in contact with several people in my year via e-mail, and more recently, on Facebook. I'd love news of **Sarah Squibb and Nicky Edgar**, last heard of living in the Cayman Islands. I've has been trying to trace them with no success whatsoever. They started in 1972, at the same time as me.

Jane (Harvey) Porter

I had a lovely chat on the phone recently with **Liz Caudle (neé Baker)** the other evening. She had sent me photos of my old class mates from the final SMH get together. My husband and I have lived here in Australia for 41 years now. We have a son and daughter and 3 grandchildren nearby and our other daughter and her 4 children live in Edinburgh!! We do try to get over to see them as often as possible but it never coincides with the reunions.

Emma (Thomas) Davies was at SMH 1982-1991.

Last October she had a little boy, Isaac, 8 weeks early weighing 3lbs 15oz. He was in Special care for 3 weeks but is fine. Now 5 months old he weighs 13 lbs and is continuing to grow at a rapid rate! He's a little brother for Isabella who is 5.

We have moved to Horsham where my daughter is now at school with **Jo Nash (Cornell)**'s children. (she was in the year below at SMH).
Small world!

Penny (Buck) Gardiner (past Honorary Secretary, SMHA)

Retirement from the City came not a moment too soon. I had relished the challenges and demands of a late-start City career but beckoning me were a house and much loved garden nestling amongst the warm red hills of West Somerset, and something else besides. A railway, the twenty or so miles of the West Somerset Railway, and trains steaming gently past my front door to the country station just a few yards beyond. I can't claim to have been a train nerd all my life; threshers, ploughs, binders and tractors were the machines of choice for a farming girl pre-City, but with steam trains on the doorstep, who could resist becoming an enthusiast?

So I got a bit involved, and then a bit more and then a lot more. One day, maybe, they'll let me drive a locomotive but meanwhile I do what I'm good at, helping to shuffle the mountain of paperwork generated by the very successful and busy West Somerset Railway Association, the members' charity supporting the heritage and the history of the WSR. I haven't let go of the old life entirely as I still commute - a hop on, hop off, ten minute train ride through glorious countryside to HQ at Bishop's Lydeard. Retirement?
What retirement!

Penny (Titheradge) Harrison's and **Diana (Markham) Sijpesteijn's** news of the past year is reported elsewhere in these pages, but they add that they met up with **Jackie (Brasher) Leask, Julia (Bagshaw) Dunncliffe), Sue (Corringham) Medley** and **Rosemary (Haylock) Batts** in 2009 and will be seeing all but Julia again in September in London where they hope to enjoy "Ladies who Tea" before Jackie, Diana and Penny go on to the Globe.

Susanne (Fopp) Bray writes: 6 old girls will be spending our annual reunion over the weekend of 9/10/11 July here at my home near Guildford, Surrey. Our maiden names were **Susanne Fopp (Flo), Rosemary Bellamy (Belly), Jean Pearson** (no Nickname), **Elizabeth Baker (Baker), Elizabeth Allwright (Lizzie)** and **Alison Vaughan (Tich)**. I still answer to Flo once a year and in all correspondence from them!

Susanne Rea (Nicholls)

In 1963 I went to live in New Zealand for two years!

A lifetime later and now living in Cairns - Tropical North Queensland I have had an eventful life.

My two daughters - Karen lives here and has three sons all teenagers.

Daughter Merinda - lives in London - so after 40 years I started to travel to England again. Now with a two year old Grandson to visit!

I have also been in touch with **Carol O'Connor (Pink)** and **Amy Easter**.

I spent most of my life working with children as a Teacher in Early Childhood Education and have chosen to work for children in my retirement.

Basically I am a Rotarian with positions at District and Regional level concerned with World Community Service and the Rotary Foundation. It is very interesting and keeps me young (I hope)!!

I would especially welcome contact from other **Old Girls or Staff from 1956-61 or Rotarians who would be interested in partnering** with Matching Grants or other interesting ventures, visitors to Cairns are welcome to phone or email me too.

In the photos you see me set to visit a Thai Rotary Club where I went to talk (through an interpreter) about the Children's Village that my Club has built through partnering with an organisation called Destiny Rescue. www.destinyrescue.org



What we have and what they have is a big contrast - especially in SE Asia



Children from the Hill Tribe Villages that are living in the Sunrise Village built by the Rotary Club of Cairns Sunrise and managed by Destiny Rescue - an Australian NGO.

P.S. I thanked Susanne for this newsy email and she replied immediately to say "Really a big coincidence that today Anne Bell (Bearne) who lives in N.Z. contacted me!" – SMH is networking well!

Ed.

Susan (Harris) Roller went away for a fortnight at Easter to visit her father in the British Virgin Islands and met up with **Tamsin (Johnson) Kidwell** who is sailing round the world and was, at that time, in Antigua. **Libby Ager** has also been a regular visitor to Tamsin and David on their boat!

Jill Webster writes: I would be happy to meet any Old Girls who e-mail me that they will be in Toronto. I spend a large part of the year in Barcelona, hence the need to e-mail me.

Linda (Belasco) Kings tells us that her son and daughter in law have a gorgeous son, Samuel who will be one on the 14th June, and her daughter, Lianne is getting married on the 2nd October this year. Other than that her husband remains fit and well and it is nearly five years since his cancer scare. Lots to be thankful for!

Kathy Howard says she is very sad, like everyone else, that SMH has been absorbed into Rodean. However, last year's enhanced communications between old girls resulted in her getting back into contact with **Julian (Hornsby) Fowler** and **Susan (James) Mitchell**. In addition she bumped into **Virginia James** again at an SMHA meeting a few years ago. Kathy still sees PE Teacher **Mary (McEwan) Hayhurst**, and continues to be in contact with **Claire Bowes**, **Susan (Graves) Sharman**, **Susan (Davies) Hall**, **Elisabeth (Ferguson) Eastham**, **Anne "Pog" Powell**, and **Alison Forster**.

Kathy's recent involvement with the SMHA has also resulted in her contacting former headmistresses **Mrs.. James** and **Mrs.. Leslie**, and she has enjoyed becoming an "email pen friend" to **Penny (Titheradge) Harrison** – something that slightly amuses her as she associates Penny with those "grown up VIth formers" who used to ensure the younger girls went outside at lunchtime, and not hide in the loos! Kathy still lives in Sussex (Steyning) and would love to hear from anyone who remembers her.

Kathy also writes:

I had a most enjoyable time last autumn contacting some of the "**dinner ladies**" whom we last saw at the May reunion.

Winnie Kinsley was at the school from 1951 to 2007 and still lives in Brighton. Her daughter used to also work at SMH but is now working at Roedean, so SMH was very much part of her family. She has the old SMH flag!! She told me some lovely stories. For example, she said the dustman used to chase them around! And in her early 20s, she said she set the fire alarm off (probably for a dare!), and Miss Conrady was in the bath.

Rhoda Jones was at SMH from 1959 to 1993 and is good friends with Winnie, who lives close by. Rhoda reminded me of the "sausage meat" we used to have for lunch, the large long sausage shaped thing in the metal tin that we used to slice up and put gravy on.

The kitchen staff for some reason called it Baby Maude. I wondered if any Old Girls might know why? She remembers Miss Conrady standing watching the girls marching past her going into lunch, ensuring they looked OK. Sometimes Miss C. would say something, for example "tell your mother that your shoes need replacing"!

Rhoda mentioned **Miss Orme**, **Miss Hill** and **Miss Brown-Douglas**. Miss Brown-Douglas lived in the main school apparently, up at the top (I suppose where the library and VIth form common rooms were). Miss Brown-Douglas, Miss Hill and Rhoda did the cooking.

Rhoda also mentioned **Gwenda Sullivan** and **Christine Mead** and said that Gwenda was her "best friend" now.

I also contacted **Chris Heyburgh's** daughter, who told me that Chris was not very well so unfortunately I could not speak to her. I passed on our best wishes. Chris was at SMH for about 10 years, leaving 3 or 4 years ago. She enjoyed SMH very much, staying beyond retirement age.

This Poem by **Tracey Bryant**, a member of the kitchen staff, was published on the letters page of the Argus newspaper in September 2009.

It's time to say goodbye to St Mary's Hall It's sad we know but we will miss you all. Our time here we've had some highs and lows And you especially laid on some cracking shows But life continues so we have to move on But St Mary's Hall is where we truly belong Us kitchen ladies say good luck to you all Whatever you make of your life is your call	So enjoy life and succeed at all you do And that will be rewards enough for us crew There will be plenty of tears in the weeks to come But along with this we hope some fun If you do one thing when you leave St Mary's Hall Just don't give up get over that wall So we wish you good luck when you leave this school Just remember we were part of St Mary's Hall
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Cynthia (Fabian) Palmer wrote a lovely long letter to the Hon Sec.
Extracts follow:

"I must say I do miss the geographical connection of the old buildings and the actual physical contact of a reunion.

Nothing particularly exciting has been happening in my life recently. I continue to sing with the Angmering Chorale in Arundel Cathedral and hope to go on tour with them in May 2011. We still have our little dog Pepsi, who is 16/17 and beginning to show her age. I have a good selection of friends locally and we visit cinemas and theatres occasionally.

I had a special birthday last year and my daughter Emma took me to Rome for a week which was fabulous. I had been teaching Latin and Roman History for years and been head of Classics at my last school, but I had never been to Rome.

Emma also treated me to a West End theatre trip in November to see "Wicked" which I enjoyed very much."

Mary (Rand) Abbis writes: You may be interested to know I am in touch with **Kathleen (Farmer) Milton** She and her husband are in a residential home in Hove and I am planning to see her later in the summer.

I am also in touch with **Lucinda (Tudor) Hassell** who lives in Barbados. She is spending a month here in June and then I will be in Barbados in December for the wedding of her daughter Yonette.

I also see **Veronica (Alsop) Smith** regularly and **Pam (Cryer) Butcher**. We should all be meeting up whilst Lucinda is here in June.

Lorna (Thomson) Hindmarsh has been corresponding, through her nephew Dr Michael Thomson, with Sue Carnochan about her twin sister and her time at St Mary's Hall. She had hoped for news of one great friend of hers in particular, **Heather Milburn**. Heather was a day girl. They kept up a friendship after Lorna left and went to Kenya but lost contact with each other during the war. Lorna wrote that she is now 94. She lived for 50 years in Kenya, got married and had four daughters. She is now living in Western Australia, Her husband died in his 60s leaving her a farm to run. Three of her daughters came to Australia, married and had families so when things got difficult in Kenya for Lorna she went there and has all her family around me. Lorna's twin, Nancy, died six years ago. Lorna has recently been in touch again to say:

"I am just about to have a book printed about my life in Kenya. I start right when I was born at my home in Wimborne right through to when I went to Kenya when I was 20. There is a photo of St Mary's Hall but unfortunately I was never any good there, my twin sister Nancy was much better at all school work than I was and my Father took me away when I was 16. I am afraid in later years that the school neglected me, I feel that if I had been at a school away from Nancy I would have done much better. I grew up very quickly once I was away on my own. My sister and I were in Miss Wisdom's house away from the main building and she used to take us all out on trips to the downs which I always enjoyed".

I know I am asking a lot – but does anyone remember Lorna?

I will put some information about Lorna's book on the website, when she gives me the details. (Ed.)

It has been reported recently that non clinical staff and services from the Royal Sussex County Hospital, part of Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust, whose main building is sited next to Saint Mary's Hall, could use the school buildings if recently announced plans for the Hospital site get the go ahead. If the Government approves their plans the Trust will redevelop the RSUH site over the next nine years and the school buildings could be rented by the Hospital for staff to use during the work. Estate Agents, Cluttons, who have been advertising the school for rent, on behalf of Roedean, have confirmed that an acceptable bid has been received and negotiations are continuing.

St Mark's Chapel

This had been St Mary's Hall (SMH) chapel since 1987 and was passed to Roedean along with all the other buildings when the school closed in July 2009. Roedean plans to let all the buildings with the exception of the junior school and the Chapel.

St George's Church has put forward a business plan suggesting that Roedean gift the chapel to St George's.

St George's would complete the basic renovation and then hire it out to community groups, for the arts etc.

The Chapel could also be used for occasional services e.g. St Mark's day (25th April) and St Mary's Hall Old Girls (SMHA) reunions.

The St George's and Roedean lawyers are now in discussion. If the plan is acceptable to both parties it would then be passed to the Charity Commission for approval. There are then several months' work to be done to the inside of the building (e.g. heating, flooring) before it can be opened.

An appeal to raise upwards of £60k will be launched to complete the basic works.

Obviously this will be of great interest to Old Girls and we will update you via the website as and when we hear more.

Committee Report

For varying reasons not every member of the Committee has been able to devote equal time to their voluntary work on this body during 2009/10. This has been a year of, perhaps, unprecedented busy-ness for us and Sue Meek, Susan Roller, Penny Harrison, supported by Kathy Howard, Diana Markham and Olwen Davies have shouldered the majority of the work among them. They are grateful to others who have participated whenever and wherever possible.

The Committee is actively seeking "new blood" and would welcome contact, via Penny, from anyone who would like to know more about involvement. We really do not anticipate the level of work as being anything like as large in the future but it is vital to secure young members to join in as we represent past Headmistresses and Old Girls who left (with a couple of exceptions only) at least 30 years ago!

While we are by no means over the hill we do need to have a succession plan, so please consider assisting your Association in this way.

We are delighted to report that Alice Rawdon Mogg, Jo Stubbs and Olive Ridge have agreed to be co-opted, Olive and Jo with immediate effect and Alice after her return to the UK later this year.

We work by email, with the occasional Conference Call, and plan to meet once a year, only. We are able to consider assistance with travel costs for Committee members with long journeys to a meeting, if necessary.

We met in June where we discussed:

- The proposed Draft Constitution (which, when completed will be put to you for approval at our next General Meeting)
- The transition of the post of Hon Treasurer
- St Mark's (see above)
- Future work of the Committee and the Association

If you would like to have more information on any of this, please contact Penny, or look on the website.

Contacts:

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Susan Roller. Hon Treasurer (to June 2010)

Diana Markham, Hon Treasurer (from June 2010)

treasurer@smhassociation.org.uk

To benefit fully from your membership of SMHA be sure to register with Penny and (Life Members) use your log-on to view the full website.

It is updated regularly and contains many articles and items of interest.

www.smhassociation.org.uk

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.