

OLD STOPS' REVIEW

ISSUE 1
SPRING
2011

30 YEARS OF GIRLS
FROM MADOFF TO MARMALADE
MINI-ASHES SERIES WIN
NEWS



FOUNDED IN 1487

WELCOME TO OUR FIRST EDITION

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The Old Stops section of the school website gives frequent updates on current activities, but many of you felt that you would like a more dedicated review of news and events in hard copy form. It is intended to publish Old Stops' Review annually to complement our other forms of communication and we hope very much that it will become your magazine with contributions from Old Stopfordians far and wide.

One of the most valuable resources for future researchers of the life and times of SGS will undoubtedly be the collection of Stopfordian magazines with their comprehensive record of events and articles assembled by conscientious editors over the years. Every issue provides a fascinating snapshot of school life and demonstrates a continual pattern of optimism, determination and resolve that has always characterised Stopfordians. It is interesting to note the increasing acceleration and range of academic and extra-curricular activities offered to successive generations of pupils and current issues reveal just how extensive that range is. The full contents of the most recent Stopfordian magazine may also be viewed on the school website.

SGS continues to maintain and refurbish existing buildings and to pursue the possibilities of new building whenever possible. Some of you will have had the opportunity to explore the Technology Centre and Sports Hall, situated on the former Convent site and the new Library and Physics department, the design of which has continued the impressive architectural style of the Hallam site. Many Old Stopfordians from 1980 onwards will have experienced assemblies and lessons on the Woodsmoor site in buildings that were acquired from the Convent authorities. Last Summer, I wrote on the SGS website about the demolition of the Woodsmoor Hall and the adjacent labs and classrooms. Planning permission has now been granted for a substantial teaching block which again will mirror the Hallam site developments in style. Following on from the completion of this, the 'Black and White' tower and the Classics Block will also be demolished and the area landscaped. The former Convent House, having endured several stays of execution, is structurally sound and continues to play an important role in providing valuable teaching space. 1980, of course, was memorable for another major change in the School's history, the arrival of girls and an article in this issue reflects that event.

The School and the Old Stopfordians' Association Committee are beginning to think about ways in which the 525th Anniversary of the Foundation in 2012 may be marked and there are embryonic plans for a number of events, details of which will be published in due course. We would welcome any thoughts you may have as well as any offers of support and involvement.

Stuart Helm

Archivist and OSA Membership Secretary

WHY NOT GET IN TOUCH?

We hope you enjoy reading the news and views in this new magazine, please send us your thoughts or announcements to contribute to future issues.

externalrelations@stockportgrammar.co.uk



A continual pattern of optimism, determination and resolve has always characterised Stopfordians.



I AM DELIGHTED TO BE ASKED TO WRITE A FEW WORDS OF INTRODUCTION TO THIS NEW PUBLICATION WHICH WILL, I HOPE, HELP TO KEEP OLD STOPFORDIANS OF ALL VINTAGES IN TOUCH.

The school has enjoyed a year of memorable success, with examination results reaching record levels and many outstanding achievements in the cultural and sporting life of the school. Full details of these can, of course, be found on our website or in our regular email newsletter. We have also celebrated two notable anniversaries. In November we were honoured by a visit from HRH Prince Edward, the Earl of Wessex, to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the introduction of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme and the 1,000th Award obtained by a Stockport Grammar School pupil, whilst the 30th anniversary of the introduction of co-education will be marked by a major re-development of the former Convent Buildings on the Woodsmoor site. The results of a detailed survey of parental opinion, which demonstrated very high levels of satisfaction with the education we provide, were supported by the

findings of a rigorous external audit by the Independent Schools Inspectorate. Their report found the academic and extra-curricular achievements of pupils inside and outside the classroom to be excellent with boys and girls having an exemplary attitude to learning and demonstrating outstanding qualities of personal development.

It is no surprise that, even in times of great economic uncertainty, places at Stockport Grammar School continue to be in very high demand. We rely very much on the generosity of our supporters to provide the bursary funds which enable bright boys and girls from all sections of the local community to develop their talents in this very special school. I hope that you will enjoy reading of the fortunes of Old Stopfordians and thank you very much for your continuing support in offering opportunities for the next generation.

Andrew Chicken
Headmaster



The School has enjoyed a year of memorable success

Acclaimed Theatre Director Marianne Elliott (OS 1985) on life at SGS and the challenges of opening a production on Broadway.

Marianne Elliott, one of the first girls to join the Sixth Form, has gone on to have a hugely successful career as a theatre director. Marianne studied Drama at Hull University and after graduation, worked in the media before eventually setting up her own fringe theatre company. Based on its success, she went on to secure jobs at The Open Air Theatre and Manchester's Royal Exchange before moving to London, where she became an Associate at the Royal Court and then the National Theatre, where she has now been for five years.

Throughout her career, Marianne has brought many award-winning and critically acclaimed productions to the stage. Following on from the success of her recent production of *War Horse* at The National Theatre, Marianne has just opened the show on Broadway. She was named as one of the 50 most influential people in theatre in The Times Luvvie Power List 2010.

Marianne, who is married with one daughter, was in the middle of an incredibly hectic preview week in New York when we caught up with her

What are your strongest memories of the school?

The boys I suppose! And not for just the obvious reasons. The school had only just gone co-ed so the boys in my year were used to being all boys. They were then confronted by a lot of fresh faced girls when they reached the Sixth Form. On the first few days even weeks and months, the girls would congregate on one side of the common room, and the boys on the other side. We didn't really know how to communicate at all! It was a shock to us all. It seems extraordinary to me now that it could ever be deemed a good idea to segregate children into single sex schools. This was a prime example of the misunderstanding between the sexes that has existed through the ages.

But by the end of the Lower Sixth I had formed some amazing friendships with a lot of those boys, some of which I still have. It was lovely to have a best friend who was of the opposite sex, a truly best friend. The agonies of being a teenager are so shared when you can see another person's perspective, and the more different that person, the more interesting their perspective. We were all awkward, agonised, lumbering adolescents dealing with all sorts of hormones and growing pains!

I do also remember the mean chocolate biscuit pudding that kinda melted under hot custard! We used to re-queue for that one, pretending we were in the Fifth Form in order to get their portions! Some of the kids must have gone without. Sorry about that.

What do you remember about lessons at SGS?

Well, I really enjoyed Art and English. I was lucky enough to have some really excellent teachers in both subjects; Geraldine Little in English and Isobel Bishop in Art. Both were very inspiring and became my friends. I remember distinctly Mrs Bishop saying that no one is born with a gift for art, they learn it. That's been quite a motto for me in all things and encouraged me to try at things that I would otherwise have shied away from. I would say in most things, we learn and train ourselves to be skilful. Hard work can reap many benefits whatever the ability.

How do you think being a pupil at SGS prepared you for life beyond school?

It helped me take that step into a wider world. I was extremely happy there although I went through some tough emotional times with my father dying. I felt secure and encouraged and appreciated. I think the best gift any child can be given is the gift of confidence.

Can you give an account of a typical day in your life at present?

Well, right now, I'm staying in New York as I'm putting on a show that has been in London, *War Horse*. We are re-creating and re-writing it to be as good as it possibly can be. So I've been here about two and a half months solely rehearsing the show. We're in previews at the moment so I'm living rather a strange existence of about 14 hours a day in a darkened theatre, polishing and refining each moment of the show. Frankly, I could be anywhere as I'm not seeing much of New York! It's exciting but highly stressful as who knows how it will go down here. And it's been a huge effort on the National Theatre's part to bring it out. Fingers crossed!

What ambitions have you yet to fulfil?

I really want to do a film one day. I've done a short film which I absolutely loved. But there aren't many opportunities in that field at the moment. And I really, really want to go skiing!



NEWS IN BRIEF

PETER GIBLIN RETIRES

After 22 years of teaching at SGS, Head of Physics Peter Giblin retired in the summer of 2010. Peter's unparalleled enthusiasm for teaching his subject, even to those for whom it did not come naturally, will be missed, and former pupils gathered at a reunion in July 2010 to show their appreciation and wish him well. His legacy is not solely confined to Physics matters as Peter can take responsibility for the blue/yellow week timetable system, the improved Sixth Form Yearbook, the introduction of the Sixth Form Ball and the design of the impressive Physics accommodation. Fortunately, Peter Giblin has not left the school entirely, as he remains working with SGS on a consultancy basis – using his analytical skills and great patience to continue to produce the school timetable, as well as serving on the Governing Body.

MEDICAL RESEARCH

A medical research paper, co-authored by **Abigail Howson (OS 2010)** while she was still a pupil at SGS, has been published in Pub Med & Heart Magazine. Abigail received a highly prestigious Nuffield Science Bursary that gave her the opportunity to spend six weeks joining a real research project alongside Professor Tony Heagerty at Manchester University. The resulting paper, *Effects of Aldosterone and Obesity on the Anticontractile Properties of Perivascular Adipose Tissue in Rat Aortic Rings* was published in the autumn. Abigail, who left school last summer with a clean sweep of four A levels at A* and A grades, has gone on to study Medicine at Leeds University.

SURGICAL SUCCESS IN LA

Neil Jones (OS 1967) studied Biochemistry and then Medicine at Trinity College, Oxford, before moving to Los Angeles. After holding the positions of Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery & Professor of Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery at UCLA as well as Chief of Hand Surgery and Micro Surgery at UCLA Medical Centre, Neil was elected President of the American Society for Reconstructive Microsurgery in 2008. Neil is willing to talk to any Old Stops who are considering a move to the US or a career in surgery. Please get in touch with the External Relations Office if you wish to contact him.

JUGGLING CAREER, MOTHERHOOD AND A PASSION FOR FOOTBALL

Starting a business, writing a blog about being a working mother, featuring in an ITV1 documentary about football, finding Eric Cantona in her kitchen... 2010 was certainly an eventful year for **Laura Wolfe (OS 1991)**. And it seems that she's not resting on her laurels in 2011, already making the front page of the new Manchester Evening News title, Greater Manchester Business Week. Before setting up award-winning marketing and events company, Journey9 UK, in January 2010, Laura was a director of Out There Events Limited. Laura has also worked for Merrill Lynch Europe plc and ABN AMRO as well as the Institute of Directors North West. Laura now sits on numerous boards and committees, including the Royal Exchange Theatre Development Committee and Downtown Manchester in Business Advisory Board. 2011 is sure to be another busy year for Laura with the birth of her second child in May.

OLD STOP DRIVES THE ROCK FORWARD

David Laycock (OS 1981) has overseen the development of Bury's new leisure and retail centre The Rock, which opened in the summer of 2010. The £350m scheme incorporates three department stores, 60 other stores, eight restaurants and coffee shops, plus a cinema and family bowl and entertainment centre.

NICHOLAS HENSHALL HAS SECOND BOOK PUBLISHED

Former Head of History and Old Stop **Nicholas Henshall (OS 1964)** had his second book *The Zenith of European Monarchy and its Elites* published by Macmillan in February 2010. His first book, *The Myth of Absolutism* was published in 1992. Nicholas Henshall was also formerly the editor of History Review Magazine.

SINGING FOR SUCCESS

Rachel Joyce (OS 1993), now known as soprano singer Victoria Joyce, graduated from the Royal Northern College of Music and has gone on to enjoy a very successful career in opera, performing on the international stage. Her most recent credits include a concert performance of Cherubini's *Médée* at Cadogan Hall in London. Victoria made her debut at the Amsterdam Concertgebouw with a performance of *Parsifal* in December 2010. This spring, she sings Musetta in *La Bohème* for the Opéra de Limoges.

IN BLOOM

In 2010 **Alex Denman (née Baulkwill, OS 1992)** reprised her role as Show Manager at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show for the fourth year running. The show was a total sell-out, with live coverage airing daily on the BBC. Alex regularly appeared alongside Alan Titchmarsh and in her own video diaries. Alex also gave an insight into the build-up to the event.

She is set to manage the show again this year and it looks like it's going to be better than ever. Visit rhs.org.uk/chelsea for more information.



DELPHIC MAKE IT BIG IN 2010
Delphic, featuring **Richard Boardman** and **Matt Cocksedge (both OS 2002)**, released their debut album *Acolyte* on Polydor Records. Receiving unanimously positive reviews (and described by The Independent on Sunday as 'on kissing terms with magnificence'), *Acolyte* supports the band's 3rd place finish in the BBC's Sound of 2010 poll. From this followed a European tour, which included a sell-out homecoming gig at Salford's Islington Mill. Delphic were then nominated for the 'Best UK & Ireland New Act' in the 2010 MTV EMAs in Madrid. The band have also played on BBC Radio 1's *Live Lounge* and made their TV debut on *Later.... with Jools Holland*.

DESIGNS ON SUCCESS

After graduating from the prestigious Central St Martins College, textile designer **Dominique Mosley (OS 2001)** began her career designing handbags in London, but harbouring dreams of starting her own range, she returned to the North West and established her luxury scarves business to showcase her talent in pattern design. Dominique has chosen to champion British manufacture and has her scarves printed locally in Macclesfield and hand finished in the Cotswolds. Her products are currently stocked in boutiques in Manchester and Hale as well as being available to purchase on her website dominiquemosley.com. Dominique ultimately plans to extend her range to homeware and womenswear, with all items featuring her signature prints.



FROM MADOFF TO MARMALADE LIFE IN THE BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS

Chairman of Governors **Richard Rimmington (OS 1962)** and his wife Angela recently returned from their fourth visit to the home of Richard's cousin, **William Tacon (OS 1971)**, in the beautiful British Virgin Islands. William reflects on his last six years in the Caribbean.



In 2004, just after turning 50, I had a late midlife crisis and decided to move from being Partner at Ernst & Young in Birmingham to the offices in Tortola, British Virgin Islands, a mere speck in the Caribbean Sea.

Despite BVI only having a population of 25,000, it has on its companies register some 600,000 limited companies, with up to 60-70,000 being formed each year, registering in BVI, but actually being run by entrepreneurs in various parts of the world. This activity is good for my profession as they get into huge financial disputes into the £billions, assets disappear, allegations are made, there is fraudulent activity and so on.

I am liquidator of two BVI registered funds which fed investors' money into investments with that nice Mr Madoff. These funds were supposed to be valued at around \$6bn but



William Tacon and Angela Rimmington

of course the only real assets were cash balances (frozen in Bermuda) of c\$90m. I am suing various parties for \$240m and am considering selling the funds' claims against Madoff's estate for hundreds of \$millions.

Failed property developments are also plentiful at the moment, one of which is Temenos in Anguilla which has a Greg Norman designed golf course and costs \$250 per round (Richard Rimmington was disappointed not to have been able to play on this during his visit in February). It is costing the Banking Syndicate roughly \$250,000 per month to keep it going, mainly for the cost of running the water desalination plant used to create water to keep it looking green, but we cannot shut it, as much for political as any other reason.

The highlight, however, of my time in BVI, if not my life to date, has been to win the 2010 World Marmalade

Championships (International Category) for my Tortola Lime Marmalade. I fed-exed my entry back to the Lake District, where the competition was being judged, and was given '20 out of 20, excellent in every way'. The supreme irony is that I am ultra allergic to handling the pungent and incredibly aromatic Tortola key limes, so I have to employ an army of helpers, including Richard's wife Angela when she visits, to squeeze, peel and handle them, which is a big job as the marmalade has become very popular over here.

BVI is a tremendous place! It's not for everyone but I have no regrets about coming here. Yes we have hurricanes, floods, power cuts and landslides but also great winter weather, fantastic professional work and great friends. Initially, I came for one or two years, but nearly seven years later, I am still here.

SGS WIN MINI-ASHES SERIES



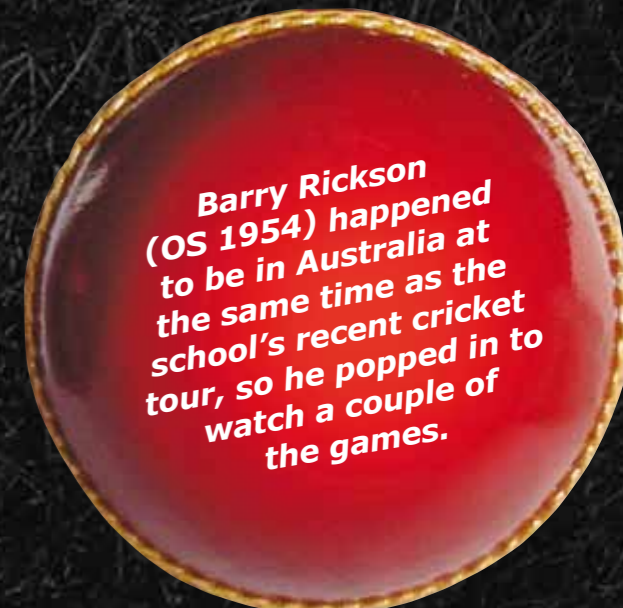
On their first day in Australia, after a long flight, the team did remarkably well to win against Maroochydore HS. Two days later they played against the Sunshine GS and beat them off the last ball in a high-scoring game. Would you believe, they played under floodlights in a Day/Night match! I clearly remember playing for school in a stygian gloom in such exotic places as Audenshaw or Urmston but they were never officially dubbed D/N games.

Unfortunately, in spite of a more mature 'Barmy Army' (Dr and Mrs Wright and myself and Jen) being there in support, the next match did not go as well. At Matthew Flinders College in Buderim, their luck changed and they lost. This, however, was a splendid day's cricket in a high-scoring game. Matthew Flinders scored 256-9 in 45 overs to which SGS replied with 193-9, a creditable response after so many days in the energy-sapping heat. Alex Jones and David Wright bowled particularly well, while David shone again with the bat as did Chris Marshall and Mark Isherwood. Matt Hughes excelled in an all-round fine performance in the field.

We were all most impressed by the hospitality afforded us in the 33 degrees heat, with a constant supply of ice-cold water and the best cricket lunch I have ever experienced. The staff, boys and parents of the Matthew Flinders College went out of their way to be friendly and hospitable to our boys who enjoyed a fine game on an excellent ground with a lovely atmosphere – an experience which all of us will treasure.

The school then went on to play St Lawrence College at Runcorn, and were beaten. This left the score two all in this mini-Ashes series with one to play at Brisbane Boys' College, by reputation the hardest of all the games. We were unable to attend the Runcorn game but were all "on fire" to see the Ashes decider, especially as our grandson had only just left the school, and although not a cricketer himself, was full of stories of how good they were and what lay in store for the Poms.

So onto Toowong, and the most bizarre game of cricket I have ever witnessed. Although the dreadful Queensland floods had subsided, this turned out to be a very wet day, the impact of which was crucial to the game. This ground was right next to a very busy main road so the players were asked not to hit sixes in that direction, not a request I have ever heard before but would have welcomed it with some of the batsmen I came across!



Barry Rickson (OS 1954) happened to be in Australia at the same time as the school's recent cricket tour, so he popped in to watch a couple of the games.

Matt Hughes defied the rules by hitting a six onto the road in the first over and others followed, particularly Jason Downey with a superb 43, worth twice as many in normal conditions, and the school won with one ball and one wicket to spare. I'm not sure I would want to drive past that ground whilst a game is going on! I could not help but marvel at the opportunities given to the students at SGS. I think of my days when a fixture at Liverpool College seemed a long way away and even more excitement when King George V at Southport appeared on the fixture list, and as for Day/Night cricket, well, that was a fantasy world. Many of my generation will also remember the open-fronted tractor shed with the concrete floor which served as some sort of pavilion. I recall playing a side from Lancashire, captained by their coach, an ex-England Test cricketer who turned up wearing a beautiful England touring blazer; the incongruity of this was most striking when he placed his gear alongside the mowers and groundsman's implements. Happy memories!

I know that the boys thoroughly enjoyed their Australian experience and they must be truly grateful to the school for setting all this in motion and especially to Messrs Young and Makinson for leading them.



Hockey Squad 1981-1982

30 YEARS OF GIRLS

This school year we celebrate 30 years of girls at SGS. In 1980, after 493 years of the education of boys, 66 girls joined the new First Year intake and 22 girls joined the Sixth Form, as well as provision being made to accept 25 girls at 7+ in the Junior School.

This decision placed SGS firmly in the earliest group of major independent schools that chose to go co-educational, and was a decision that was welcomed by both existing and prospective parents. Read on for some recollections from pupils who were at the school at the time. You will find even more on the Old Stops section of the website.

Pauline Lai (OS 1987)

'The seven years I spent at SGS really were the happiest and most carefree of my life so far...

I went to St Andrews University Medical School straight after SGS. The transition was smooth and I felt academically, Stockport Grammar School more than adequately prepared me for medical school.'

Beatrix Milburn (Née Wood OS 1983)

After Stockport Grammar School, Beatrix graduated from film school, and has since written and produced a variety of award winning documentary and feature films throughout Europe. She says: 'Stockport Grammar School helped me to prepare for how to deal with being an independently minded person in a conformist world.'

Ginny McDermott (Née Burke OS 1982)

'I don't know how different my life would have been if I'd had the chance to attend Stockport Grammar School from age 11, but it certainly changed my outlook on life in the two years that I was able to attend. I certainly expected more from myself and more from life, and Stockport Grammar School gave me the confidence to tread my own path whatever life threw at me.'

Caroline Pearce (Née Wiltshire OS 1985)

Caroline remembers playing in the wind band, especially the open air concerts in the quad. She has continued her passion for music, and following a piano teaching diploma, she teaches piano and percussion in South East London.

'Looking back, it is all the interpersonal skills that I acquired at Stockport Grammar School that have helped me most. Those, along with an ability to work hard and be self disciplined, and aim high, have remained with me throughout.'

Sarah Barker (Née Vernon OS 1990)

'The most important memory of all for me is that I am fortunate to be able to say I had the most fantastic schooling anybody could wish for. Stockport Grammar School was a very happy time for me and I have very fond memories of my time there. I think that counts for so much and I hope my children can grow up and feel the same way about their school and education.'

Immediately after leaving Stockport Grammar School, Sarah spent a year in Germany. She then went on to study Languages at university, and spent a year in France as part of her degree.

'Stockport Grammar School gave me the confidence to follow my dreams and to fulfil my ambitions.'

MY YEAR IN OFFICE HAS BEEN A GREAT EXPERIENCE, AND A REAL EYE OPENER WITH RESPECT TO SCHOOL ACTIVITIES...



Once I got over the shock of being invited to be President of the OSA, I realised that I had to arrange to be given a guided tour of the 'new' school, as it was obvious that much had changed during the 22 years that I had been living and working in Kenya. I was very impressed by the creation of the new areas developed within the school and how well the new had been blended in with the old.

My year in office has been a great experience, and a real eye opener with respect to school activities. I attended Speech Day and the two wonderful Carol Services. Armistice Day was a very moving occasion and extremely well attended with over 100 Old Stopfordians present. The Junior School sports day was a superb display of unbridled enthusiasm and budding talent.

The school music concerts were absolutely superb, and impressed me so much that I shall enjoy attending as many as possible after my year of office ends.

The World Lacrosse Championships were held in Manchester during July 2010 and it was good to see so many Old Stops being selected for the various categories of English Lions (defined as players of a more senior age) and playing so well.

Finally, I would like to thank the OSA committee members for their unstinting support and guidance during the year.

Tony Fort
OSA President 2010/11

SCHOOL HIGHLIGHTS 2010/11

STAR STUDDED YEAR FOR A LEVELS

The school celebrated another outstanding year of A Level results: 61% of all grades were awarded at A* or A, and 98% of all grades were between A* and C.

The much-discussed A* grades, designed to recognise the achievements of particularly talented students, were awarded to 47 boys and girls, with four of those gaining all A* grades. A further 43 pupils celebrated a clean sweep of A* and A grades.

RECORD GCSE RESULTS

The Fifth Year group of 160 pupils collected a record-breaking set of GCSE results with boys and girls gaining 71% of all grades at A* and A, and a third of the entire year group being awarded straight A* and A grades in all ten subjects taken. Eight pupils were 'All-Star' students, each gaining ten GCSEs at A* grade. One pupil, Sarah Hindle, achieved 11 A* and A grades, and a further 43 pupils gained ten A* and A grades.

Visit the school website for more news, including the Spring Concert at the RNCM, sporting success, drama productions, the ISI Inspection Report, Parent Survey Results, information on trips and activities, and much more.



Richard Rimmington and Prince Edward at St James's Palace

ROYAL VISIT

Pupils and staff were honoured to receive a visit from HRH Prince Edward The Earl of Wessex in November 2010 as the school celebrated its 20th Anniversary of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme, and the presentation of its 1,000th Award. The Prince was shown different aspects of Junior School life from sport, to music, science, handicrafts and story time before meeting Senior School pupils, who demonstrated their work in the various sections of the scheme. His Royal Highness took time to talk to everyone in detail as they showed him activities that included route planning, volunteering, music, photography, sport, animation, tactical games, fencing, dancing and climbing. *A Walkers' Guide to the Lake District* – a book of walks compiled by pupils for their Gold Duke of Edinburgh Awards, was presented to the Prince at the end of his visit.

Celebration of the school's Duke of Edinburgh achievements continued later in the term when Chairman of Governors, Richard Rimmington was invited to St James's Palace to meet Prince Edward at a reception.

ALPS TRIP

Nineteen pupils from the Fourth Year up to the Lower Sixth ended their summer holidays on a high, when they ventured to the stunning Swiss Alps for five exhilarating days of climbing and mountaineering with the International School of Mountaineering.

As well as practical exercises, the group attended lectures on glaciers and crevasse rescue and learnt how to make anchors in the ice for rescue purposes. They rounded off the trip by abseiling into the deep crevasses and ice-climbing out – a real adventure.



Retired diplomat Martin Bourke (OS 1966) shares his memories of SGS

Martin Bourke's career in the Diplomatic Service took in postings all over the world, and school children from across the country were able to benefit from his experience when he returned to SGS in March 2010 as a speaker at the Model United Nations Conference. A former Deputy High Commissioner of New Zealand and Governor of the Turks and Caicos Islands, Martin is clearly an Old Stop who knows how to be calm under pressure.

Tell us about your memories of the school.

I was at SGS as a town scholar from 1958-1966. Then it was all boys and much smaller, about 550 pupils, including the Junior School. I particularly remember very high standards of teaching in the subjects I studied, with equally strong discipline and no fancy ideas of political correctness. My main influences were Mr W S Johnston (English), Mr Norris (French) and the inimitable Mr A Johnston (History).

We were a rowdy bunch and could make life difficult for some of the staff, but with these three you never dared to step over the line. The great Joe Stanley (Art) was also a strong influence, as were John Durnall (Geography) and Bingo Roberts (Latin). My other main – and very fond – memory remains the fantastic school plays that Albert Johnston and his wife Mickey used to produce in the Hallam Hall. These plays, and the way much of school life revolved around them, were an institution and were done to a very high standard with limited resources. I acted in many of the plays and also in Albert and Mickey's own company, which also used the Hallam Hall.

What is your proudest achievement?

I guess joining the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and gaining access to central policy-making was a huge moment and I did feel very proud. Later on there were all kinds of strange experiences, with their highs and lows, but one which stands out was the General Election in the Turks and Caicos Islands in 1995. I was Governor then, and I took personal charge of supervising the organisation. The result was an election relatively free from corruption and intimidation, for the first time. Being highly commended by the Ambassador for my commercial work in South Africa, and by the NZ Foreign Minister for my work in Wellington, were other highs.

Do you have any advice for someone contemplating a career in foreign affairs?

You need to be bright, good at analysis with a creative instinct; resilient, flexible, and able to work on complex issues at speed under pressure. And always to be ready for the unexpected! Resilience and flexibility are vital when serving overseas, often in difficult places.

Martin Bourke with Nina Rawlings (OS 2010) and Martin Kent (OS 2010) at the MUN Conference



You also need two other skills; familiarity with a foreign language (usually French but German is also important in Europe) and computer literacy. Really good linguists get the chance to learn hard languages such as Russian, Chinese, or Arabic.

What are your most treasured possessions?

What is most important in my life is my wife and family; four grown-up sons and four grandsons (no girls – yet!). Family and health outrank anything else.

Tell us a bit about your involvement with Help for Heroes.

Since retiring from the FCO I have (among other things) been working as a volunteer for Help for Heroes since early 2008. I got involved partly because a friend asked me to and partly because my youngest son was an army officer at the time and had just done a tour in Iraq. I've also visited the Defence Rehab Centre at Headley Court to see at first hand what they do – a truly inspiring experience.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BIRTHS

Mark Baxter (OS 1994) and wife Sara welcomed George Edmund to their family on 1st October 2010, weighing 11lb 3oz.

MARRIAGES

Please do let us know if you have recently got married – send us a picture too!

IN MEMORY

In memory of Old Stopfordians and friends of the school who have recently passed away.

David Adams (OS 1948)

October 2010

Roy Henley (OS 1948)

January 2011

John Robert-Blunn

14th March 2010

Peter Rowlinson (OS 1946)

14th September 2009

Geoffrey P Rye (OS 1933)

July 2010

Michael F Tavernor (OS 1939)

February 2010

James Vernon-Parry (OS 1944)

23rd May 2010

Dr Nicholas Vites (OS 1972)

December 2010

John Wrigley (OS 1942)

11th November 2009

Alan Baxendale (OS 1942)

It was with great sadness that we heard of the death of Alan Baxendale on 3rd October 2010 in hospital, following a fall at his home.

Alan was well known in the Old Stopfordians' Association, as a stalwart supporter and past Secretary and Chairman of the London Branch.

He received his Bachelor of Arts from University College London in 1949, and qualified as a teacher at the London Institute of Education in 1950. He received his Masters in History from the University of London in 1954. He became the first professional educator to serve as Chief Education Officer to the Secretary of State at the Home Office. Prior to his retirement he was awarded an honorary M.A. by the Open University for his role in broadening prison education programmes through the medium of OU techniques. On his retirement in 1985 he was awarded an OBE for educational services. He received his M.Phil. from Queen Mary University of London in 2004.

Alan converted his MPhil thesis into a book published in 2010 about Winston Churchill's approach to the role of education in penal reform. This book has a forward by Sir Martin Gilbert, who is Churchill's official biographer.

This interest continued up to the end of his life, and his generosity was recently extended when he undertook to fund a bursary which would support a student undertaking post-graduate research into post-war education provision within the UK prison system.

Alan was a supporter of many charities, and an active supporter of our Old Stopfordians' Association. He was also a regular attendee of events in Stockport, particularly the Remembrance Day and Founder's Day services. As an acknowledgement of his service to the Association, Alan was awarded the honour of being appointed as a Distinguished Life Member of the Association two years ago.

The full text of this obituary, written by David Pugh, Chairman of the OSA London Branch, can be found on the school website.

DO YOU HAVE AN ANNOUNCEMENT?
 Why not tell us all about it?
 Send in your story and help to contribute to future issues.

REMEMBRANCE SERVICE

On Thursday 11th November 2010, 108 Old Stopfordians returned to SGS to join Governors, staff and pupils for a Service of Remembrance led by Headmaster Andrew Chicken.

After the ceremony, guests enjoyed lunch, were entertained by the school string quartet led by Sixth Former Sam Holmes and heard an account from pupils who had visited the French and Belgian Battlefields.

SHAA SOCIETY LUNCH

Legators and current donors gathered in the Hallam Hall on 17th March 2011 for the annual Shaa Lunch. The event is open to current donors and all those who are members of the Shaa Society – that is anyone who has pledged a legacy to the school. If you are interested in joining the Shaa Society or donating to the Bursary Fund, please contact Rachel Horsford, Director of External Relations on 0161 419 2408.

LACROSSE

This season, the Old Stopfordians lacrosse team found itself in the second division of first teams under a new structure. Many were expecting to find the opposition too tough at this level, but in fact the season turned out to be anything but disastrous. At the time of writing, the team has secured its position in the division, having gathered twelve points from as many league games.

The highlight was probably a win over Boardman and Eccles, a recent premiership side, in the early part of the season. Other wins against the likes of Ashton, Cheadle Hulme and

Nottingham have boosted team spirit and captain, Andrew Withington, should be able to look towards next season with confidence. All members of the squad had their moments of glory and it would be unfair to pick out individuals in this brief review of the season.

For any readers who may wish to find out more, team reports are on the OSA news section of the school website, where fixtures are also listed. Spectators at the Disley ground are very welcome, as are prospective new players. – Report written by Richard Griffiths
OSA Secretary

OSA AGM

The Annual General Meeting of the Association takes place in school during April. This year, Tom Gare takes over the Presidency from Tony Fort and David Withington succeeds John Mott as OSA representative on the school's Board of Governors.

The committee is structured so that each year four of the twelve committee members are elected or re-elected for a three year term. In addition, the Secretary, Treasurer and Membership Secretary are elected and additional committee members may be co-opted. The committee is keen to embrace all age groups and although some members have served for over twenty years, more recent Old Stops such as Hannah Brown (OS 2000), Tom Hegarty (OS 1994), Matthew Griffiths (OS 2004) and Alex Dymock (OS 1995) have been welcomed onto the committee. As well as the AGM, committee meetings take place four times a year and one of the current aims is to improve communication with the wider membership of the Association.

STOCKPORT GRAMMAR SCHOOL

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We would like to thank all those who have contributed. If you would like to submit material for the 2012 edition or give any feedback on this one, please email externalrelations@stockportgrammar.co.uk or call 0161 419 2408.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Golf Day

Thursday 16th June 2011

The annual Bursary Appeal Fundraiser takes place at Stockport Golf Club. For more information, including team bookings and sponsorship, please contact Vivienne Arrowsmith on 0161 419 2408 or arrowsmithv@stockportgrammar.co.uk.

1980s Reunion

Saturday 17th September 2011

We are planning a reunion for pupils and staff who were at the school in the 1980s. Invitations will be going out soon, but do mark the date in your diary now. This will be a great opportunity to catch up with old friends and even make new ones. Why not get in touch with your old crowd and come together?

KEEP IN TOUCH

- What are your fondest memories of your time at Stockport Grammar School?
- Have you any recent achievements that you would like to share with us? We are always keen to hear what our alumni are up to.
- Were you a recipient of a Bursary? Would you be happy to provide a testimonial? This will help us in raising money for the future of the Bursary Fund.
- Do you know any Old Stops that would like to be on our mailing list and aren't already? Please ask them to get in touch.

Email: externalrelations@stockportgrammar.co.uk