

OLD STOPS' REVIEW

ISSUE 3
2013



JESS COULSON WINS GOLD
DI DOUGHERTY TALKS TV
MEMORIES OF ALBERT JOHNSTON
BUILDING NEWS



WELCOME TO OUR THIRD EDITION

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Read our interview with Di Dougherty on page 6



The 525th anniversary provided us all with a fantastic opportunity to renew acquaintances with Old Stopfordians and the many friends of Stockport Grammar School. I would like to thank colleagues in the school, Governors, the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths and members of the OSA Committee for their support and hard work in creating a programme of events that enabled us to celebrate not only the history of the school,

but also the present day talents and enthusiasm of the boys and girls who benefit from Shaa's great vision.

The Reception at The Goldsmiths' Hall was an occasion that I'm sure all present will remember for many years to come and I am delighted that relations between The Company and Stockport Grammar School are as strong as they have ever been.

A particular highlight of the year was the opening of the new Woodsmoor development; whilst many Old Stopfordians no doubt have fond memories of lessons in the Black and White Tower, anybody visiting will agree that the project has provided marvellous facilities for the children who follow in their footsteps.

No sooner has one anniversary finished than we start preparing for another. We have already started discussing how to mark the centenary of the opening of the school's buildings on the current site in 1916.

Last year saw the retirement of Richard Rimmington from the Board of Governors. I should like to reiterate the gratitude of all Stopfordians for his outstanding contribution as Chairman.

Richard has been at the forefront of the successful development of Stockport Grammar School for the last two decades and there has been no more faithful steward of Edmond Shaa's legacy.

Andrew Chicken
Headmaster

**PAUL CARR
(OS 1971)
REFLECTS ON
HIS YEAR AS
PRESIDENT
OF THE OSA**



As well as being an Old Stop himself, Paul is a parent of a current pupil. He graduated from Cambridge in 1975 with a Classics and Law degree and is now a District Judge in the Magistrates' Court.

"As I write this in February my term as President is drawing towards its end. It has been a most rewarding experience and an invaluable means of being reintroduced to Stockport life, as I have returned to this area after living in Essex for many years, where I was Secretary of the London Branch.

I have had the privilege of attending a variety of the OSA activities and representing its members at school events. The rain held off long enough for the annual Golf Day and I was able to brave the cold weather to watch an exciting lacrosse match at Disley. Old Stops put in a splendid performance against Leeds to come out convincing winners.

I have enjoyed the wide range of excellent music being made by pupils of all ages and it is pleasing to know that the musical traditions of Douglas Steele and Harry Robinson are being maintained and developed.

The annual Remembrance Service has become a firm fixture in the calendar, and this year provided the opportunity for a reunion of Old Stops who were pupils between 1930 and 1955. After the service there was time for reminiscence during a splendid lunch with musical accompaniment.

This year we have been exploring means to ensure Old Stops are able to keep in touch wherever they may be in the world.

FROM THE HELM

I am pleased that the initiative to develop the Facebook site and other means of online communication is progressing well.

The OSA contributes to the funding of the Alumni Assistant post, for whom the focus has been on promoting communication between Old Stops and forging links between them and school. One tangible benefit of this relationship has been the OSA's funding of hockey masks for the school team. Tommy Bowden, Chairman of the 250 Club, made the presentation at a ceremony in February.

As Secretary of the London Branch, I am conscious of its need for development. I am therefore pleased to say that a London event is currently in the planning for later this year. If you would like more details about this please email Maili Lavin at lavinm@stockportgrammar.co.uk

It remains for me to thank my committee members for their help and guidance, particularly our Secretary and now distinguished Life Member, Richard Griffiths. I also wish to express my appreciation to the staff of the External Relations department who have always been available to advise and assist.

To our great delight **Sarah Johnson (OS 1993)** the SGS Music Administrator, will be my successor. We are also fortunate to have Mike Cheslett as President Elect."

Stockport Grammar School has a long and fascinating history. Today we acknowledge and celebrate the success of a school with over 1400 pupils but towards the end of the 19th Century the position was very different. At the end of 1887 there were five pupils on the roll in the Upper School and 17 in the Lower.

As is frequently the case in crises, there were a number of factors that had conspired together to create this situation. In 1842 the school, ten years after its successful move to the new building at Greek Street, was performing tolerably well but by 1846 the Examiners' report came to the conclusion that '*the School had fallen off lamentably in the higher branches of Education*'. The Goldsmiths were less than impressed with this news but increasingly their ability to exercise Shaa's will and control events from London was becoming more difficult. They determined, however, to appoint a new Headmaster, new Visitors (the forerunners of Governors) and new statutes.

When the new statutes appeared they revealed some fundamental changes: the Headmaster no longer had to be a clergyman; and French, German and higher mathematics were incorporated as new subjects, in addition to the classical curriculum of Greek and Latin. Fees of two guineas could now be charged in the Upper section, although the Lower was still free. By the time of the 1849 Visitation, significant progress was obvious: there were 130 pupils in nine classes with 21 prospective applicants. The new Headmaster was William Gurney.

However there began to be increasing arguments and friction over the direction and content of religious teaching from elements in the town, suggestions of impropriety in the selling of stationery and dissatisfaction with the salary of the Headmaster. The 1850s were years of continued academic success on the one hand, but on the other increasing disputes in the town.

In 1859 the Goldsmiths finally lost patience, exasperated that all their efforts should be unappreciated they provided for a perpetual endowment of £300 leaving the Mayor and Corporation to be totally responsible for the running of the school. Initially there was great enthusiasm but the withdrawal of scholarships and other funds from the Goldsmiths,

Tentative hope replaced darkest gloom and the storm appeared to have been weathered. In 1937 the then Prime Warden accepted for himself and his successors the office of Patron of the School and the path to the successful modern school seemed increasingly assured.*

YOUR MEMORIES

As part of the 525th Anniversary celebrations, I have been compiling a history of the School since 1980 chronicling the enormous achievements of that period and I would encourage Old Stops to contact me with their recollections. Old Stops of any generation are always welcome to explore the Archives by initially contacting the External Relations Office on 0161 419 2408.

Best Wishes

Stuart Helm (OS 1964)

Archivist and OSA Membership Secretary

*Adapted from 'Stockport Grammar School' by James and William Ball



Pupils at Greek Street c 1895



WELCOME TO THE NEW CHAIRMAN OF GOVERNORS

Mr Ron Astles first joined the Board of Governors in 1993, after a five year term on the Stopfordian Parents' Association committee (two of which were spent as Chairman). He stepped down from the SPA when his son Chris left SGS, and was then "very surprised" to receive a phonecall from Alan Kershaw, the Chairman of Governors at that time, asking him to join the Board.

Ron told us he "thought about it for all of 5 or 6 seconds!" He saw the role as the perfect way to continue his association with SGS and credits his time as a school Governor as "one of the most pleasant duties I have done in my life."

In particular, Ron continues to seize the opportunity to enjoy the high quality music and drama performances at the school, a tradition which began when he used to watch Chris singing in the choir, playing the oboe in the orchestra and taking part in drama productions.

Prior to his retirement in 1995, Ron was in the Greater Manchester Police Force, working through every rank from Constable to Detective Chief Superintendent. He worked on the shootings in Moss Side and was involved in countless working groups as well as being a Senior Advisor on prosecution policies.

Ron became Chairman of Governors in the summer of 2012, following the retirement of Richard Rimmington. Ron's son **Chris Astles (OS 1991)** is a Corporate Lawyer in London.

TEE TIME CHAT

Di Dougherty (née Stewart, OS 1997) is a TV Presenter on the SKY channels.

She can often be found talking sport on Sky News Sunrise programme with Eamonn Holmes and she recently hosted The World Series Squash Finals at Queen's Club on Sky Sports. Diana also presented the *The People's Rainforest* with Richard Bacon for Sky One. She is perhaps best known for her Golf coverage for Sky Sports over the last few years. As well as her TV work, Diana hosts charity and corporate events. Here, she talks to us about her career, juggling motherhood and work and the impact SGS had on her life.

We are used to seeing you on TV but what else have you been up to recently?

In March, I hosted a big event for the Hawn Foundation in London. This Foundation was set up by Goldie Hawn and with her backing, they have set up an educational programme called MindUP, which equips children with emotional and cognitive tools to help them manage their behaviour. It was a fantastic evening and Goldie Hawn is an amazing woman. Kurt Russell also flew in for the event and an incredible amount of money was raised.



So, how did you get into working in television?

I started off in TV ten years ago as a runner, making cups of tea and doing the autocue. Then after a couple of interviews with Sky Sports, I started working on the Spanish football programme, photocopying scripts and looking after the guests. I moved quickly onto other departments, running on lots of sports shows, and soon realised I actually wanted to present. I'd had a year at drama school following my German degree and I knew I wanted to 'perform' in some way. When I was promoted to sub editor on a production team for Sky Sports News, I also started doing a few spots of reporting which led to a screen test for Sky Sports News and I have never looked back! I presented on that channel for three years then moved to the golf department for six years. My golf work included presenting live European Tour and PGA Tour events. I have travelled a lot with my job, met some incredible people and have definitely made friends for life along the way.

What do you love most about your job?

I love interviewing people and finding out what makes them tick. Sportsmen can be a bit distant but once you get to know them, they tend to open up and interviews become a real treat, often with unexpected responses. Thinking quickly during live TV interviews is very rewarding and I much prefer live TV to pre-recorded programmes.

I have also travelled considerably over the last few years and getting to experience different cultures has been a real treat. My husband plays golf for a living so we travel a lot together. One of the first discussions we always have in the airport is what food we are going to try when we get there!

And what has been the highlight of your career so far?

The highlight of my career was presenting the Opening and Closing Ceremonies of the Ryder Cup in 2010 at Celtic Manor in Wales. The ceremony went to 140 countries with over 100 million viewers. I am glad I didn't know the stats beforehand! Everyone asks if I was nervous but the answer is honestly no. I was so proud to be part of such a huge sporting event and I had the easy job of just talking about the game. The players had the hard work to do on the course! Plus I had an amazing stage manager, director and producer so I couldn't go wrong. The people that talk in your ear piece are so important. Calm demeanours really help.

Would you say that sport reporting, in particular golf, is still a male dominated environment? And if so, has it been difficult to forge a career in this field?

The doors for golf reporting have well and truly opened up for women. I never really thought too much about it, I have just always kept my head down, worked hard and believed in my ability. Rewards will come from hard work and that is something that Stockport Grammar definitely instilled in me.

I think presenters like Clare Balding have paved the way for other female broadcasters. What she has achieved is amazing. I admire her talent and love listening to her interviews. When I saw her at Cheltenham Races, I followed her round the paddock!

Congratulations on the birth of your first child last year! Being a working mother brings with it a whole set of new challenges...

Maximilian was born on 21st August 2012. He is awesome and changing daily. I left my full-time role as Golf Presenter at Sky Sports in December 2011 to have a family but my decision to go freelance is working so far and I am really excited about combining being a parent with work. I still work in the golfing world and continue with my sports presenting and MCing. So far, Max has travelled with me and my husband to various golf events. He recently came with us to South Africa which was a great trip but the eleven hour flight with a six month old was a challenge. He got to know all the cabin crew very well!

I am also ambassador for the golf brand Lynx. We have had so much fun over the last year with golf days, exhibitions and promoting the brand. The company almost insist on Max joining us for team meetings, which can be a case of passing the baby around the board room.

....and can you offer any pearls of wisdom to other working mothers?

You can combine work and motherhood but you do have to be super organised! I have learnt to prioritise, organise and plan everything. It has, in fact helped my professional life as my brain certainly multi-tasks even more nowadays. It is really important to Nick and me to spend quality time with Max too though and some days you just have to turn the phone off and breathe.

As you mentioned, your husband is golfer Nick Dougherty, so golf is obviously going to be in Max's genes! Will you be encouraging him to follow in your footsteps?

Max will do whatever he wants to do. That was the message I always got from my parents. We live in a world full of possibilities, so who knows!

What are your favourite memories of your time at SGS?

I have so many memories from school and my best friends are still my school friends. I remember my first day at Senior School... I had been at Stockport Grammar Junior School too as were my two sisters and brother. That feeling of being all grown up with a new uniform was amazing.

I was very sporty at school and spent countless hours on team buses going to hockey matches. I loved playing on the Astroturf, being taught by Mrs Backley back in the day.

One of my favourite teachers was Mrs Muscutt. She was fair, very organised and I really liked her outfits! She was my Head of House and was a big influence in terms of me going on to study German at university. I lived in Vienna for a year while at Newcastle University and that would never have happened if it wasn't for Mrs Muscutt.

I loved doing the school plays too and every year that was what I looked forward to most. I will never forget all the MUN trips – I learnt so much travelling to places like The Hague to debate United Nations affairs. So many happy memories....

Are you still in touch with many of your old schoolfriends?

I am seeing all my girlfriends from Stockport Grammar this weekend! I love them to bits. Grace Dawson, Lindsey Dickinson, Lisa Whitehead, Mel Taylor, Beth Robinson, Lucy Broadhurst to name a few. We meet up a few times a year and every summer we rent a cottage together and have a girly weekend. I can honestly say these girls are like sisters.

Lucy Cotter (Sky News Arts & Entertainment Correspondent) and I were talking only last week about our fun days at Stockport Grammar – amazing that we work in the same building now!

What's next for you then?

I have lots of work coming up, TV and corporate-wise. I normally tweet all about it! But this evening, I am cooking for my husband who has just returned from Orlando where he has been playing. I am inspired by Gwyneth Paltrow's recipes at the moment so am going to try one of them...

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I have so many memories from school and my best friends are still my school friends.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?



CLASS ACT

Sophie Skelton (OS 2012) began her acting career whilst still at SGS, with her first TV drama appearance being filmed during her study leave. This speaking role in ITV's detective drama *DCI Banks* aired in 2012, and was followed by her appearance in two episodes of CBBC's *The Dumping Ground*, a spin-off of the popular *Tracy Beaker* series.

In between filming scenes, Sophie studied for her A Levels in a hotel room in Leeds and says her teachers at SGS were "incredibly supportive and encouraging." Whilst at Stockport Grammar, the actress appeared in the school productions of *The Wizard of Oz*, *Les Misérables* and *Fiddler on the Roof*. Sophie plans to head to King's College London to study English Literature this autumn, whilst also continuing her acting work.



HOLDING A TORCH

In the run up to London 2012, two Old Stops were given the honour of carrying the Olympic flame in their home towns. **Daniel Walker (OS 2008)** carried the torch through Macclesfield and **Richard Howarth (OS 2010)** carried his through Bolton.

Over the last three years, Daniel has volunteered at an orphanage in Nepal, helped reconstruct homes destroyed by an earthquake in Peru and assisted volunteers in developing and transforming a school in Tanzania, where he is also funding two children's education projects.

Richard studied for two years at the Royal National College for the Blind, before commencing his Law Foundation course in Coventry. At the same time, under the pseudonym of Rikky James, he has been launching his music career, recording an unofficial Paralympics EP with *The Happy Mondays'* Mikey Shine as well as a charity single for PAPYRUS (Prevention of Young Suicide) called *Take It Away*.

Richard is also involved with Fixers - an ITV campaign which supports young people who want to make a change. He is working with them to highlight discrimination faced by pop musicians with disabilities.

PASSING OUT

Olly Britland (OS 2006) passed out of Sandhurst as a Second Lieutenant in the Royal Army Medical Corps following the 168th Sovereign's Parade at the Academy, and has now been deployed to Afghanistan with his regiment (5th Medical Regiment). Prior to attending Sandhurst, Olly was a member of the Combined Bath and Bristol Officer Training Corps while studying towards a History degree at Bath Spa University.

HARVARD HISTORY HEAD

Professor **David Armitage (OS 1982)** was recently interviewed by Cambridge University Press's *Itinerario* (the international journal on the history of European expansion and global interaction). In the interview, David spoke about his time at Stockport Grammar and, in particular, the inspiration and support he gained from his History teacher, Nicholas Henshall. David now lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He is Chairman of the History department at Harvard University and was recently elected Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities. A link to David's interview can be found on the school website in the Old Stops section.



EVEREST BASE CAMP

Together with fellow students from the University of Dundee, **Helena Charles (OS 2009)**

will be joining an expedition to Everest Base Camp this summer, to raise money for children's charity *Childreach International*.

Whilst in Nepal her team will visit *Childreach* projects. Helena's fundraising goal is £2,500, with at least 50% of that going to the charity and the remainder being spent on the expedition expenses.

To donate, please visit:
mydonate.bt.com/fundraisers/helenacharles

SCOUTING FOR AN MBE

Colin McIntyre (OS 1959) was invested as a Member of the Order of the British Empire by the Queen at Buckingham Palace last October, following a scouting career which stretches back 65 years.

Colin first joined the Scouts in Romiley in 1947, gaining his Queen's Scout Award ten years later. Shortly afterwards he took various volunteer leader roles in the Romiley and Sale districts. Following a move to Ware in 1977, he took a commissioner role and later became a member of the Hertfordshire county executive committee.

His MBE was awarded in recognition of his record-breaking term of 26 years as county secretary, and follows the Silver Wolf, awarded to him by the Chief Scout in 2004 for services to scouting of the most exceptional nature.

DELPHIC DOUBLE

Matt Cockedge and Richard Boardman (both OS 2002) make up two-thirds of *Delphic*, the electronic rock band, whose single *Good Life* was an official song of the London 2012 Olympic Games.

Their latest album, released at the start of 2013 is called *Collections*, which Virgin.com calls "a melting pot of musical influences, an eclectic mix of vibes, beats and arrangements." In an interview with *NME* magazine, Matt said of the album: "We never have boundaries. That's why the

LIFE IN COLOUR
Helen Bridges (OS 1998) is an artist based in London. She is a printmaker whose work is a mix between art and illustration, combining traditional screen-printing techniques with modern technologies. Taking inspiration from the everyday, she celebrates specific areas with drawings, photographs and collages. Her subtle use of text and image lends itself to beautifully considered prints building up layers of colour.

After graduating from the Camberwell College of Art in 2005 with a Masters in Printmaking, Helen set up a screen printing studio in South London. A couple of years later she combined forces with Lucy Bainbridge and now works at Bainbridge Studio, a creative hub for over 50 artists. Helen also teaches screenprinting and is an art tutor at Core Arts, working with people with mental health issues.

TEACHING ENGLISH IN JAPAN

After graduating with a First in English from Southampton University, **Anna Broster (OS 2008)** has become an Assistant Language Teacher with JET (Japan Exchange and Teaching programme). Anna has been living in Nagasaki since 2011 where she teaches at Nagasaki Hokuyodai High School. She teaches ichi-nen-sei (equivalent to Fifth Year) and runs the school's English Club.

Anna has also been getting involved with the local community, singing with the school's Chorus in their Nagasaki concert and teaching an English conversation class for adult women. She also taught at an English Camp for teenagers in Sasebo in April.

album's called *Collections* – it's a reflection of how we've tried to pull in influence from everywhere, pulling in as many sources as we could."

As part of this year's Manchester International Festival, the trio will be completely reworking *Collections* over three nights, with the help of musicians from across the globe. These gigs are tipped to be one of the hottest tickets of the year. You can find out more about *Delphic*'s music at www.delphic.cc Follow them on Twitter @delphicmusic

FASHION STUDENT TURNS HEADS

Philip Ellis (OS 2011) won the male Final of the *Religion and House of Fraser Model Search* (with current Fifth Year pupil Thea Hudson coincidentally winning the female category). Philip will star in *Religion's* Autumn/Winter 2013 Lookbook, and has received a contract with Premier plus £800 to spend on *Religion* clothing at *House of Fraser*.

After completing his A Levels, Philip studied Art Foundation at Manchester Metropolitan University, where he won the fashion illustration prize. He is now taking a degree in Fashion at Central St Martin's College, London.



THE ADVENTURE CONTINUES

After a year serving as the resident doctor, whilst also running psychological and physiological research on Concordia base in Antarctica (as reported in the last issue of *OSR*), Dr Alex Kumar (OS 2001) decided to stay on in Antarctica as the expedition doctor for the Shackleton Epic.

He then came home for a short time before heading off to Thailand in April for six months of tropical medicine.

We look forward to seeing where medicine will take Dr Kumar next year...



AN APP A DAY

Susannah Dushaj (née Farmer) (OS 1988) has created an app to photograph and store children's artwork.



Kids Art Keeper is available for both Apple and Android devices, enabling parents to collect their children's artwork without taking up lots of space and avoiding the guilt of throwing the work away.

After leaving SGS, Susannah's first degree was in Physiology and Pharmacology at King's College London and she went on to work in pharmaceuticals in both the UK and the US.

Susannah met her Albanian husband at a carwash in London and, following their marriage, they moved to Australia in 2002. There, she completed a Postgraduate degree in Forensic Science before working for Victoria Police in Melbourne for two years as a forensic scientist.

Susannah now works part-time selling prosthetic joints to fund her app development. With two other apps in the pipeline, she juggles this with raising her children Sunday, aged four and Felix, aged two.

CRICKET CHAIRMAN

Barry Rickson (OS 1954) has been elected as Chairman of the International Council of Cricket Societies; an organisation which stretches across the UK and has branches in Australia, New Zealand and Zimbabwe.

Having served as secretary for many years, Barry has organised numerous events for the council, involving eminent figures from the cricket world.

HELPING GRADUATES

Ben Rosen (OS 1994) established *Inspiringinterns.com* in 2009, to help graduates secure structured work experience positions at digital companies in London, with the intention that the placements would lead to full-time paid roles for the candidates. 2,800 internships later, 70% of their interns have full-time roles at the companies at which they interned.

Ben now has twenty two employees and plans to open more *Inspiringinterns* offices across the UK, as well as branching out into European cities such as Berlin and Stockholm, where digital start-ups are plentiful.



OS SPORTING HIGHLIGHTS

RUGBY

The annual match between the current Rugby First XV and the Old Stops team saw a 17 – 15 win for our first XV over the team of recent leavers, putting the school's players in good stead for the new season.

GOLF

The Golf Society currently has about 33 active members of whom 23 are regulars. Under Captain Tony Leary they had an enjoyable and successful season last year despite the wet weather.

The team played against Bramhall Park GC and Gatley GC (14-a-side) at the end of May before taking part in the Inter-Old Boys Competition at Bramhall GC in July, in which teams of former pupils from seven local schools took part. Old Stops finished third behind Old Waconians and Old Maxonians, with our best player being Peter (Fred) Maher with 32 stableford points.

The annual Worth Trophy match against Old Maxonians was played at Knutsford GC on 6th September, resulting in a very tight win for Old Maxonians who retained the trophy with 255 points to 250.

After being cancelled due to heavy rain in July, the OSA Oppida Cup competition was finally played in October at Stockport GC in lovely weather, with current SGS pupils bringing out a team too.

If you'd like to get involved please contact David Withington, Secretary of the Old Stopfordians' Golf Society on withington.d@sky.com

OS LACROSSE

Having retained our place in the Premier Two Division, the 2012/13 season has tested the determination of a comparatively small squad of Stopfordian lacrosse players.

An erratic schedule, with lengthy gaps between games at the start of the season, has meant that commitment and consistency of performance have inevitably been affected. However, at the time of going to press, the team have won their last two games, beating Ashton and Newcastle. Stopfordian Lacrosse has a long tradition and the mixture of youth and experience in the current squad deserves a rewarding outcome to the current campaign.

To get involved with the Lacrosse team, please contact Richard Griffiths on richard@jtgriffiths.com

BOARDMAN TASKER CALENDAR

A commemorative 2013 calendar has been produced to mark 30 years since the establishment of the Boardman Tasker Trust in memory of Old Stopfordian Pete Boardman and his friend Joe Tasker, who both died on the north-east ridge of Mount Everest in 1982.

Proceeds from the calendar will support The Boardman Tasker Prize for Mountain Literature which awards £3,000 to an author or authors for original work which has made an outstanding contribution to mountain literature.

Last year the Trust introduced an award for writers aged 16-25 for original unpublished literary work of up to 1500 words, whether fiction, non-fiction, drama or poetry, the central theme of which is concerned with the mountain environment.

Pete, renowned as one of the greats of British Himalayan mountaineering, was an SGS pupil between 1956 and 1969, where his passion for the sport began. His influence lives on at the school through the state-of-the-art climbing wall, opened in his name in 2008.



If you would like to buy a calendar you can do so at: v-publishing.co.uk/books/wildlife-and-photography/2013-boardman-tasker-30th-anniversary-calendar.htm



RUN FOR YOUR LIFE

Cross Country Runner
Jess Coulson (OS 2008) won Gold last December in the Women's Under-23s Race at the European Cross Country Championships in Budapest.

Congratulations on your Gold in Budapest

Thanks... I was very happy with it!

Were you expecting to win?

We'd had the trials two weeks earlier in Liverpool. I just wanted to make the team for the Under 23s but I actually won the overall thing! I had a great race. I'd also had a good race two weeks before in Spain so I was running well and feeling good.

How did you get into running in the first place?

Through school... in 2004 I qualified for the Schools Championships by accident really.

I just went through the system, getting into the top eight of the Stockport Schools. I then went on to represent Stockport at the Greater Manchester Schools competition and from there I qualified to represent Manchester at the National Schools Championships.

I didn't have a clue what it was really - I went on a five hour coach journey to Kent and everyone was eating sweets and I thought "Oh, this is brilliant!"

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The PE department have been so supportive and they want me to do well... that spurs me on!

For my training I used to do laps round the school field (like I do now) on my lunch break. The day before the race, I did my maximum number of laps which is completely the wrong way to do things, as you're supposed to ease back before a race, which I know now, obviously.

I started going down to Stockport Harriers from then on but was still playing hockey too and that was taking priority, until I gave it up in September 2006 and that's when I qualified for GB and started taking running seriously.

At what point did you think running would be the career you were going to pursue?

When I first qualified for the Junior GB team, it was a really strong team and I got a taste for it. In 2007 I went to Kenya but then unfortunately in 2008 I started to get a lot of injuries.

While I was at university, running had fallen to the side and I concentrated on my degree. I had one really good performance in 2011 over a 10 mile course but I still had injuries. But after I graduated, I just thought "Right, I'm really going to give this a go." So I guess it became serious last summer.

I know that I can do it and I've had some good performances. If I'm healthy and I stay fit then hopefully I can make a career out of it. As long as I'm happy doing it, I will just go for it.

What support have you had from the SGS PE department?

The PE department have been amazing; they're so supportive and I consider them all my good friends. I do all my training at the school so it's good to know that they want me to do well. That spurs me on. I come and do some coaching as well.

Do you enjoy the coaching?

I do enjoy it, I've got a coaching qualification so I do quite a bit of it. I like to give people a taste of what I do and to show that there is more to running than just doing a run every now and again.

You were part of camp set up by Kelly Holmes (On Camp with Kelly). Is she a big inspiration for you?

On Camp with Kelly was set up in 2004 – I joined in 2007. It's ending now because of the funding cuts, but it has helped me over the years. To have someone like Kelly to support you, who's achieved two gold medals and has been through injuries – it's great to know that they're there if you need them.

Now I've got my coach Mick, in London, who's great and my family are my main support, but *On Camp With Kelly* taught me a lot of important things.

Talk us through your routine on a typical training day

It depends if it's a session or a run day. Three days a week I do a session day where I get up early, have breakfast, and then run between 10 and 13 miles at school. After that, I go home to recover, and then do a 20-30 minute run in the afternoon. In between all that, I do a 30-60 minute gym session.

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I train between 4 and 6 hours every day.

Two days a week, I get up and go straight out for a run which lasts between 15 minutes to an hour. From my run I go to the gym and do a weights session for about an hour. Then I'll do a 30 minute swim before going home for breakfast, recovering and maybe doing some work. In the afternoon, I do some drills and core work for an hour. I do a long run on Sundays.

Friday is an easier day but it's still 30 minutes running and gym work. I'd say I train between 4 and 6 hours every day.

Is it easy to balance all of your training with your work for your Masters Degree?

My Masters is part-time which is helpful and I'm doing a big research project on bone health in female athletes. I can do a lot of it from home, so while I am recovering from training, I sit down and do some work on my laptop.

What did you think about the Olympics last year?

That Saturday night of athletics was unbelievable. Even when people play it back I still get goosebumps! It's great to see that it has inspired people.

Is Rio your next big goal or do you have other things on the horizon?

Well, I've got other things on the way and because of the injuries I've had I take each day as it comes. I've got some short term goals but obviously it's a big aspiration and it'd be amazing if I get there.

Jess is pictured above with teammates at the Championships in Budapest.

L-R: Lauren Howarth, Beth Potter, Lily Partridge, Jess Coulson, Hannah Alderson, Hannah Walker

MEMORIES OF ALBERT JOHNSTON SGS 1925-1968

In the history of the school, there are few teachers whose reputation surpasses that of Albert Johnston.

'AJ' stands out as a man devoted to two professions, the teaching of history and amateur dramatics. The thoroughness which marked his teaching was matched only by that which he and his wife Eleanor, aka Mickey, showed in producing the school plays. His memory lives on in the Albert Johnston Travel Prize, which is awarded annually to individuals or teams from the Sixth Form who would like to travel to further their experience and knowledge of a passion or subject.

We have been inundated with your contributions and memories of 'AJ' so we have included a selection of excerpts from your recollections. Please visit the website for the full versions. Many thanks to all those who got in touch and apologies to anyone whose memories we were unable to include.

"I was in three of Albert's plays. Taking a high profile role of Third Sailor in *The Trial Scene* from *The Caine Mutiny* and an equally significant role in *The Tempest* of... Third Sailor! I also had a bit part in *Androcles & the Lion* (possibly Third Sailor, though I'm not sure they had one). The most memorable of these was *The Tempest*, performed in my last year at SGS. As the mariners were only needed for the first and last scene, we worked up a thirst in between by playing a vigorous game of badminton in the gym, clad in our medieval sailor suits, greasepaint running down our faces before donning raincoats and legging it down to the pub for an illicit pint! We always managed to get back for the final scene..."

J.E. 'Ernie' Whalley (OS 1959)

"I was greatly influenced by AJ who not only was an inspirational master but had the ability to set aspirations in the boys: it was thanks mainly to him that I left in 1949 with a place at Cambridge." **Chris Walton OS 1949**



"I remember Albert's plays – and also him walking up and down the classroom aisles as we were studying – rehearsing his own lines for other plays that he was involved in."

Ken Leigh (OS 1946)

"Innocent youth that I was, never having seen a drunken man, I did my imaginary imitation of inebriation in front of a full-house of parents and friends..."

... Albert and his wife created remarkable productions which achieved the magical atmosphere so often absent from professional performances."

Brian Wilshaw (OS 1944)



"I was privileged to be one of the brotherhood known as the Stage Staff... The ultimate proof of being a true member was having to climb up to the bell tower above the Hallam Hall.... This was a more precarious event during the Spring performances when it was light and one could have been easily seen from the Quadrangle. The audience were never aware that, thirty feet above them, the stage staff were passing time between scene shifting duties. I am not aware that any of the stage staff ever refused the challenge..."

...After the last performance on a Saturday night, we were treated to a fish and chip supper, with the odd glass of cider, before the whole of the stage had to be dismantled. After one November play, we unbolted the steel sections and laid them down outside. The residents opposite did not appreciate the amount of work we had to do in a very short period of time, particularly after midnight, and the police arrived after thirty minutes. At 4am that same night, all of us cycled up to stay at a house in Disley (the parents were away on holiday). We set off up the A6 on bikes and some even had lights. Just out of Hazel Grove the police stopped us and to their request, we just said, "SGS Stage Staff." They left us alone! We never determined whether they were the ones we had seen earlier..."

Norman E Stansfield (OS 1966)

"I was involved in the last two plays for the school: Richard III in November 1966 (playing Cardinal Bourchier) and *Arms and the Man* in November 1967 (playing Sergius). As a result of the Johnstons' influence, amateur dramatics has been a hobby of mine ever since. Rehearsals were always held in the History Room, the old Room 5 that disappeared when the hall was built across the drive. When I was in the First Year, and being taught ancient history by Albert Johnston during the Autumn Term, I was always mystified by AJ's habit of suddenly sketching chalk lines across the parquet floor whilst teaching. I put this down to eccentricity until I later understood that he was mapping the set for the school play!"

John Blunden-Ellis (OS 1969)

"Following the last performance on the Saturday night, we would start stripping out everything as soon as the audience had left. Then there would be a break whilst we all had our fish & chip supper in Albert's form room. This was followed by speeches and thank yous. It was the highlight of the week..."

...Everything had to be tidied up before we could go home, certainly to be ready for school on the Monday morning, and sometimes for a service in the Hallam Hall on the Sunday. It could be as late as just before dawn on the Saturday night before I would set off to cycle home. I was once stopped by the police in the early hours, when cycling home to Hazel Grove along the A6 with a rucksack on my back – very suspicious!"

Neville Savage (OS 1961)

Lighting Technician

"Johnnie insisted that I had revolver practice under the supervision of an imported police sergeant.... He was totally committed to helping young boys understand themes far above our heads to start with, bringing them eventually within our grasp..."



... I had to be made up with black dye every night...after it was all over, the Johnstons packed me off to a sauna bath in Stockport to sweat it all out!

...They were like two other parents for me. From the age of 12 until I left school, they appeared in all my growing life – 'Johnnie' was my History teacher and enabled me to get a History Exhibition to his old college, Emmanuel. He was a brilliant teacher, easy to follow and would have us all gripped in his lessons. And in play rehearsals, he would draw the part out of you by encouragement – you always felt improved and Mickey was a constant encourager too. They were two amazing people."

Peter Firth (OS 1948) *David in The Boy David* – 1942; *Joan in Joan of Arc* – 1943; *The Chronicler in Abraham Lincoln*; *Oliver Cromwell in Cromwell*; *Emperor Jones in Emperor Jones*



Images from left to right Michael Bullimore 1964, AJ and Mickey 1958, Christopher Mantell 1961, Ken Leigh 2nd from right, front 1943.

"AJ was an enthusiast of the first order, and every memory I have of him seems to include his smile. He was totally absorbed by the plays whilst they were on, and any free time he had was devoted to the play. His non-teaching time was more likely to be spent constructing scenery than marking books..."

... Johnnie never appeared in school plays himself – but he did play the part of the Voice of God in the production of *Everyman*. At one school performance, there was unrest in the ranks, and the Voice of God boomed "If you don't settle down, you will all be in detention..."

...We must acknowledge the fact that it was all a joint effort with his beloved wife Mickey, who taught the Juniors, and gave many of us a love of poetry...

...There is an old saying that the difference between an actor and a clergyman is that an actor speaks fiction as if it were truth, and a clergyman speaks truth as if it were fiction. I would like to think that those of us like me, who were later ordained might have been helped to avoid that trap by Johnnie's coaching in voice production and timing. I guess it would also apply to those who later became barristers, and indeed teachers themselves."

The Revd Andrew Body (OS 1964) quondam Secretary of the Dramatic Society



OLYMPIC TORCHBEARER

Fourth Year pupil Claudia Thomas carried the torch during the Stockport leg of the relay as a reward for raising thousands of pounds for charity over the past eight years.

Claudia, who was "so excited to be selected to take part in this once-in-a-lifetime experience" started fundraising when she was a pupil in the Junior School, donating all her birthday money to charity as well as fundraising for animal rights and homeless charities. She also volunteers at the Wellspring Homeless Shelter in her spare time.

Claudia talked to younger pupils about her experience in a Junior School assembly, and was invited to speak at local primary schools and colleges.

SGS HIGHLIGHTS 2012-13

[For more news stories visit the website](#)

SPORTING EXCELLENCE

This year has seen more representative honours for pupils in Rugby, Hockey and Netball, alongside countless wins and trophies for the school teams.

Fifth Year pupil Emily Spencer will have the honour of playing hockey for the England U18s later this year. Emily follows school first XI goalkeeper Martha Watson who represented England U18s last year and recently attended an U21s assessment camp. Third Year Lauren Hunt has been selected for an England U15s training camp. She joins her older sister Holly, who has been picked for England U16s and also captained the SGS U16s to a win in the Greater Manchester schools tournament.

Rugby stars James Gilboy and Tom Morton have been picked to play for England.

Fifth Year pupil James was selected for England U16s after he impressed the selectors while playing for Cheshire and the North. Sixth Former Tom Morton's outstanding performances for the North U18s have led to him being picked for the England U18 Clubs and Schools squad.

Both players are members of the Sale Sharks Academy and Tom has been playing for the team in the Aviva Premiership U18 League. Tom will be hoping to follow in the footsteps of Old Stopfordian James Flynn (OS 2012), who represented England Clubs and Schools last year and then made his debut for the Sharks first team in November.

THE TEMPEST

In March, forty Senior School pupils took to the stage to perform in a breathtaking sell-out production of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*.

Directed by Head of Drama Alison Moffatt and stage-managed by Sarah Johnson (OS 1993), the production also benefited from the twenty five pupils and staff who worked tirelessly as part of costume, props, makeup, lighting, front of house, filming, backstage, set and sound teams.



OS HIGHLIGHTS 2012-13

GOLDSMITHS RECEPTION

One of the many highlights of the 525th Anniversary programme of events was the Reception on May 2nd 2012. Guests enjoyed drinks and canapés in the magnificent surroundings of Goldsmiths' Hall in London. Attended by Old Stops, Governors, Goldsmiths, supporters of the school and representative staff and pupils, the evening took us to the spiritual home of our Founder, Sir Edmond Shaa. Addresses by the Chairman of Governors, the Headmaster and the Clerk to the Goldsmiths' Company reminded us not only of the school's long history but also of the seemingly boundless enthusiasm and talents of the present day pupils and staff.



REMEMBRANCE DAY

The Remembrance Reunion once again brought together over a hundred Old Stopfordians who attended SGS between 1930 and 1955. The annual school Remembrance Service was followed by the opportunity to hear an account from pupils who had recently returned from a visit to the French and Belgian battlefields. Lunch in the Hallam Hall and jazz from Fifth Year and Sixth Form ensemble *Lady Cha-Cha* provided refreshment before a tour of the new Woodsmoor Building concluded proceedings.

OXBRIDGE DINNER

Old Stops, Governors, pupils and parents enjoyed the neo-classical elegance of Downing College, Cambridge as the venue for the Oxbridge Dinner on the 3rd May. We would be delighted to hear from any Old Stops who may be interested in assisting with the arrangements for next year's fixture in Oxford.

SHAA SOCIETY LUNCH

The tradition of the Shaa Lunch for legators and current donors brought supporters of the school together in the Hallam Hall on the day before Founder's Day. Donors are also invited each May to a special reception and tour of the annual Art exhibitions. 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.

OSA DINNER

Old Stops gathered for an evening of food, conversation and memories of the past at the Founder's Day dinner in the Hallam Hall. Organised annually by the OSA Committee the dinner provides an excellent opportunity to catch up with old friends, as a mini reunion of 1973 leavers amply demonstrated.

Alumni Assistant Maili Lavin (OS 2008) on the new Woodsmoor teaching block, and trips down memory lane on Facebook...

The last two years have seen significant changes take place at the Woodsmoor end of the school site.

In September 2012 the newly constructed Woodsmoor building opened its doors for business, and over the course of the last year both the 'black and white' tower and the Classics block have been demolished.

The new teaching block provides classrooms for English, Drama, History, Classics, Psychology and Business Studies. It is a bright and spacious structure, allowing for a more open learning space. The style of the building is in-keeping with the original architecture of the school and it is highly-energy efficient.



The black and white tower most notably housed the History department, the top corridor of which is remembered for its murals painted by Nicholas Henshall and Stephen Cross.

The pulling down of the building sparked a lot of nostalgia when we posted an image of it being demolished on our Old Stopfordian Facebook page.

Many people remembered Mr Cross and his History lessons on the top floor:

"I'll never forget Mr Cross' dramatisation of the murder of Rizzio by Darnley (he was stabbed 56 times, don't you know?!). He would rush out of his classroom screaming and enact being murdered on the stairs. The year after we had been treated to this performance, we were in the library with Miss Buckley (now Mrs Johnson) opposite Mr Cross' classroom when the blood-curdling screams filled the hallway outside. As she dashed to the door to see what was going on, we had to enlighten her."

Lisa Bricknell (OS 1992)

A few remembered, less fondly, the long flights of stairs:

"My form room was at the top of this building for two years. Twice a day climbing all those stairs!"

Janette Smith

"Gosh what memories - History, German, PE, English, Flute lessons and all those stairs!"

Vickie Schofield-Jones (OS 2001)

"I've just come back from a five day trip to Manchester going down memory lane showing my husband and kids my old school and house – would I have known the building was coming down I would have brought back a piece of brick as a souvenir."

Maartje Luisman



ANNOUNCEMENTS

IN MEMORY

Longer versions of obituaries can be found on the Old Stops section of the website.

William Geoffrey Brooks (OS 1946)

9th March 2012

Gerald Brimelow (OS 1947)

19th April 2012

Robert Hayden (OS 1967)

22nd April 2012

Paul Bromley (OS 1956)

3rd May 2012

Neville Cooke (OS 1949)

26th May 2012

Frank Lythgoe Hadfield (OS 1943)

29th May 2012

John Nickson (OS 1947)

July 2012

Malcolm L Hall (OS 1936)

19th August 2012

A former pupil and Governor of 15 years, Malcolm had a distinguished legal career. He founded his own practice and became Deputy Registrar of the High Court and County Court. Malcolm penned a life history before he passed away which can be read on the SGS website.

Roy Phillips (OS 1950)

2nd October 2012

Arthur Creighton (OS 1940)

6th October 2012

Arthur was a key member of the London branch of the Old Stopfordians' Association and in 1992 was honoured by being made a distinguished life member.

Ken Hollin

7th October 2012

Ken taught Physics at Stockport Grammar School from 1975 to 2003. In addition to his teaching commitments, he ran lunchtime Italian lessons and was in charge of sound for

school productions. Ken was also involved with careers guidance and was a keen musician.

Meg Pickersgill (teacher of PE)

26th October 2012

Sheila Renshaw

November 2012

A former teacher of 18 years, Sheila became the first Senior Mistress and is remembered by former pupils for her welcoming disposition and her help in aiding girls and female staff as they settled into the newly co-educational school.

Brian Wilshaw (OS 1944)

22nd December 2012

David Rakestraw (OS 1954)

18th January 2013

John B Davies (OS 1963)

26th January 2013

Peter Clay (OS 1949)

2nd February 2013

Harry Robinson

January 2013

Fondly remembered by Old Stops over many years as the Proctor until his retirement in 1990, Harry "Robbie" Robinson's funeral took place at Norbury Parish Church on 30th January.

"Robbie" was one of the post-war generation of teachers whose contribution was exemplary.

He arrived in 1952, a graduate in French from Manchester University and taught that language with discipline throughout his time at school. His service with the RAF made him the ideal candidate to become CO of the ATC.

He played an important role in school music for many years, founding a wind band and giving permanent existence to an orchestra. He was meticulous in his record keeping and was, for a long time, responsible for the organisation of external examinations.

Hugh Wright created the post of Proctor which Robbie applied himself to with loyalty and his usual high level of care and attention to detail, much preferring to find a lost Home Economics basket or lend a tie than write a hard letter home or hold a detention.

BIRTHS

Maximilian James Dougherty born August 2012, son of **Di Dougherty (née Stewart, OS 1997)** and Nick Dougherty.

Jackson James Bloom born 26th June 2012, son of **Louis Bloom (OS 1994)** and Laura Bloom and brother to Max.

MARRIAGES

Stephen Lockwood (OS 1999) married Gaynor Jones in August 2012.

Alisha Dignan (OS 2007) married Dean Large in September 2012.

Lucy Cotter (OS 1998) married Richard Pallot in August 2012.

Helen Bridges (OS 1998) married Steve Eggs in August 2012.

Ben Rosen (OS 1994) married Sarah-Jane Lennard on 9th September 2012.

RETIREMENTS

Kim Bridges 1981 – 2012
Gill Lockwood 1986 – 2012
Maggie Wilson 2009 – 2012

TELL US YOUR NEWS

email externalrelations@stockportgrammar.co.uk

COMING SOON

GOLF DAY

Thursday 13th June 2013

Now in its 10th year, the annual Bursary Appeal Fundraiser takes place at Stockport Golf Club. Cost - £400 for a team of four (includes lunch, dinner and full colour ad in the programme).

You can also support the day even if you are not putting a team in. For more information on team bookings, advertising, sponsorship and prize donations, please contact Hannah Atenyam as soon as possible on 0161 419 2408.

LONDON CALLING

This September there will be a midweek evening event in central London, with a very interesting speaker. For more information on this exciting event, please email lavinm@stockportgrammar.co.uk

1990S REUNION

Saturday 6th July 2013

If you were a pupil in the '90s, please join us for an afternoon of food, drink and joyful reminiscing, along with the opportunity to bid farewell to some long-serving members of staff who retire this year. Contact Maili for information and to book your place.

KEEP IN TOUCH

There are lots of ways you can keep in touch with old classmates and teachers as well as seeing what is going on at SGS now...

 To share your memories and connect with fellow Old Stops, 'Like' our Old Stopfordians page on facebook

 You can also join the Stockport Grammar School Alumni group on LinkedIn

 On Twitter our username is **@stockportgs**

Visit the school website and click on the *Old Stopfordians* section to read about recent achievements and news that we've been made aware of.

Or email your news to lavinm@stockportgrammar.co.uk



Photos from 1980s Reunion

REUNIONS – FORMAL AND INFORMAL!
We regularly help Old Stops to re-find old friends and we are always pleased to arrange visits into school.

STOCKPORT GRAMMAR SCHOOL

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Old Stops' Review is produced by The External Relations Department and this issue was edited by Tamara Shneck.

We would like to thank all those who have contributed. If you would like to submit material for the 2014 edition or give any feedback on this one, please email externalrelations@stockportgrammar.co.uk or call 0161 419 2408.

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FOUNDED IN 1487