

OLD STOPS' REVIEW

ISSUE 12 2022



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Message from the Headmaster

DR PAUL OWEN



The school has largely returned to normal this academic year after the deprivations of covid. Occasional bouts of mask wearing have not stopped teachers from delivering lessons filled with discussion, practical work and experiments and work in groups. Teaching through a screen is a distant memory and pupils are very clear about the benefits of being taught in school. The co-curricular activity programme is in full swing with plentiful concerts, dance shows and drama productions all on offer. 'The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe' in November was the first piece of live theatre at school for 18 months and the audience made the most of it. The Sports department has expanded the number and range of sports fixtures and it has been fantastic to see so many pupils taking part. The community is making up for lost time and I am delighted by the pupils' enthusiasm for learning and for seizing the many opportunities.

Last year's GCSE and A Level results, awarded through a system of Teacher Awarded Grades, were very pleasing. This summer it seems very likely that the public examinations will go ahead and our pupils are well-prepared as we were able to keep learning during the periods of school closure, and we have had plenty of time this year to check for and remedy any weaknesses in knowledge or understanding.

Live events have returned with a reflective Remembrance Service, a wonderful Carol Service, a fine Shaa Lunch and a memorable Founder's Day Service, all well-attended by Old Stopfordians.

It has been fantastic to be able to welcome so many people back onto the school site and a small reunion, led by former Headmaster Hugh Wright, was hugely enjoyable.

The school continues to work with many local charities including the Wellspring, which helps homeless people within Stockport, through volunteering and raising money. We remain committed to fulfilling the wishes of our founder Sir Edmond Shaa to transform the life chances of children in Stockport, particularly through education. Our bursary scheme allows us to provide excellent education for children regardless of the financial circumstances of their families. Our ambition is to expand the scheme and extend these opportunities to more children within Stockport as, sadly, we currently have far more bursary applicants than we can support.

We are extremely grateful to all of the individuals and organisations who contribute to our bursary scheme and who contribute in so many other ways to our school community through careers, co-curricular experiences and providing work experience opportunities. If you would like to offer your time, expertise or financial support we would be delighted to hear from you.

A new online community for Old Stopfordians is now available. I would encourage you to register so that you can connect with other alumni and explore news and photos from the recent and not-so recent past.

I do hope that you enjoy reading through this magazine and finding out more about the school and its alumni.

President's Message

CLARE FRANCIS
(OS 1994)



What a difference a year makes. When I took over as President of the Old Stopfordians in March last year, there was no formal handover and no events for me to attend because we were still in the grip of covid restrictions. So, it was a case of virtual committee meetings and meetings with the external relations team, with the focus very much on planning, in the hope that some sort of normality would return and key events in the school calendar could resume. Thankfully they have.

I went to the Careers Convention last October with some colleagues from Barclays, to talk about careers in banking, and it was the first time I'd been back in the main hall since I was in there doing my A-Levels. Twenty-seven years on, and it still smelled exactly the same!

The Careers Convention didn't happen back in my day, but so many other events did. And it's the traditions and history of SGS that contribute to its uniqueness and link us all – that's special and something we shouldn't forget. Many schools don't continue traditions or try to keep former pupils connected to the same degree.

One of the privileges of being President is the nostalgia and all the memories that come back, particularly when you walk down the corridors and attend the events that we were all part of when we were at school. I think it's particularly poignant this year, given what life has been like through the pandemic.

The Remembrance Day service in November was the first event that had been held at school since before lockdown, but even though our lives have been tough for the last couple of years, hearing about the memories of some of those who were at SGS during the Second World War, served as a reminder that previous generations have been through a lot worse.

In March it was Founder's Day and it was great to see the sea of black and yellow blazers walking down the A6 as I arrived at St George's – and sing the school psalm again. The Founder's Day service moved to St George's Church during my time at SGS so I have memories of it there, but also at St Mary's, in the centre of Stockport.

After the Founder's Day service in the day, it was the Annual Old Stopfordians' Dinner in the evening. I'd been quite nervous about the speech I had to give – not quite sure what to say or how it would be received. I'd also roped Charlotte Garvey in, my best friend who I'd met while we were at SGS, and she had to do a speech too – something I knew she definitely wasn't looking forward to! But it was all ok – the speeches went down well, and it was great to see some familiar faces as well as speak to people we'd never met before.

Coming up are Speech Day at the end of June, and then the Reunion BBQ in July – Charlotte and I are both going to that with our families and are looking forward to showing our children where we went to school. Hopefully, I'll see some of you there.

New SGS Community Network for Old Stopfordians

SGS has launched a new online SGS Community network to help Old Stopfordians and friends stay connected, updated and involved with Stockport Grammar School today. The SGS Community is a global network of alumni and friends who are passionate about Stockport Grammar School.

Through the network you can:

- Reconnect with fellow Old Stopfordians
- View photographs from your school days
- Keep up-to-date with the latest news, events and reunions
- View event guest lists
- Update your records and communication consents
- Support the Bursary Fund
- Give back to, and inspire SGS current pupils

The network is a great place to share your news and stories – we are always delighted to hear your updates, big or small. We will also be using the SGS Community for our event registrations, this will enable you to see all online members attending our events.

Join the SGS Community at [community.stockportgrammar.co.uk](https://stockportgrammar.co.uk/community)

If you have any questions or feedback about the SGS Community please get in touch with us at externalrelations@stockportgrammar.co.uk.





FROM THE HELM:

**School life
in the 1980s**

The 1980s were a very exciting period for the school. The decade had begun with a new Headmaster, Hugh Wright, and with girls entering both the Junior and Senior schools at every level.

A plan had been devised to double the size of the school in seven years and there was a newly acquired set of buildings and grounds to accommodate the increase in numbers. Additional staff were appointed with new ideas and skills, bringing with them further opportunities in academia, culture, sport and exploration.

Overall there was a huge sense of optimism in the whole school community. At the time there were few contemporary models in independent schools on which to draw for advice and, when considering new schemes and proposals, the response would frequently be, 'let's try it and see if it works'. It invariably did!

In 1980, the first three Tandy computers were purchased and the first language lab was constructed. The first true minibus arrived, a former company crew bus with bench seats and no seat belts, which was donated by the Chairman of Governors.

Drama productions continued to flourish as did the ever popular trips to Mull and Wasdale. The mountaineering club's annual expeditions to the Dolomites, Corsica and the Pyrenees continued

to thrive, becoming more ambitious each year. Events at sports day continued to be keenly contested but now by girls as well as boys.

The change from the all boys' school of the 19th century to a co-educational school in every respect had gone without issue. The arrival of girls had enriched the culture of the school and when Hugh Wright left in the summer of 1985 his legacy was that of a community looking forward to the next phase of its future.

With the next Headmaster, David Bird, came a programme of consolidation, stock taking and consideration. One of which was the planning and management of events to mark the school's Quincentenary in 1987.

The list included the visit of HRH Princess Anne who arrived by helicopter and who was treated to many exhibitions and displays, including pupils abseiling down from the main hall roof.

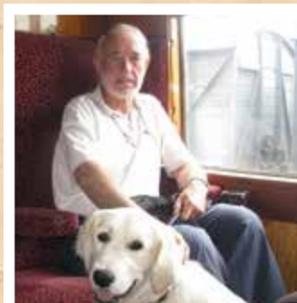
The school choirs performed on a number of occasions and some 2,500 commemorative stamp covers were franked with a unique hand stamp. There were closed season lacrosse and rugby tours to the USA and

Australia, New Zealand and Fiji respectively, a mountaineering club expedition to Baffin Island and a 500k walk along the route of Offa's Dyke.

As the remaining years of the decade unfolded, the school continued to expand and explore new directions and horizons. A comment made by Mr Wilf Paish, an official coach of the British Olympic Athletics Team since 1949, after coaching young pupils at SGS during a Summer Term is worth recounting: "I can honestly say that your school is one of the finest that I have ever visited and I include among all of those most of the major public schools in the country."

A selection of photographs of school life in the 1980s and a much fuller account of those years may be found in the book 'SGS - The Years of Expansion' in the school website on-line archive.

Stuart Helm
(OS 1964)
School Archivist



**Railway
Club**

David R Morgan (OS 1959) has many fond memories of his time at SGS. None stand out like his time as part of various school societies such as the Railway Club, later known as GrammarRail. David spoke about how this pastime helped build his confidence.

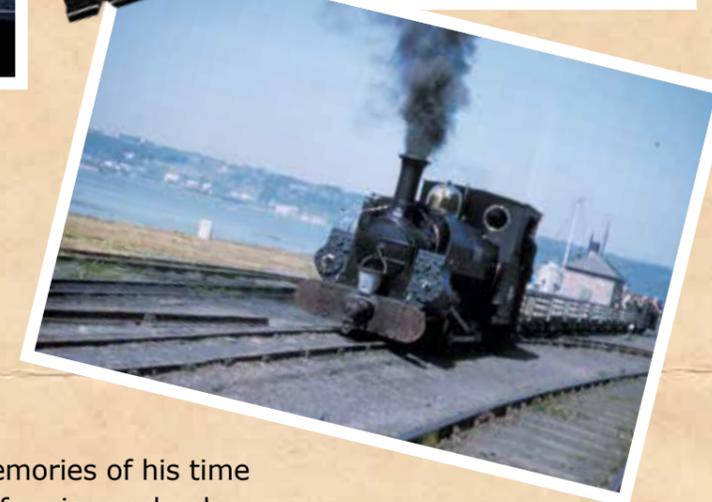
"In the 1950s, some friends and I developed an interest in trainspotting. In the Senior School, we joined the school Railway Club which was run by Classics teacher, Mr Theodore Horne, whom we called Tonk. A group of us would often take the train from Stockport Edgeley to Crewe to do some trainspotting. The fare was 7/6d (37p), saved up from pocket money. We had plenty of fun, spotting locos from other parts of the country, some of which had been overhauled in the Crewe workshops. The luggage trolleys provided seats for us to eat our packed lunches.

As club secretary in 1958-59, I was encouraged by Mr Jimmy Gosling to arrange a field visit to the Penrhyn Slate Railway and quarries near Bangor during the May half term on May 26th 1959. The school had just acquired its first minibus, a Trojan, which was driven by Anthony, the Headmaster's son, who had a driving licence. The company attached an

open quarrymen's coach to the end of the train of empty slate waggons at Port Penrhyn. A steam locomotive called "LINDA" hauled the train up the 2ft gauge line for 7 miles to the Penrhyn slate quarries at Bethesda. Here we were conducted round the quarry workshops and gazed overawed at the largest slate quarry in the world. The quarry now has a newer role as host to Europe's longest and fastest zip line!

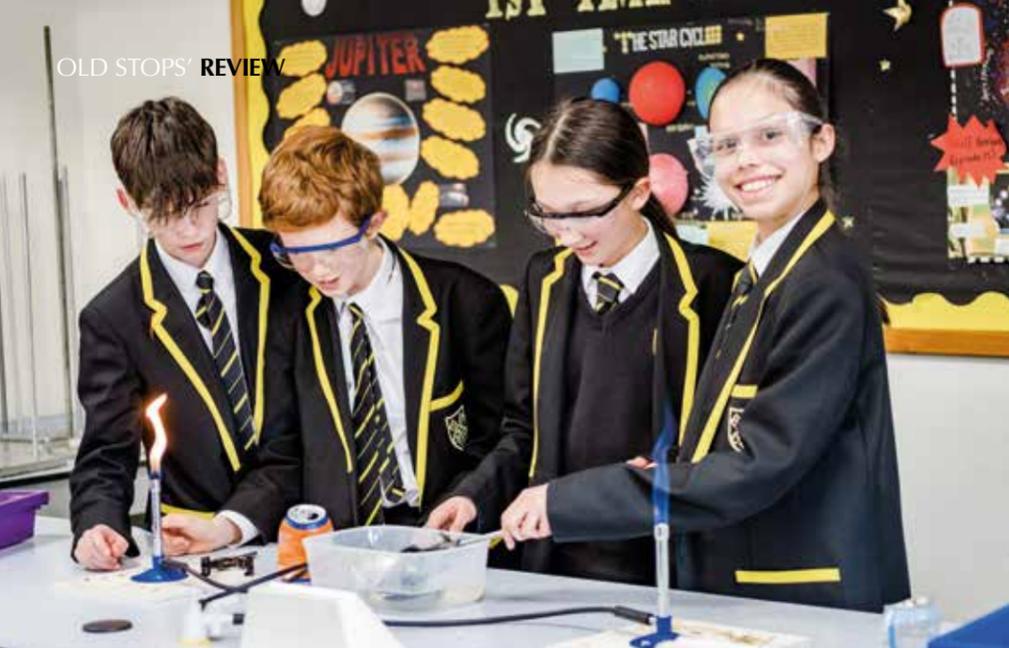
As a teenager who was quite shy at school and did not achieve at sports, being a member of school clubs helped develop friendships, confidence and skills. I have fond memories of the Photographic Society; The Christian Fellowship Group; and the Archaeological Society. All these played a significant educational role in my early life.

My first public talk was in the Sixth Form at the railway club, on steam locomotives. As visual aids, I used railway pictures cut out of old



Kellogg's cornflakes boxes, and projected using the epidiascope. I gained a lot of confidence in my abilities to be able to speak to a group. At Durham University, where I read chemistry, I helped to found the Durham University Railway Society, so gaining both committee and speaking experience. I later chose a teaching career in chemistry which included four years on contract in Tanzania.

I will always be grateful for the friendship and experiences I had as a member of school societies, and kept in touch with several former teachers like Jimmy Gosling, until they passed away. I would encourage students to participate in extra-curricular societies because I believe they can be transformative. Even 60 years later, I still have opportunity to practise organisational and lecturing skills, with local societies, Probus groups etc."



"If the Bursary Scheme was not in place, I would simply not have had the opportunity to attend SGS. I would have missed out on numerous experiences... The high quality teaching also enabled me to fulfil my potential and gain a place at Birmingham Medical School."

TRANSFORMING LIVES THROUGH BURSARIES

Five hundred and thirty-five years ago, Sir Edmond Shaa had high hopes for the young people of his home town. Determined to 'give back' and improve the lives of children, he founded Stockport Grammar School to nurture intellect, foster character and provide opportunity.

Bursaries change lives! And today, with the support of Old Stopfordians and parents, we offer means-tested assistance to local children from all backgrounds. Yet there is no great endowment that underpins the success of SGS. Each year, we have to turn away bright children – who have met our academic entry requirements – on financial grounds. For 2022, we received 150 applications for bursary places in

the First Year and have been able to award 13. Our focus is on providing as many transformational bursaries as we can so that the full fees are paid; essential when Stockport has some of the highest levels of poverty, with four areas among the most deprived 1% nationally. We want to do so much more and we need your help! You can support the Bursary Fund in so many ways – by returning the enclosed form, with an online donation on our SGS Community website, by leaving a legacy to SGS. We would be delighted to chat in-person, by phone or email. Every donation makes a difference.

We are immensely grateful to everyone who supports the Bursary Fund and to all who volunteer their

time and expertise. In November, former Headmaster Hugh Wright returned to SGS for afternoon tea with former pupils and staff, and to highlight the importance of the Bursary Fund. A few months later, in March, the annual Shaa Lunch brought together supporters of the school to enjoy music, good food, conversation and a chance to explore familiar areas of SGS along with the new - Shaa House Nursery and the Sixth Form Centre.

For more information on the Bursary Fund, please contact Rachel Horsford on **0161 419 2408** or horsfordr@stockportgrammar.co.uk

"Studying at SGS gave me invaluable opportunities... In particular debating enhanced my confidence and developed my ability to articulate a cogent and coherent argument... I am extremely grateful for the assistance I received."



Shaa Lunch



Hugh Wright Reunion



Alex Denman OS 1992

When she was a pupil, Alexandra Denman (née Baulkwill) never imagined that her love of gardening would blossom into a high-flying career, but with encouragement from her teachers at SGS, she says she was inspired to see where it took her.

From being a young child, Alex (OS 1992) had always enjoyed spending time in the garden with her father. He himself ran the Alderley Edge and Wilmslow Rose and Horticultural Show and Alex grew up helping her dad organise the show.

Her love of the natural world led her to read Horticulture at Reading University. It was Head of Biology Mr Gregg who supported and encouraged her to pursue her passions and tread her own path. "Stockport had some great teachers who took the time to get to know their students and what inspired them," she said.

After graduating from university, Alex went on to lecture at Reaseheath College, and later became Features Editor on the Royal Horticultural Societies Journal 'The Garden'. But it was a return to flower shows that really saw Alex's career take off when she became Show Manager of the world famous RHS Chelsea Flower Show.

During this time, she curated the horticultural content of the show, overseeing hundreds of exhibits. She worked closely with designers, charities and sponsors to manage the complexities of exhibiting and help them realise their dreams.

"I think if you'd have told an 18-year-old me that my love of gardening would lead me to this role, I wouldn't have believed you," she said.

After leaving Chelsea to start a family, she has now returned to work - on the other side of the fence - as an exhibitor, project managing gardens at the Chelsea Flower Show. In May, she supported the Place2Be Securing Tomorrow Garden partnered by Sarasin & Partners.

"This garden highlights the incredible work undertaken by the children's mental health charity Place2Be. It is at times like these that you recognise, and are very grateful for, a great education but also a supportive one."

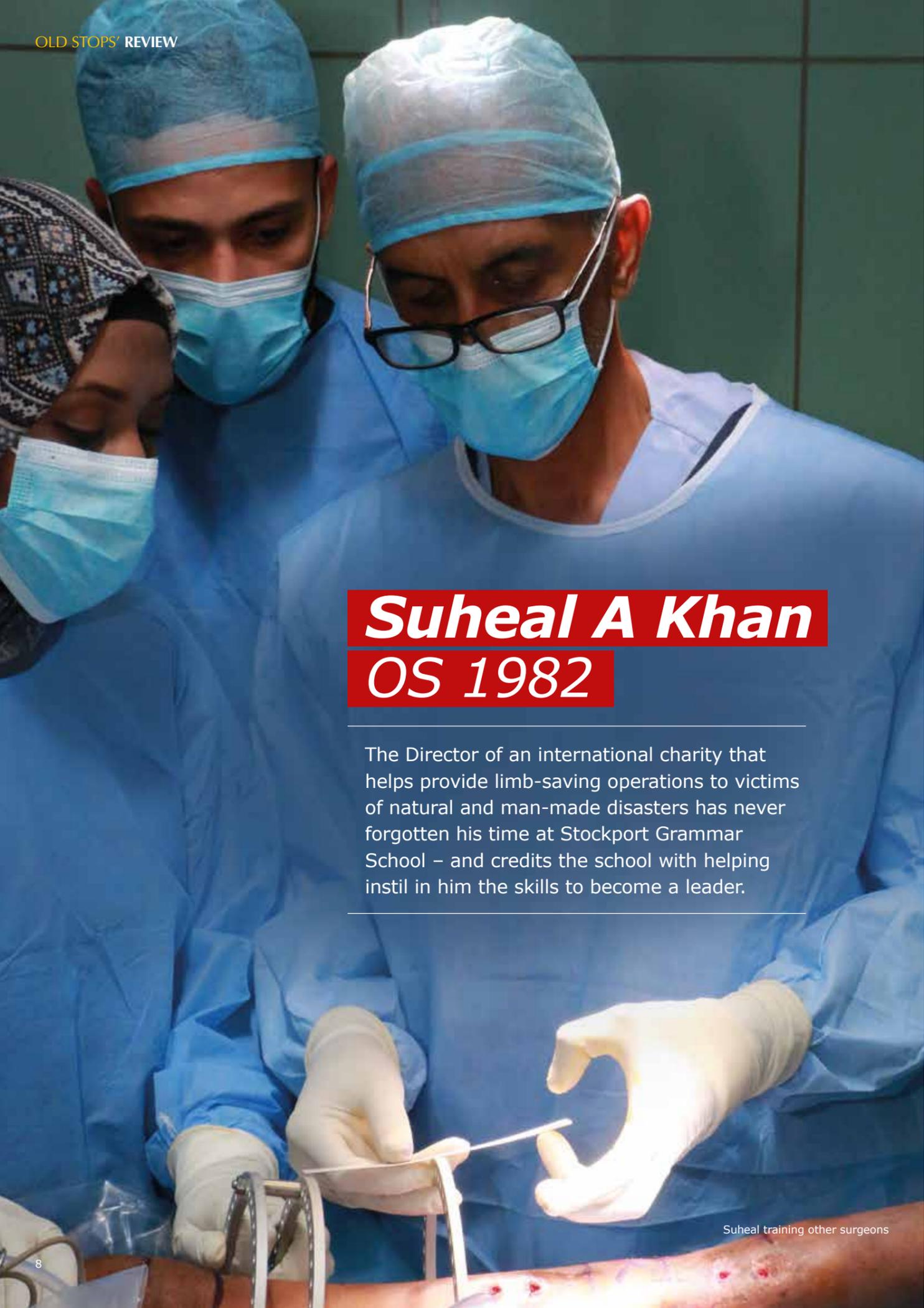
"I've had to make a lot of my own experiences and that's something I would definitely urge others to do, don't just follow what everyone else in your field has done just because it's been done before, try something different and you'll be surprised where your career will take you."

As well as Chelsea, Alex will kick off her first Royal Windsor Flower Show in style as this year it marks the show's 130th anniversary in June, as well as the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II, the Society's Patron. Alex also hopes that the occasion will help encourage younger people to take an interest in Horticulture.

"Our schools' initiative 'The Windsor Castle Wheelbarrow Challenge' goes out to ten local primary schools. The children are encouraged to grow wheelbarrows full of plants around a theme such as Plants for Pollinators. Teachers report back that their students are calmer and grow in confidence when they are in touch with the natural world but also competing against other schools.

"I want to encourage them as I was encouraged. The next generation is inheriting a damaged planet and if in some small way we can help engage them to tend for it, then that's great."





Suheal A Khan OS 1982

The Director of an international charity that helps provide limb-saving operations to victims of natural and man-made disasters has never forgotten his time at Stockport Grammar School – and credits the school with helping instil in him the skills to become a leader.

Suheal training other surgeons



Car park ward, Nepal

How MiST was founded

Suheal A Khan (OS 1982) is now the Director of the Mobile International Surgical Team Charity (or MiST) which works in areas that have been affected by war or natural disasters.

Alongside his team, Suheal helps deliver vital aid to people who are at risk of losing one of their limbs, and who had previously been forced to wait weeks for aid.

After leaving SGS and studying for a medicine degree at The University of Sheffield, Suheal became one of the leading Orthopaedic Surgeons in the country – and one of only 20 that had studied a revolutionary technique to help fix shattered limbs, without the need for amputation.

He created MiST in 2005, after observing a high level of amputation following natural disasters.

“Back then, there wasn’t a co-ordinated international surgical response so when natural disasters did happen, victims were waiting weeks with painful broken limbs before they could be assessed by a surgeon.

“Often this meant that we couldn’t save the limb and for people in some Asian countries this effectively made them a social pariah.

“It’s my belief that access to quality health care is a basic human right and shouldn’t depend on which country you were born in – a person from Cambodia deserves the same quality of care as someone from the UK.”

MiST now operates globally and has expanded to train surgeons from less-developed countries to perform the vital operations.

The importance of Lacrosse

Suheal credits his professional career with his time playing Lacrosse for the school and says that sport helped to lay the foundations.

“I played Lacrosse for the school and county in the 1970s,” he said,

“I remember my teachers being very encouraging of me to chase my dreams and work hard to make them happen.”

“I spent seven happy years at the school, I eventually became the captain of the school and Cheshire Under 18 team. I learned a lot of skills during my time as captain – namely how to unite people towards a common goal.

“I think this definitely helped equip me with the skills to become a leader, and it’s something I use every day while working with doctors and surgeons from across the world.”

How Old Stopfordians can help

Suheal also wants to encourage fellow Old Stopfordians to get involved with the charity to help provide all-round care to victims.

“I remember when I was working in Cambodia,” said Suheal. “Next door to the hospital was a clinic for people who suffered with leprosy, when I visited it was in total darkness and the patients didn’t have anything to look at or engage with.

“I got in touch with an artist friend of mine who set up art therapy out there.

“On my next visit to Cambodia, I visited the clinic again and it was completely transformed – the patients were smiling and happy and were busy painting.

“I also believe in all-round care. Often my patients are traumatised after surviving a natural disaster or living in a war zone. It can be good to have something else to help occupy their mind.”



Suheal with a patient in Libya

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

John Turner
OS 1961

Celebrated recorder player John took to the stage once again to perform music by Benjamin Britten and Mozart.

John was part of a concert which took place in St Paul's Church, Heaton Moor to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Manchester Record label, Prima Facie.

Throughout his distinguished musical career, John has played recorder in the Hallé Orchestra and the London Philharmonic. He's played across the globe in Switzerland, Poland, France and New Zealand – to name a few.



Laura Wolfe
OS 1990

Laura is the founder of the events and media relations agency, Road3 and Road3 Concierge, which looks after the lives of some of football's biggest names.

Laura also heads up the events programme at Women in Football and has worked with the PFA, Manchester FA and the National Football Museum.

Outside of football, Laura is an ambassador for the Northwest Air Ambulance and an ambassador for the Diane Modahl Sports Foundation.



OS working together

A group of Old Stops work together as part of an education trust that is dedicated to removing barriers to education.

Karen Burns née Hampson (OS 1995) was previously the Chief Executive Officer of Carillion Academies Trust when she created a new entity, Victorious Academies Trust.

The trust was formed in 2018 and includes nine primary schools in the North West. Alongside her role, Karen facilitates training across the UK for the National Professional Qualification for Executive Leadership and has been a keynote speaker at several educational events including the MAT summit.

Karen also works with fellow Old Stopfordians including Jenny Callaghan née Roberts (OS 1994) who is a headteacher at a school within the trust, and Kate Healey née Longden (OS 1999) who is the director and founder of PR company Inform.

Also, Libby Artingstall (OS 1999) provides mental health training to the trust from her company Team Mental Health, of which she is the Director and Founder.

Will Hunter
OS 1999

Founder of the London School of Architecture, Will has been selected by the Harvard University Graduate School of Design as one of 10 Loeb Fellows in the 51st cohort.

The fellowship includes a one-year residency on the GSD's campus, where fellows engage in research, audit courses, convene workshops, and attend and participate on panels and at conferences as a way of furthering knowledge-sharing and expanding their work through social engagement.



Dr Mark Cox
OS 2013

Mark has launched a new podcast series 'The Straight Talking Doctor', featuring guest speakers such as Made In Chelsea's Jamie Laing. The podcast is dedicated to improving listeners' health and happiness. Mark says, "I decided to start the podcast to help open up the conversation around mental health as well as simplify the overly-complicated world of wellness and health."

Alongside running his podcast, Mark works in the respiratory department at the Royal Free Hospital in North West London. Mark's podcast is available on all leading platforms including Audible, Apple and Amazon Music.



Faza Qadiri

OS 2019

She may have only left Stockport Grammar a mere three years ago, but Faza Qadiri (OS 2019) already has her sights firmly set on her future – and helping to educate others along the way.

With a degree in Cardiac Physiology well underway, and deadlines looming, you may wonder how she has the time to not only run a successful blog about feminism, tutor GCSE students, and write and release a children's book – all in the space of a year.

We were lucky enough to welcome Faza back to the school to give a 'Spotlight On' talk about her blog, and her growing effort to educate more people on the subject of feminism.



This is a topic that resonates closely with Faza, who was born in Afghanistan, and she spoke about wanting to demolish the divide between men and women.

"I came to England from Afghanistan when I was really young," Faza said. "I grew up with more Western ideals, but I was shocked with the divide between men and women in Afghanistan.

"Over there, there is a very clear distinction between what you can, and cannot, do if you are a woman. I became a feminist when I was still at school and I have always been very passionate about the topic – and I think learning about how differently women are perceived not only in Afghanistan, but in England too, gave me the push to begin writing about my thoughts and feelings."

Through her blog – Your Rights Blog – Faza produces articles about the topic, which she hopes one day will help spark change in the country. She hopes that men and women will come to be regarded equally.

During her speech, she credited Stockport Grammar School with helping to instil in her the skills she needed to thrive after leaving school.

"My learning experience was life-changing," she explained. "Coming to Stockport Grammar School taught me how to discipline myself, handle multiple priorities, and embrace my own ambitions.

"This is something I use every day as I have to juggle multiple priorities at once, but it's something that comes naturally to me and what I credit to be the key to making the most out of your time."

Last year, Faza turned her attention to writing a children's book which explained the history of the Afghan flag to a child.

She set about writing the book in response to the ongoing conflict in the country.

"When I heard that they wanted to change the colours of the Afghanistan flag, it made me really sad but also angry.

"The three colours of the flag represent the country's history and reflect so many people's identities.

"It set off something in me, and I wrote a children's book about the flag and why it was so important.

"I didn't tell anyone I was writing the book; I just went ahead and did it – I still remember my parents being really shocked when I told them one day 'oh by the way, I wrote a children's book'."

Her book is called 'The Flag of Afghanistan' and is available to buy on Amazon Kindle and Lulu.

Now, Faza has her sights set on her future, and hopes she can continue to inspire the next generation through her work and writing.

James Brown

OS 1995



A top family lawyer, James Brown has not only succeeded in his field, but has helped to save a pioneering family court along the way.

James (OS 1995) studied for his degree in politics at the University of York before making the transition into law. Decades later, he is now one of the country's leading Family Lawyers and runs his own practice which has been named the Best Company to Work For by the independent body, Best Companies. Now helping other families, James credits his time at SGS with giving him the confidence to pursue his goals.

Tell us about your career so far

While I was studying towards my law qualifications, I remember thinking I wanted to go into litigation or employment law but in the end I fell in love with family law. Once I graduated, I was fortunate enough to be able to work for the top family law firm in London and I could learn from the people who were the very best in the field. This is something that really helped me when I decided to set up my own specialist family law firm with my friend, Sam Hall.

In six years we've grown to a team of 50 staff, with offices in Manchester, London, and Sheffield and are honoured to have been listed as one of the top law firms in the country for family law.

You helped to save the Family Drug and Alcohol Court in Stockport from closure – can you tell us about the campaign you launched?

I believe that the court is an invaluable resource. Previously, people who had issues with alcohol and substance abuse would have their children removed from their care, and some even ended up in mainstream prisons. However, this didn't address the issue at the root of the problem – addiction. The family court was the first organisation that worked with parents to overcome their addictions and regain custody of their children.

However, the FDAC isn't funded by central government, and is instead run with money from local authorities. These local authority funds have to be continually re-applied for from their budget – applications that are made by an FDAC National Unit.

In 2018, we heard that the funding for the National Unit was being stopped. We knew we had to help save it because without it we knew that the FDAC courts would stall and disappear, removing a vital part of our justice system.

We personally contributed £75,000 and liaised with other companies to raise an additional £350,000.

Hall Brown has recently been named the Best Company to Work For by Best Companies. That must feel amazing to receive such high praise.

From the get-go, we wanted Hall Brown to be led with our staff in mind and it's great to see that our ethos is working. Both Sam and I believe that if your team is happy then they will be motivated to do their best work for clients which, in turn, builds a great firm. Our area of law means supporting people going through very difficult aspects of their lives, whether that be a divorce, financial issues arising from a divorce or disagreements about children. We try and provide as much support as we can to our team so that they can, in turn, provide as much support as possible to clients.

What advice would you give SGS students to get the most out of their time here?

Get stuck in.

While I was at school, I did a bit of everything. I joined all the clubs and they really helped me to develop a range of skills which went far beyond just academic grades – skills that I use now all the time. Most importantly, what I really took away from SGS was learning about perseverance and staying focussed on your goals.

I loved my time at SGS and everyone really looked after me but it goes by so quickly. So in addition to my earlier advice, I would also say to enjoy your time at school. Remember that although it can be hard sometimes, on the whole it's supposed to be fun!

FOCUS ON... SPORT

DR JESS PIASEKI NÉE COULSON (OS 2008)

Marathon runner Jess has risen up the rankings once again and is now second in the UK all-time women's rankings.

She made the cut after running a time of 2:22.25 at the Seville marathon and is now second only to Paula Radcliffe.

Jess has also been announced as one of the first British athletes to be selected for the World Athletics Championships in Eugene, Oregon.



OVER 65s HOCKEY TEAM

Former Stockport Grammar School Physics teacher, Ms Lockwood continues to prove her sporting talents.

Ms Lockwood is part of the Over 65's North Hockey team who played in Edinburgh in April.

The teams drew 0-0 in the first match but North won 2-1 in the second!

ROSS MILLINGTON

Long distance runner, Ross (OS 2008) took second place in April's Manchester Marathon.

Ross finished the race with a time of 02:11:37 and ran alongside more than 24,000 runners.

His other accolades include representing Great Britain in the Men's 10,000m race at the Rio Olympic Games.

He said: "SGS is where I started my athletic journey."

"If it wasn't for the encouragement of the PE staff and the amount of sport we were able to do at SGS I may never have gone down this path."

"The competitive element at SGS has helped me achieve in all aspects since I left the school."



BETH TAYLOR (OS 2020)

Former Netball captain Beth put her best foot forward to raise money to help get her to Zambia.

Beth ran 100 miles throughout April to help fundraise to participate in a netball coaching programme in the African country.

It's hoped the programme will help enhance sports development in the country and help develop young people's leadership and life skills.

Beth's passion for Netball began at SGS where she was heavily involved with the sport and was the Sixth Form Netball Captain from 2019-2020.

She is now reading Natural Sciences at Durham University where she is also President of Hild Bede College's Netball Club.



HOLLY HUNT (OS 2015)

Hockey player Holly has been selected to train full time with the Senior Women's England and Great Britain Hockey Squad.

Whilst attending SGS, Holly was selected for England at U16, U18 and U21 level and since leaving she has played in the Development squad.

Holly's medals and achievements include: U18 European Bronze Medal 2015; 2 x U21 European Bronze Medals 2014/2017; National School Champions 2015; National Indoor Champions 2015 and European Championships.



OLD STOPS LACROSSE LUNCH

We were delighted to hear from Old Stopfordians Martin Tootall, Tom Gare and Gordon Assioun about the latest gathering of former Old Stopfordian lacrosse players.

Martin Tootall (OS 1965) said: "With a combined age of about 945, twelve old team-mates met for lunch on 21st April 2022. This time we were joined by two friends from the New Forest area and a former goalkeeper who travelled from California!"



Photo credit: David Greenwood

Matt Barnes

OS 1995

A lawyer for New Balance, Matt (OS 1995) followed his love of sport into a flourishing legal career. He credits sport with helping him to lead a balanced life and has spoken about how he sets and achieves his goals both in his professional and sporting life.

Can you tell us about your journey from leaving SGS?

I left the school having done a pretty eclectic mix of A Levels – Maths, History and French. No one else in my year had taken that combination of subjects and at the time it wasn't obvious what my career would be.

Even during my first couple of years studying History at St. Peter's College, Oxford, I was unsure about what my career would look like. But in my second year I did some work experience at a law firm and I realised that there might be an opportunity to combine my interest in sport with a career as a lawyer.

I signed up for a law conversion course and started to target firms that did sports related work. Since then, my career has taken a number of different turns, but always with sport and law at the heart of it.

I now work in a more commercial environment, for the sportswear company New Balance, looking after all their legal work across Europe and the Middle East.

You competed as a pentathlete and an athlete – how has your sporting journey panned out and how do you balance your successful career with your sporting achievements?

At school I was always very keen on sport, both playing and watching. I wasn't a rugby player though, and any talent I had was shown more in endurance sports like athletics and swimming. I had already started doing the multi event sport of Modern Pentathlon before I left school and was lucky in that there was a strong tradition in that sport at Oxford.

I've had decent success competing at a national level and even competed twice internationally for Great Britain and England in road events. In 2007 I ran a sub 4 minute mile which was my best achievement in the sport.

The answer to how do I balance the career and sport is simple really, I just have to be really organised! If I'm not training or working, I'm planning on what I'm doing next. When I was just competing as a runner one big time saver was using my commute to work as my run.

What advice would you give current SGS pupils to help them succeed?

I would say to set goals.

The most important thing with setting goals is they need to really stretch you in achieving them but there has to be an element of realism. If they are too easy, the challenge just isn't there but equally if the target is impossible, your motivation will soon disappear.

Also being good at something isn't enough to motivate you. If you want long term success, you have to put in a lot of hard work and when things get tough, you won't be prepared to do that, unless you enjoy it.

Who has influenced you in your life?

From a school perspective, I'd say Mr Henshall certainly. I am incredibly grateful that he inspired me to initially take a degree in History, which then led onto a number of other things, including my career.

In life I have tended to take advice from people who have a passion in a particular field and/or have achieved what they have through real hard work rather than freakish talent. The best coaches in a sport aren't always the best athletes or players!

Marcus Hodson

OS 2014

Marcus Hodson (OS 2014) is a model and aspiring actor whose career has seen him work with Attitude Magazine, Samsung, Clarins, JD and Versace. He can trace the passion for what he does back to a Classics play at SGS.

Marcus began modelling while studying towards his Classical Studies degree at King's College, London. He soon fell in love with being in front of the camera and has expanded his portfolio to include collaborations with big brands, as well as causes that are close to his heart.

He said: "Modelling fit really well around my studies and I found that I really enjoyed it.

"I have been fortunate to have met a lot of people through modelling and I was in a great place to be able to get my start in the industry as I lived in London."

Himself a member of the LGBTQ+ community, Marcus uses his platform to speak about issues that are close to his heart – and was 'blown away' when he was given the chance to appear on the front cover of popular gay publication, Attitude Magazine.

"I had read Attitude for a long time before I got into modelling," said Marcus. "When I started modelling I said that I wanted to be in the magazine. I never for a minute imagined I would be on the front cover.

"It's something I am extremely proud of because I am proud of who I am, and I want to encourage everyone to embrace who they are because there's only one of you and you can't spend your life working to please other people."

As well as modelling, Marcus has rubbed shoulders with some of music's biggest names. He recently appeared in the music video for the Craig David ft MNEK song, 'Who You Are'.

Marcus revealed: "I really loved the concept of the whole music video. It's about loving who you are and that's something that really resonates with me.

"I have worked with MNEK in the past, but it was my first time meeting Craig David – who I have to say is really lovely and down-to-earth. I had a really great time filming and my mum loves telling people I was in a Craig David music video!"

Marcus now hopes to break into acting – and would love to star in a coming-of-age TV show such as Skins, or Euphoria. He said he was inspired to start acting after he gained the lead role of Dionysus in the Classics play, Bacchae. He now studies at Identity School of Acting.

"Having the lead role gave me the confidence to pursue other creative avenues and it inspired me to perform in the play in my last year which was Godspell.

"One day I would love to be the lead in a TV show or movie, but my real dream is to be able to get to a place in my career where I can use my platform to inspire others. Diversity is key for me and I want to represent the mixed-race queer demographic as best I can."

Reflecting on his time at SGS, and how the school prepared him for his life and career Marcus said: "I definitely have Classics teacher, Mr Thorley, to thank for helping me find my passion for the subject as I ultimately went on to study Classics at university.

"I have nothing but positive words to say about the school because I always felt very accepted there. There was never any fuss made about my sexuality or what I wanted to do; the teachers were supportive of me."

SGS COMMUNITY



REMEMBRANCE DAY

Pupils, staff and governors were this year joined by more than eighty guests, including Greater Manchester Vice Lord-Lieutenant, Mrs Sharman Birtles JP DL, representing Her Majesty The Queen; Deputy Mayor and Mayoress of Stockport, Councillor Mr David Wilkinson and Ms Jeanette Slavinski; Old Stopfordian President Ms Clare Francis; Chairman of Governors

Mr Christopher Dunn and fellow Old Stopfordians in memory of those who gave their lives in the service of their country.

Following the service, guests were invited to a reunion lunch in the Hallam Hall which contains the war memorial to the 68 Old Stopfordians who gave their lives in the service of their country.

Golf Day



Twenty-eight golfers took part in our annual Founder's Day golf tournament – the first since the pandemic.

The golfers teed off at Disley Golf Club on 18th March and enjoyed glorious sunshine.

In the end, it was the SGS pupils that beat the Old Stops with an average score of 37 points for their best 5 stableford scores compared with an average of 35 points for the Old Stops' best 5 scores.

James Lockwood took home the trophy and was crowned winner of the competition with a stableford score of 38 points.

We would also like to give a warm welcome to our new Old Stopfordians' Golf Secretary, Andy 'Archie' Roberts (OS 1983).

Nicknamed Archie while at school, he spent 25 years working in Africa before returning to Stockport three years ago.

Now retired, Andy enjoys walking in the Peak District – and playing golf of course.



Founder's Day

Pupils, governors, staff and Old Stopfordians gathered at St George's Church to mark the 535th anniversary of the school.

The service was led by Headmaster, Dr Paul Owen and the Bishop of Stockport, the Rt Rev Sam Corley in commemoration of Sir Edmond Shaa's generosity. This was the first in-person service since 2020.

The service was also accompanied by music, performed by the school choirs. The pieces included 'Lift up your voice, Alleluia' and 'Benedictus and Gloria'.

Candles were also lit to remember Old Stops we have lost in the past year.

CAREER SUPPORT

Our thanks to Old Stopfordians Chris Bannister, Phil Boyd, Gaz Edwards, Clare Francis, Anwar Khan and Siobhan Lennox for registering as pupil mentors on our SGS Community.

The programme will enable current pupils to benefit from the wealth of experience and advice Old Stopfordians have to offer and



Old Stops' Dinner

We were delighted to welcome back Old Stopfordians, governors and guests for the annual Founder's Day dinner.

The four course meal was provided by Old Stopfordian and Director of GL Event Services Ltd, Gaz Edwards (OS 2000).

Former Head of Art, Archivist and Master of Ceremonies, Stuart Helm (OS 1964), proposed the toast to the school and the Pious Founder.

Charlotte Garvey (OS 1994) proposed the toast to Old Stopfordians and the

President, Clare Francis (OS 1994), recollecting how their friendship grew unexpectedly and on many of the highlights along the way.

The President's response was enjoyed by all, providing humour, humility and inspiration.

Our thanks to everyone who joined us for a delightful evening. Thank you also to all those involved in providing such a wonderful event, including our pupil musicians Nicholas Othen, Charlie Harrison, Brian Liu, Ella Moran and Mr Newlove for the arrangements.

Pictured: Charlotte Garvey (OS 1994), Stuart Helm (OS 1964), Clare Francis (OS 1994).

If you would be interested in signing up as a mentor please visit:

**community.
stockportgrammar.co.uk/
careers**



SGS Highlights

HUMAN RIGHTS POETRY

Budding poets had their work published as part of a landmark initiative to help celebrate the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The first Greater Manchester Poetic Declaration of Human Rights was created by students from across the area in a bid to highlight the importance of the original document – which was created in 1948.

The Greater Manchester declaration was put together in collaboration between the Robert F Kennedy Foundation for Human Rights and Curious Minds, a creative charity.

SGS pupils were tasked with creating poetry based on one of the 30 declarations which was then compiled in a book – something Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham, hopes will encourage equality across the region.

Of the 30 poems that appeared in the book, five of those were written by SGS English and Drama pupils; George Hammond, Jess Wiggetts, Alex Powrie, Mia Fovargue and Arthur Wolstenholme - which was the most from any contributor.

AUDIENCES TRANSPORTED TO NARNIA

Audiences flocked to the Main Hall for this year's drama production of 'The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe' which combined the talents of more than 100 pupils.

Thanks to excellent acting, staging and production work, the spectators immersed themselves in the most mystical of adventures as they joined Lucy, Edmund, Susan and Peter when they waved goodbye to wartime Britain and said hello to a talking Faun, an unforgettable Lion and the coldest, cruellest Witch.

The production was a culmination of six weeks of intensive work and was a real team effort from everyone involved, including the Directors and the staff who helped with artwork, costumes, front of house and backstage.

Fourth Year Ben Smethurst, who played Peter, said: "The show was really enjoyable and there was a great community ethos amongst the cast and crew. Being involved in the production is a great way to make friends and to find passions you never knew you had."

FOUNTAINS LINKED THANKS TO AMNESTY CLUB

Amnesty club have worked hard to make sure that every time pupils fill up their water bottle it helps a good cause.

The club have successfully twinned two of our water fountains with countries that don't have access to safe drinking water.



The fountain in the Hallam building is twinned with a community in Afghanistan and the fountain in the Woodsmoor building has been twinned with a community in Nepal.

It helps residents in the villages to have access to fresh water by providing a community tap that can be used for drinking water, cooking and safe washing water.

Students from the club held a bake sale before Christmas to raise the vital funds for the project which was unveiled after the Christmas break.



NATIONAL SEMI-FINALISTS

The 1st XV rugby team showed excellent determination and teamwork as they made it all the way to the semi-final of the U18 National Schools Plate Competition.

The SGS boys saw off a number of tough teams through the first, second and third rounds with wins against King's School, Macclesfield, Merchant Taylors' School and Stonyhurst College.

Norwich School made the long journey north for the quarter-final but SGS was again triumphant with a 51-19 victory before an away match to Stowe School ended the successful run.

1st XV Captain Ewan Curran said: "The cup run was characterised not only by individual brilliance but also by a whole squad effort across three year groups. The boys went from strength to strength and played for the values that the badge represents."

Albert Johnston Award



Lower Sixth student Lydia Barker will travel across the Irish Sea after impressing the judges to win this year's Albert Johnston Award competition.

Lydia's presentation was entitled 'Study of IRA Incidents in Northern Ireland' and during her trip she will visit Belfast, Derry/Londonderry and Enniskillen for six days to study the activities of the Irish Republican Army.

Whilst in Enniskillen, Lydia hopes to visit family she has there and see if they had any first-hand knowledge of the Troubles that she would not necessarily find in a textbook.

Speaking about her chosen topic, Lydia said: "I have chosen to tour Northern Ireland as I want to make the most of the ability to travel and I think it would deepen my knowledge to visit the locations of incidents."

"I have also specifically chosen these three destinations because I have found, during research to satisfy my own curiosity, that there were bombings and shootings in each of these cities. I would like to stand in the exact spot that these happened, as well as visit some of the museums."

This year's judging panel was made up of Head of Sixth Form David Stone, SGS Archivist Stuart Helm (OS 1964), former Bursar Chris Watson (OS 1973) and Governor Chris Muscutt.

After declaring Lydia as the winner, Mr Stone said: "Lydia confidently and authentically delivered her plan to the panel and she responded positively to the range of questions posed by the panellists."

"Her project had very clearly considered the logistical challenges and how the time spent in Belfast, Enniskillen and Derry/Londonderry could be most effectively utilised with visits to museums and historical sites."

Well done to all of the students who entered this year's competition.

Announcements

Staff Leavers

As we reach the end of the academic year, we say thank you and farewell to the following long serving members of staff. We wish all of them the very best for the future.

Catherine Bailey
Assistant Head – Infants
(Retiring, joined 2015)

Ruth Cole
Junior School Music Teacher
and Co-ordinator
(Retired, joined 1987)

Alison Sullivan
Junior School Teacher
and Drama Co-ordinator
(Retired, joined 1997)

Carolyn Tonge
Junior School Support Staff
(Retiring, joined 1998)

Jackie Gibson
Catering
(Retired, joined 1991)

Barbara Kershaw
Assistant Bursar
(Retired, joined 1999)

Anne Larkin
Senior School Maths Teacher
(Retiring, joined 2001)

Steve 'DJ' Markham
Maintenance
(Retired, joined 1993)

Danny Thomson
Director of Sport
(Joined 2019)

Neil Young
Senior School Head
of Design Technology
(Joined 2001)

Rachel Grey née Hindley
Senior School Chemistry
Teacher & Head of Year
(Joined 2011)

Ollie Johnson
Senior School English Teacher
(Joined 2017)

Ann-Marie Thomson
Senior School Business
and Economics Teacher
(Joined 2019)

Gita Miles
Senior School
Geography Teacher
(Joined 2013)



Congratulations to **Lorna Cole** (OS 2012) and **Oliver Mills** (OS 2012)

We were delighted to hear the news of Lorna and Ollie's marriage on 1st November 2020. To make up for not being able to share their special day with all their friends and family Lorna and Ollie hosted a wedding party in November 2021 – a day which included many familiar faces from SGS.

Brian Lingard OS 1942 & Denys Lingard OS 1944

Brian has uncovered a connection between the creator of 'Jeeves and Wooster', P.G. Wodehouse, and SGS via Headmaster Christopher Gilkes and Dulwich College.

P.G. Wodehouse studied at Dulwich College until 1900 where his Headmaster was the father of Christopher Gilkes, who was Headmaster at SGS between 1929 and 1941.

You can read Brian's reflections on 'The Inheritance Of A Sense Of Humour' on the SGS Community website.

Our thanks are also due to Denys Lingard who has kindly shared with us his stories of life at SGS and of Stockport in the period prior to, and during, the Second World War.

In Memory



Derrick Short

Sunday 6th February 2022
Derrick was the former Head of Chemistry from 1975 – 2005.

Former pupil Cara Steele née Lallement (OS 2003) paid tribute to Derrick: "I am a chemistry teacher myself now and it is in no short way due to the amazing chemistry teachers I had myself at SGS, Mr Short being one of them. He had such a dry sense of humour and was so fiercely intelligent and I look back on my days in those old chemistry labs with great fondness."

Robert P. Megson (OS 1988)
Sunday 27th June 2021

Geoffrey R. Crowther (OS 1954)
Wednesday 30th June 2021

Geoffrey Dale Smith (OS 1952)
Wednesday 1st September 2021

David A. G. Coleman (OS 1959)
Friday 7th October 2021

J. Brian Boyle (OS 1958)
November 2021

Muriel Blunden-Ellis (Former Headmaster's Secretary 1973-1988 & Former Junior School assistant 1988-1991)
Thursday 4th November 2021

Roy Stansfield (OS 1942)
Tuesday 9th November 2021

David Anthony Oldham (OS 1963)
Saturday 13th November 2021

Peter Jackson (OS 1952)
Thursday 25th November 2021

Ralph Neville Watts (OS 1948)
Tuesday 30th November 2021

Geoffrey Stewart Bowring (OS 1945)
Monday 17th January 2022

Christine Wilshaw (Arts Secretary 1994-2003)
Tuesday 8th March 2022

Anthony 'Tony' P. Redfern (OS 1955)
Thursday 10th March 2022

Sara 'Sally' J. Hemsley (Shaa Society Member, Former Parent)
Sunday 20th March 2022

Robert Barry Rose (OS 1953)
April 2022

Ken Heath (OS 1950)
Thursday 26th May 2022



Stephen Russell Cross

Monday 15th November 2021
Stephen taught in the History Department between 1980-2005.

A former pupil, Dr Karl Walsh (OS 2006) gave a touching tribute: "Stephen was the best teacher I had and he certainly had a unique teaching style. This varied from meticulous planned lectures, re-enacting moments of world history or walking to lunch in historical military uniform. He however was more than just a teacher, but a friend at a time in my third year when our year group lost our dear friend Richard Cawley."

To read more obituaries visit... stockportgrammar.co.uk/alumni/in.memory/

Keep in touch!

We hope you've enjoyed this jam-packed edition of Old Stops' Review! Thank you to everyone who has shared their news and helped Charlotte Hutton and Rebecca Shawcross fill this edition with so many fascinating and inspiring stories. The new online SGS Community makes it easy to keep in touch – with just a simple click to join you can connect globally and locally. Along with email, Old Stopfordians' Facebook, LinkedIn, the Stopfordian Committee, phone and post there are so many ways to stay up to date with all things SGS. We're always delighted to arrange a tour round school, help organise a reunion or welcome you back to Old Stop events.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the Bursary Fund this year – your support transforms children's lives, creating experiences and opportunities that last a lifetime. You can read more about bursaries and why the need is now so important on page 6.

Volunteering and 'giving back' is a consistent theme at SGS and this year Old Stops have lent their experience to the Careers Convention, Careers Days and Work Experience. Perhaps for many Old Stops it all started with the Duke of Edinburgh Award? Still going strong with over 300 current and former pupils working towards their awards, we would love to hear your stories for the next edition.

Rachel Horsford
External Relations Director



Rachel Horsford



Charlotte Hutton



Rebecca Shawcross

Please visit www.stockportgrammar.co.uk/alumni/events/ for further information about our upcoming events.

To contact the External Relations office email externalrelations@stockportgrammar.co.uk or phone **0161 419 2408**.



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Dates for your Diary

Summer Reunion Barbecue

12 noon – 3pm
Saturday 9th July 2022

Stopfordian Committee Meeting

10.30am – 11.30am
Saturday 9th July 2022
Further meetings in the Autumn & Spring Terms

Remembrance Reunion

Friday 11th November 2022

Carol Service

December 2022

The Shaa Society Lunch

Thursday 16th March 2023
By invitation only

Founder's Day

Friday 17th March 2023

Founder's Old Stops Event

March 2023

London Old Stops Event

Spring 2023

The Bursary Fund Golf Day

June 2023

