



# **OL Newsletter**

**TRINITY 2017**

## IN MEMORIAM

### *Marianne Maunder*



Marianne joined the School initially as a teacher of Geography in 1986 and she retired in 2003. When I first met her it was obvious that duty, doing the right thing, and professionalism were very important to her. Do not be deceived though because she could do this with great good humour and ready wit. On hearing the fact that the Head on one occasion was to be absent, a mischievous member of staff suggested it might be a chance for a bloodless coup. "Why does it have to be bloodless" said Marianne.

Her pastoral approach was summed up by this comment from a colleague 'pastorally, having dealt with what she would have regarded as the symptoms of the problem, she worked with the student or member of staff to address the cause; and often with very apparent success.' Marianne was one of the driving forces behind the School's ethos of care during her time at LGS.

To me, and I know many others, she was always totally supportive. She was also really good company with her delightful laugh. She was valued by me as a Deputy Head and invaluable to LGS. It was with great sadness that we received the news of her passing in 2016.

**Chris King**  
Headmaster

Abridged from a homily written for a memorial service in the School Chapel

She was a very good teacher and a first class geographer. I remember exchanging ideas and chewing the geographical cud with her in many enjoyable conversations. I know other colleagues in the Geography Department valued her as an accomplished teacher.

### *Matthew Teather* (OL'94)



We were all very sad to hear of the recent death of Matthew Teather shortly before his 40th birthday after a long and determined fight against cancer. Matt had a huge circle of friends, including a loyal group from his school days at LGS (Vinay Mistry, Graeme Stretton, and Mark Hopkins), others he lived with in Birmingham and Lincoln, friends from his time as a volunteer in Malaysia, and many others from London, and more recently

Cambridge where he worked for the Woolf Institute, which studies the relations between Jews, Christians and Muslims.

His family was able to compile a booklet for the funeral containing memories, anecdotes and photographs which could act as a memento for his wife Chloe and also be passed on to their daughter Thea when she is older.

We send Sarah, Andrew and Matt's parents our condolences.

## Officers of the Association

**Tim Cawston** - President  
**Ron Berry** - OL Liaison Officer  
**Peter Cox** [OL'07]  
**Katharine Douglas** [OL'92]  
**Carl James** [OL'00]  
**Rachael Kendall** [OL'92]  
**Darren Pilbeam** [OL'96]

## Events

**OL REUNION** Sat 7th Oct 2017  
King Richard III Visitor Centre

**OL CAROL SERVICE** Thurs 21st Dec, 7.30pm  
Leicester Grammar School

**LONDON DRINKS** Thurs 19th April  
St Pancras Station, London

**CLASS OF '08** May 2018  
Leicester Grammar School

# VALETE

## Best wishes to all our leaving staff



Natalie Fletcher [MFL] to  
Sherborne Girls School



Jamie Rennie [PE, LGJS]



Pete Smith [Site Services]  
Retirement



Josh Peake [Geography]  
to Dulwich College, Shanghai



Jan Barrow

### Jan Barrow

Jan has been a longstanding member of the Design and Technology Team, joining us not long after its inception. Although she started by bringing some very new ideas to textiles, her versatility extended to resistant materials with the younger students. She spent much of her non-teaching time at school helping with Drama's costumes and later within the school chapel. A brilliant team player, I am glad I am not going to have to be looking for a replacement for her when she retires.

**Dave Gee**

Retired Head of D&T



Jonathan Walker [Classics] to  
Feltonfleet School, Cobham



Jill Carr [RS] to  
Beauchamp College



Tom Lemon [PE] to Discovery  
Bay International School,  
Hong Kong

### Peter Handford

When I joined the School in 1991 as Head of Science and Head of Chemistry, Peter had already been teaching Chemistry at LGS for 4 years. At our first departmental meeting I was struck by his intelligence, quiet assurance and friendly demeanour. Over the following 23 years I came to greatly value his professionalism, keen mind, departmental input and friendship. Peter has had a wonderful rapport with his students, especially the 6th form, displaying an enviable knowledge and understanding of his subject. His lessons have been delivered with style, wit and empathy for the range of abilities of the students in front of him. His dry sense of humour and engaging personality have inspired a devoted following amongst them. In addition Peter



Peter Handford

has devoted much time to making music and supporting the School's musicians. He will be greatly missed and I wish him a long and happy retirement.

**David Roebuck**

Retired Head of Science

## REUNION

# 35th Anniversary Lunch

18th June 2016

It seems unbelievable that the School has reached its 35th Anniversary and we felt it appropriate that this occasion be celebrated. A Gala Lunch was held last June in the foyer of the new School building at Great Glen. It was most encouraging to be able to welcome 65 former pupils and staff, both current and retired, who joined during the first 5 years of the School's history. Tim Cawston entertained us as guest speaker, sharing his memories of his time at the School. It was good to hear his personal recollections of some of the OLs present.

These photos reflect the success of the event and the continuing affection that many OLs feel for the School.



Faith Archer (nee Dewey) and Tom Cossham



Tim Cawston



Anne de Graeve, Andrew Kirk & Mrs Lorna Kirk



Katharine Douglas (nee Staunton), Mark Walls & Laura Marriott-Clarke

# REUNION



Anne Briggs, Caroline Williams (nee Gill) and Alison Walker



Andy Sobek, Melanie Naylor (nee Blight) and Liz Arnold (nee Southwick) Matt Brunning, Vicki Martinek & Charlotte Rhodes (nee Smith) Anne Marie Jenks (nee Smith), Ben Alba, Zoe Cosciani & Clare Geraghty (nee Parker)



Eleanor Lewis (nee Williams)



Simon Heaps, Tim Cawston, Jon Sansome, Richard Longson and Ed Cufflin



David Hawker & Tim Cawston

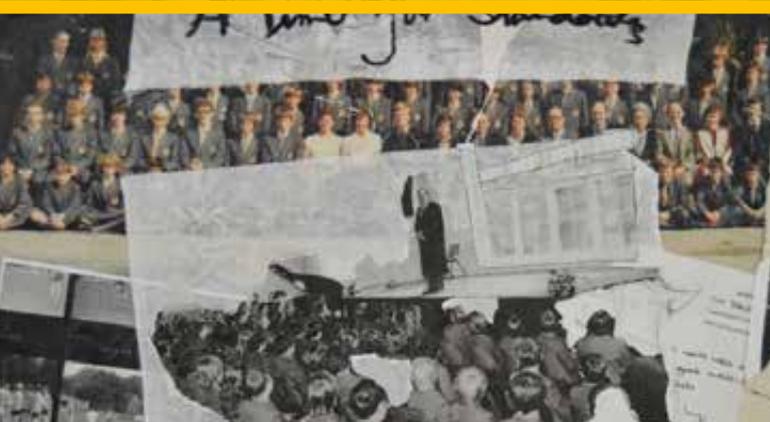
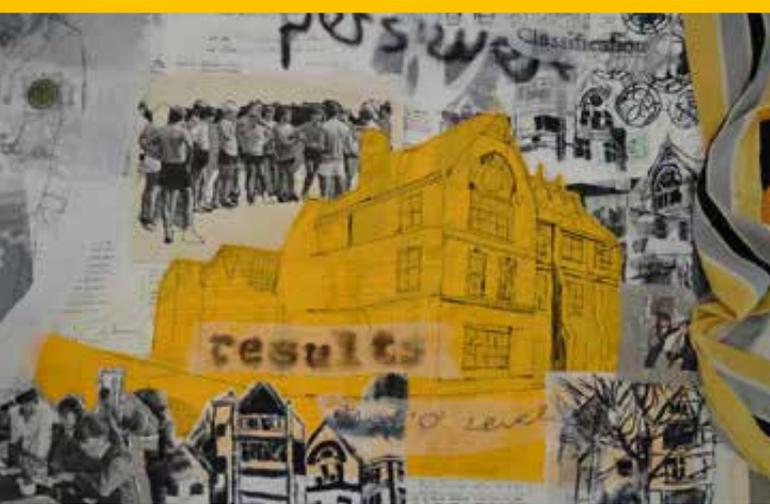
## OL PROJECT

# *The first 4 decades of LGS*

Since the last newsletter the OL project to represent the first four decades of Leicester Grammar School on four pieces of artwork has achieved its first goal, namely the completion and hanging of the collage of memorabilia from 1981-1991. This has been displayed above the entrance to the St Nicholas Hall in the Foyer.

We are now asking all OLs who were at the School between 1991-2001 to help us gather together memorabilia from the second decade of the School's history. This can be in the form of uniform, memories, reports and photos - anything that you think would give an impression of LGS in the 1990's.

If you have anything you can donate please contact the OL office.



# From the Chair of the Trust

Sarah Dauncey

As you are aware, due to the sad death of Ian Patterson in early 2016, the LGS Trust Board was required to elect a new Chair to lead the Trust forward into its next phase. The election took place in June 2016 and I am honoured and feel very privileged to have been elected.



I know some of you, mainly through my three daughters (the Lefleys) who are OLs, but I am conscious that there are many of you whom I do not know so a brief introduction seems appropriate.

I trained as a doctor. I was a GP for over 20 years in Leicestershire followed by a period as Medical Director at Nuffield Health, an independent healthcare provider. Whilst I have only been a Trustee at LGS for 4 years, my connection goes back to 1993, when my eldest daughter joined the Junior School. I have been a parent at the School throughout the intervening 24 years and currently have a son finishing year 11 at the Senior School. I am passionately fond of the Junior and Senior Schools and immensely proud of their growth and development over the years. Since May 2016 we have a third school under our governance – Stoneygate School. This is an exciting new project for us and we are determined to enhance this school's unique offering to give parents more choice when selecting an independent education for their children in south Leicestershire.

I am always pleased to hear about the increasing numbers of OLs who are making the decision to keep in touch and remain part of the LGS extended family. It is a testament to the important friendships you made when at LGS as well as an opportunity to forge new ones.

# Medical Elective

Vageesh Jain [OL'11]

Last summer I spent six weeks working at the World Health Organization (WHO) in Geneva, with the Epidemic Clinical Management and Health Services Delivery teams. I spent most of my time working on a project involving the Joint External Evaluation (JEE), a tool used to evaluate national capacity to prevent, detect and respond to large infectious disease outbreaks. Since the Ebola outbreak this process of national assessment has become increasingly important, as Ebola exposed gaps in international response mechanisms and local healthcare systems. This work, critiquing the current tool and proposing ways to improve it, was presented to public health experts and formed part of the initial process leading to JEE reform.

The experience was eye-opening and I learnt a lot from seeing how health issues, particularly surrounding epidemic response and system resilience, are dealt with on the global stage. It was also great to meet senior figures in global health and clinical medicine, as well as other interns from different countries and backgrounds. Moving forward, I am continuing to collaborate with those I met, mostly on academic projects relating to policy challenges, for instance universal health coverage, in the context of pandemic emergency preparedness and response.



## OL GAP YEAR AWARD

# *Seville, Sun, and Supervising Spanish Children*

Katie Tincello [OL'16]

I am spending my gap year working as an au pair in Seville, Spain, before going to Exeter University to study English and Spanish in September. The city of Seville is beautiful and I have been a true tourist, visiting all the major sites and getting lost among the picturesque cobbled streets of the old town. When I first arrived in the last week of September the temperature was 34 degrees. This weather continued throughout October, and I was even to be found sunbathing on a beach on October 31st, something I have never done before.

My working day centres around looking after the two boys of my host family (aged 4 years and 18 months). I get them ready in the morning, take them to and from school and clubs, and look after them until their parents come home in the evening. We often go to the park as the weather here is so good, or we do some colouring or play with toy animals. The most important aspect of my job is that I talk only in English to help the boys learn the language. As they are so young, this has been difficult, but I am amazed to see

that the youngest can already say 'please' and understands when I say 'sit down'. It is interesting to see how quickly young children pick up a language, and I am impressed that the 4 year old already knows and understands so much.

As an au pair I am treated as another member of the family, and this family have involved me in everything they do and made me feel very welcome. Celebrating King's Day on the 6th January, which is when the Spanish celebrate Christmas, was an exciting and interesting event. I witnessed the famous Spanish Cabalgata (a procession through the city with floats where they throw sweets into the crowd), and enjoyed indulging in the traditional Spanish foods of Christmas time (my favourite Roscos de vino). On arrival I was surprised to discover that my Spanish was better than I first thought, and I think I have improved considerably since then - even if I am developing an Andalusian accent! I am also attending Spanish lessons during my free time, and I hope



to do the DELE exam in April to take advantage of the language opportunity. I have met lots of other au pairs here in Seville and we have taken advantage of our situation to see other parts of Spain. Overall, my time here so far has been a great adventure, even if I am completely exhausted by the weekend. Little children are hard work!

## Lower School Prize Giving

Faith Archer (nee Dewey) [OL'89]

Following a pattern set over recent years, Faith Archer (nee Dewey) [OL'89] presented the prizes at the Lower School Speech Day in June. Faith follows in the footsteps of Annie Allum [OL'08] and Matt Brunning [OL'92].



# REUNION

## Carol Service 22nd December 2016



1. Anna Meadows, Sarah Wolloff, Harry Ellis, Megan Oliver, George Summerton, Sahil Nichani & Philippa Bliss
2. Joseph Gurman, Francis Gurman & Michael Loveday
3. Katharine Douglas, Ed Whittaker, Dr Ainge, Tom Hunt, Will Osborne & Siddhart Wadhwa
4. Krupa Joshi, Claire Perry, Rav Virdee & Krystal Fox
5. Harry Penfold, Emily Fry, Louise Nicholson, Lucy Summerton & Georgia Smith
6. Alex Williams, William Atkinson, Jack Storrey, Charlotte Jameson & Grace Gladdle

# Love & Marriage

at LGS



Emily Thomas [OL'00] & Peter Stevenson [OL'00]



Alice Orton [OL'06] & Tom Lafford [OL'06]



Ele Hanning [OL'98] & Andrew Field [OL'98]



Caroline Ireland [OL'03] & Steve Glitherow [OL'01]



Niharika Tyagi [OL'06] & Neal Ganatra [OL'06]



Alice Ireland [OL'02] & Richard Jones [OL'03] plus many OLs!



Jenna Fears [OL'03] & Chris Gutteridge [OL'03]



Rebecca Herbert [OL'94] & Chris Wesley [OL'94]



Ellie Homard-Roy [OL'11] & John Huxley [OL'11]



Cheng Ge [OL'07] & Qian Li [OL'06]



## Invested as Outstanding Woman of Scotland Alice Strang [OL'91]

Having failed to get the results I needed for Cambridge, I left LGS in 1991 and spent a year in Florence. Whilst there Emmanuel College told me they didn't care about my lack of success in Chemistry and so the following October I began my degree there in History and then History of Art. After graduating I joined Christie's Graduate Trainee Scheme, becoming a Junior Specialist in the Impressionist and Modern Art Department, before being promoted to a Specialist in the Contemporary Art Department. In 1999, I joined the National Galleries of Scotland in Edinburgh as a Curator, where I am now a Senior Curator at the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art. My plan was to stay for two years

and try to get a job at the Tate. Fast forward 18 years and I have married a Glaswegian and now combine working part-time with looking after our two sons (who have Scottish accents!).

I have specialised in modern Scottish art and recently curated the exhibition Modern Scottish Women: Painters and Sculptors 1885-1965 and edited the accompanying publication, which featured Dorothy Johnstone's beautiful portrait of her friend the painter Anne Finlay on its cover. This looked at the experiences women faced as art students and professional artists due to their gender - including not being able to study the human nude and having to exhibit sculpture



Photo: Alex Robson

anonymously because it was considered too physical a pursuit to be suitable for a lady. The project shed new light on this chapter of Scottish art history and revealed the contribution made to it by women artists. In recognition of our pioneering research, on behalf of the Modern Scottish Women team I was made a Saltire Society 'Outstanding Woman of Scotland'. Not bad for someone who got a C in their Chemistry A level!

## A Family Affair Hollie [OL'04] & Amelia [OL'08] Brooks

When I was at LGS, my goal was to become a household name within the fashion industry. Well, lofty it may be, but since then, the industry has changed, yet the goal remains the same. Fast forward a few (OK, a fair few) years and I now run an online homewares boutique called MiaFleur ([www.miafleur.com](http://www.miafleur.com)), together with my sister, Amelia (a fellow OL) and my mum, Jacqui. We co-founded MiaFleur together and have been responsible for taking it from just an idea to fruition and have since seen our turnover grow consistently year on year.

So how did I get here? After leaving LGS, I studied Fashion and Textile Management at Nottingham Trent University and, following internships in the industry, I knew the corporate world of a buying office just wasn't for me. After graduation, there was no doubt in my mind that I wanted to run my own business, it was just a case of what, and when.

Following a year travelling I was offered a job on a cruise ship, working in sales in a prestigious art gallery, which was a fantastic experience. By the time I left my next role, Amelia was in her final year of studying Textile Design and we'd begun talking about starting a business together. My mum also studied Textiles and as we're all passionate about interiors and styling, an online

homewares shop became the obvious answer. So, after much blood, sweat and tears, in late 2012 MiaFleur was born.

Since then, I'm pleased to say that MiaFleur has gone from strength to strength; amongst other achievements, we were awarded 'Best Use of Digital' in the 2016 Midlands Family Business Awards. We are redesigning and rebranding our website this year and suffice to say, we have big plans for the future. So watch this space.



# An alternative pathway to success

James Bentley [OL'16]

Towards the end of my academic career at LGS I decided that, alongside my UCAS application, I would also apply for several higher apprenticeships. After passing my aptitude test and attending an interview, come results day, I had the choice of accepting my university place or taking up the apprenticeship route. My choice of the apprenticeship route turned out to be incredibly beneficial for me in so many ways.

I now work for Jaguar Land Rover as a cost engineer, where I am required to have an in-depth knowledge of all types of manufacturing techniques with the aim of saving the company money during the manufacturing process. Also I am

currently studying a foundation degree in Engineering, aiming to complete a BEng at the University of Warwick in the next few years. The best part is that this is all paid for by Jaguar Land Rover and I also earn a salary the whole time. This highlights the main benefit of a degree apprenticeship, as I am being paid to study and will finish my degree with no student debt, as well as 6 years of experience and a guaranteed job.

I would highly recommend this path to anyone looking at a career in engineering. However, there aren't just apprenticeships for engineering but also for other professions such as finance. So it is always worth a look online.



## GAP YEAR

### Plain Sailing

Jonathan Ramsbottom [OL'16]

After collecting my grades, I decided I was in a position to take a year out whilst securing a place at a good university. Although the decision was last minute, there were still many opportunities out there.

Having spent many of my summers boating in France, I decided to build on my skills and

opted to take a six week intensive super yacht crew training course. This would not only give me a number of skills including first aid, fire fighting and engine maintenance but also give me a full skipper qualification, allowing me to skipper boats up to 50ft. Having now completed the course I am in the process of applying for work as part of a crew delivering

boats to some fantastic locations.

So far, I have found my gap year great fun, learned some great new life skills and met some very interesting people.



# A Career on the Professional Stage

Joseph Connor [OL'06]

In 2006, I left Leicester Grammar School with a golden ticket straight into the upper echelons of the musical theatre industry. I landed my first professional acting job at 17 in the Original London cast of 'Wicked'. I was ecstatic so much so that much so that I forgot to turn up for my General Studies A Level Exam. In July of that year I started my rehearsal period with people I had never met, that had 10/20+ years experience more than me and knew how to do what I was about to do. I became a sponge. I spent a year alongside people like Miriam Margoles, Idina Menzel, Nigel Planer and Adam Garcia, learning everything I would need to progress in my new industry.

I left 'Wicked' and joined 'Lord of the Rings; The Musical' and this is where I gained the experience of being an understudy to the role of Legolas. I got to work with the world reknowned A.R.Rahman on the album for this show at Air Studios and Abbey Road.

This was the best beginning I could have hoped for as I was now solidified into the community. I had two shows under my belt, album experience, leading role experience and loads of auditions coming in. At this point I had gained an agent, Michael Garrett at Global Artists. He was my sole manager, so I could only work on projects that were through him

or were approved by him. As our world has moved into the age of celebrity, as a performer you are classed as a brand and therefore your manager or agent is the person who keeps you on track and steers you away from sex, drugs and rock'n'roll.

I spent 6 years in the West End jumping around shows like 'We Will Rock You' and 'Flashdance'. I performed on Children in Need,

Blue Peter, the Royal Variety and at numerous charity dinners, galas and industry press events. I also spent time studying the Meisner acting technique.

I left the UK to do my first job away in 2011. I had just bought a flat in London and then had an offer from Royal Caribbean Cruise lines to go and sing for 6 months on their Freedom of the Seas cruise liner. I had just moved in and was



# CAREER NEWS

now contemplating moving away. It was the 2nd largest ship in the world and their contract was amazing. It was basically a working holiday around the Caribbean for 6 months being paid 3 times the amount I was paid in London. So I took it and spent an amazing 6 months traveling and performing.

When I came back I wasn't so young and fresh anymore. The auditions were not as regular and these are the parts of every performers life that they dread, the out of work periods. I think I became everything. I worked for Virgin Atlantic, worked in the financial district of London as a PA, worked for the Royal Household, I basically did whatever job I could blag my way into. I did a lot of these jobs alongside performing in the West End. This meant I was always working and for me that's great.

I was out of work for 6 months, a short period compared to many actors.

I started working at Curve in Leicester with 'Hello, Dolly!' and pretty much straight after joined the new UK tour of 'Evita' with Marti Pellow. This took me around the UK for the year and I got to see places in the UK I had never been to before.

I also started to set up my own productions company in London with my business partner Sarah Ingram. Remember when I said that all actors hate being out of work, well this was my idea to stop the fear of those periods. We started to take established performers who needed a spring-board for publicity or just wanted a change in direction, and created cabarets for them. This meant that when we produced them we would fill the audiences with the right people, reviewers and paying public. We started our first season at the

world famous Hippodrome Casino in Leicester Square in their theatre which was formerly the 'Talk of the Town.' Our first artist was Anton Stephans, now known from the Xfactor. For that production we hired Ed Barker (former LGS Pupil and Saxophonist for the late George Michael) to musically direct the show. We produced 5 shows over a period of a year and a half.

In 2015 Black Sapphire Productions was nominated for Best Theatrical Event in London 2015 with 'Sibling Revelry' by Ann Hampton Callaway



and Liz Callaway. We didn't win but we were so honoured to be on the list. We were up against Cameron Macintosh's 'Les Mis' and 'Miss Saigon'. My mum thought we would win...

Meanwhile I was still performing, 'Evita' went into the Dominion Theatre for a short West End run and after that I came home to Leicester Curve again to perform in 'Hairspray' with David Witts.

I auditioned for 'Starlight Express' in November 2014 and got

offered to understudy the roles of Rusty and Electra. Rusty being the romantic lead of the show and Electra the supporting lead. The show was in Germany and I would have to perform the roles in German. I had also never roller skated before and the entire show is on roller skates.

I spent 4 months learning how to skate and to speak German. I then spent a year performing the show.

In August 2016 the performer playing the role of Electra injured himself pretty badly and I was asked to take over the role of Electra. I played this role until March 31st. I finish the entire contract in June 2017 and will then be returning home to the UK.

I have recently changed agent after 10 years with Global Artists and have moved to a new agent. For contractual reasons I am unable to say which agency but it is more aimed towards TV and Film.

I have spent over 10 years in Musical Theatre and have loved every challenging minute. Musical theatre is my grounding but I am being led in a different direction now and it's even more terrifying than when I left school to move to London at 17.

My company has recently been approached to set up a venue in Leicester that will provide intimate cabaret events for the Leicestershire community. It will provide master classes as well as evening performances from up and coming, current and world renowned artists across the pop, classical and jazz genres.

So I have a long year ahead with lots of hard work, juggling auditions and producing, but I'm sure amazing experiences will come from it.

## EVENTS

# New Directions OL Art Show

We have had exhibitions by former LGS students in 1999, 2002, 2007, 2009, and, most recently, 2016. I think we called the first one 'New Directions' and have called some, if not all, of them that since then. On each occasion we have invited recent LGS alumni at Art and Design or Architecture School, or who have recently graduated, to exhibit work so that our current students can see what their studies might lead on to.

The most recent one in Advent 2016 featured Fine Art video and drawings by Sorcha McCole who had just graduated from Newcastle University; a 'lo-tech' sewing machine designed for Third World use by Emma Morris who is now working for Dyson having graduated from Loughborough University; designs

for footwear by Bethany Rist who is now working for Doc Marten's, having just graduated from London College of Fashion; fashion design drawings by Matthew Haynes who is now in his final year of Fashion; architectural drawings by Kathryn Chung, who recently graduated from the University of Westminster, and by Yu Chen Pan, who recently graduated from the Bartlett School of Architecture.

**David Maddock - Head of Art**



## London Drinks 27th April 2017

The London Drinks event was attended by a record 20 members of staff and over 30 OLs from across the age range who joined them at the Betjeman Arms on St Pancras Station for a few hours of reminiscing ... and drinking! It was particularly gratifying to welcome some of the younger members of staff who will play an increasing role in the development of the OLs in the future.



Dave Roebuck, Dave Gee, Tim Cawston, Carl James & Trevor Allen



Tony Duffield, Ned Davies & Jack Storrey

## CAREER NEWS

# OL Sixth Form Gap Year Award

## Rosie Gladdle [OL'16]



## Blogging her way to Success

Clare Wilson [OL'05]

Well done to Clare who as part of her job as a Digital Content Editor at English Heritage has just picked up two national awards - Best Arts & Culture and Best Travel Blog in the company categories of the UK Blog Awards.

Over 95,000 votes were cast in the public voting stage to determine the finalists, then a panel of industry experts for each field picked out the winner. Clare is absolutely thrilled by the recognition - as you can see from the picture.



In February 2016 I travelled to Costa Rica to take part in a Raleigh International project. This is an organisation that aims to improve the lives of people by creating sustainable change and improving the environment and the communities it works with. I had to raise £2550 as a donation to the charity plus the cost of flights.

My destination in Costa Rica was the Field Base Centre at Turrialba. My first 3 week project was in the northern part of Nicaragua called San Antonio. This is a very dry and hot area and the landscape is barren. We stayed with families in the village, many of them having 3 generations under the same tin roof. The majority of these families are subsistence farmers who trade any surplus produce like plantain or cattle in the local market at Esteli. Drinking water comes from an unreliable well in the village. The family I lived with had a vegetable plot, chickens and a pig which often chased me. The kitchen consisted of a fire in the corner and a wooden plank sticking out of the mud wall where food was prepared. Meals consisted of fried rice and beans for breakfast, lunch and dinner!

Our mission in San Antonio was to educate the locals about better hygiene and water usage, and to build a gravitational water supply system. We worked alongside local people

to build a covered filter at the source and to install trenched piping to each house, giving them clean running water for the first time. In addition we taught them about important hygiene issues like washing hands and not washing kitchen utensils in the river which was shared with cattle. We created games and put on plays to make it more interesting.

My second phase of Raleigh was a youth leadership project, involving working together in small groups, walking and backpacking across 290km of Costa Rica as a team; a 20 day trek. Taking turns to lead, we had to make sure the whole group was organised and safe. I loved this phase as we had the opportunity to see the whole of Costa Rica from beach to rainforest as well as experiencing the generosity of the people. Some people invited us into their homes and gave us coffee and bananas. I particularly remember a lady called Alba, headmistress of a school in one village, who let us stay in the school overnight, gave us some fresh food (a treat after our dry rations) and let us use her shower which was something we had not used for a week.

I would like to thank the OLs for the Gap Year Award. I am proud to say that I felt that I was making a difference.



## INTERVIEW

# *Adrift, A Secret Life of London's Waterways*

Helen Babbs [OL'01]

### WHAT'S YOUR NEW BOOK ABOUT?

Adrift is about the people, politics, history and wildlife of London's navigable canals and rivers, written from the perspective of someone who lives on a boat – that's me. It's very much a book for city-lovers and nature-lovers, as well as people with a specific interest in urban waterways.

### WHY WRITE ABOUT LONDON'S CANALS?

They have been my home for almost four years. Living on the water has given me a new perspective on the city, and as a writer and journalist I felt compelled to document my experiences. The way London's canal network cuts across the capital makes it a really rich seam to delve into.

### ARE URBAN CANALS GOOD FOR WILDLIFE?

Very much so. A blue-green place where rough land meets torpid water has potency, and the mixing up of the wet and the dry along a canal means it can support much wildlife. Man-made waterways are part of our ecosystem. In fact they have become increasingly important 'natural' features as traditional ponds have disappeared. My favourite canal creatures are cormorants, grey wagtails, herons, and pipistrelle bats. The waterways are great for plants and wildflowers too.

### HOW DOES LIFE AFLOAT COMPARE TO LIFE ON LAND?

Our home space isn't entirely domestic. It is mechanical, it moves, it is subject to the weather, the water, the changing landscape. The writer and

naturalist Richard Mabey was on to something when he said many of us – wherever we might live – nurse a 'dream of satisfying two strong and contrasting human drives, to be both settled native and adventurous pioneer'. The boat allows us, demands us, to try to be both.



Helen Babbs attended Leicester Grammar School from 1993 - 2001. *Adrift, A Secret Life of London's Waterways* (Icon) is available in hardback (£16.99) and paperback (£8.99).



## Reunion for All special guest Peter Handford Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2017, 6.30pm

Come and enjoy a buffet meal, cash bar and the chance to wander round the King Richard III Visitor Centre to see the changes made to the St Martin's building. This will be a chance to wish Peter Handford a happy retirement.

Ticket price £15

Please email [englandk@leicestergrammar.org.uk](mailto:englandk@leicestergrammar.org.uk)

to book your place. Places are limited.

# First steps as a Journalist

## Samuel Lovett [OL'13]

When Miss England initially approached me about writing something for the Leicestrian, I must admit I had no idea what I would say. Write about how I became a journalist? Too self-indulgent. My day-to-day life? Not as exotic as you'd think. Career highlights? Too cliché. At just 22, it's hard to think what to say when I have so much to learn myself, not just about journalism but, rather worryingly, the wider world itself. Taxes, bills, rent, new relationships, the daily commute, simply feeding myself (!): these are the sorts of things that preoccupy life after education as much as work and are matters that, admittedly, I'm still coming to terms with.

Having largely spent our formative years in a bubble, that all-important step into the real world is understandably a big one - and one that I certainly struggled with. But, for me, it was a transition that was helped by the fact that I was doing something I loved. Journalism has certainly changed from when I first decided I wanted to become a reporter during my LGS days (what with the rise of the internet and social media) but I can honestly say there are few jobs in the world I'd rather be doing.

From the intense buzz of reporting on a live Premier League football match to interviewing sports figures from all walks of life, it's a job

that repeatedly leaves a lasting impression. I've always said I want to avoid monotony in life and while I'd be lying if I said I hadn't endured my slow days, it's certainly a job which keeps me on my toes. Of course, the pressure can be unbearable at times - tight deadlines, breaking news and long, unsociable hours aren't fun - but it all adds to the 'buzz' of the job. It's been far from easy but it's been equally thrilling at the same time. It's easy for me to say this now, but looking back on the careers classes at school ... I'd say 'just pick a career that you know you'll love'. It'll make that transition into adulthood a great deal easier.



SPORT

# OL London Marathon Successes 2017



Matt Lyons



Holly Mould



David Dixon (LGJS Staff)



## Rugby

Congratulations to Ed Milne [OL'11] who played for, and captained, England Students against the England U20's in Guilford. Ed was also selected for the England Counties tour of Spain that took place at the end of May and played a full part in the successful team.

## Contact us

✉ [oldleicestrians@leicestergrammar.org.uk](mailto:oldleicestrians@leicestergrammar.org.uk)

📘 [www.facebook.com/LGSOLs](http://www.facebook.com/LGSOLs)

🐦 @LGSOLS

## Advertise with us

If you would like to advertise in this magazine, please contact...

[oldleicestrians@leicestergrammar.org.uk](mailto:oldleicestrians@leicestergrammar.org.uk)