

# OL Newsletter

## TRINITY 2018



# THE END OF AN ERA

## The Retirement of Christopher King Headmaster 2001-2018

The Headmaster has been a consistent supporter of the OL Association and has attended the vast majority of events. In the article below he reflects on his years at Leicester Grammar School before moving on to become Chief Executive of the Prep Schools Association;

The opportunity to reflect on seventeen years of Headship runs the risk of seeming to be egocentric or even worse sycophantic in praise of others. The greater chance is that one falls into clichés and in doing so loses the interest of anyone willing to devote a little time to reading my piece. The truth is, at the risk of falling effectively into all these traps, that the story of a long period as the Head of such a successful school is as much about how I tried not to get in the way of talented others as it has been about setting strategic direction. The ingredients for success were all in place when I arrived and one of the essential acts was to recognise that and let other members of staff get on with their



initiative and not get in their way to muck things up. One of the great joys of being a Head of LGS Trust is that it has no lengthy history which, very often, can be an anchor on initiative and development and instead it is a Trust which has only a past linked to growth, development and evolution. What an opportunity then for me to head up an organisation that has such an approach underpinning it as I put myself forward as a candidate in 1999.

Most people who have engaged me in conversation about the things I'm most proud of during my time as Head immediately assume that the relocation to Great Glen in 2008 must be at the top of the list. This is hardly

a rash conclusion but the reason why escapes most until I point it out. The move to our current site was all about giving the Trust the maximum opportunity to have the best possible future. I fully anticipate, should I be granted the chance to live so long, that if I return to our current site in 25 years it will look physically very different and different and exciting things will be happening. The move in 2008 was about the future and not about fixing the schools to a model based on technology from 2006 and curriculum ideas from the turn of the millennium. Flexibility and adaptability were key elements written into the design brief and the way we have used the buildings in the past ten years shows how they have proven to have both those qualities.

Highlights? Welcoming Her Majesty, The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh to officially open the school building not surprisingly features towards the top of the list. One small story from her visit has some symbolism to it. Her Majesty called



**Cover photo:** Part of the school altar frontal

# VALETE

the Duke over to see the plaque which records the fact of their visit because she was so pleased to see it was carved in wood and not transfer printed onto acrylic or stencilled into glass. As I explained to her the wood came from the worktops within the physics laboratories at the former school site. A bit of the old in the new evolving into a new use. This was a point she and her husband certainly appreciated.

I know many look in on LGS Trust and think it's been an easy job filling the school and achieving top academic results. The truth again is very different. Yes, we were the fastest growing independent school in the country between 2008 and 2011 when we were full for the first time and two years ahead of the business plan. Every Head of an independent school lives with the pressure of ensuring their school has a full roll. Here there

is the pressure to have a full roll and maintain academic standards and if the reader thinks this has been an easy trick to pull off then I've performed a better swan act than I thought. We borrowed a lot of money to make the transition to the current site and the fact that no other independent school has done anything like the same in the past decade, though many have considered the possibility and visited us to find out about how we did it, shows how brave the then Trustees were and how difficult it really is to pull off.

We have added greatly to the number of staff as we have grown in size. The appointments we have made have brought new ideas and energy to the school, grafted onto the foundations created by those who have served the school(s) for a long time. This is one of the great keys to the schools' successes. I am very proud of the fact



that we have developed the initial careers of a significant number of teachers new to the profession some of whom are still with us but others have moved on to more success elsewhere.

What will I miss? Too many things to list. I've seen my last 15-a side rugby game and a lump came to my throat as I congratulated the U15s on winning the County Cup in their age group. I can't count the number of sports fixtures I've witnessed and I will miss not having an immediate allegiance to a team when I watch schools compete in the future. Music at the school has been a great joy – if only the Grammar School sang as well collectively as the Junior School does. The achievements at a national level with quiz teams, debaters, economists and sports teams is something we have come to expect will happen at some point in the year. It doesn't in other schools.

It has been a great honour to lead the Trust's schools for so long. I do think good things have happened in my time and perhaps those who are not my greatest fans will at least allow me to think I didn't muck things up too much.



## Best wishes to all our leaving staff



**David Boyce**  
Head of Physics  
Uppingham School



**Tom Fishpool**  
RGS Guildford



**Helen May**  
St Martin's Catholic  
Academy, Stoke Golding



**Aimee Schofield**



**Laura Wright**



**Rev. Helena  
Whittaker**



# Retiring Staff



## Wendy Harvey

**W**endy became the second member of the relatively young Design and Technology Department in 1993 and played an enormous part in its development. Prior to that, it had had somewhat of an engineering focus, but she brought a whole new dimension to it, having trained in furniture design and manufacture; this brought in the use and combination of new materials such as plastic and textiles with the more traditional metal and wood, and later she took forward computer-aided design and taught the use of the 3-D printer.

Through Wendy, the Design and Technology Department worked with the Art Department to put on an annual display of students' work.

Half way through her time at LGS Wendy demonstrated a totally hidden talent for botanical art and spent time teaching this outside the normal school hours, with classes being developed for local people at the new school.

Her abilities to develop new ideas and coordinate activities within the school will be very sorely missed. I wish her well in her retirement.

### Dave Gee

Head of Design and Technology  
(1990-2014: Retired)



## David Lupton

**D**eputy Head of Modern Foreign Languages, David, leaves LGS this year after an impressive twenty years at the School, during which he has seen many changes.

Born on the same night as the Berlin Wall was built, but thankfully lasting longer, David was one of the first set at his comprehensive school who was able to choose to study Spanish for 'O' Level, following which his love of languages grew considerably. Teaching as a career choice became instilled in him whilst on his year abroad from Exeter University.

Seeking a change from boarding school life at Lancing College he saw an advertisement for an MFL post at LGS which resulted in his taking residence in Room 22 on the old school site.

The rest is, as they say, history. David's achievements at LGS are far too numerous to mention, but notably among them, he introduced the now hugely popular subject of Spanish in Year 9 through to A level, initiated the Granada exchange, organised and accompanied trips to France and Spain and has smiled through these last seven years as the sole male in a department of ten women with admirable good grace. David now moves on to a new life in Oxfordshire with Kate and is looking forward to listening to his collection of vinyl records, picking up his bass guitar again, brewing beer, improving his Italian and tinkering with his Alfa Romeo! We shall certainly miss him and wish him all the very best for the future.

### Shirley Stout

Head of MFL



## Susan Sains

**S**usan joined LGS in 1985 initially in a part-time role before becoming full time in 1986. In the more than 30 years that have followed, she has been a stalwart of the Maths Department, teaching effectively throughout the school – apart from Year 8 if she could possibly avoid it – and developing a voluminous collection of resources that fill (and I mean fill!) every piece of available space above, below and around her desk in the Maths Office. She introduced Decision Maths to the school, first as a lunchtime extra where her students included staff members Mrs Price and Mr Handford as well as Mr James, then a mathematically keen Year 11, before making it part of the A-level curriculum as a whole. She has also cajoled and encouraged generations of lower set pupils through Year 10 and 11 to their GCSE exams and all the pupils who experienced her calm and caring approach should be very grateful for the success they achieved, often to their surprise. Despite being one of the most experienced members of the department, she has never been afraid to learn new skills and embraced technology to become the acknowledged Maths expert on Smart Notebook and the interactive whiteboard. She leaves a department nearly three times the size as the one she joined and, thanks in no small part to her efforts over the years, one of the most successful in the school. The department, the pupils and the school as a whole will miss her. We wish her a long and happy retirement – even if, in typical Susan fashion, she will be doing some teaching at Stoneygate next year.

### David Crawford

Head of Mathematics

OL AWARD

# *My Time in Tanzania*

Max Bowers [OL'17]



From seeing children wearing rags begging for money in the street to seeing the 'Big Five' at sunrise on the Serengeti; my time in Tanzania was one of the most eye opening and humbling experiences of my life to date. It is one of the most beautiful countries I have had the pleasure of visiting. However there is a great deal poverty and communicable disease; one of the main reasons I chose Tanzania to try and help.

My journey began with an early morning flight to Doha and then on to Kilimanjaro International Airport. 16 hours later on arrival, after I got my Visa and collected my bags, there was another hour drive to Arusha, where I would be staying for the majority of my time.

Arusha is a large town with a population of over 400,000. It prides itself on being the exact middle between Cairo & Cape Town and where the President of Tanzania has one of his holiday homes. We were staying in essentially a glorified mud hut (with Wifi).

My voluntary work was in the community hospital of a village called Tengeru where it is estimated that 50% of the population live on less than £2 per week. I was doing relatively basic jobs such as helping to cast fracture victims. I saw some horrific things there such as an old man dying of unidentified high blood pressure as the male ward could not afford to buy a monitor. However, the doctors seemed to be accustomed to it as it did not phase them at all. For the last of my 5 weeks, I took an 8 hour bus journey to a fishing town on the coast called Pangani. It was paradise. I spent the week snorkelling and helping out on the Maziwe Island conservation park; a coral reef that is at massive risk of dying due to thieves and poachers breaking off coral to sell and hunting endangered fish. To put it into perspective, the park rangers carry AK-47's.

Overall, my experience in Tanzania was eventful. I have never before seen a place with so much natural beauty juxtaposed to the immense poverty that the average citizen faces. It seems that Tanzania has it all, yet at the same time, very little.

The OL Committee invite applications from OLs who are planning special projects for which they would like some financial help. These can include GAP year travel, medical electives and volunteer work for charities. Any other reasonable suggestions will be considered. Awards of up to £250 can be made.





## A New Coat of Arms and a New Chaplain

On Friday 13th October, Leicester Grammar School celebrated the foundation of LGS with our annual Foundation Day service. This year our service was made even more special because it also included the awarding of Letters Patent and a Licensing.

Firstly the York Herald attended the service to present the Letters Patent on behalf of the Garter King of Arms, to the Lord Lieutenant, as the representative of the Queen. She then presented them to the Chair of Trustees, who gratefully

received them on behalf of the three schools in the Trust. Letters Patent are a legal document from the Queen conferring, in our case, a Coat of Arms to the LGS Trust. Contained within the box is the Letters Patent, which are now

framed and on display in school.

Secondly, the Bishop of Leicester, licensed Liz Wilson as the Chaplain to LGS. Although Liz has been working at the school since the beginning of September 2017, this was where she formally received permission from the Bishop to practise as a priest in the school sharing her time with her other post as Vicar of St Peter's Oadby. Liz will work alongside Father Stephen Foster as part of the Chaplaincy Team.





## CAREERS

# OLs Continue to Support the Careers Programme

September 2017 saw the biennial Careers Fair take place at LGS and we were fortunate to welcome back OLs representing different careers and companies. If anyone feels they are able to help with the Schools Careers programme please email [longsonr@leicestergrammar.org.uk](mailto:longsonr@leicestergrammar.org.uk)



**Matt  
O'Kane**  
(OL'95)



**Phil  
Schwarzenberger**  
(OL'16)



**Simran  
Obhi**  
(OL'11)



**Steve  
Pozerskis**  
(OL'05)



**Emma  
Morris**  
(OL'12)



**Will  
Hunt**  
(OL'06)



**Chris  
Wright**  
(OL'00)



**Akash  
Bhatt**  
(OL'08)

## House Memories

Duncan Willis

All things come to an end at some point and Friday 7th July was my very last House Meeting in charge. The school has come a long way since I took on the role of VCs Housemaster back in 1989 and, also, in the 20

years that I have been Senior Head of House. We have a whole new building of course, though viable spaces for House meetings are still an issue as they always were at the old site. The school has practically doubled in size during my time in charge, and it was felt that now is the time for an overhaul and relaunch of the House system. Having overseen much of the development to date, it didn't take long for me to reach the conclusion that the time is right to step down

and let someone else have a go. Consequently, since September Miss Allcoat has been in control of the reins and I wish her every success for this next step in House evolution.

My thanks must go to Mr Pilbeam who designed the mementoes (shown in the photo), they will serve as a lovely reminder of my 28 years in charge of VCs and my 20 years as Senior Head of Houses. Finally, as I sang on 7th July in my own lyrical rendition of the Sid Vicious version of "My Way".

*"I've loved, my time in charge Drama and Music Nights, my share of losing  
And now a new regime, I find it all so amusing  
To think I can just chill out  
No need to shout, on any upcoming Friday  
Oh no, Oh no not me... I did it my way*

*"So what is my plan, what have I got  
Next year will be strange, might lose the plot  
Thanks to you all, it's been a blast  
Now it's up to Miss Allcoat, and her House cast ...  
... But the record shows, I took the blows  
and did it My Way"*







# Happy Birthday



## Katie Tutt

Twenty-five years is a long time to do anything but last year I celebrated not only twenty-five years of marriage but also twenty-five years at Leicester Grammar Junior School.

LGJS started life at Evington Hall in September 1992, taking over the running of St. Paul's Convent and I knew this was going to be special the first time I heard the singing of the Lord's Prayer at the end of the first Friday assembly.

The building had a unique atmosphere felt by everyone who entered. The regal staircase, the old chapel, carved marble fireplaces and the enormous floor to ceiling double doors. It was certainly a building ready to welcome all who entered.

The grounds were memorable too; the beautiful cherry blossom in spring and an endless supply of conkers every autumn. Certainly Evington Hall offered a lot more than the average

junior school. Attic rooms for music lessons, filled with memorabilia and who can forget the cavernous Victorian cellars, opened up by Mr Farrant as a Haunted House attraction for the annual Christmas Fayre.

Rumours of a move began at least ten years before the actual event and at one point we thought we were all moving to Stoughton Farm Park! Would the school ever be the same? I must admit I was sceptical. However to quote our school song, 'it's hearts that make a school' and 10 years in, the unique atmosphere remains.

I certainly feel extremely privileged to have had the opportunity to teach at both sites as well as giving my children such a solid, secure, exceptional education. LGJS continues to evolve and although it is good to take the time to reminisce, it's important to look to the future too. Happy Birthday LGJS, and here's to many more successful years.





## CAREERS

# New York, New York

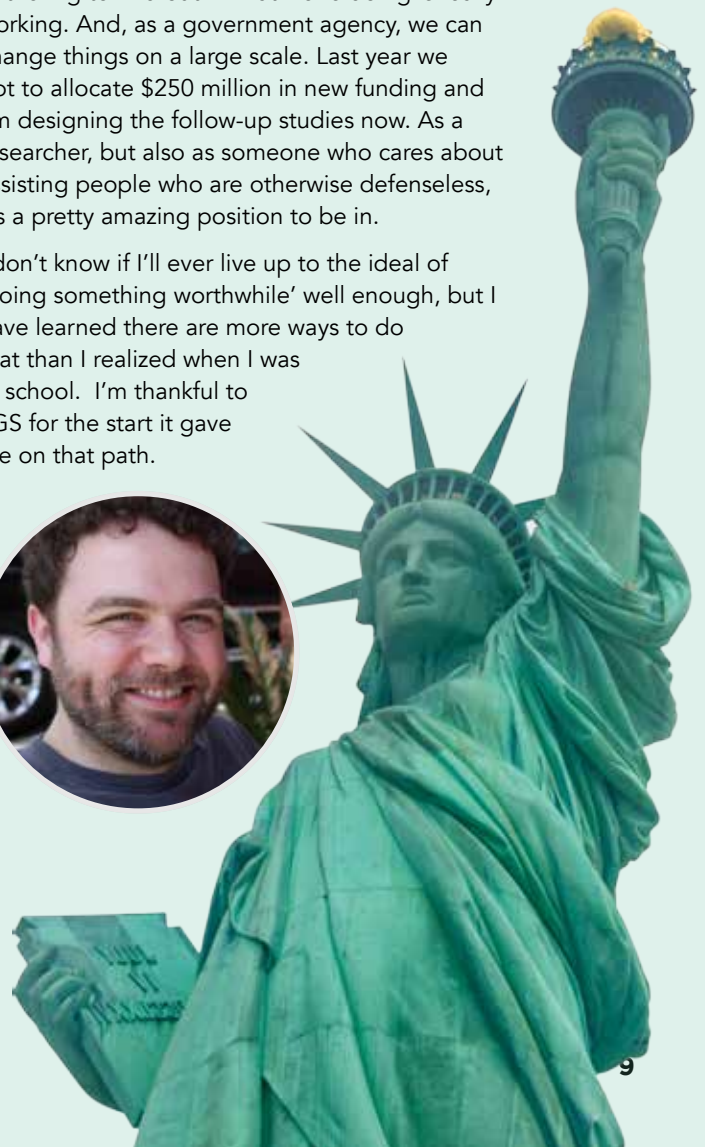
Andrew Davies [OL'98]

When I left LGS twenty years ago I had no idea what career I would pursue. I only had a sense of wanting to do something worthwhile. Now I work for a government agency in the United States where I direct a programme of social science research into 'indigent legal services'. Similar to legal aid, it's the system that supplies free lawyers to people who need one but can't afford it.

I live in Albany, the capital city of New York State, about 150 miles north of New York City. I first came to the U.S. for post-graduate study. I didn't know then that I would be staying permanently. Getting here was hard: the paperwork alone was no joke, and it would take years to qualify for residency. But life happened. I met my future wife, graduated fortuitously just as a job opened up, and, after so many years studying criminal justice in America, it made sense to stay where there was a market for the knowledge.

My favourite thing about what I do is that it combines science and helping people. I do a lot of information gathering to find out if what we're doing is really working. And, as a government agency, we can change things on a large scale. Last year we got to allocate \$250 million in new funding and I'm designing the follow-up studies now. As a researcher, but also as someone who cares about assisting people who are otherwise defenseless, it's a pretty amazing position to be in.

I don't know if I'll ever live up to the ideal of 'doing something worthwhile' well enough, but I have learned there are more ways to do that than I realized when I was at school. I'm thankful to LGS for the start it gave me on that path.





# The Retirement of a Legend

## *David Whittle*



After just a few weeks of joining LGS in September 1986 at the age of 28 I thought I had made the biggest mistake of my life. After all, I had exchanged a boarding school with an idyllic setting looking over the sea on the Dorset/Devon border with what appeared to be an inner-city slum. Even though I knew that I had to move (the boarding school, Allhallows, was clearly on the slide and indeed closed in 1998), I wasn't prepared for what I found. The school had no facilities, no money and nothing like as many pupils as now; I had to bring in my own books to teach A Level and a lot of what we did in those early days had to be improvised for one reason or another.

Even so, we managed to get music on an even footing. Charles Paterson already had the choir up and running, but instrumental ensembles had not had the same attention and that was where my focus went in those early days. I took a gamble, blithely unaware at the time how much of one it was, to get the orchestra to accompany the choir in Beethoven's Mass in C (the singers were the forerunner of the choral society we developed later). A junior orchestra was started (now the Training Orchestra), as were any number of smaller ensembles. The Dance Band came along, since renamed the Big Band, as later did the Folk Group which remains a rarity in English schools.

Staffing played a great part in the development of music. I inherited a fairly disparate team of visiting teachers (not their fault, just the way things had to be done piecemeal in those early days). An important appointment was of Bryan Shaw as Head of Instrumental Studies, and thereafter the visiting staff grew in line with the school and consequently played a vital role in the progression of music.

It's probably true that there is not the same proportion of characters in schools these days. However, nobody who met the founding headmaster, John Eagle Higginbotham, could forget him. The first lesson I took at LGS was actually a fifth form (Year 11 these days, alas) English O Level class (don't ask). As they came in following one of Mr. Higginbotham's performances (the only word to describe them) at assembly, there was a dispute of some sort going on: 'It was 9' – 'No, it wasn't, it was 10' – 'I thought it was 8' and things like that. When I asked what they were talking about, one said to me: 'Oh, it's how many times Higgy said 'As you know' in Assembly'. From then on I found it impossible not to count such utterances myself. I remember driving up from Devon for a visit in the June before I started and staying with him (his wife was away). After hammering on his door for what seemed quite a long time, it suddenly opened and I was more or less dragged inside, plonked in an armchair with a large





glass of whisky but without any conversation so that he could watch the remainder of *The Titfield Thunderbolt* (younger readers may need to look up that excellent Ealing comedy).

Given those early days, to find ourselves for the past ten years in the surroundings of Great Glen has been something of a culture shock. We now have so much more space. As is inevitable, we think we could do with even more – and I look back and wonder how we ever did anything in the confines of the old site. But we did, of course, because the will was there. Some things have changed in the past ten years, but not the pupils as teenagers seem to stay much the same. We have more of a community focus, now that we actually have a community around us. The choral society is made up of locals as well as parents and former parents; we get people from outside the school coming to school concerts (particularly those given by the Choral Society & First Orchestra and Big Band at the end of the Lent Term); and we have established a concert series each year by visiting artists prominent in the classical, jazz and folk fields which are also open to the public. Although the school has grown to its current level of almost 850 pupils, the numbers are still sufficiently manageable for us to be able each year to look at the musicians we have and design ensembles and programmes to suit them. In these days of so much

pressure on teenagers, both socially and academically, it is reassuring to see that LGS still has a very high proportion of pupils who are extremely keen to reach a high standard and to contribute to ensembles whilst, in many cases, contributing equally enthusiastically to other areas of school life. I'm not quite sure how they manage it.

So, having reached the age of 60 (more of a shock, it appears, to me than to the pupils), it seems the right time to have a change after 32 years at the school. I've never been one for educational philosophies (as many former pupils will testify), but I hope that no-one leaving LGS could say that they were not given the opportunity to develop their musical ability in whatever style they wanted. It has been a privilege to have played some part in the development of this extraordinary school, and I must thank all the colleagues over the years who have helped this development. I am very fortunate that I have a number of very good friends amongst OLs and their parents, and seeing what former pupils get up to is, of course, one of the great pleasures of the job. I am delighted that my current deputy, John Barker, is taking over next year and know that the future of music at LGS is in extremely able hands. I wish him, the school and all OLs the best of fortune in the future, and thank everyone for the fun I've had over the years.



# A Life dedicated to Wine

Charlotte Allen [OL'89]

I have been making wine here in the Arribes del Duero in north-west Spain for the past ten years. It isn't an obvious profession for a middle-class Midlands girl who went off to study Classical Archaeology, but I've always been one for going where life took me, and life brought me here after first being a wine importer in the UK, and then a winemaker in South Africa, Bordeaux and the Rhône Valley, where I did my viticulture and winemaking studies.

It had never occurred to me to come to Spain. I always assumed that I would set up my own project somewhere in France, which is probably what would have happened had it not been for a chance meeting with a French friend who has an estate here in Spain. He convinced me that life would be much easier here: less bureaucracy, lower taxes and many underexploited winemaking regions with old vines and weird and wonderful grape varieties. All of which was quite true.

What he didn't point out was how unbelievably difficult it would be moving to this very beautiful but incredibly isolated area. Apart from the obvious problems associated with not speaking the language, life had

simply not prepared me for rural Spain. I always say that living here is a cross between "A Year in Provence" and "The Good, the Bad and the Ugly". The first few years were hellish, but in the end I realized that I either had to adapt or leave. So I started swearing and being very forthright, none of which is terribly British, but it had the desired effect and eventually people left me alone.

After ten years, I am well-integrated in the village now, even if they still call me "La Francesa" (the French woman). I get involved in village life, even standing as a candidate in the local elections last year, and whilst you won't see me at the bull fighting, I'm pretty much at home here.

For anyone interested in knowing more about the area, here is a link to a beautiful four-minute video on the estate and the vineyards: <http://almaroja.es/en/video/>

The OL Committee decided that a case of Charlotte's 2011 vintage would make a very appropriate leaving present for Mr King and this was presented by Mr Berry at his leaving event on Friday 6th July 2018.





## CAREERS

# The Ideal Job for Me

Oliver Blomfield [OL'89]

Oli Blomfield is Head of Summer Programmes at the UK charity The Outward Bound Trust. Previously Oli spent 10 years in the tourism industry, including 4 years in Helsinki. Introduced to Outward Bound 10 years ago, Oli completed an 8-day course for adults at Outward Bound New Zealand. Inspired to change his work direction, Oli returned to the UK to work for Scottish Youth Hostelling and then The Outward Bound Trust (UK) in 2010.'

How many of us work for an organisation with the same initials as our own? Perhaps not the basis for careers advice, however I can say that the fit for me couldn't be better! It did take almost 40 years to find this connection and if I am honest I had no idea what Outward Bound was all about 10 years ago.

Often mistakenly used in the generic term of referring to outdoor activity centres, The Outward Bound Trust (UK) has been in existence for 76 years and was founded in Aberdovey, Wales by educationalist Kurt Hahn and businessman Lawrence Holt. Today, whilst we aren't preparing young sailors for Atlantic convoys, we are however helping young people learn more about themselves, developing life skills through authentic adventures & deliberate learning in real, inspiring environments of the Scottish Highlands, the Lake District and Snowdonia. (Outward Bound schools

are also located in over 30 countries).

I started work for Outward Bound at our Ullswater centre, moving onto our Education Team for Scotland and now head up a team "selling" our Summer Adventures – from June to Sept we offer 7 & 19-day adventures for individuals aged 11 to 19 years. The young people come for all variety of reasons, from different backgrounds and a range of countries (over 35 nationalities last summer!)

I work with some truly inspiring colleagues, with our instructional team leading the way – these highly skilled professionals have a passion for sharing the outdoors with young people and at the same time bringing meaningful learning to the experience in a fun, memorable and impactful way, often in some very challenging weather!

We could not do what we do without our amazing fundraising team. As a UK



charity we believe that money should never be an obstacle to discovering more in life. By raising £3 million annually, over 70% of young people visiting our residential centres are able to receive financial support either with their school or as an individual through our Adventure Fund. In addition, any surplus from our Early Careers Development work with apprentices from organisations such as Rolls Royce, Volkswagen, Airbus goes back to support our charitable work.

Growing up in east Leicestershire the outdoors was very much part of my childhood. Now living in The Lakes, it continues to be so, both at work and through my passion for fell & ultra-running! If you would like to find out more please get in touch. For now, as John Muir wrote "The Mountains are calling and I must go!"

# THINK OUTSIDE

## No box required



**THE  
OUTWARD  
BOUND TRUST**



## REUNIONS



**Richard III Visitor Centre**



**Class of 08**

L to R: Julian Griffin, Ronak Shah, Rikesh Lodhia, Steve Mooncie, Nicken Kotak, Jagruti Rathod, Akash Bhatt, Alice Wilmott, Ron Berry, Alex Stanhope, Hannah Shariat Madari, Amanda Davies, Annette Harris, Ashley Kacha.

If you would like us to organise a reunion at the School site for your year group or interest group please contact [oldleicestrians@leicestergrammar.org.uk](mailto:oldleicestrians@leicestergrammar.org.uk)



**Carol Service**

L to R: Holly Mould, James Bentley, Samantha Haynes, Ed Whittaker, Priya Luharia, Tom Hunt, Siddhart Wadhwa, Harry Potter.



**London Drinks**

L to R: Morgan Rees, Ron Berry, Alex Cohen, Rory Walkinshaw, Harry Lin, Henry Green, Chris King, William Davison



# The Gift of Life

Vicki Martinek [OL'91]

My younger brother, Ben [OL'94], was diagnosed with Nephrotic Syndrome over 22 years ago, by the late Professor John Walls, who basically saved his life. At that time it was a rare diagnosis. The only other person we knew who had it was the rugby player, Jonah Lomu, who my parents were fortunate to meet on several occasions and chat to about it.

Over the next 20 or so years, Ben managed his condition with a multitude of daily medications and regular hospital visits. His kidney function remained relatively stable at around 35-40% throughout this period of his life and never stopped him from living life to the full in Scotland, with his wife and two sons (singing in the City of Glasgow Chorus Choir, quad biking and fishing, to name a few of his favourite things).

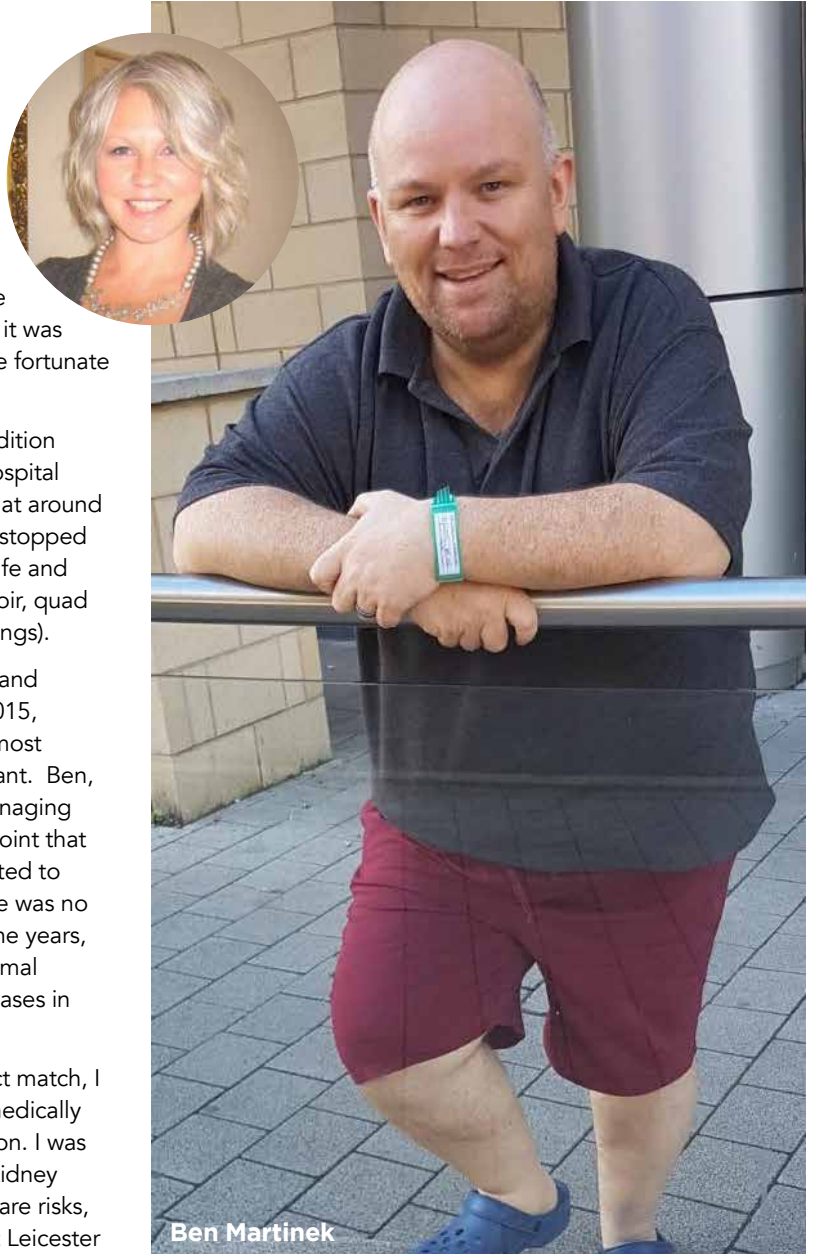
His function started to decrease during 2012-2013; and after our parents both passed away in November 2015, it dropped from 25% to under 15%, a point where most people are brought in for dialysis or to await transplant. Ben, however, was determined to carry on as he was, managing it through renal diet and medication. It was at this point that his doctors in Glasgow decided that I should be tested to see if I was suitable to become a living donor. There was no hesitation on my part as I had prepared for it over the years, and was ready. (It is possible to lead a perfectly normal life with only one kidney, as the remaining one increases in capacity and performs the work of two kidneys).

After receiving the fantastic news that I was a perfect match, I had to undergo months of testing to ensure I was medically fit to lead a normal life with one kidney after donation. I was basically turned inside out - blood and urine tests, kidney function, ECG, X-Rays, scans, etc. Of course, there are risks, as with any operation of this nature, but the team at Leicester General Renal Unit were amazing and held my hand every step of the way.

Ben carried on as normal with his depleted kidney function until May 2017, at which point unfortunately, it dropped down to 5% and he had to begin dialysis - whilst still working full time I might add, sitting in the hospital with tubes coming out of his neck, typing away on his laptop - his strength and determination never ceased to amaze me.

It was decided that my kidney was going to be taken out on the morning of 2nd August 2017 at the Leicester General, and "blue lighted" up the motorway to Glasgow, to be put into Ben that evening. We were face-timing via our phones all day on 1st August from our hospital beds, and I have no shame in admitting we were both a little bit terrified! We had been warned that Ben's body might not accept my kidney and there was also a risk of him going into cardiac arrest, so obviously we were concerned.

The outcome couldn't have been better. Having been in theatre for over four hours, I was back on the ward by 2pm



to the news that my operation had been a success and that my right kidney was already whizzing up the M1. Ben was prepped and in surgery at 7pm. I refused to sleep until I knew he was out of theatre. Finally, at midnight, I received a call from my sister in law, to say that Ben was back from recovery and all had gone well. I remained in hospital for another 5 days, and Ben a little longer, as they had to ensure his body wasn't going to reject my kidney. The following weeks for us both comprised many hospital visits and a lot of rest and recuperation!

Eight months later, we are both doing well. Apart from not being able to partake in anything physical that might harm my remaining kidney; and having to drink three litres of water every day for the rest of my life to keep my kidney hydrated, my life is pretty much the same as it was before the transplant. For Ben, well in his words, he has been "reborn" and can live life properly, without fear, for the first time in over twenty years, and hopefully my kidney will give him at least another twenty.



# Miss Universe GB

Anna Burdzy [OL'10]

At the end of November 2017, I took to the Miss Universe stage in front of 750 million viewers and became the second British woman to be placed in the Top 16 in over sixty years, out of 93 incredible women. The misconception in this country about pageantry, that it's judged only on prettiness and dresses, is tremendously oversimplified. I, a Law graduate, competed against (to name a few) a nuclear scientist, a dentist, a translator who speaks 8 languages, a doctor, a journalist, entrepreneurs, a fashion designer and the winner who established her own self-defence programme for women in South Africa after being carjacked by five men with three guns and managing to escape by punching one in the throat and running for her life – at only 22 years of age. The sheer determination, hard-work, uniqueness and strength of these women I met is what made my experience truly unforgettable.

I am half-way through my Human Rights Law Master's Degree, hoping to go on to work for the UN and so I am grateful for the charitable opportunities I have had as MUGB. Prior to the title, I had always helped on a local level by supporting animal shelters in the area, particularly the East Midlands Dog Rescue and two farms which rescue abandoned farm animals. I taught refugees in Nottingham how to speak English as an opportunity through my University and I work closely with a homeless charity in Leicester by actively collecting money for necessities and linking them with local business for food and clothes.

With my platform, I have the privilege of working closely with charities on an international level. One very close to my heart is Wildlife SOS, who I volunteered with in India for a few days. They rescue elephants, my favourite animals, from a lifetime of torture and I seek to raise awareness about the use of elephants in circuses, elephant rides, street begging and zoos and to discourage the younger generation from seeking pleasure in

these activities. Another one of my highlights this year was visiting Stop Acid Attacks/ Sheroes Hangout in India who work with survivors of acid attacks by getting them medical care, a place to live away from the villages which shun them and then offer them work in cafés where they can make a new life for themselves amongst friends. When I asked one of the girls how Sheroes had helped her, she replied 'Sheroes taught me how to smile again. My life went from dark to light' which is the most accurate summary of this incredible charity. Whilst there, I met 7-year-old Julli who was attacked by her father when she was only a few years old and I have pledged to help fund her education to give her the best opportunities possible. (Thank you to the LGS family for helping me raise an incredible amount toward her future!)

Whilst in Manila, I was also part of an outreach programme which fed the poorest children living in the slums on the outskirts of the city. It is eye-opening to see how people live and yet the size of their smiles is bigger than ours, despite us living in such a privileged position!

After leaving LGS and completing my Law degree, I have taken "the road less travelled" and that has made all the difference. I encourage everyone to live life to the fullest and do all those things they have wanted to do but have never found the time!







# HubBox

## A New Internet Venture

Claire Jarvis (nee Simpson) [OL'02]



**R**isk taker. Technologically savvy. Interested in shopping. Words that I very much doubt my schoolmates would have used to describe me. Yet somehow I have become the co-founder of a tech start-up called HubBox ([www.hub-box.com](http://www.hub-box.com)), whose mission is to make missed deliveries a thing of the past by enabling online shoppers to collect their parcels from local collection points.

After university, I worked as a solicitor in London for 10 years. Long hours and a lack of desire to hit Oxford Street at the weekend meant that online shopping became my best friend, especially around Christmas. But the problem was that I was never at home to receive the deliveries. When I had things delivered to work, I risked the wrath of the post room, and then my fellow commuters when wrestling with large parcels on the journey home.

Back in 2014, my husband, Sam, and I persuaded our local dry cleaner to receive our deliveries for us to collect in the evening or at weekends. We doubted that our predicament was unique and decided to explore whether there was a viable business opportunity in creating a network of Collect Points. Roll on a few years, and we now have over 3,500 locations nationwide, supported by a HQ team of 15 fellow parcel lovers.

It turns out that changing consumer behaviour is a fairly tall order. Yet, on the sell-side, all but the largest online retailers have historically been unable to offer local Click & Collect because the technology was not available. We are now plugging this gap.

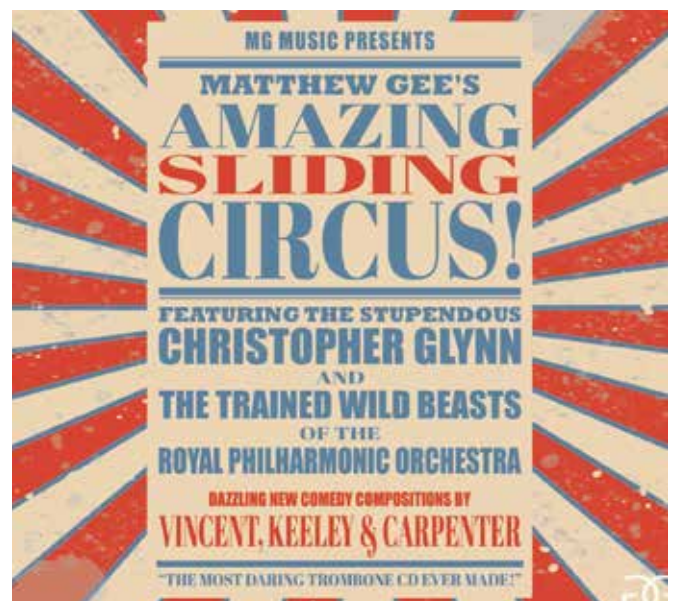
It has been, and continues to be, a challenging journey, but one that is thoroughly enjoyable and diverse.



## NEWS

**Robert Berkeley** ♥ **Vaila Ormiston**

[OL'10]



Matt's new recording is available now from  
[www.prestoclassical.co.uk](http://www.prestoclassical.co.uk)

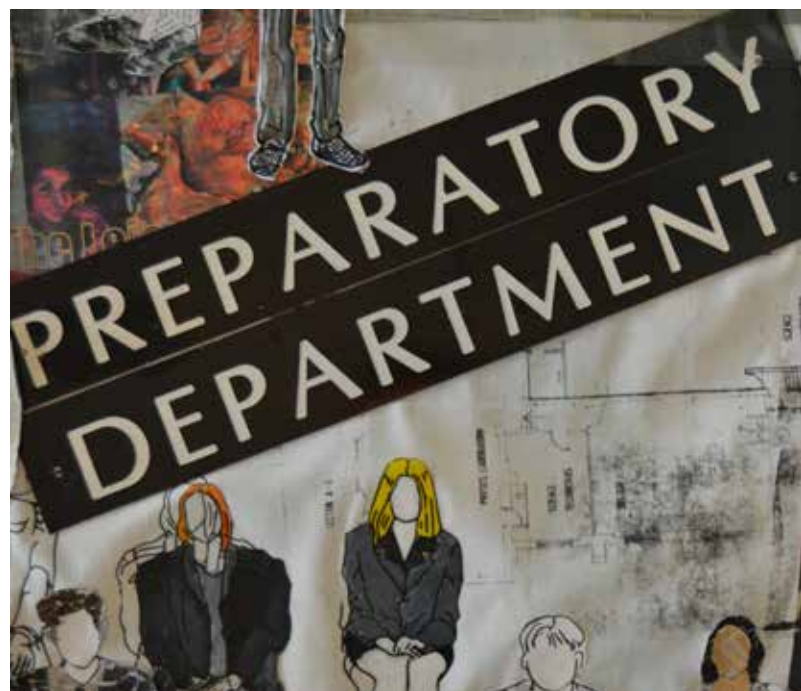




## OL PROJECT

### *The Second Decade (1991-2001)*

The OL project came into being through discussions about how to mark the 40th Anniversary of the School. We have now completed the second hanging which represents the second decade of LGS. Current students have assisted in parts of the creation of the panel and the third panel is now underway. It is hoped that every member of LGS, staff or pupil, will contribute to the fourth and final panel in due course.





## A Day at the Palace

Gold DofE

Olivia May [OL'16]

The pinnacle of success in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme is the invitation to 'The Palace' to collect your Gold award. After rejecting two previous invitations, Thursday 9th November 2018 proved to be the date that would see me collect my certificate from the Duke of Wessex. My guest (my Mum!) and I arrived at St. James' Palace early in order to avoid the crowds; as did the rest of the recipients! It was lovely to catch up with the other OL's also receiving their awards: Julia Banerjee [OL'16], Katie Tincello [OL'16] and Theo Rashid [OL'15]. After being shepherded from one queue to another we progressed into the correct hall to



wait for the celebrity, 'Bake-off Mel', to arrive and the presentations to begin. It proved to be a slick production and culminated in the presentations by the Duke, meeting and greeting the award winners and discussing the various routes that participants took in order to qualify. To finally receive my award in such surroundings was fantastic and memories of rain-soaked

tents, blisters and watery porridge somehow seemed to be worthwhile. The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme is an excellent way to challenge young people and take them out of their comfort zone and I would wholeheartedly recommend current participants to persevere with the scheme so that they too might receive their invitation to the palace.



OL AWARD  
**Pedal Power**  
Sam Neal [OL'10]

Over the past few years I have been undertaking challenges which have not only tested my ability but have also raised money for various charities in the process. These challenges have included a 100 mile hike across the Lake District, taking part in a half marathon, and completing Tough Mudder.

This year I felt like I needed to go one better. I undertook a cycling challenge which took me from one end of the United Kingdom to the other in the space of 12 days. This consisted of cycling from Land's End to John O' Groats and involved pedalling over 960 miles and climbing over 50,000 feet. This was definitely my hardest challenge to date, with the most challenging part being able to maintain the mental strength to carry on when the legs just wanted to rest. Although it was tough, the scenic views of the Highlands and Wye Valley and reaching the John O' Groats signpost made the experience worthwhile.

The money raised from this challenge will be going towards LOROS which is a hospice based within Leicestershire. This charity helped my late grandfather during his battle with cancer and they also provided my grandma with the support she needed during this time. As such, it seemed only right that I should help to raise money which would allow them to continue providing the excellent support and care to other families and individuals.

I would like to thank the Old Leicestrians for donating towards my cause and I am happy to say that I reached my £2,800 target.

Who knows what next year's challenge will be. Everest Base Camp? We will have to wait and see.



## PRIZE GIVING

## SPORT

### Lower School Prize Giving

Joe Connor [OL'06]



Following a pattern set over recent years, Joe Connor presented the prizes at the Lower School Prize Giving in July. Joe follows in the footsteps of Annie Allum [OL'08], Matt Brunning [OL'92] and Faith Archer [OL'89].

### EVENT



### OL Business Networking Event

Following the first successful meeting last March, it has been decided to hold these Leicester events twice a year. The aim of these gatherings is to develop links between OLs who might like to support the work of the Careers Department as well as networking with each other for the benefit of their careers or businesses. The next such event will be in November.



**James Hunt**  
[OL'17]

Congratulations to James on his selection for the upcoming tour of Sri Lanka with the England Lions Indoor Cricket team.

### Events

Nov 2018 (date tba)	Business Lunch
Thurs 20th Dec 2018	Carol Service
Thurs 9th May 2019	London Drinks
Fri 10th May 2019	OL Parents Lunch
May 2019 (date tba)	Business Lunch
Sat 29th June 2019	Class of '09/'99/'89 Leavers Reunion

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