

OLNEWSLETTER – ADVENT 2022



A MESSAGE from the Headmaster

You will all remember our PM's words from early in the pandemic about a determination to 'build back better'. As I reflect on events globally and at home, outcomes remain 'messy' to say the least, but I have recently been considering both the positives and the negatives with other heads as we emerge from the pandemic.

On the plus side, we are seeing: better and more flexible use of technology; encouragement of creativity and initiative; more mutual care and understanding; fresh enjoyment of opportunities in and out of school; strengthened independence; reappraisal of priorities - more altruism; greater interest in the world. Amongst the negatives are: increased anxiety and mental health concerns; increased government expectations of schools; some 'immature' behaviour due to time spent out of school; reappraisal of priorities; more self-absorption; staff cumulative fatigue.

As we recover, my cup is generally half-full and, as a head, I am a relentless optimist! When I look back over the last 40 years, I find the story of our school's journey quite remarkable, and I have thoroughly enjoyed listening to some of your memories at our reunions this year, especially with the 1980s pioneers. Our founders 40 years ago dared to dream dreams - initially very precarious dreams - and would have had little conception of how a school with 96 pupils in September 1981 would become the LGS Trust community of three schools and some 1700 pupils and staff today. What an exciting adventure and what cause for thanks and celebration!

When looking to the future of LGS at our Foundation Day service in October, I ended by saying: "What I can predict with confidence is that the strong sense of community and proud belonging which developed very quickly in the old school and which we share today - the clear ethos and values, the emphasis on well-being (simply called 'happiness' back in the day) and outreach or service - that strong sense of community will persist and will continue to grow.

Although I predict it confidently, let's never take it for granted, as it's not a given. Together, we build community every day: in the sharing of our values; in the ways in



“Strong sense of community will persist and will continue to grow”

which we encourage, support and care for one another; in our selfless service to others beyond our school; in our nurturing of generous young people, determined to make a positive difference to the lives of those around them and to contribute powerfully to the future of our world.

LGS tomorrow: a community of opportunity, a beacon of hope and a wellspring of generosity”

As the future of independent schools under a Labour government appears challenged, I am especially focussed on two aspects of our future at LGS: outreach and partnership; and bursary support for those for whom a life-changing LGS education would otherwise be inaccessible. I am passionate about both in any case, as partnership richly benefits all partners and, secondly, because our founders were adamant that all bright children should be able to benefit from the excellence and promise of an LGS education.

If you feel able to lend support with either of these hugely important initiatives, I would love to hear from you. Ron Berry would also be pleased to hear of any suggestions for OL events. In the meantime, I send my very best wishes for an abundance of post-pandemic positives and look forward to welcoming you back at any stage to your school.

JOHN WATSON

In Memoriam

ANGELA PATTERSON 1964-2022

Peter Handford has written this tribute to Angela.

Angela came to LGS in 1998 and so I had the privilege of working alongside her for the best part of 20 years. Prior to meeting her, there were a few qualms as to how well a newcomer might fit into the well-oiled machine of the Chemistry Department, but very soon any anxieties disappeared as Angela's quiet competence and very amiable nature shone through.



It goes without saying that Angela was an excellent Chemist, but that in a sense was only a small part of the whole. She was very well-organised and could keep an incredible number of plates spinning in the air at the same time - without breakage! Apart from teaching, she looked after a House, Community Service, mentored student teachers, to name but a few of her responsibilities. Her diligence and organisational skills were generously mixed with an ample helping of humour and humanity. These are some of the qualities her students appreciated in her teaching. It is why they looked forward to her lessons.

It was her hallmark that just ticking something off a list was not enough. Only the best would do. With the spread of news of her death, a number of her former students have contacted her family. Some left the school quite a long time ago, but still clearly remember how she had gone out of her way to help them with things like university applications and work experience placements. They appreciated how her norm was to go the extra mile. Their lives were changed very positively by what she did, and they remain very grateful and appreciative. Many others, including myself, benefitted in a similar way. If I might be allowed to mix my metaphors, Angela was a shining light who hid her light under a bushel. The help she gave people was freely given because it was the right thing to do, with reward not being an issue. On a good day, she would just about accept being thanked, but further praise or appreciation tended to be shrugged off, almost as though she didn't understand why it was being given.

It seems extremely cruel that Angela should have been prematurely robbed of the remaining years of her career, the pleasure of retirement and the chance to see her son Thomas make his own way in the world. However, although she may be gone, Angela is far from forgotten. Too many people had their lives touched in a very positive and enriching way by her. Her memory will endure for a very long time to come and rightly so.

IAN TAILBY 1935-2022

Ian Tailby passed away in early September.

Tim Cawston shares memories of his close colleague:

I interviewed Ian in 1983 for a post in the fledgling Mathematics Department. Looking back I now realise that he was the very first person I had ever interviewed - I was probably more nervous than he was, but we got on really well and I was delighted that he accepted John Higginbotham's offer to start in the September.

Ian had come to teaching late from a family engineering background, via an Open University degree. He was an excellent mathematician and I know that his gentle style of teaching was much appreciated by generations of students. His forte was definitely the teaching of A level and the results his students gained over the years reflected this.

On my appointment as Deputy Head in 1987 I was delighted that Ian took up the reins of the department, which he led with distinction until his retirement in 1997.

For some time he was housemaster of Dukes House and supported many of the wider school activities, more often than not with his late wife Diane by his side.

Outside school he led a full and active life - supporting Kettering Town FC and Northants CCC, as well as being a keen bridge player, jogger and lover of cryptic crosswords. He was particularly proud of the fact that by playing in the staff cricket side he had played the game for over 50 years - his wily left arm spin and dogged forward defence live long in the memory!

Ian was fondly referred to by many of his colleagues as 'the Desborough Flyer' for his haste to exit the Holiday Inn carpark and 'Trigger Tailby' for the speed of his out LBW decisions when umpiring. However, most famously of all, John Higginbotham endearingly referred to Ian as "a wise old bird" and that he certainly was.



Farewell

to leaving staff

LORAINE HOWD

Loraine (yes it is spelt like this) joined the Maths Department in September 2013 and added significantly to the fashion awareness of the department with her array of colourful outfits! She has been an excellent teacher across all ages, being equally at home with both Sixth Form and Year 7. For the last three years she has been in charge of Prep Maths, giving our youngest pupils a solid start in the basics with her clear explanations and boundless enthusiasm. Outside the classroom, she has been a willing helper on trips both overseas (Cape Canaveral, Sixth Form Biology to France) and at home (Lake District for Music) as well as assisting with D of E when needed. Over the nine years she has been here, she has clocked up nearly 100,000 miles getting to and from school from her home near Nottingham and her retirement (very early, she insists I say) will give her a chance to spend less time in the car and more on the golf course where she will hope to add to her achievements there.

DAVID CRAWFORD



CATHRYN MCQUILLAN

Cathryn was appointed to LGJS in 2007, and during her long service here she has been an incredibly thoughtful and patient teacher who has cared so much for all the children. Nothing is too much trouble to her where they are concerned. So many people here will really miss her, not only her Year 4 colleagues but all of her friends on the staff. She will leave a huge hole in the school community. We will miss the bunches of flowers, the chocolate, her wisdom.... and the northern humour that has been her trademark.

Although deciding to retire has been a difficult decision, she will enjoy being able to spend time with Mark and the family, going on more holidays, doing the next home project.... and I hope she doesn't forget that we are going to expect to see her here doing supply cover for us all! Thank you for being YOU Cathryn and thank you for everything you have done for the Year 4 team and the whole school.

ZOE COSCIANI



PAULA GANGAR

'This is our school, let love abide here'. If you were one of the countless children to have been taught by Mrs Gangar you will quite possibly now be humming one of her best-known tunes and picturing her at the piano, last chord held by her foot on the sustaining pedal and both arms extended sideways; with a small circular gesture from the wrist, each thumb and forefinger would close into a circle and the sound of singing and piano would simultaneously stop.

That moment encapsulates her dedicated approach to both children and music: choose appropriate repertoire and if you can't find it, adapt or compose yourself; even when the message is serious, wrap it in accessible loveliness i.e. make it fun; secure it with a ribbon of carefully disciplined preparation and add a message of the expectation of high standards. This was Paula's gift to everyone and, as both a former parent and colleague, I'm profoundly grateful. Other recipients of that gift include every child who encountered her in the classroom, choir, orchestra, Year 6 ensemble, recorder group and more or who simply listened to her jamming on the keyboard, equally at home in the middle of the sports field as in the cathedral. Luckily for some, the gift is still there to be enjoyed - her final LGJS glissando was a launch into more piano teaching and spending some time at Stoneygate. Encore, encore!

ELEANOR GRAFF-BAKER



HANNAH MCCLEARY

Hannah joined LGS only two short years ago. We were confident she would be a success as a teacher as she had been an outstanding PGCE student when she did her first placement with us and she certainly did nothing to dispel that impression. She brought energy, enthusiasm and an eagerness to learn to the department (both in Maths and in improving her understanding of English as her Irish turns of phrase did baffle many of the department at times!) and was always ready to give her time to help anyone she could. As well as her Maths teaching, she has been a key member of the female Games team, doing Games afternoons and taking teams in hockey, netball and cricket. She also freely gave her time to help with DofE, including going out overnight when required, and has been a driving force within the Christian Union.



Unfortunately for us, she has decided to leave, first to travel around Australia and New Zealand to make up for lost opportunities during Covid and then to return home to Northern Ireland to teach there and I am sure she will make as much of a success there as she has here.

DAVID CRAWFORD
HEAD OF MATHEMATICS

SEÑORA IRMA MANKTELOW

We say "Adiós" to Irma, who joined LGS 13 years ago, working as a part-time Spanish teacher at the Senior School and at Stoneygate. Irma gained a degree in chemical engineering in Mexico and worked in the oil industry there. She met and married an Englishman and hence came to live in the UK. She took a 12 year break from work to bring up her family and then went into teaching (at St Paul's School, Leicester and at Leicester University). LGS sent an email to the university, asking if a Spanish language tutor would be interested in teaching a Y9 class at the school and that one-year contract eventually became 13!

Irma is looking forward to a less stressful life as she retires. Although she will carry on with her work at the University of Leicester, she will have time to do all those things she has had to put off, such as pursuing her love of science, learning Italian, going to the cinema more, cookery, and the learning of new skills such as sewing and practising yoga.

Irma has many good memories of her school trips to Spain and has really enjoyed the company of the friends she has made at LGS.

She will be remembered as a warm-hearted, cheerful, fun-loving, dedicated, caring, generous, and incredibly kind teacher who always went above and beyond for her pupils and colleagues.

SYLVIE LOPEZ-CORREIA
HEAD OF MFL



Farewell to leaving staff

CHRISTINA FEENEY

Christina Feeney started teaching in September 2017 after graduating from Loughborough University. It soon became apparent that she had a very strong sense of right and wrong and this would be extremely beneficial when teaching pupils at LGS. She was able to combine being an excellent role model alongside instilling the school rules and motivating pupils to achieve their potential. Christina became an excellent practitioner of Academic P.E., focussing on the delivery of Anatomy and Physiology at A-Level. Her attention to detail, in particular when marking exam questions, ensured that students became well practised in attaining the highest marks.

Christina's approachable and friendly nature quickly propelled her into taking on more responsibilities and in 2019 she became Head of Girls Cricket and Head of VC's House. Both roles have benefited enormously from her attention to detail and willingness to go above and beyond in providing opportunities for all. Christina has also taught Maths to the Prep during this academic year and it is her love of numbers that will see her starting a career in Accountancy in September. Outside of life at LGS, Christina is a fan of Derby County and has enjoyed playing tennis alongside other members of staff who she



would now count as close friends. Christina also has a love of music: she can often be heard belting out a show tune in the Sports Centre and has played the viola in the School Orchestra. Away from LGS, Christina will pursue her love of gardening and appetite for eating cake. A committed and hardworking teacher, Christina has been a real asset to the school and she will be missed by many. Good luck in the future.

JAMES MCCANN
DIRECTOR OF SPORT

Returning to the Alma Mater

CARL JAMES (OL '00)

I read Mathematics at Girton College, Cambridge and completed my PGCE there.

When I started at LGS in 2004 I used to insist on calling some of the teachers by Mr/Mrs/Miss but really only for reasons of tradition, not because I felt in any way awkward. And that's probably the headline, it wasn't awkward - I always found it a great place to study so coming back here to work felt natural.

I have held a variety of posts. I started as a teacher of Mathematics, and after two years took over the role of Young Enterprise coordinator from Mr Inchley. When appointed Examinations Officer working alongside Mr Harrop I handed the YE reins to Mr Moore-Friis, who is still in charge of that to date. Prior to retiring Mr Cawston trained me in Timetabling, a role I assumed in 2012, and then I took over from Mr Paterson as Director of Studies in 2013. I was elevated to Senior Leadership in 2017 and was called upon to act as an interim Headteacher in 2018 between the administrations of Mr King and Mr Watson, before becoming Assistant Head and latterly Deputy Head (Curriculum).



THE LONDON DRINKS AT THE BETJEMAN ARMS ON ST PANCRAS STATION



Lucy Ramsey, Jahangir Khan,
Chloe Butland, Henry Rowley



Lucy Ramsey, Katie O'Connor, Dulcie Barr



Justin Peng, Sophie Jefford, Christina Fearon, Theo Mast



Morgan Rees, Lindsay Christie, Justin Peng



Chris Dixon, Kirsten Barker, Craig Calvert

Triumph over Adversity

NICK CUMMINS (OL '03): PARALYMPIAN AND MBE

After leaving LGS in 2003 and a gap year spent working and travelling, I began an undergraduate degree in Politics at the University of Leeds. One evening during my second term, I began to experience a strong headache and fever-like symptoms at my Halls of Residence. Unable to withstand the light emanating from my friend's Playstation and putting all of this down to a cold, I headed to bed expecting to wake up the next morning feeling fine.

Early the next morning, my friend in the room opposite, returning to pick up the architectural project that he had forgotten, heard me gasping as he passed my room and alerted the manager of the Halls. When she opened the door, they found me almost completely purple and struggling to breathe. Far from the mild inconvenience of a cold, I was at the beginning of a long, hard and painful experience that has taken me from intense anguish to newfound purpose and success.

After spending two weeks in an induced coma, I awoke to find that my fingers, legs and feet had turned black and that I was on a ventilator, unable to speak, eat or drink. I gradually learned that I had caught Meningococcal Septicaemia, an illness that is particularly prevalent amongst students.

Ultimately, I spent nearly two years in hospital. The extent of the illness had led to a severe form of a little-known condition called Critical Care Polyneuromyopathy which involves damage to the nerves and muscle of the entire



body. My starting point was being able only to move my neck but, by the end of my time at hospital, I had regained full use, but not strength, of my upper body and some use of my legs.

Perhaps the hardest part of all this was when I finally left hospital. My sole purpose whilst in hospital was to get better and go home. Once I had recovered as much as I was likely to and was finally back home, there was, frankly, no purpose to my life.

Struggling to accept that I would use a wheelchair for the rest of my life, I had no idea what to do and was content to sit and wait for a miracle recovery that was never going to come.

Eventually I made a decision that I now look upon as perhaps the best in my life - to attend a training session for my local wheelchair rugby team. Wheelchair rugby was developed in Canada in the 1980s as a way of introducing a team sport that could be played by people with upper and lower limb disabilities who could not play wheelchair basketball. Unlike wheelchair basketball, everyone who plays must have some level of disability in both their arms and legs.

I had never really crossed paths in any meaningful way with a person who had a disability prior to being one myself and so, in my ignorance, I had assumed that they were generally as defeated and miserable as I was at the time. That first training session, however, shattered that illusion. The people that I met had jobs, went to university, travelled and were confident and outgoing, all the things that I had thought would not be possible for me. My horizons were broadened completely. As I got



back into my parents' car, I felt exhilarated. I had barely played but could feel the endorphins. I knew that this sport could really improve my life and that is exactly what it has done.

My original intention was to train as part of my rehabilitation and to ease my boredom but, perhaps surprisingly given my unremarkable three games as a prop for LGS's rugby team, it turned out that I was actually pretty good at this form of rugby! At first, I was invited to become part of the Great Britain Development Squad before moving to the Elite Squad in 2015.

It was upon selection to the Elite Squad that the hard work really began. Disability sport is as ruthless as any other. If you are not good enough, you'll be stripped of your funding and cut from the team. It is imperative to train hard and adhere to a strict diet and lifestyle if you want to make the Paralympics, the pinnacle sporting event for any athlete with a disability. As the newest member of the squad at the time, I missed out on selection for Rio 2016 but vowed that I wouldn't miss out on Tokyo 2020.

There was, however, one major problem. In December 2016, we were informed that our National Lottery funding had been stripped completely after we had finished 4th in Rio. However, by pulling together sponsors and donors, we were able to put together a competitive schedule of training camps and tournaments on a shoestring budget and were able to win back-to-back European Championships in 2017 and 2019. The pandemic made team training impossible, so like many others, I transformed part of my home into a makeshift gym. I also pushed up hills to maintain my fitness.

We were able to compete against other international opposition only once between February 2020 and the Paralympic Games in Tokyo. This created a real sense of the unknown - How would we fare when playing teams that we hadn't seen in action for so long?

For years, Great Britain had been known as the 'nearly team', the one that always came up short against the world's best - Japan, USA, Canada and Australia. This was something that we were determined to change.

After 6 days of acclimatisation and training in Tokyo, now sick of playing each other for the umpteenth time, we were ready to play. Finishing second in our group, we made it to the semi-finals and a match against the hosts Japan, the current World Champions, which we won. The final against the USA was a real challenge as they are perennial medallists. However, we kept our momentum and played with freedom to take the gold medal position.

We talk a lot about identity on our team. After I was ill, I had lost mine but, through wheelchair rugby, I have established a new one. Becoming an athlete was a route that I never thought I would take in life but that I'm so glad I did. It is not just the game itself that changed my life for the better but the confidence it has given me to pursue other endeavours - earlier this year I finished a PhD in History at the University of Leicester. We are already in the midst of training for the next Paralympics in Paris and I can't wait to continue representing Great Britain. Our success in Tokyo, for which we have all been awarded MBEs, has raised the visibility of wheelchair rugby to new heights and the future of the sport in this country is now looking bright.

To Infinity and Beyond?



EMMET FLETCHER (OL '88): EUROPEAN SPACE AGENCY

What do you want to do when you grow up? It's been over thirty years since I left LGS and I still don't know how to answer that question. I think that the only thing that has remained constant is that I have always had a fascination with the stars, the universe and our place in it.

So, for this reason, after finishing my A-levels, I managed to convince a university to let me study Aerospace Engineering, which was then followed by a Masters in Astronautics and Space Engineering. However, from then on, nothing has gone in a very linear fashion.

Across my working career to date, I've been an English teacher to the Spanish government, marketed electronics to the Japanese space agency, dabbled as a software engineer in Philadelphia and run my own company in Madrid. Some of these experiences have been, in turn, mildly terrifying (being dropped from a helicopter in the Falklands), daunting (talking at the United Nations in Vienna), amusing (organising astronaut DJ sessions on a cruise ship), tiring (searching for space debris from a mountain-top observatory at 4am), emotional (being with the Rosetta team when Philae landed on a comet, three times) and confusing (being chased by wild camels in the UAE). The two main lessons I have gained from all of these are, firstly - never ever let a test pilot drive the car you are in, and secondly - whatever you say is never as stupid as you thought, but not as clever as you imagined.

From all this, I landed at the European Space Agency

(ESA), first for a brief time in Frankfurt, Germany and then at their centre close to Madrid, Spain. My original task was to set up the first civilian space debris monitoring system, completing the original concept design and prototypes (some of which are still operational). Given the high profile of the project, much of my time was spent giving interviews to the media, which led me to move to the role of spokesperson for ESA. Taking an extraordinarily complex space mission and making it understandable and relevant for the general public is a very rewarding task and something I still like to do from time to time.

About five years ago, I began a new venture and founded a unit within ESA which concentrates on bringing ESA's brand to a wider audience through partnerships with well-known companies (such as Mattel, Omega, Playmobil and Warner). More recently the responsibility for the overall brand of the Agency also became part of my portfolio, which necessitated a move to ESA's headquarters in Paris. Now my focus is to help bring an understanding of ESA and our partners' activities to the attention of the public across 22 countries. This means that in the morning I can be working with collaborators in the music industry or supporting a movie release and in the afternoon planning the painting scheme for ESA's next launcher or our next mission with NASA (and then in the evening doing all the paperwork). The big advantage to doing this kind of activity in ESA is that I am always surrounded with people who are absolutely the best in their fields. This doesn't just mean the astronauts or the engineers and scientists, but also the graphics designers, legal team, diplomatic service and other specialists who are always ready to provide their expert input to all of our projects. Without them, this just wouldn't be possible.

In the end, this is a fascinating, exhausting, frustrating and rewarding position that, on top of everything, uses many of the skills I acquired on the way. I still need to be an engineer, a project manager, a salesperson and an English teacher (and sometimes all at the same time). However, if you ask me what I want to be when I grow up, then I'll still have to get back to you on that.



'It's an Honour!'

JEMMA HAINES (née ROGERSON) MBE: (OL '99)

Jemma Haines recently attended her Windsor Castle investiture ceremony and became a Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire. The Honour was awarded in recognition of Jemma's leadership within the field of upper airway respiratory disorders in speech and language therapy, in addition to her significant contribution and response to supporting modifications to practice during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Jemma's work has influenced effective change across the speech and language therapy workforce over her 18-year career. Through direct support and leading professional guidance policy, she has supported clinicians across the country to establish and develop integrated respiratory multi-disciplinary services, improving quality of life for many patients.

She left LGS in 1999 and studied at Newcastle University for four years, achieving a First-class honours degree. Since qualification Jemma has worked across



the NW and developed several multi-disciplinary respiratory teams, most notably the Manchester Airways Service at Wythenshawe Hospital which is now a nationally recognised centre of excellence receiving over 700 referrals a year from across the UK. As part of her work she is National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Manchester Biomedical

Research Centre PhD Fellow, Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists' National Respiratory Professional Advisor and elected British Thoracic Society Specialist Advisory Group member.

Jemma was recently appointed to become the Chief Allied Health Professional (AHP) at Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust, the largest NHS Trust in England. Her new role aims to provide strategic direction, voice and visibility for the 2,000 strong AHP workforce and sits within the corporate Group function.

Outside of work Jemma continues to love playing netball, as she did at LGS. Her three children Austin, age 11 years, Faye, age 10 years, and Amber, age 8 years, keep her and her husband Andrew even busier at home than at work!!

CRICKET: OL'S XI V/S LGS 1ST XI - 6TH JULY 2022

Once again the School was delighted to welcome a team of OLs to play against the 1st XI. It turned out to be a very competitive fixture this year which was nice to see after the OLs ran away with last year's match by nearly a 100 runs. The OL team was again organised by Will Hunt who excelled with the bat and mustered a strong group of players, mainly from his year group but also one or two from other years. The final result was a win to the OLs by 5 runs, with LGS Captain Paddy Horne striking 24 in the final two overs to nearly get his side across the line.

THE FUTURE

For next season the OLs are very keen to expand the fixture to welcome not only players but also spectators, supplying food and drink both during and after the fixture. There will be further information in due course, but it would be delightful for groups of OLs to meet on this day each year, watch some cricket, enjoy the sun, the refreshments and a relaxing time with friends.

The match normally runs from 2.00pm to around



From left to right: Robbie Spencer, Tim Spencer, James Hunt, James Scudamore, Tom Smith, Will Hunt (Captain and OL Organiser), Robbie Scudamore, Front row - Sachin Abeysondera, George Sawers, Patrick Sadd. With members of the 1st XI and Laurie Potter.

6.30pm, so plenty of time to snack and chat. Even if you don't like cricket (surely not!!!!) it could be a very pleasant afternoon. See you there

LAURIE POTTER

A life with Tigers

SCOTT CLARKE (OL '85)

PRESENT ROLE:

Leicester Tigers - Head of Community and Global Partnerships

Trustee - Leicester Tigers Foundation

After leaving LGS in 1985 and spending a few years bouncing around in education I started working in the Financial Services Motor Industry sector as an Account Manager based in the Derby / Nottingham area. The variety of tasks faced in my day to day activities, along with the sales environment and in-house training, was key to my career development and proved useful later in life, as it took my natural openness and happy to meet and talk to anyone nature and placed it in an engaging business situation. My career developed from account management on a local scale to a recession-hit national default task force, then on to sales training and finally National Accounts covering a Motor Dealership base across most of England. The 4000 miles in the car each month, 80 hour weeks and the day to day grind of the Motor Industry, coupled with the internal politics of the bank became a task that gave me little joy or fulfilment. The rewards however allowed me to make a career changing decision to technically retire from the "Rat Race" at the age of 30 and look for something more in keeping with my character, interests and my desire to actually enjoy the work environment I was in and had a passion for. What that was at that time was still not apparent to me but a chance conversation whilst visiting a friend in the Caribbean led me to land on my feet, being offered and accepting a new role in 1999 as a National Coach and Rugby Development Officer for Barbados. Whilst the financial rewards didn't match the bank, the conditions and work environment were amazing and I found myself actually being paid to talk about and coach rugby across the island, something I had been doing myself back at my local club in Leicester for free for the previous 10 years.

I loved most things about coaching rugby: you were always



Delhi Hurricanes at Tigers

working with people who were having fun (if done right) and it was outside, healthy and sociable. My passion for the game and this new found enthusiasm for "work" began to open more doors as the game developed professionally and I found myself working whenever back in the UK for the RFU. I began to pick up contract work as a coach educator with them and for a few months with Melton Mowbray RFC whilst I was running things for Leicester Forest RFC- the role helped the club reach out to local primary schools to feed their 'mini section'. In 2001 I picked up some work for Leicester Tigers on their new TAG rugby programme and in early 2002 was invited to attend an interview at Tigers for a new post they were considering for a full-time Rugby Development Officer. I was offered the job in May that year and obviously immediately accepted, not telling my friends even though that week we all went to Cardiff to watch Tigers win their 2nd European Cup, beating Munster in the Final. So I joined Tigers in

June 2002 where I find myself today in my 20th year at the club.

On starting at the Club it was an unbelievable environment - the team was used to winning and carried on winning for most of that decade. The people behind the scenes driving it were some of the world's best in their fields, either former top international players or industry leaders in a sport that was new to professionalism. It was still a rugby club, just a very big one, with some amazing supporters who loved Tigers and all it stood for. My brief initially was to deliver on the promises of a key sponsor and activate that sponsorship on the ground by engaging and working with every primary school across Leicestershire and Rutland during a 3 year rolling process - the key sponsor was a bank so my previous experience allowed me to work well with the sponsorship team and see the opportunities from their eyes. I was also able to utilise my commercial experience and sales background to identify ways to develop the Tigers offer to a wider audience and give support to the then Community

Manager at Tigers who was a former player, recently retired through injury. Having a boss who also knew how to enjoy the work environment and wanted to challenge every aspect of the day to day was so refreshing. It allowed me to grow what we did and build the community department to meet not only rugby development outcomes but more and more commercial success, bringing in much needed funding to support the Club as it developed.

As the years have gone by I have taken on the lead in several aspects of the business and for the last 10 years have taken on new roles that have seen me develop the Community offer to a wider audience. The Club has also allowed me to develop the work we can do using Rugby to help those struggling in their own environment, tackling health, education, access and inclusion inequalities by working with a variety of partners both locally and nationally.

In 2012 I started to reach out further afield and worked on building our presence on an international scale - initially taking the Tigers Rugby Camp operations developed over the previous 10 years to other countries and then beginning a Global Partnership programme that looks to build more formal links with clubs and like-minded Rugby operations on a global scale. This has been an exciting aspect of my role at Tigers as now I

get to travel the world and talk to anyone who will listen about my two work passions - Rugby and Leicester Tigers. So far we have visited and delivered Tigers Rugby in Japan, India, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Italy, Holland, Belgium, USA, Chile and not forgetting the Channel Islands.

Tigers is a far cry from where I started at the Bank and clearly a different entity to Rugby Barbados. My day to day role now sees me less on the grass coaching and more driving a desk, building and managing the team that delivers on all our promises whilst managing the commercial viability of all we do. The last few years have been extremely hard for professional sport and for Rugby (in particular not having the riches of football).

The commercial challenges at the bank along with the resilience drilled into us by attending a new school back in 1981 with only a few students, an old building and Tim (Chalky) Cawston as our rugby coach I believe has stood me in good stead to cope with the ever-changing and sometimes ruthless environment that is professional sport.

If you attend a match day at Tigers you will probably see me running around (slowly), herding kids and their parents and still getting over excited whilst the first team do their stuff.

LGS CELEBRATES 40 YEARS OF MUSICAL SUCCESS WITH A GALA CONCERT - SUNDAY 26TH JUNE 2022

It was decided to hold a Gala Concert as one of the events to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the foundation of LGS and to invite OLs to come and join with the School Orchestra, Big Band and Choral Society in an afternoon of music-making. 18 former pupils from across the last 40 years attended the event and shared their talents with a sizeable audience. We are grateful to John Barker and his colleagues in the Music Department for making it such a success.



Left to right: Ethan Leech, Jacob Philips, Ben Carr, David Atter, Jatin Naidu, Alison Walker, Fraser Snow, Akshay Patel, Sarah Beadle, James Beadle, Emily Leech, Adam Cygan, Moritz Wagner-Tsukamoto, James Cockcroft, Annabelle Onions, Vladimir Turapov, Rosalind Rashid, Nicholas Njopa-Kaba.

OL Award Launching A Career In Drama

SAFIA LAMRANI (OL'15)

Graduating from drama school mid-pandemic was challenging to say the least. With in-person shows and opportunities cancelled, it became harder to stay motivated to create and be creative. Therefore, when our final year performance was cancelled, I and my colleague Kitty Evans decided to write our own play with the hope of one day being able to perform it. Fast forward several months and our modern adaptation of Little Women, titled Four Sisters, was accepted and performed at The Camden Fringe Festival at The Hope Theatre, August 2021.

Four Sisters is a modern adaptation of Little Women, following the March sisters over a weekend, as Jo and Meg go to visit Beth and Amy in their London-based house for Beth's 21st birthday. As the weekend unfolds, so do the cracks in their relationships as they struggle to cope with the loss of their father and subsequent breakdown of their mother. The focus of this piece is the women: their varying ways of coping with their shared trauma, their complex and interwoven relationships, and the ways in which their differing experiences unite them. The play celebrates connection between women. The creative team is entirely women, all different and unique, coming together to tell a story of female voices and love.

Putting on a play from start to finish had its challenges. There were many hurdles we had not anticipated - being trained as actors we simply wanted to create something that allowed us to perform and not spend endless nights marketing, writing risk assessments, and a myriad of other producing responsibilities that come with creating a show.

However, it has been a huge learning experience and one I would encourage others to embark on: despite the stress that came with it, the process of performing a piece we wrote on stage to a capacity audience was incredibly rewarding. We learnt so much about ourselves as writers, directors, and actors as well as being given the opportunity to meet and work alongside other hugely talented creatives.

The play itself was a success, with a sell-out run over four nights. We had surpassed our hopes and goals



for the piece. Moreover, we received a huge amount of feedback which is brilliant when wanting to develop the story further. We also received praise from reviewers, such as London Pub Theatres, stating "The acting was impressive for such a young company, and they brought it into this timescale with perfection. (...) Produced well and written with passion. I loved it.", and A Younger Theatre: "What I love most about this production is that it feels distinctly current without being about the pandemic, politics, or technology. Instead, its relevance comes from

little relatable details about the sisters' lives, the way they speak to each other, and their living situations. Evans and Lamrani do an excellent job of keeping each character distinctive and easily recognisable from the source novel, while still creating four women that feel like they belong in 2021." So, the play was well received, with critics citing the writing and relatable female characters as a highlight.

Overall this has been such an invaluable experience, with a story we hope to continue further. Being a young creative often means there are difficulties when wanting to share stories and create work. However there are so many talented and kind individuals and organisations who want to encourage and support the arts, and thanks to that support we were able to make this play possible. The OL Association gave a small grant towards the realisation of this project.



The Pioneers Return

40TH ANNIVERSARY REUNION FOR THOSE WHO JOINED LGS IN THE 1980S



Scott Clarke, Anne Tester, Neal Evans, Anne Gardner (née Clifton)



Jonathan Woodhead, Vanessa Woodhead, Sanjay Trivedi, Peter Handford, Duncan Gray



Paul Smith, Helen West, Fiona Wilson (née Crooks), Andrew Kirk, Matthew Graham, Anne Gardner (née Clifton)



Leigh-Ann O'Brien (née Holland), Rachel Shearer (née Herbert), Rebecca Wesley (née Herbert)



Andrew Seaton, David Champness, William Adderley, John Sturme, Paul Smith



ABOVE: Chris Wesley, Simon Baigent, Oliver Blomfield



LEFT: Ann-Marie Jenks (née Smith), Amanda Wright-Kluger, Melanie Naylor (née Blight), Matthew Brunning, Jonathan Sansome, Claire Geraghty (née Parker), Charlotte Rhodes (née Smith), Chris Fletcher, Jo Renshaw

Lifelong learning and music

LISA LOGAN (née CARTER) OL'89

Whenever anybody asks me, 'If you hadn't been X what would you have been?', I always answer 'a composer.' I do of course have LGS (especially Charles Paterson) to thank for inspiring my love of music. However I have learnt to compose later in life.

At LGS, I was in the excellent chamber choir. Mr Paterson was the inspiring and dedicated choir master, with many wonderful teachers such as Ron Berry and Peter Handford. I also sang in the Leicester Cathedral girls' choir. It was at Cambridge, where I read Law, that I was awarded a choral scholarship. Singing five days a week in the chapel choir was an incredible grounding in sight-reading and wider musical skills. Also at Cambridge, I directed opera for the Cambridge University Opera Society. My first career was as a professional opera/theatre director in my 20s, but I found it didn't really suit my personality: it needs a rhinoceros skin to deal with large numbers of trickier personalities and I found that stressful. I also found it financially difficult, so I retrained as an entertainment lawyer, and kept my singing going with lessons privately at RCM with Sally Burgess (ENO's lead mezzo).

In my 20s I was taught to work with playwrights by the National Theatre studio, and of course working as a director in theatre and opera taught me many important dramaturgical and theatrical skills. About seven years ago, I was taking my young son to composition lessons. He didn't enjoy it very much so I said to his teacher 'I don't suppose you'd teach me rather than him?' And that's how it started. Within six months I found I had an ability to compose I never knew I had. It was like discovering a language where you are suddenly fluent. So, I then spent several years learning to compose seriously, whilst working as a lawyer. This then led to Kings College London accepting me onto their Masters in Composition, with only five coveted places. All this in my mid 40s! A story of many people being open-minded enough to teach a (slightly) older person!

Opera is a huge passion for me, so I was naturally drawn in that direction. My first opera, 'A Silver Spoon', premiered at the Beaumaris Festival with the Welsh Chamber Orchestra on 1st July 2022. It is an opera that tells the story of Princess Diana and Dodi. Recently, the Britten Pears organisation in Aldeburgh awarded me a residency where I continued to compose my second opera on a creative retreat, and I hope it will premiere in 2024. Composed during the pandemic, it's called 'Bronte', based on an acclaimed play by Polly Teale. I am also starting to compose my third opera for ELMG.

Hackney Proms have recently commissioned me to compose a quintet based upon refugees and migration, and my children's orchestra piece with narrator will be premiered by Carshalton Opera in Surrey in 2023.

Arts Council England have just awarded me a substantial DYCP grant to develop my next opera with conductor, director and singers (an invaluable game changer). In addition, I've tried to give my skills to assist a variety of charities, as a member of ENO's Advisory Board and a trustee of Keynote Opera and the Turtle Foundation (and formerly helping Unexpected Opera as a trustee for ten years). I'm also proud to share that the top S.E. Asian theatre company Tara Theatre has invited me to be a Board member, due partly, I feel, to my Leicester background and my passion for multi-cultural Britain.

My intention is to continue to wear two hats: TV lawyer by day, composer by night. So, whatever your passion, I do encourage you to develop it further. I have no idea where this musical journey will lead, I can only say it's a joy!



An insight into a local authority's approach to Climate Change planning

NICHOLAS NJOPA-KABA (OL '20)

Between my first and second year reading General Engineering at Durham University, I found myself venturing only slightly further north and joining the Northumberland County Council Climate Change Team as an intern for six weeks. In response to the climate emergency, Northumberland County Council is committed to halving the county's carbon footprint by 2025 and being a carbon neutral county by 2030. Having set out a climate action plan, the team is approaching the problem holistically with different members of the team focussing on something in particular. Some of these areas include waste, heating and carbon sequestration. Whilst I was with the team, a big topic was that of restoring peatland in Northumberland as a natural form of carbon capture and storage.

Although the internship was largely remote, I was able to get up to Northumberland for a week to conduct some site visits and meet some of my colleagues. One of these visits included a trip to Solar Capture Technologies. Here the county was investigating the possibility of using their modular solar tiles in a pilot project, with the long-term goal of rolling out a solar roof scheme for council-owned properties and homes. Another visit was to the SUEZ Energy From Waste plant in Teeside. At the plant, myself and a few colleagues were given a tour of the impressive facility, capable of producing nearly 30MW of electricity.

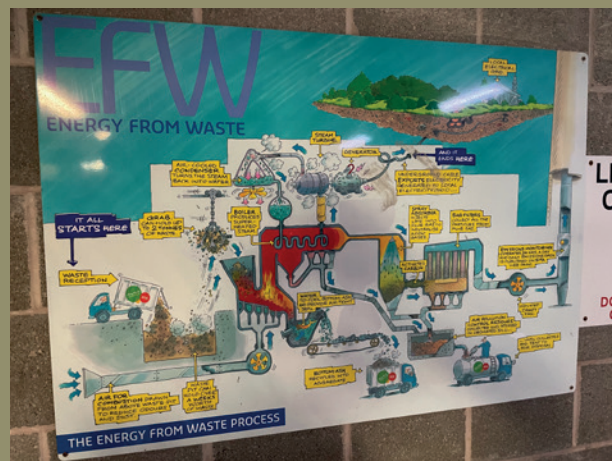
My particular area of focus came under the heading of transport. I was tasked with a project entitled 'Electric Vehicle Charge Point Demand Mapping'. As the adoption of electric vehicles accelerates, it is important that the necessary infrastructure to support vehicle charging is widespread and reliable. Having said this, there is some uncertainty surrounding who should roll-out this infrastructure. Do local governments have a responsibility to ensure their counties are equipped and prepared for the transition to electric vehicles or should vehicle



charging infrastructure be left to the private sector? At Northumberland County Council, the view is that they do have some responsibility here, particularly in providing on-street charging for those who do not have private driveways, and also charging at points of interest and in more remote areas of this predominantly rural county. Using existing data, developing forecasts and using

forecasts published by Northern Powergrid, I was able to deliver the project alongside my own suggestions and recommendations for the future council-implemented charging infrastructure of Northumberland. As a result of the project and the work across the whole team, Northumberland recently began launching a pilot programme with on-street charging installations at seven locations across the county.

Whilst at Northumberland County Council, I was inspired by the group of people surrounding me. They were passionate about addressing the climate emergency and working towards transforming the county of Northumberland. It was also extremely encouraging to see the myriad steps in the right direction and seeing first-hand how positive policy, action and drive can make a difference as we move towards a more sustainable future.





Drawn to the water

ANDREA STARTIN (OL'93)

I returned to regular swimming while working in IT at Alliance & Leicester. I was learning to scuba dive and wanted to stay fit and brush up my aquatic skills. In 2009 I was pregnant with my daughter and the bank was taken over following the financial crisis, so I decided to take the very generous redundancy package and take some time out.

To begin with I swam to enjoy some 'me time' but I eventually ended up swimming quite a lot. I did my first open water race when my daughter was one and got the open water bug. Over the next couple of years, I built up to racing swim marathons (10km+).

After a few swim marathons I decided to ditch my wetsuit and take up Ice Swimming, competing in events in the UK and internationally, doing 7 Ice Miles and competing in two Ice Swimming World Championships. I swam the English Channel with a relay team in June 2017, after swimming the length of Windermere the year before, and having really enjoyed it I enquired as to the possibility of doing a solo Channel crossing for my 50th birthday (not until 2024).

In the meantime, I found out that fewer people have swum the length of Loch Lomond (roughly the same distance) than had swum the Channel and looked into the possibility of doing that instead. It is a similar, but different challenge - colder and fresh water which is harder to swim in than the more buoyant sea water of the Channel and without the tides (which can help or hinder in sea swimming). I estimated that it could take me 16 to 18 hours to complete the 22+ mile swim and started to train at every opportunity. I had two years of bad luck. The first was my husband undergoing cancer

treatment and then Covid struck, postponing my swim for a second year.

Lockdown and Covid restrictions in early 2021 prevented me from being able to swim, so instead I had to follow a daily cardio and weights regime, involving spinning and running (this may surprise my former PE teachers).

As the open water sites reopened, eventually followed by the indoor pools, I managed to get back in the water, building up to training around 4 hours on the average day and up to 7 hours per day on the weekend (furlough from work allowed me the time to do this). I was managing somewhere between 80 and 100 kilometres per week. This was done mostly in open water, supplemented by pool swimming in public sessions, and with Braunstone Masters and Leicester Triathlon Club. It also had to be fitted around my return to work.

Three years late, I stood on the cold northern shores



of Loch Lomond in the twilight before dawn, finally about to start my swim. It was hard. The water was particularly chilling in the first few hours through the deeper water, but thankfully the early hours were flat and calm. My boat pilot and crew kept my energy up with hot energy drinks and flapjacks as the hours rolled on. The wind picked up and the waves rose up, making the last few hours tough going. I ground out that last few miles to finally finish in 14 hours 46 minutes.



I hadn't really thought about swimming the Channel, but friends convinced me that, seeing as I had recovered well from the Loch Lomond swim and had done all the training, it was a good year to attempt a Channel swim too. The realisation was a bit of a shock, but they were right, and I signed up for a "last minute" slot.

Four weeks to the day after Loch Lomond I was up before dawn again. After a short boat ride from Dover to the small beach at Abbot's Cliff I slipped into the water, walked up the beach and then re-entered the water. Next stop France!

The water was lovely and warm compared to Loch Lomond and was flat calm in the stillness before dawn. Sunrise was spectacular and as the day warmed up it was good to feel the sun on my back. As with Loch Lomond, I was being fed regularly from the boat - but time was more critical as every time you stop the water can be pushing you the wrong way, so I had to be fast. There were a lot of jellyfish mid-Channel and I had a few stings, but nothing too bad. Apparently a seal popped up to take a look at me from a distance too, but I didn't see it. As the day went on the sun clouded over and the wind picked up, bringing with it big rolling waves. The boat skipper moved me to swim on the other side of the boat because of the risk of the boat rolling into me. My shoulder was more painful than in Loch Lomond, but despite the pain I kept my stroke and rhythm.



I could see France from about halfway across and frustratingly it was an achingly long time before it seemed to get any closer and the shape of the coast and the height of the cliffs meant it didn't feel like I was swimming towards the closest point. Keeping my frustrations to myself I pushed on through the waves. Just as I'd seen dawn, I swam through the sunset too, edging steadily closer. Not long after dark the skipper shouted at me to swim for the beach - it was too dark to see. From the urgency in the skipper's voice, I was worried that the tide was about to turn and push me backwards, so I went for it. Ahead the cliffs seemed to loom through the darkness quite a long way off still, so I was shocked when my fingers sank into soft wet sand. Suddenly I was standing clear of the water on the beach in a time of 14 hours 14 minutes.

The boat ride back was long and uncomfortable, and I felt seasick until I was back on land. My shoulder was very painful, and I could barely move it for a few days afterwards. I was also very hungry, but also very happy to have done it.

Since my big swims in 2021 I now work for Swim England, working with volunteers, helping them to be involved in all aspects of aquatics (Swimming, Water Polo, Diving and Artistic Swimming). My particular focus is Masters Swimming (grown-ups).



PLATINUM PARTY AT THE PALACE

ALISON GATES (née PRINT) OL '99

After my time as a music scholar at LGS, I chose to further my studies as a violinist at Trinity College of Music, where I spent seven years. I assumed my career would evolve around shows, concerts, and teaching, but was not fully aware of the myriad of opportunities available to military musicians. In addition to being a violin teacher, currently teaching at LGS, I now frequently perform globally for high-profile engagements, in addition to regular appointments for Royalty and dignitaries. but I also serve as a reservist in the Corps of Army Music, as principal flautist with the Nottinghamshire Band of the Royal Engineers. I joined several years ago after successfully meeting rigorous physical and medical thresholds. The work is demanding but rewarding – opening many new doors and opportunities which provide me with skills I utilise in my civilian life.

I was therefore extremely honoured to be called up to perform as violinist for the Platinum Party at the Palace for the Queen's recent Jubilee Celebrations. Along with four other reserve string players, we enhanced the Countess of Wessex String Orchestra and the Household Division Bands for the engagement. Prior to the week-long rehearsals in

situ at Buckingham Palace, a reduced orchestra (myself included) was required for a studio session in North London to record a short piece. There was a great deal of secrecy and mystery surrounding the piece - but all became clear on the night. The beautiful and charming piece featured as the audio for the opening sequence of the Queen and Paddington Bear enjoying tea together, which aired at the start of the Party. The concert was then broadcast live by the BBC and watched by millions. From the stage, it was a sea of faces and flags stretching down The Mall as far as the eyes could see, and the atmosphere was electric. It was an incredible experience, performing alongside and working with so many great musicians; Alicia Keys, Andrew Lloyd-Webber, Hans Zimmer, Andreas Bocelli to name only a few.

Music is an amazing entity that can enhance anything. As Celeste sang, 'What a Wonderful World'.



WEDDING

We always like to celebrate when OLS marry each other, so we congratulate Reece Winch **OL' 08** and Kirsty Munro **OL '09** on their marriage on 2nd January 2020. Alex Munro, Frankie Gangar, Rodha Sell and Eve Littlejohn were bridesmaids. Other guests included George Warner and Oliver Brooks.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday 21st December at 6.00pm

Reunion and collection of certificates for Leavers of 2022

Wednesday 21st December at 7.30pm

OL Carol Service

Thursday 20th April from 6.30pm

London Drinks at Betjeman Arms on St Pancras Station

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