

# THE OLD HENDONIAN ◆ 2023 ◆



## ISSUE NUMBER THIRTY-TWO

*Dear Old Hendonians and Friends,*

**A** very warm welcome to the thirty-second edition of the *Old Hendonian*. Once again, we are fortunate to include a wide range of material which will hopefully be of interest to all. My grateful thanks go to all contributors. We have just the one set of school memories, but eminently readable and entertaining, from a real (albeit sadly late) raconteur; a truly bumper interview slot from David Eadon; and the usual welcome contributions from Miriam Webber, Ashleigh Brilliant (with a bit of a twist this time!), Reg Beckley, and Yen Yee Chong.

The Headteacher, Rhona Povey, has once again gone out of her way to give us an extended letter which includes a good selection of snapshots of school life during the current academic year. And whilst it is never nice to draw attention to a longer-than-usual obituary section, it includes no shortage of former pupils who went on to achieve fame, fortune or fulfilment in lives well lived in such a variety of different ways, which I hope you will find fascinating reading.

A motif of powerful teenage love and lust runs through this edition of the magazine in a number of different guises and places ... perhaps I should leave it to you to find out where!

My usual thanks go to my proofreaders – and, of course, a special thank you to everyone who has made a donation to Friends of Hendon School, for which we are always very grateful.

With sincere best wishes to you all,

**Alan Freedman – Editor**

# POET'S CORNER

## FROM MIRIAM WEBBER ...

### THE TICKETS

*Fourth form memory from school, 1948*

He was two years above me, a god in Olympus  
my heart-throb, good-looking and slim,  
whenever I saw him my legs turned to jelly  
but I knew I meant nothing to him.

A rumour went round – he was offering tickets  
to a Prom at the Royal Albert Hall,  
I felt sure he was looking for company so  
my friend and I answered the call.

It was she who approached him – I stood to one  
side  
as he said we should wait at the station  
on Saturday morning and he'll come along,  
that was all – there was no explanation.

My best friend and I reached the station on time  
and stood waiting, prepared for the ride,  
I would soon be attending a Promenade concert,  
the god of my dreams at my side.

I have no recollection regarding the programme  
the music, the players, the hall ...  
only one thing remains in my mind from that day,  
even now I can clearly recall ...

He came striding towards us, firm confident steps,  
I was swamped by emotions unplanned ...  
he was with us for only a few precious moments,  
two tickets in outstretched hand.

“Enjoy the concert,” was all that he said,  
and turned on his heavenly heel,  
he could never imagine the deep disappointment  
and pain that my young heart would reel.

I watched as he left us, a god-like figure,  
devouring him with my eyes,  
I watched him until he was quite out of sight,  
Adonis himself in disguise.

### DOPEY

Dopey was the family tortoise,  
lawns and beds were his estate,  
I loved to feed him lettuce leaves  
and hear the crunching as he ate.

I didn't know how old he was,  
It didn't matter – I was four,  
I played with him out on the lawn  
in thirty-nine, before the war.

The windows of my parents' bedroom  
faced the street; I saw below  
the driveway and the path that led  
towards the cars going to and fro.

One day, in shock, I spotted Dopey  
on that path, all set to roam –  
he'd heard the call of the open road  
and promptly ran away from home!

**Miriam Webber, née Retkin**  
(1945 – 1950)

## NEWS FROM OLD HENDONIANS

One never quite knows what the random inclusion of an old class photo might lead to. The one of Form 1A from 1953/54, on page 34 of last year's *Old Hendonian*, reproduced below, is a case in point. It prompted the following response from **John Gardiner (1952 – 1957)**: I was both surprised and delighted to see the photograph, as it contains my late wife Carole née Coffin, front row first left, and her lifelong friend Gill Packer, front row second from right.



In truth, Carole and I never knew each other at school, even though I was only one year ahead of her. We met after we had both left school – at the Club in the school undercroft (“Tuck Shop” to you and me) – run by and on behalf of “Old Hendonians”. There were normally about 30 attendees on a Friday evening to chat and dance, usually on a themed basis each week, such as “trad jazz” or “jive” and “rock’n’roll”. No alcohol was allowed, so it was not unknown to go to the pub before or after the Club.

I am pleased to say that meeting resulted in our enjoying 57 years of a great marriage, including a wonderful son and daughter – but sadly ended just over two years ago, when Carole lost her battle with pancreatic cancer.

I was also interested to read the article by John Ward on his time playing football for Old Hendonians. I too played in the third, second and first teams from 1957 to 1963 as their goalkeeper, as well as keeping goal for the school junior and second teams from 1952 to 1957. There were only three Old Hendonian teams when I was playing, and I do not remember much fitness training being done, although in The Load of Hay pub (now long since demolished) in Brent Street on a Friday evening, tactics were always discussed regarding the following day's game!

The school memoirs from **Jim Ballantyne (1950 – 1957)** – also published in last year's *Old Hendonian* –

prompted the following recollections from **Jonathan Marsh OBE (1953 – 1960)**:

Jimmy was three years above me, but we did cross paths many times outside school, as we were both avid trainspotters. He was also fiendishly fast on his bike – I recall none of us could keep up with him. I met him a few years after he left school, and I knew he had gone to work for Babcock & Wilcox. Many many years later, in 2000, I was on a railway bash in Poland ... and as I sat in our chase coach bus that had been chasing the steam train we had all been photographing ... as I sat down I looked at the chap in the seat next to me, and was amazed to see that it was Jimmy. Naturally, we had a chat about HCGS, and also trains as our common interest. I have not seen him since, but would like to be in touch if that is possible, as I have also been to see the Laxey replica locos on the Isle of Man, and we clearly still share the same railway interest. As Jimmy says, it is incurable!

Your Editor was delighted to be able to put both of them back in touch with each other. And for good measure, Jonathan sent in a copy of his own Form 1C photo – also from 1953/54 – shown below.



At Jim's suggestion, your Editor wrote to an old classmate of his, **David Thacker (1950 – 1957)** – it was nice to hear the two of them have kept in contact ever since leaving school. David has since joined the mailing list for the magazine, and writes as follows:

I certainly enjoyed my time in Hendon – we had a lot of inspiring teachers. I particularly remember Gertie Stranz, Chemistry, who inspired me so that at 13 I decided to study chemistry. I chose to take a part-time degree, followed by a full time Ph.D. with six years post-doctoral research. Three of these years were spent in Australia. However, there were few jobs in my particular area, so I used my knowledge of carbohydrate chemistry to gain a post as a food technologist. The rest of my career was within the food industry, including finally lecturing at South Bank University.

Jim's obituary on the late **Tony Marshall (1954 – 1957)** – his brother-in-law as well as an old classmate – can be found towards the end of the magazine, on page 36. Tony's daughter provided Jim with the following photos of scenes taken from a school cycle tour in 1957, photos he never knew existed and which he assumed Tony may have forgotten about. If any reader can help with more information or memories, please let your Editor know. The captions and comments which follow are from Jim:



Left to right: me, Tony Marshall (partly visible), Jimmy Ambrose, Johnny Kraushaar, George Miall, Peter Williams, Dave Cox, Rosalind Borthwick, Pat Stevens and Marion Lansdowne.



Left to right: Tony Marshall, Jimmy Ambrose, Dave Cox, Peter Williams, Johnny Kraushaar, me, George Miall, Marion Lansdowne, Rosalind Borthwick and Pat Stevens.



Left to right: George Miall (imbibing from the village pump!), Jimmy Ambrose, Tony Marshall, Johnny Kraushaar, Peter Williams and Dave Cox.



Dave Cox (left) and Tony Marshall (right) with puncture problems!

The smart and elegantly dressed girls make an interesting comparison with the rather shabby-looking boys. Blokes will be blokes!

It is sad to reflect that Tony, Peter, Johnny and George are no longer with us. Dave emigrated to the USA and I have no info. Neither do I know what happened to the girls. Perhaps another "group" member would know?

Your Editor had the pleasure of spending a couple of hours in the company of **Reg Beckley (1942 – 1948)** whilst on holiday in Bournemouth last August. Here is a photo of the two of us together.



Staying with Reg ...79 years since he first appeared in a Shakespeare play at school – more about this in *Reg Beckley Remembers* on page 19 – he is starting rehearsals for the part of Warden 1 in *Romeo and Juliet*. He says he is happy to have a second bite of the cherry, seeing the production originally scheduled for 2020 had to be cancelled. Performances will be at Brownsea Island Open Air Theatre, Poole Harbour, and will run from 26 July to 11 August.

**Professor Michael Sternberg (1962 – 1969)** is the Director of the Centre for Integrative Systems Biology and Bioinformatics (CISBIO) at Imperial College London, and holds the Chair of Structural Bioinformatics. CISBIO brings together scientists from a wide range of different fields to develop innovative interdisciplinary approaches to understanding biological problems. A key component of the



interdisciplinary strategy is a repeated cycle of experimentation and modelling.

Professor Sternberg has been involved in schools outreach programmes funded by the Royal Society and Rolls Royce. He entered Bioinformatics via his D. Phil in Biophysics (Oxford). He obtained a first degree in Physics (Cambridge) and a Masters in Computing (Imperial College). He has worked at Oxford, Birkbeck College, Cancer Research UK and joined Imperial College in 2001.

The main research interests of his group are:

- prediction of protein structure and function
- prediction of macromolecular docking and interactions
- prediction of the effect of genetic variants, particularly those associated with disease
- network modelling for Systems Biology
- logic-based drug design

A team led by Michael and other Imperial College London researchers looked fairly recently into a fascinating aspect of Covid-19, namely how certain people seemed to be naturally more resistant to severe infection. Their findings, reported in early 2022, demonstrated that people with a common genetic change to one protein were less likely to be hospitalised or to die of the virus. The protein in question, present on human cells in the lungs, colon, stomach, and many other tissues, plays an important rôle in SARS-CoV-2 infection, as it is necessary to activate the spike protein of many variants of the virus, facilitating entry into the cell. The change they identified highlighted a potential target for drugs in early treatment.

The creations of **Sinta Tantra (1991 – 1995)** – an acclaimed artist working in many different types of media – continue to go from strength to strength. Her website <https://sintatantra.com/> contains everything you'd wish to know, but here are a couple of recent examples:

*On Being Blue*, Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery's third annual exhibition last summer at The Shrimp Factory in Nevlunghavn, Norway, took the form of a multi-sensory installation created by Sinta in response to the building's

architecture, history and geographical location. For the latest show, Sinta created a striking new series of paintings as well as a large-scale mural painted on the façade of the building, a sound piece and sculptures that came together to reflect on the various histories and poetic associations of the sea. Moving between fluid forms and minimalist lines, rich, vibrant colours and soft pastel tones, Sinta paid homage to the romance of the seaside setting, while also reinvigorating the space with her bold contemporary aesthetic.



Below is one of Sinta's sculptures, featured this January in *Cure*<sup>3</sup> – the critically acclaimed selling exhibition at Bonhams, London – devised to raise awareness and funds for curative Parkinson's research.



## MY LAST FIGHT

I am a peaceful sort. Apart from childhood squabbles with my sister, there were only two occasions in my life when I can remember voluntarily engaging in violence against another person. And they are both painful memories.

The first was in an organised boxing competition, at a summer camp I attended at the age of 9. I don't know how this happened. Maybe at that time I actually wanted to box. We wore gloves – but most of my knowledge of fighting came from comic books, in which the bad guys were always knocked out by blows to the jaw. So my entire fighting style consisted of aiming for my opponent's jaw.

The only opponent I remember was a boy with reddish brown hair and the kind of clear fresh face I now associate with innocence and angels. I didn't know him, but there I was, for no reason at all, trying to hurt him, by aiming punches at his jaw. Nobody actually did get hurt, and I think I was declared the winner. But something in me still cringes when I think about that whole experience.

The next memory is much worse. It happened at school in England, when I was 14. Somehow I had come to be on bad terms with another boy in my year. His name was Solleveld. We were both outsiders. He was from Holland, and I, having recently returned from seven years across the Atlantic, was considered to be a "Yank." Apparently our mutual hostility became known to our classmates, and under the instigation of one of them – a little guy named Taylor – Solleveld and I were egged on to settle our differences in a formal fight. Yes, peer pressure! Somehow we both agreed, and at an appointed time, we met in a sort of semi-basement area under the school. Of course, nobody in authority was present. But there we stood, surrounded by a howling circle of our classmates. I think Taylor acted as referee, but if there were any rules, I don't remember what they were. We certainly were not boxing.

One thing I had learned from tussling with my sister in earlier years was that if you got your arm twisted and pushed up behind your back, you were pretty much

immobilised. So as soon as the fight began, I grabbed hold of one of Solleveld's arms, and very quickly had him on the ground with his arm twisted behind his back. He was obviously in pain, and had to give up. The fight was over, and I suppose we shook hands.

But here is the disturbing part: there seemed to be a possibility that I may actually have done some damage to Solleveld's arm. For most of my life, I didn't know the truth. I was, for some reason, under the impression that he possibly already had a bad arm, which I may or may not have made worse. But there was talk, some time after the fight, that he had had to go into hospital, and possibly even needed to have surgery on his arm.



I never tried to get at the truth. (Perhaps I didn't want to find out). I was left with practically a lifetime of guilty uncertainty. English schools of my era were not very big on yearbooks, reunions, and all the other nostalgia generators which are so characteristic of American schools and colleges. And besides, I emigrated to California when I was 21. So it wasn't until 2009, when I was 75, that for the first time I attended one of the rare reunions at that old school of mine in London. In the time between, I had never heard anything about Solleveld. But unexpectedly I found him there, at the reunion. Though still a little hesitant, I felt obliged to ask him if he remembered our fight, and if his arm had really been damaged.

To my amazement, although that incident had loomed so large in my memory for all those years, he said he had no recollection of it! – And about his arm, he simply said it was fine.

But, whatever the true story, that fight really was my last. Within a few years, I was making pacifist speeches in London's Hyde Park, and taking a stand as a Conscientious Objector to military service. And some time later, here in California, I was making a career of writing epigrams with messages like: "If forced to choose, I'd almost always rather eat than fight."



*Editor's Note: An obituary of the late David English, CBE, who sadly passed away last November, can be found towards the end of the magazine, on page 33.*

*His autobiography, Mad Dogs and the Englishman, published in 2002, is an entertaining read. He went to various schools in Hendon and the immediate locality. David's recollection of his time at Hendon County and a couple of other nearby schools, taken from his book, is worthy of this separate article.*

I loved my dad, although he tickled me unmercifully and sent me to Bell Lane Primary School at the age of four and a half. It was like entering the world of the Bash Street Kids. Quickly, I learnt the art of survival in the playground using the weapon of humour and mimicry to get me through the day.



On the playground wall were three chalk stumps. It was there that I had my first taste of cricket, bowling with a shabby tennis ball, batting with a piece of wood taken from an old orange box. Bell Lane's most famous old boy was Dennis Compton (who went on to be a real hero and one of the all-time greatest cricketers in the world) – so unbeknown to me, I was following in the footsteps of a real master.

At the age of five, my father plucked me away from the killing fields of Bell Lane and placed me in the sedate, safe haven of Alma White Junior Pillar of Fire College, tucked behind Brent Green ...

At the age of eight I left Alma White to enter the purple, black and white striped blazer brigade of Hendon Preparatory School. There I stood among future prime ministers and heart surgeons and those financial people who earn millions behind oak-beamed offices and chandeliered splendour. Dave English, an actor in

real life – I loved school for its theatre. Every lesson, among the inkwells and the Flashman feel of Latin declensions and French verbs, I would tell my gags and play the fool, ribbing the masters in their sports jackets with leather patches, *Educating Rita* prototypes. Every lesson was a performance and an opportunity to entertain my fellow conker champions and teachers alike. There's nothing like a challenge.



Every now and again, I would overstep the mark, and a well-aimed blackboard duster would arrest my show in mid-flow, especially from the geography master who had a lethal right arm.

Sometimes my cheek would land me in the study of Mr Williams, the handsome headmaster who resembled a cross between Gary Cooper and Gregory Peck. With a resigned sigh tinged with sadness, the head decreed, "I hear you've been up to your tricks again, English, I'm afraid it's the cane for you!"

I enjoyed Hendon Prep. I excelled at the arts and sports, though maths, physics and chemistry presented a mental block. Football, played in all weathers at Cophthall Playing Fields, was fantastic – and as for cricket, the magic web was already spun. I played in the First XI team and clearly recall hitting 105 not out, one fine summer's day. My best pals were Donald Grant, fêted by the boys because his dad had won the Monte Carlo Rally, and a boy called Tulloch, popular not least because, on the long trek home, his mother would invite us in for cream cakes ...

Hendon County Grammar School was not sheltered from the outside world, like Eton with its playing fields ... it was where the intelligentsia went to school, having earned their right to be educated by the best at no cost, just picked on merit.

In my class, the sixth form, was Geoffrey Tobias, now the world's number one brain surgeon, Stephen Solley, currently a High Court judge, Robert Earl, who went on to make millions with his Planet Hollywood restaurant chains, Grant Kriteman, a financial wizard, and Steven "Stodge" Kaye, a lovely 18-stone bloke with a lethal left foot and a heart of gold.

Once again I was quickly put on the right wing of the First XI football team. Every Saturday morning, we used to pile into Mickey Linn's massive Vauxhall and descend upon our pitch at Pursley Road to take on Orange Hill and the other elite grammar schools of the borough ...

Days at Hendon County flew by. I fell in love with Jackie Bass, the blonde hockey captain. The perfect girl, a combination of sexy and sporty, a titillating tomboy. I immersed myself in my studies, stimulated by the brains and wit of my classmates ...

Easter came, and crimson skies caught the yellow in the daffodil's eye. It was time to spring northwards to the frozen wastes of *Wuthering Heights* on our A-Level geography field trip. Overwhelmed with the exciting prospect of leave from academia, we piled into our school bus (a 12-seater transit van) and made for the M1. Past the Blue Boar café and Milton Keynes, through Northampton and the Midlands with its Brummie burr, and onwards to Yorkshire, proud land of the White Rose.

Packed into our transit van with our packed lunches, we went potty with excitement. Me and Archdeacon and Geraldine Harris with the fulsome figure and captivating perfume. The fragrant flower of youth, full-bodied and inviting. I marvelled at the breathtaking views of the valleys with their tapering chimneys and whole communities of terraced houses clinging onto hillsides ...

*[Caught red-handed in an act of indiscretion with Geraldine Harris, David goes on to describe what happened next.]*

Needless to say, all hell was let loose. The geography master phoned Headmaster E. W. Maynard Potts back at HQ. My geography adventure was curtailed, and I was sent home in disgrace on the train ... I went straight to school from Kings Cross station. My mum was waiting for me in Mr Potts' study. The old Beak with the hawk face and cloaked wingspan laid into me. Ever so eruditely, he accused me of "conduct extremely unbecoming" etc. "Scandalous, English! What have you got to say?" "One of those things, sir. It just felt right at the time." ... All this time my poor old mum sat there while I was berated by the Beak. Trial concluded, sentence: a severe warning. Apparently, the sports department gave Mr Potts a glowing report on my cricketing abilities: "couldn't afford to lose the school cricket captain."

It was almost 1964 when God decided my life should end. The final innings, D. S. English bowled by the fickle finger of fate for 17. As usual, I had dropped Jackie Bass off at Hendon Central station, and was running back to school along Queens Road. In the park across the way, a game of cricket was in progress. Without thinking, I darted out to cross the road ... and bang! I was flattened by a lorry driven by a West Indian gentleman called Ghose. End of life. End of story. Enter the Gates of Heaven to discover all these men with bonces like boiled eggs.

For when I came round, I found myself sitting in bed facing rows and rows of blokes with bald heads. Welcome to the Neurosurgery Ward of the Whittington Hospital, Highgate – second innings – D. S. English, fractured skull, 0 not out.

I was now a full-blooded member of *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. Back at Hendon County some people, including E. W. Maynard Potts, had thought I had got run over on purpose in order to escape taking my A-Levels. Just imagine such cynicism. Anyway, my tussle with Mr Ghose's lorry had terminated my education. Eight schools in all. For me, it had been eight wonderful wonders of the world – and now I was banged up in hospital. Bald and fractured, but the spirit hadn't flown, it still burned inside, ready to take me into the wide, wild wacky world and beyond.



News about the **Hendon Hub Redevelopment** scheme has featured prominently in the last two issues of the *Old Hendonian*.

Readers will recall the initial plans – mainly designed to provide student homes and facilities for Middlesex University on Barnet Council-owned sites in The Burroughs, Hendon – were first revealed in December 2020. The following July, after a consultation period, the Council voted to give the scheme the go-ahead, despite strong opposition from local residents and Hendon MP Matthew Offord among others. There followed an application to the High Court for judicial review by Richard Lecoat, with the support of a crowdfunding campaign. That was adjourned following the local elections in May 2022, and a request by the incoming Labour administration to have another look at the scheme in the light of residents' concerns.

On 19<sup>th</sup> July 2022, under the new administration, Barnet Council's Policy & Resources Committee voted not to pursue the formal adoption of The Burroughs & Middlesex University Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) – the document which served as the blueprint for the whole development. A key claim in the judicial review application had been that the SPD was unlawful.

Although the Council never formally admitted as much, perhaps they had been advised that the High Court could well rule against them on that count.

Mr Lecoat made the following statement afterwards:

“I am pleased that the Labour Council has recognised the need to withdraw the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD); I always contested that the SPD, created by the previous administration, grossly overstepped its bounds, to the point of being an unlawful document. I consider the Council's recent decision to be a clear validation of the legal merits of my challenge. That said, we should bear in mind that until such time as the claim for Judicial Review is formally settled it very much remains in force; it is my hope that the new Labour Council, having seen fit to take this action in the face of a potential judgement in my favour, will now settle the claim once and for all ... I also very much hope that they will then do the right thing and live up to their electoral promises by really listening to Hendon residents.”

The SPD was always a preliminary (albeit foundational) part of the planning process. The legal challenge was brought, prior to any individual planning applications being made, specifically against that document because it was felt that such a far-reaching and transformative plan should not be based upon a foundational document that was unlawful by its very nature.

In response to this and previous feedback, the Council has now agreed to retain the historic Hendon Library within the original Grade II-listed 1930s library building, which it is looking to expand, refurbish, and bring up to modern standards. The original proposal was to house a new business school within the building, moving the library elsewhere. This decision involves changes to some of the other elements of the plans, to include improved modern spaces in the new buildings for local charities to use; ensure all of the original Hendon Library will be for library and community uses; ensure the Meritage Centre community hall is also restored for all the community to use, and to provide a new retail space. A fresh consultation exercise for these new proposals ended in May, and revised planning applications should by now have been submitted.



This re-think surely makes sense. After all, the wider situation has significantly changed, both politically and economically. Original doubts about the financial viability of the project as a whole, and Middlesex University in particular, have since been compounded by the state of the post-pandemic economy, Brexit's impact on the higher education sector, and the cost of living crisis in which the UK currently finds itself. There are now two ways to keep abreast of developments online: the original, official website <https://hendonhub.co.uk/> and one set up by local residents <https://www.savehendon.org/> who are opposed to the scheme.

Plans for **radical new constituency boundaries** in the Borough of Barnet were shelved in revised proposals published last November by the Boundary Commission for England.

In 2021, it was suggested the Finchley and Golders Green seat could become Finchley and Muswell Hill – joined by a new constituency of Hendon and Golders Green – as boundaries were redrawn to ensure that the number of electors in each constituency was more equal than is currently the case; but this suggestion was not taken up.

The previous plan also included a Stanmore and Edgware constituency comprising six wards, Burnt Oak and Edgware, from the existing Hendon constituency. The new plans see the Hendon constituency remaining largely untouched other than the Edgwarebury ward, which is to be moved to Chipping Barnet.



*Votes being counted in Barnet*

The commission said it had taken into consideration many thousands of comments sent in during the public consultation, and had changed nearly half of its initial proposals based on this feedback.

Labour's parliamentary candidate for Hendon admitted "there is still more to do" to root out antisemitism from the party after his selection was confirmed last July.

**David Pinto-Duschinsky**, the son of a Holocaust survivor who came to the UK alone as a child refugee, will attempt to win the north London seat for Sir Keir Starmer's party at the next election, following a ballot of local members.

A management consultant, and a former adviser to Labour chancellor Alistair Darling, Pinto-Duschinsky stood against current Tory MP Matthew Offord at the 2019 election, losing to him by 4230 votes.

After his selection in a seat – believed to have the highest proportion of Jewish voters – was announced, Pinto-Duschinsky said: "It's an honour to have been selected to stand as Labour's parliamentary candidate for Hendon.

"I want to say thank you to the local Labour members for their support and for choosing me as the Labour candidate for Hendon at the next General Election.

"I'm completely focused on building a better future for Hendon and working tirelessly for local people on their priorities like providing real help with the cost of living crisis, rebuilding our NHS, tackling Hendon's housing crisis and cutting crime.

"And I'm committed to rooting antisemitism out of the Labour Party.

"For too long, Labour let the Jewish community down and allowed the poison of antisemitism to spread.

"Under Keir Starmer, we have made great progress but there is still more to do.

"I am totally dedicated to building a Labour Party that all can be proud to support."

Unfortunately, David's comments about the need to do more were borne out as recently as April, when his party had to suspend Diane Abbott – who had served as Shadow Home Secretary under Jeremy Corbyn – following antisemitic comments she included in a letter about racism which she wrote in response to an article in *The Observer* newspaper.

David's father Michael was born in Hungary in 1943, the son of a rabbi, who went on to become an expert in human rights and a senior consultant on constitutional affairs for the think-tank Policy Exchange.

Offord has been the MP for Hendon since 2010, and ahead of the last election said:

"I'm proud of my record of standing up for the Jewish community here in the Hendon constituency, and I will always do so."

Pinto-Duschinsky said Labour would be fighting the next election on economic growth to end the cost of living crisis.

"This will include our plan to buy, make and sell more in Britain, invest £28 billion a year to tackle the climate crisis and create the next generation of jobs," he added.

"This is an exciting challenge and I'll be fighting for every vote until the General Election."



New figures from the **Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency**, obtained by RADAR through a freedom of information request, show that learner drivers were waiting at least 24 weeks to take their driving test at **Hendon testing centre** as of the end of March 2022 – far exceeding the government's six-week target.

This was up from one week at the end of March 2020. The DVSA does not record the exact length of time for waits over 24 weeks, so the true figure could be higher.

As of the end of March last year, more than 500,000 people were waiting for a test across Britain – seven times the 70,000 waiting in March 2020, and up from 372,000 the previous year. The number of people waiting by test centre was not available.



In July 2022, Barnet Council leader Barry Rawlings was invited to lead a ground-breaking ceremony for the development.



Head of roads policy at the RAC, Nicholas Lyes, said: “There’s little doubt the pandemic has had an impact on practical driving test backlogs, though we’re encouraged that the DVSA is taking steps to get on top of this including offering overtime for instructors, as well as making tests available on weekends and over public holidays.

“The figures powerfully demonstrate the continuing strong demand from younger people to get their full driving licence, given the opportunities and freedom that come with driving.”

Across Britain, 123 driving test centres had waits of at least six months as of March 2022 – 38% of the country’s 324 testing sites.

Meanwhile, just 43 sites (13%) had waiting times of less than a month.

The DVSA said that it had since cut down waiting times, with 23% of test centres now having a wait of 24 weeks, and a further 23% within the target of six weeks as of November 2022 – although it could not provide figures on which centres had improved.

Chief executive of the DVSA, Loveday Ryder, said that it had taken “swift action” to tackle the impact of the pandemic.

However, she added that more than half of learners are still failing their tests, and urged them to check the “Ready to Pass” checklist available on the DVSA website.

Separate analysis by the RAC shows that more than 50,000 tests in the 12 months to March 2022 were taken by people who had already failed their test five times or more.

It said this may be driving up the backlog, as inexperienced learners take any test available for fear of missing out on a slot later on.

Work began in 2022 on the construction of affordable homes on the **Upper and Lower Fosters Estate** in Hendon, and is now well under way.

A total of 217 homes – including 75 extra care homes on the site of the old Cheshir House – will be built by The Hill Group on the estate, on the other side of Brent Street from Bell Lane, not far from the school.

Cllr Rawlings said: “The Fosters Estate is one part of Barnet borough’s ambitious housing delivery programme – the largest in the capital. We are building for and with our residents, respectful of our communities and proud of our heritage.

“To achieve this, we know we must work in partnership with residents, whether that’s on community-led regeneration, or co-design of local services, in order to deliver new affordable homes, new facilities, public spaces and places to be enjoyed by all.”

The council says the scheme was co-designed with residents, neighbours and community organisations to decide what to build, where and how.

Feedback means the estate will retain an “open park-like character” with new community spaces and amenities.

Under the partnership, Barnet Homes will manage 60 homes at London Affordable Rent on the council’s behalf for people on the borough’s waiting list and continue to manage the entire estate, which will include the 75 care homes.

Sage Homes will sell the remaining 82 shared ownership homes to part-rent / part-buy customers in the local area who can’t afford to buy on the open market.

To increase the number of affordable homes, Sage Homes invested £46.6 million in the scheme, and worked with the council to jointly secure a £7.32 million grant from the Greater London Authority (GLA).

Tim Mulvenna, chief executive of the Barnet Group, said: “We’re delighted to be working with Barnet Council, the GLA and Sage Homes and the Hill Group to be delivering much-needed high quality homes in Barnet.

“We have worked closely with existing residents at the estate to co-design the new homes, strengthening the community ties and enhancing the surrounding areas. This project further strengthens our home-building credentials.”

Simon Trice, Managing Director of the Hill Group, said: “We are delighted to be working in partnership with Barnet Homes to deliver these much needed affordable homes.

“We have extensive experience working in partnership to ensure the effective delivery of community-led estate regeneration projects, and are looking forward to utilising our skills to create high quality homes that benefit the local community for many generations.”

Not long before Christmas last year, the **RAF Museum** proudly announced it had been granted the Royal Charter in its 50<sup>th</sup> birthday year.

On 12<sup>th</sup> December 2022, the Representative Deputy Lieutenant for the London Borough of Barnet, Martin Russell, and the RAF Museum Chair, AVM Sir Stephen Hillier, formally unveiled the Royal Charter, which is now on public display in the newly refurbished entrance to the Hendon Museum’s Hangar 3 building.



The Royal Charter was granted by Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, who also officially opened the Museum in 1972.

“It is a great honour to have been granted a Royal Charter by Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. All the Museum team – trustees, staff and volunteers – are incredibly grateful for this recognition. We are inspired even further to fulfil our dual rôle as a National Museum and community resource and partner, collecting and sharing globally significant stories for and with everyone,” said Maggie Appleton, the Museum’s Chief Executive Officer.



A Royal Charter is a formal grant issued by a monarch which confers an independent legal personality on an organisation and defines its objectives, constitution and powers to govern its own affairs. Incorporation by Charter is a prestigious way of acquiring legal personality, and reflects the high status of that body. Only pre-eminent leaders in their field are granted this honour: Charter status provides an appropriate

governance structure for the future, and is an affirmation of the national importance of the Museum.

According to the Privy Council, there are now over one thousand Royal chartered bodies. The first ever organisation to receive a Royal Charter was the Weavers Company in 1155. Last year, the RAF Museum became the 1,038<sup>th</sup> company to receive their charter. Other famous fellow chartered bodies include the BBC, the British Red Cross and the Honourable Company of Air Pilots.

The Royal Charter was granted to the Museum in recognition of its objectives to educate and inform the public and members of the RAF about the history and traditions of the RAF; and the rôle of the RAF in relation to the armed forces of the realm, other air forces and aviation.

Applications for a Royal Charter take the form of a formal Petition to The Sovereign in Council. The Museum’s own petition included signatures from five previous RAF Chiefs of Air Staff , as well as the incumbent Air Chief Marshal Mike Wigston.

Original support was given by the Museum’s former Royal Patron, His Late Royal Highness Prince Philip.

A few days later – on 16<sup>th</sup> December, 2022 – the **Community Security Trust (CST)** was honoured to host His Majesty King Charles III at their North London headquarters in Hendon, where he was welcomed by chairman Gerald Ronson and deputy chairman, Sir Lloyd Dorfman, before meeting with many of the charity’s volunteers, staff and trustees.



The King viewed a self-defence training session, visited CST’s 24/7 security control centre, and was briefed on the full range of CST’s many activities, including support for the victims of antisemitism, expert online investigative research against terrorism, and the sharing of security advice with other faith and minority communities.

Ronson said: “The visit was a tribute to everything that CST does in protection of our Jewish communities.”

In March, **Barnet Council** approved a new tree policy, which includes plans to plant 5,000 trees in the borough by 2028.

The policy will guarantee the replacement of every tree felled by the council, and aims to create what it calls “a sustainable urban forest” for Barnet’s residents.

The council says that planting 1,000 trees a year for the next five years reflects its commitment to caring for people, places and the planet. More trees should also be a boon for the local ecosystem, attracting more wildlife. The policy builds on the progress the council has made in recent years to preserve and protect Barnet’s trees, drawing on scientific research and expert advice.

Increasing the number of trees will play a rôle in hitting an ambitious target for Barnet to be a net zero council by 2030 and borough by 2042.

The ongoing **Brent Cross Cricklewood regeneration programme** is one of the largest regeneration schemes in Europe, and is starting to transform the area.

Sustainability is a key part of the ambitions of all involved – and for Brent Cross Town, the development is at the heart of Barnet Council’s net zero programme mentioned above.



In January, together with partners Related Argent, Barnet Council unveiled a new artwork at Brent Cross Town with impressive green credentials. “Here we come, here we rise” was created by London-based artist, Lakwena, in collaboration with architects, IF\_DO. Funded by central government, the public artwork wraps around a sustainable electrical substation which, in future, will power all of Brent Cross Town within its control from 100% renewable sources.

The construction of the substation was also completed using structural steel salvaged from unused oil pipelines, reducing the amount of carbon released by over 40%.

Visit <https://transformingbx.co.uk/vision/sustainability/> to find out more.

Barnet Council leader, Barry Rawlings, has welcomed the Government’s announcement to award £29.5m of Levelling Up funding for the redevelopment of **Colindale Tube station**.

Colindale is one of London’s most deprived areas, and the redevelopment of the station will be central to enabling the building of 11,400 quality new homes for locals. Since 2011, Colindale’s population has grown by 70%, making the area around the station the second-fastest growing ward in London after the Stratford Olympic Park in Newham.



In its current state, the 1960s built station will reach passenger capacity by 2026. The redevelopment will increase the number of people the station can cope with and create step-free access, which will speed up journey times.

The Colindale station bid has been led by the Greater London Authority, and has received broad cross-party support.

Clr Rawlings said it will benefit tens of thousands of people: “The award ... is good news for those living at the sharp end of the cost-of-living crisis. The Colindale Tube station redevelopment scheme is precisely the kind of project Levelling Up should support, facilitating house building and spreading opportunity for so many living in one of the capital’s most deprived areas. Better transport links means better jobs and better pay.” Barnet Council is now working with Transport for London to ensure that construction on the station improvements can begin as quickly as possible this year. The pictures shown are artists’ impressions of how the new station will look.



# DAVID EADON MEETS...



## FOUR FROM 1958 – 1965 !



**K**en Sheringham, Dick Coldwell, Chris Kaufman and Grant Kriteam (pictured left to right above, after David) were all friends with each other at Hendon County Grammar School from 1958 to 1965. They have kept in touch ever since. Photos of some of their reunions have appeared in recent editions of the *Old Hendonian* ... but here is your chance to find out a bit more about the “people behind the faces” in this special bumper offering from David!



### ***Why was Hendon County so special to you as a student?***

**KEN:** What was special about the school was that it was a happily diverse community where firm – and as it turns out – lifelong friendships could be formed, including that with my wife, Flora, whose life and untimely death in 2021 was marked in last year’s magazine.

**DICK:** Hendon County acknowledged diversity, promoted high standards, and encouraged us to enjoy music, drama and sport. There was a lot of mixing of pupils from an assortment of social and religious backgrounds. Stories and jokes were shared and it was generally a lot of fun. I was fortunate to form several friendships which have lasted for the rest of my life, and groups of us still meet for a laugh, a meal and a chat. There were some very kind, clever, funny and remarkable people at school.

**CHRIS:** Made and kept many friends at Hendon County. It had a vitality which sprang from the diversity of students, excellence of teaching, and cross-fertilisation between them. Good facilities too, though I would have preferred that opportunity

also to have been available for children flung out of the academic pipeline by the 11-plus exams.

**GRANT:** I spent seven very happy years at Hendon County, where I made many friendships that still last to this day.

I met my wife at a party given by two school friends – we have been married for over 50 years with two children, one here in Suffolk and the other in California, and with six grandchildren ranging from 5 to 23 years old.

### ***Can you tell me about some of the more memorable staff members from your time at Hendon County?***

**KEN:** Mr (Jack) Driver – sharp but warm-hearted – was for me, as for many, a significant presence. In the classroom – I had only one lesson with him (covering an absent teacher) for which he chose a poem ('Une araignée dans la salle de bain') – he made French a language of emotion and subtlety rather than merely transaction. It lived.

Miss (Gertie) Stranz and Mr (Charlie) Western and their choir exchange visits to Berlin were remarkable, too.

Mr (Paddy) Murphy taught me maths in my O-Level year. His immaculate appearance was all part of the precision that characterised his teaching and, though maths has played little obvious part in my life, the methods he encouraged in us of confident, logical thinking have stayed with me.

Finally, though he may not be remembered by many with affection – he was by no means universally popular – Mr E. W. Maynard Potts, the Head, deserves credit. Schools like Hendon County don't just happen.

**DICK:** There were many memorable teachers at Hendon in the period 1958 – 65. Jack Driver was a brilliant teacher of French, who helped numbers of pupils to take O-Level French a year early, and so leave space for other subjects. He also was in charge of the school's soccer teams, giving up his Saturday mornings to travel to wherever they were playing. Dennis Dean and Robin Stallwood-Betts were very good history teachers who helped us learn how to think and analyse problems. Gertie Stranz, a very good chemistry teacher, set high standards in and outside the classroom.

**CHRIS:** Lucky to have particularly high quality teachers in Jack Driver, Jean Birkby and Gertie Stranz.

Quick-fire maths teacher Paddy Murphy ('how many inches in a foot?' – ans: '12'; 'how many feet in a yard?' – ans: '3'; 'how many feet in a shoe? Ans: '... er, 3? Sir?') gave me the grounding for tough negotiations in later years. A shout-out, too, for Mr O'Connell, who showed his faith by designating me 'fresh air monitor' responsible for wielding the long wooden pole that opened the top windows in the Physics classroom.

**GRANT:** I have many memories of so many staff, but I specifically remember Jack Driver, who encouraged me in both my school work and in sport. I also recall my many run-ins with 'Holy Joe', our RI teacher.

### ***Can you recall a particularly amusing incident from your time at Hendon County?***

**KEN:** There were many amusing incidents, none of them repeatable here!

**DICK:** Chemistry proved to be a place of interest and amusement. On one occasion the teacher, Gertie Stranz, had moved us all up to the front bench, where she was placing some sodium in water. Roger Painter, a member of our class who was not very tall, was at the back of the group straining his neck to see what he could, when Gertie said 'What do you see, Roger?' He replied: 'I can't see a sausage, Miss' to which she responded 'Roger, we're not looking for sausages'.

**CHRIS:** Music maestro Charlie Western took his celebrated school choir to perform at the Albert Hall. I was recruited for the exciting event – on condition I kept shtum and only mimed. I was needed to make up the numbers, but my youthful tones were considered discordant. However, regular participation in the 'Glory Halleluyah' chorus at Spurs, with school pal Mick Finer, developed my vocal cords. In time, I was able to boom menacingly as Schmitz in the *Fire Raisers* play at school. I am now doing Paul Robeson solos like *Go Down Moses* in the local Enfield in Song choir.

**GRANT:** I had so many interesting and amusing incidents during my time at school, involving some of the people I still see on a semi-regular basis, and also involving the late David English, never to be forgotten by so many of us.

One particularly amusing incident I recall was when two of us travelled up to Yorkshire to the geography field trip at Malham Tarn.

The minibus was full, so we travelled up there by train on our own, but armed with a bottle of gin. I'm sure it was a good journey!

### ***What made you decide to take up the career you did?***

**KEN:** I'm retired so don't have a present career – but I was an English teacher in a comprehensive school for about thirty years, and then taught basic literacy to adults as well as being an examiner in English Language at A-Level. I was also involved (occasionally) in the European Baccalaureate qualification.

I enjoyed the subject (still do); and the chance to lead others into finding the same kind of enjoyment, and developing in them ways to explore and articulate their own thoughts and feelings, was always something of a privilege.

**DICK:** I started work as a university lecturer in political science, worked as a senior manager in the power sector, was Director of the Electricity Consumers' Council, chaired a University Board of Governors for 12 years, and was subsequently appointed by the Secretary of State as a Board Member of the Higher Education Funding Council. Much of my work in both the power industry and universities was concerned with the relationship between Government and those institutions. It included many long-term strategic issues on energy and education which were challenging, vitally important and interesting – and were, I suppose, a key reason why I spent a large part of my working life focused on them.

**CHRIS:** I always believed trade unions were the first line of defence for working people, and gave them the chance to improve their lives. I became a union national official for nigh-on 40 years at the Transport and General Workers' Union, its successor Unite, and its predecessor the NUAAW.

I was also, and remain, a journalist. Having discovered at school English lessons some facility as a wordsmith, I spent many years editing the T&G's publications (and being the union's first 'spin doctor') including the *Landworker* and *T&G Record*. Currently I edit the *Country Standard*.

**GRANT:** My career plans were to follow my father to train and qualify as a Chartered Accountant and then to decide what to do with it. Forty-seven years later, I then decided that I had had enough of professional practice and retired, and in the last couple of years my wife and I have moved out of London to the calm of Suffolk.

***Was there a person who had a major influence on your career choice?***

**KEN:** At Hendon County, Mr Driver taught me most about teacher-pupil relationships and what being *in loco parentis* means, as a teacher.

I wouldn't say it was 'because' of him that I made teaching my career – but it would have been difficult to find a better 'role model'.

**DICK:** I was very fortunate to be taught by Dennis Dean, a history teacher at Hendon and later an academic at the Institute of Education, now part of University College London, and a place where I was a governor for some years. Peter Calvoceossi, who taught and advised me at both undergraduate and research level at university, was also a key influence. He had been a member of the British code-breakers at Bletchley Park during the Second World War, was a lawyer at the Nuremberg Trials, and later taught international politics. Both Messrs Dean and Calvoceossi led by example, and helped me to develop a base for my later work.

**CHRIS:** My parents had a major influence on my career path. East End, Jewish, communists who had fought Moseley's fascist blackshirts in the Battle of Cable Street. Trade unionists played a leading rôle in organising that resistance.

***In three words, how would your friends describe you?***

**KEN:** Better ask them ... the invitation to 'see ourselves as others see us' is one few will accept comfortably, I suspect. If pressed, I hope they'd say 'A good bloke'.

**DICK:** I shudder to think ... the three words that come to my mind are 'good tennis player.'

**CHRIS:** Friends could say 'sociable but independent.'

**GRANT:** How would my friends describe me? I don't know, but it can't be too badly as we are still friends after nearly 65 years.

***Sum up your time at the school in one sentence.***

**KEN:** Being a pupil at Hendon County Grammar School 1958 – 1965 was as stimulating as it was enjoyable.

**DICK:** School was a lot of fun and a wonderful introduction to many different subjects which helped me prepare for more advanced study, the world of work and having a good time.

**CHRIS:** School was a stimulating, structured environment in which to learn and interact with diverse pupils and teachers. Famed for its music, drama and sports, it taught me self-reliance and the ability to think on my feet. The memories and many friendships endure to this day. *[OK, so it's more than one sentence! – Ed.]*

**GRANT:** I can honestly say that Hendon County had a huge influence on my life, and I am very grateful for it.

***Thank you, Ken, Dick, Chris, and Grant,  
for giving up your time for our Old Hendonian readers!***

## REG BECKLEY REMEMBERS



1942 – 1948

### WARTIME STARDOM

**A**t the end of school in Summer 1944, I was sent to live with my grandparents in Blyth, Northumberland, to escape the V1 (“Doodlebug”) raids. However, the advances made since D-Day diminished the threat considerably – so I returned home for the start of term, only to be treated to two surprises.

The first: my mates, as usual playing street cricket with a lamp post as a wicket, exclaimed: “Why have you come home? We’ve got Rockets now!” Yes – the V2 raids had started ... and the very next Sunday, one exploded behind the Prince Albert pub in Golders Green.

The second: on the mat was a letter from Miss Munt, the English teacher and producer of the Spring school play, Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* in which I had played Puck, explaining that J. Arthur Rank was carrying out a nationwide search for prospects to play the part of the young “Pip” for the forthcoming movie of Dickens’ *Great Expectations* – and that surely I should give it a try?

So, a few days later, I duly made the “Tube” trip to the old Victorian Lyric theatre in Hammersmith. I climbed a seemingly endless flight of stairs to the topmost gallery. There “in the Gods” was a lady sitting at a very small table with a solitary light illuminating a photograph. I don’t think I had said anything before she said “I’m sorry, but you don’t look anything like John Mills!”

Dreams of stardom dashed, I didn’t step on stage for another forty years ...

# MEDICAL MUSINGS



**YEN YEE CHONG (1972 – 1979)**

## **Personal honesty and integrity: why it mattered at Hendon**

**T**his is a salute to great, principled and brave people in Hendon School, both the WW2 and post-WW2 generations.

I'd say the local "3M" Hendon doctors (as called by Alan Freedman): Dr Musgrave, Dr Minnis, Dr Marshall provided the highest standard of GP doctor service for the local community. It's a high quality level of healthcare that remains unsurpassed.



Sometimes I get asked in my Chinese TCM-Shiatsu medical work: "What makes a great doctor?" and I would reply – Dedication. This may be lost in our modern anonymous Internet world, where healthcare is now on-line and hands-off.

The 3M doctors were an integral part of the community: they knew and treated your brothers, sisters and parents. They'd give you a thorough 20-minute examination of your ears, throat, lungs, blood pulse etc. and be diligent. Nowadays, a NHS doctor's "consultation" can be a two-minute discussion over the phone – great to report, but nothing substantial done. 3Ms were not locum doctors under agency rates to work two or three days in your GP clinic. After decades of faithful service in Hendon community healthcare, they retired on a pension – there was no glory, just loyal public service.

Similarly, when you examine the rows of Hendon School teachers, we had human integrity and public service here. A few quiet WW2 heroes in Hendon: Eddie Blow taught French, but fought as a WW2 Desert Rat and evaded death fighting in Normandy killing-fields. Dr Hans Freund taught German, and fought alongside the Allies in the South African Army. Peter Tweedie taught Religious Studies, and served on HMS Hood in the late 1930s. HMS Hood was blown up by the Bismarck: three crew survived, 1,500 dead. Gertie Stranz taught Chemistry, and her father escaped imprisonment in a German concentration camp; to her credit, she bore no ill-will – instead, she took Hendon School choir members to Berlin to

cement international UK-Germany links post-WW2. PE teachers Dave Dee and John Owen pushed us in sub-zero Hendon temperatures to be physically strong.

I do believe that the post-WW2 generation of Mike Brown, Eddie Oatley and Steve Dresner had personal integrity in their DNA; I consider their dedication to teaching at Hendon unparalleled. So, I'd like to say a big thanks to the Greatest Generation of teachers and doctors in Hendon.

Nowadays, hearing the words “politician” and “integrity” – you have an oxymoron or contradiction in terms. That's the devaluation of public service under the Triumvirate world rule of Vladimir Putin, Donald Trump, Boris Johnson – VladiDoBor generation of leaders pushing their “alternative truth” versions of elastic (dis)honesty. Our economics teachers (Messrs Brown and McVernon) were savvy enough to understand the usefulness of lying and fraud when you're trying to become a political leader.



So ... where does this moral vacuum leave the next generations in Hendon School destined for the Big World outside?

I think personal integrity is still critical in our personal and professional lives. These values seemed lost in 10 Downing Street during secret boozy parties, while the nation was confined in Covid lockdown. Is it possible to show the next generations that these moral values matter? Personal integrity, taught by Dave Honney in English, or Gertie Stranz in Chemistry, and many Hendon teachers, were instilling strong social morals for ages. Sure, some schoolkids fell by the wayside; let's face it, when you're a 12-year-old kid, you have to follow someone, maybe flaky. People are shaped by the millisecond on Social Media these days – how fickle and unreliable these morals are in your future. The concept of personal integrity is really confused amid a flurry of Instagrams, Tweets and rumours, but preaching morality in the pulpit falls down once the curtains are lifted.

Mike Brown in Hendon intimated that real life is complex and there'll be occasional temptations or false steps along your way, while Eddie Oatley warned us to “have your wits about you!” How true. The 3M Hendon doctors represented honest,



dedicated healthcare. Today's two-minute NHS doctor's phone “consultation” or the physio refusing to touch the patient cannot even compare. The 3M doctors' expert commentary could have been: “It's healthcare, but not as we know it, lad.”

So, falling NHS standards, difficulties recruiting staff, nurses' strike, massive problems funding – is it the end of the NHS? Actually, for a socialist healthcare experiment founded in 1948, it's very successful and a role model for many countries.

Yet, the government rules the NHS as its paymaster, but the NHS is not 100% state-owned.

- LSE stated that in 2018/19 (pre-Covid era), the amount spent by NHS England on the independent sector was around 26% of total expenditure. <sup>1</sup>
- PFI (Private Finance Initiative) debt for the British taxpayer is more than £300bn for infrastructure projects. <sup>2</sup>



So? Higher public healthcare costs balanced against maintaining NHS dedication to public health remains a painful calculus – irrespective of political leanings. Prof Roy Porter documented: UK “since 1979, rightist governments have steered medical services towards market arrangements ... in Britain, the risk of American-style inequities will increase substantially if neo-liberal governments allow purchasers of private health insurance to reduce their state contributions, or continue to erode the boundaries between private and public sectors.” <sup>3</sup>

When you're PM Boris Johnson running the nation and NHS, it seemed mighty profitable to sell the NHS patient dataset for £23m to a US 'spy tech' company Palantir. What for? USA leads the way in AI computer systems that mine knowledge bases for human expert-type answers. Thus, future NHS doctor “consultations” will come from the expert AI computer to the patient. It's a sad state of technology that I think would make the 3M doctors cry. <sup>4</sup>



It is also hardly in keeping with the Hendon School Latin motto: *Omnia discendo vinces* (“By learning you will conquer everything”).

My fear is that integrity and patient satisfaction with NHS will become low priorities under public budget and technology objectives. I read the medical news of wonder drugs helping suffering patients. But, Big Pharma companies serve shareholders first and community second.



Hendon teachers fought for freedom and democracy in WW2 battlefields, and taught us decent moral values. Bravery and personal integrity should not be empty words. Power, money and glory are top of the list of desires among VladiDoBor leaders and successors – who restrains them?

“The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.”

<sup>1</sup> “Flawed data? Why NHS spending on the independent sector may actually be much more than 7%” LSE BPP October 1st, 2019

<sup>2</sup> “The great PFI heist”, The Independent 16 Feb 2018

<sup>3</sup> “Cambridge Illustrated History: Medicine” Roy Porter, Ch. 9 “Controlling Medical Expenditure” 1996

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.opendemocracy.net/> - 22 September 2021

# LETTER FROM THE HEADTEACHER

RHONA POVEY



**Dear Old Hendonians and Friends,**

It is with great pleasure that I write to you in this edition of our Old Hendonian magazine.

Hendon School continues to be a very special place. Our students achieve so much, and their endless passion and love of learning are tremendously inspirational. Staff continue to work hard to support our young people, especially in coping with the current post-Covid world. They create exciting opportunities to enhance learning and promote our values of Believe, Achieve, Lead, Belong, within our inclusive and caring school community.

At the start of the academic year, Key Stage 3 students went on a trip to Belsize Square Synagogue to learn more about the Jewish religion and to deepen their understanding of the Holocaust. In Religious Education lessons, students had been learning about the events of the Holocaust with a specific focus on Warsaw, the ghettoisation of the Jewish people and the Warsaw uprising. The workshop at Belsize Square Synagogue has been a regular trip for many years, and students have appreciated the value and significance of the experience. An important part of the trip was a 'question and answer' session with the Rabbi at Belsize Square, whose explanations and stories about Judaism and the history of the Jewish people are fascinating and enlightening for everyone.



Following a workshop of presentations about aspects of Jewish life, including the importance of the Torah and an overview of the main Jewish festivals, students learned

about an individual victim's stories of the Holocaust which were brought to life through modern day hip-hop. The day included personal presentations from survivors and relatives of survivors of the Holocaust, and students were able to hear first-hand accounts of how the Holocaust affected lives. The day finished with students lighting candles for victims of the Holocaust and other genocides in a moving and solemn ritual of remembrance.



In February 2023, parents, students and staff were transported to the vibrant and colourful atmosphere of Washington Heights in New York, with this year's school production of *In The Heights*, written by Lin-Manuel Miranda (who also wrote the award-winning show *Hamilton*). The musical focuses on a group of working-class people struggling to survive financially, who discover that someone in their tight-knit community has won the lottery. Following months of focused rehearsals, the students rose to the challenge magnificently, presenting the first musical that has been performed at Hendon in years, because of Covid restrictions. Behind the scenes, students demonstrated a dedication to performing, taking their free time after school and during lunch periods to rehearse and practise the myriad of songs and scenes necessary for the performance. Many other students and staff, particularly the Creative Arts Faculty Team, gave time to help behind the scenes, assisting with rehearsals, searching for props and costumes, and creating the fantastic sets. Parents and governors were tremendously impressed with the final production.

Now we are all looking forward to the next big production, which is planned for summer 2024.



Here and on the next page are some of the entries that our Year 9 art students created in response to the Mayor of London's Fourth Plinth school awards competition. A display of this work has been mounted in the C Block corridor.

The entries can also be seen online at:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/arts-and-culture/current-culture-projects/fourth-plinth-rafalgar-square/fourth-plinth-schools-awards-2023/fourth-plinth-schools-awards-2023-gallery?borough=43&school=8216>



In March this year, students from Year 12 (comprised of Careers-Ready and Health & Social Care students) were fortunate enough to have an opportunity to see Bupa HQ in central London. They had a tour of the building and an introductory talk about Bupa’s origins and the services they currently offer. They were also introduced to different people within the company – showcasing a range of career pathways / opportunities available to our students through internships, work placements and volunteering schemes. Seeing the London skyline from their rooftop terrace was an additional bonus! The workplace visit was a great success, and incredibly informative and valuable for the students!



Our sports teams have done exceedingly well this year. After finishing first in their pool this year, the Senior netball team attended the Barnet play-offs in March, involving playing the winners of the other three pools: Ashmole, Compton and Mill Hill County. The girls played brilliantly, beating both Compton and Ashmole comfortably, and securing a draw against Mill Hill County. After some fantastic displays of netball, the girls were awarded the title of ‘Barnet Champions of Senior Netball’ for the second year in a row.



Year 8 Sports leaders recently hosted the Barnet Primary & Secondary New Age Kurling event at Burnt Oak Leisure Centre. The students received training in the morning in how to lead and officiate the tournament. Despite being new to the sport, the leaders were phenomenal, and received much positive feedback from schools involved in the tournament. They led by example, and were great role models to the primary school children.

As part of the PE celebration of International Women's Day, we had a visit from Paralympic Athlete Hope Gordon. Students worked with her in a fitness session designed to test physical resilience, and then took part in a workshop in which they had the opportunity to ask questions about her journey to the Paralympics.



16 students from Year 8 travelled to the Redbridge Inspire Festival, and their behaviour and engagement were commendable throughout. They had the opportunity to participate in the cricket, ultimate frisbee, handball, boxing, skateboarding and Abula. It was a great day out, with everyone enjoying themselves and picking up some new, less common sports.



In March, our dance students represented Hendon School at the Barnet Dance festival. It was an incredible experience to be involved in, and our students demonstrated a high level of dedication and commitment. Our pieces this year included students involved in the Key Stage 5 exam street dance piece. Our students were highly commended for their dance skills and the sophistication of their dynamic performances.

We have celebrated British Science Week this year, by focussing on the theme of Connections. Key Stage 3 students participated in a STEM project during their science lessons, where they were encouraged to work collaboratively and think of practical solutions to modern day problems. Year 7 focussed on optimising the best crystals for use in computing and beyond, Year 8 designed their own profitable eco-farms, and Year 9 took part in a global experiment to help solve the pressing issue of energy sources by investigating batteries and wind turbines. Additional lunchtime and after-school activities included a magnetic challenge, creating balloon molecules, and an opportunity to embroider a nerve cell.



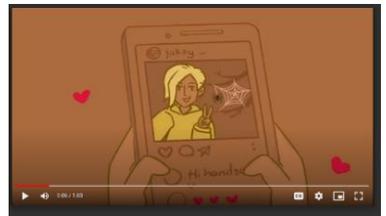
Year 12 and 13 A-Level physics students went on a trip to Geneva, Switzerland, where they were lucky enough to visit CERN, the European organisation for nuclear research, which operates the world's largest particle physics laboratory. They visited CERN Globe of Science and Innovation, where projects and

inventions that led to the particle accelerator are kept, before walking to the LHC (Large Hadron Collider). They were amazed by the size of the particle accelerator (which weighed over 13,000 tonnes) and the engineering that was needed to create this.



Our A-Level Science students have also been working with students at Bell Lane Primary School to share the fun and excitement that is ... Science! Sessions introduced primary students to the science that comes into play when building a bridge, making cheese with just a lemon, milk and a Bunsen burner, chromatography, and why water is able to cause ink to move up a piece of paper – and finally, making a rocket with Alka-Seltzer and water. Our A-Level students showed fantastic leadership skills, and the primary students really enjoyed their science adventure.

As part of careers week, a third year BA student in 2D Animation at Middlesex University visited our Photography Department to speak to Year 12 A-Level and Year 11 GCSE students. He presented his own animation clips in an engaging manner and explained the design process, speaking about the rigours of the degree course. He was very passionate (animated!) about his chosen career, providing our students with an insight into the animation industry.

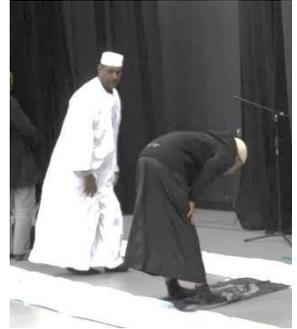




This year, we hosted our first Community Iftar for over 300 people. Muslims and non-Muslims alike came together to break their fast and share a meal. As well as staff, students and their families, we were also joined by some asylum seekers living in local hotels. Iftar is the name of the main meal eaten by Muslims at sunset to break their fast during the holy month of Ramadan. Muslims fast for 28/29 days from sunrise to sunset.



Our students worked hard to organise the Iftar and to produce hundreds of stars, moons and lanterns to decorate the school. Most of the food was donated by a local philanthropist, who organised meals from a local catering company. Staff and students also prepared additional food and gift bags for the younger children who attended. The call to prayer was led by one of our Year 11 students. The evening was a great success, and we hope to repeat this event next year.



As part of World Book Day this year, we arranged a visit from the award-winning author Sita Brahmachari. Her workshop and talk were incredibly engaging and interactive, with many of our students telling us how useful and thought-provoking they found it. Students participated well and asked insightful questions. They showed their depth of knowledge and understanding of the importance of books and reading, and the author went away with a wonderful impression of our school. Her latest novel, *When Shadows Fall*, has been shortlisted for this year's Yoto Carnegie book award.

Our premises site development continues, and this year we have managed to replace the roof of the Old Block, which after many years had started to leak. This project has also given us the opportunity to clean up stone work, replace crumbling crenellations, and paint the pipework. Adding to the new school reception area, and re-surfaced front car park, the entrance to the school is now looking very smart and much more in keeping with its original presence.

Wishing you all health and happiness  
With kind regards

Rhona Povey - Headteacher



It is with heartfelt regret that we report the following deaths. Our sincere condolences and deepest sympathy go to all families and friends, together with grateful thanks to all who have provided information. If you would like to add anything for inclusion in a future issue, please contact your editor.

**Frank Williams (1946 – 1947)** passed away on 26<sup>th</sup> June, 2022, aged 90. He will always be remembered as the actor who played the archetypal, but perennially tetchy, vicar of Walmington-on-Sea in the classic BBC sitcom *Dad's Army*.

What follows is taken from his obituary published in *The Times* last year.

Frank had not watched any of the first two series of *Dad's Army* when he reported for duty to film the third series in 1969. He was to appear in a single episode, the first to be broadcast in colour, playing the slightly camp but tetchy Reverend Timothy Farthing. "I'd worked with both the writers, Jimmy Perry and David Croft, who also produced the show, before, so I didn't have to audition," he said. "It was a nice job, but I thought it was only ever going to be a one-off engagement." He ended up appearing in 39 of the 80 television episodes, which at one time were watched by up to 18 million people a week, as well as the original 1971 film adaptation, the stage show and 14 radio episodes. He also reprised his priestly rôle in the 2016 film starring Bill Nighy and Michael Gambon.

The Rev Farthing had a love of bell-ringing and enjoyed a drink or two, as was evidenced in his regularly thwarted attempts to order large glasses of whisky at the expense of his colleagues. Yet his main dramatic function was to engage in perpetual bickering with Arthur Lowe's bluff Captain Mainwaring, who was apt to commandeer the vicar's office and church hall in Walmington-on-Sea for his Home Guard platoon.

One of Williams's favourite episodes was *The Royal Train* (1973) in which he found himself with the ARP warden, the verger and the mayor (Bill Pertwee, Edward Sinclair and Fred McNaughton respectively) on a pump trolley being chased by a runaway train. "We didn't do health and safety much in those days, and it was a bit hazardous at times," he laughed. "At one point, the train seemed to be getting perilously close. We weren't sure the driver could see us, and I remember Bill suggesting that if it got any nearer it would be best to jump clear."

Williams, who unlike his character was genial and engaging in real life, attributed the longevity of *Dad's Army* to the quality of Croft and Perry's scripts. "Jimmy and David were also very clever with the casting; they took the actors' idiosyncrasies into account," he said. "The casting of Arthur Lowe as a slightly pompous grammar school man as the captain, along with John Le Mesurier as his public school sergeant, led to some great comedy."

He had fond memories of other members of the cast, including Arnold Ridley (Private Godfrey), who as a young man had written the play *The Ghost Train*, which

Frank had taken part in at school; John Laurie (Private Frazer), who had played all the great classical rôles and once told Perry tongue-in-cheek, "Now I become a household name doing this rubbish of yours"; and Ian Lavender (Frank Pike), "the stupid boy, who regularly did the *Times* crossword".



Frank, right, as the Rev. Timothy Farthing, with the verger Maurice Yeatman, played by Edward Sinclair

Most viewers adored his petulant character, though not all. He recalled one correspondent objecting to the episode *All is Safely Gathered In* (1972), in which everyone gets drunk at the harvest festival service, "asking how I could call myself a Christian". He also received requests from couples who, believing he was a genuine clergyman, asked him to officiate at their nuptials. "I suppose the rôle did typecast me," he said. "I appeared in one episode of *Hi-de-Hi!* as a vicar and then in *You Rang, M'Lord?* I was promoted to a bishop." He also played an archdeacon in a BBC adaptation of *Vanity Fair*.

The irony was that Frank, who gradually shifted from the evangelical outlook of his childhood to the Anglo-Catholic wing of the church, had once considered a priestly vocation. He was a member of All Saints, Margaret Street in Fitzrovia, and from 1985 to 2000 represented the London diocese on the General Synod, where he spoke against the ordination of women, arguing that it would be divisive, but urged the church to accept gay relationships, adding: "Homosexuality is not wrong between loving couples."

Frank John Williams was born in Edgware, north London, in 1931, the only child of Alice (née Myles) and her husband William Williams (known as Twice), a draper who retired early after coming into money. As a child he was known as John, only using Frank when he turned professional. "Neither of my parents were from theatrical backgrounds, and my interest in drama began with my friends and I performing plays in the living room in front of the family," he recalled.

On one occasion, he won a gnome at a funfair and began creating a “gnomes’ garden” at the end of the family garden, next to their fishpond. “The gnome who had a fishing rod stood there patiently for years, never catching anything, while his companions sat on their toadstools contemplating life,” he wrote in *Vicar to Dad’s Army* (with Chris Gidney, 2002).

After several prep schools, he was sent to board at Ardingly College, an Anglican school in West Sussex. This was during the Second World War, and he escaped from sports lessons by joining the school’s Land Army, though this was no more to his liking. He later switched to Hendon County School, closer to his parents.

Determined to be an actor, Frank persuaded his father to pay £30 to the small Gateway Theatre in London to employ him as an assistant stage manager. It was repaid to him at £2 a week, and after 15 weeks he was hired. He was soon picking up small rôles, making his debut in *The Insect Play* opposite Liz Smith.

In 1952 the Gateway produced his first play, *No Traveller*, about a man who has lost his memory. Half a dozen more plays followed, though none reached the West End. “I don’t really try hard enough to get them put on,” he confessed. During the 1950s he was working at the Palace Theatre, Watford, which was being run by Perry and his wife, Gilda, where his passion play, *The Substitute*, presenting the crucifixion in modern dress, was staged.

His television debut was in *The Call Up*, a dramatised documentary about six young men starting National Service, while his first film appearance was playing a cameraman in *The Extra Day* (1956). Before long, he was appearing in Norman Wisdom films including *The Square Peg* (1958). However, his big break came as a psychiatrist in *The Army Game*, an ITV sitcom about a dysfunctional group of National Servicemen that started in 1957. Later he played Captain Pocket, pictured here,



who takes over running the conscripts’ camp, recalling how “going out live meant it could be rather frightening at times”.

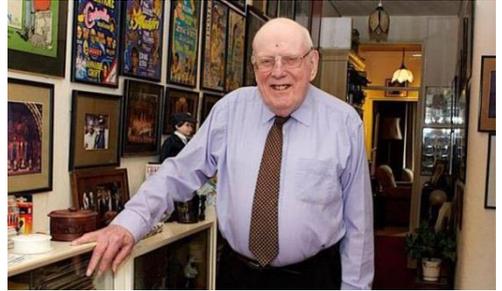
He went on to appear in the sitcom *Hugh and I* (1962 – 65) with Hugh Lloyd and Terry Scott, and supported comedians such as Tommy Cooper, Charlie Drake and Jimmy

Tarback. Although he never made it to Hollywood, he did make *Oh! Heavenly Dog* (1980) with Omar Sharif and Jane Seymour, which had to be shot in Montreal because “the star was a dog and it couldn’t film here for quarantine reasons”.

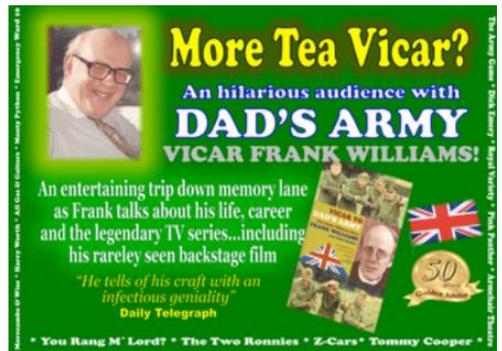
In the 1980s he switched to Shakespeare, taking small parts in two BBC productions, *The Comedy of Errors* and *Love’s Labour’s Lost*. Later he was Quince in Jonathan Miller’s production of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* at the Almeida Theatre in London. While he

might have wished for weightier parts, his slightly camp persona, prominent spectacles and face with panic written all over it meant that, away from sitcom, he was destined to spend many seasons in pantomime, often as the dame.

Things were different overseas. He was “treated almost like royalty” while touring with Derek Nimmo in Hong Kong, China and Singapore, while in Vienna he appeared at the English Theatre, noting wryly: “I can play straight rôles there because the audience don’t know *Dad’s Army*, and so they were able to take me seriously.”



Frank lived with the actor Ronnie Grainge, who was in the *Dad’s Army* stage show and who survives him. Their terraced house in north London was covered with memorabilia, and he even had the original round glasses worn by Farthing in *Dad’s Army*. Keen to keep the memories alive, he did some behind-the-scenes filming on a home movie camera in 1976. “I decided it would be fun to shoot some silly films of us when we were on tour, so it’s the cast relaxing before the show,” he said. He also helped to set up the Dad’s Army Appreciation Society, serving for many years as its president and attending events in Thetford, Norfolk, where the show’s location scenes were shot. The repeat fees provided a decent pension, and well into his ninth decade he was revelling in television nostalgia in stage shows such as *More Tea, Vicar?*



Even as his eyesight faded, Frank enjoyed repeats of *Dad’s Army*, laughing out loud at catchphrases such as “don’t panic, Mr Mainwaring”, “they don’t like it up ’em” and “stupid boy”. The beauty of the show, he

added, was it poked fun at the Home Guard without being cruel.

“There were one or two episodes where it’s clear it’s a serious business,” he said. “And the last episode (*Never Too Old*, broadcast on Remembrance Sunday, 1977) is quite moving. They all drink a toast to the Home Guard and you get this sense these funny old men would have died for their country if they had to.”

**Philip Churcher (1946 – 1954)** recalls:

A few years ago, I invited a lady friend from my club to a reception at the French Embassy, she responded by asking if I’d be interested in attending a film launch at BAFTA, I of course said “Yes”. Now before I explain how I came to be chatting to Frank Williams, I think I should tell you how I *think* the launch of a film takes place. You feel you have a sure-fire winner for a film, but you want to test the water before spending too much money. Equally, the investors you want to attract also want grounds for believing the film will be a success before giving you their money. So, you undertake a test launch. Whilst securing as much publicity as you can, you also film a few of the highlights. Also, if you can persuade well-known actors to give weight to the film by lending their names, you give them cameo parts which you show at the launch. Frank Williams was one of the ageing “heavies”, along with Peter O’Toole and a couple whose names I can’t recall. As far as I can remember, the film was about a young Arab girl in sackcloth who spent her time trying to convert Roman soldiers to Christianity. I distinctly remember Frank Williams in his cameo part, resplendent in a Roman Toga.

Following a business meeting, unintentionally, I turn up looking every part the potential investor. I am greeted warmly at the door, a glass of champagne is thrust into my hand, and I am given a tour. After a while I catch a glimpse of Frank Williams in a corner. “You must excuse me, I must have a word with Frank Williams”.

“Oh, you know him?” “Yes, I wish to renew our acquaintance”. As I approach, two minders move swiftly into place to block my path. I speak loudly over their heads: “I don’t wish to talk about the film but of Mr Potts and Hendon County”. “Oh, dear old Potty”. With a nod, the minders move to one side. For a while we speak of our time at Hendon County, of our experiences and of the teachers. After a while he whispers, “You must excuse me, I’m here to work”. We shake hands and I drift away. At that moment, we are invited to take our seats in order to see the film.

Following the film, we are invited back to the reception to enjoy more champagne. My lady friend is engaged deep in conversation, so I look around for someone to talk to. There is a large gathering in the centre of the room, so I make my way towards it and push my way through to a beautiful girl in the middle, who appears to be receiving obeisance from an adoring audience.

“Hello” I say brightly, “Who are you and what do you do?” For a moment, there is a stunned silence followed by a communal intake of breath. Someone whispers, “She’s the star, you fool!”. “Oh!” I say, “I’m so sorry, I

didn’t recognise you out of sackcloth”. She turns with a smile, puts an arm round my waist, her head on my shoulder and says “You’re lovely, just like my grandad”. We all roar with laughter, the tension is broken, and everyone relaxes.

**Christopher Gunning (1955 – 1962)** – multi award-winning composer of concert works and music for films and television – passed away on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2023, aged 78.

What follows is taken from his obituary published in *The Guardian* – with the added bonus that clicking on the links shown below, in blue underlined text, will take you to the related online recordings if you are reading the electronic (PDF) version of the magazine.

Christopher operated with equal assurance in both the film and television world and the classical symphonic tradition. The music for which he is most widely known is that for ITV’s long-running series Agatha Christie’s *Poirot*, starring David Suchet, for which he won a Bafta award in 1989, and he created incidental music for about 40 of the episodes.

Christopher recalled that he wrote three candidate melodies for the ubiquitous [signature tune](#) for the producer Brian Eastman to consider; the third option was picked as best, combining the spirit of the late 1920s and 1930s with the slightly darker side of the Belgian detective’s character. The theme was played by the jazz saxophonist Stan Sulzmann in numerous variations across the series.



In the 1970s Christopher had found success writing music for advertising, including the global [Martini campaign](#) (“the Right One”), for which he won three Clio awards, and [Black Magic](#) chocolates. From the

1980s to 2014, he composed music for many successful TV productions and films.

On the small screen, alongside *Poirot*, these included [Porterhouse Blue](#) (1987), [Middlemarch](#) (1994) – he won a Bafta for each – Dennis Potter’s final dramas *Karaoke* and [Cold Lazarus](#) (1996), and the gardening-and-murder series *Rosemary and Thyme* (2003 – 2006).

He wrote the music for the features [When the Whales Came](#) (1989, the filming of which he had stumbled across while on a family holiday in the Isles of Scilly), [Firelight](#) (1997), and the Édith Piaf biopic [La Môme](#), also known as *La Vie en Rose* (2008), winning his fourth Bafta as well as a Czech Lion award. Christopher’s final film score was for the controversial *Grace of Monaco* (2014), after which he concentrated on writing concert music in the classical tradition, his first love as a composer.

He had been producing works for live performance since the 1980s, whether children’s operas – *Rainbow Planet* (1983); *Aunt Vita* (1997) – piano preludes, a string quartet (1997, revised in 2005) and the symphonic portrait [Yorkshire Glory](#) (1989), commissioned by Yorkshire Television for an unnarrated documentary (the score recorded by the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra).

His breakthrough concert work was the 1998 saxophone concerto *On Hungerford Bridge*, recorded by John Harle to notable critical acclaim. This was the first of ten concertos, including works for piano (2001), clarinet (2009), flute (2010), plus the single-movement *Spirit of the Mountain*, (2014), guitar (2011), violin (2012, plus a Poirot Fantasy from the same year) and cello (2013).

His 2009 [Oboe Concerto](#) was written for and recorded by his oboist daughter, Verity. Other works included several orchestral poems – *Storm* (2002), *Night Voyage* (2012), and *Birdflight* (2016) – inspired by the natural world, concern for which was a constant throughout his life, whether in music or tending his garden.

His most significant lasting contribution to the concert repertoire, however, was his sequence of thirteen symphonies, the [first](#) in a single, pastoral-dramatic movement composed in 2001, and No 13 completed in 2020. Most have been recorded, by various labels, two of the finest being the single-movement [No 10](#) (2016), in which his high regard for the music of Sibelius can be felt without ever sounding like the Finnish master, and [No 12](#) (2018), a rare example of a truly convincingly structured two-movement symphony.

The picture opposite shows him rehearsing for Concert for Care at the Royal Albert Hall in 2010.

Born in Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, Christopher was the son of Alexis, a South African-born pianist and teacher, and Janet (née Bennett), who had been Alexis’s pupil; the family later moved to Hendon.

Growing up with his older brother and sister in a small semi-detached house surrounded by music, Christopher began composing at an early age, even before he could properly read music.



He was educated at Hendon County Grammar School and went on to study composition, piano and percussion at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, where his tutors included Sir Richard Rodney Bennett, Edmund Rubbra, and the musicologist Brian Trowell.

Christopher’s broad approach to composition followed Bennett’s example, whose works included three symphonies and a piano concerto, plus the hugely successful score for *Murder on the Orient Express*; he was also a noted jazz pianist. When Christopher was in his twenties, the pair collaborated on the music for the 1971 film *Nicholas and Alexandra*.

Christopher held no formal academic teaching posts, but was an outspoken champion for composers’ rights within the Performing Rights Society. In addition to his Baftas, he won three Ivor Novello awards, for *Under Suspicion* (1991), the TV mini-series *Rebecca* (1997) and *Firelight*.

In 1974, Christopher married Annie Farrow, then managing director of the Air-Edel music agency, with whom he had four daughters, Olivia, Pollyanna (a recorder player who appeared in recordings of her father’s music),

Verity and Chloë. The marriage was dissolved in 1999. In 2004, he married Svitlana Saienko.

He is survived by Svitlana, his four children and five grandchildren.



**Dr David English CBE (1962 – 1964)** – actor, writer, *bon vivant* and charity fundraiser who made a huge contribution to English cricket – died aged 76 on 12<sup>th</sup> November, 2022 having suffered a heart attack. The following is taken from obituaries which appeared in *The Times* and *The Guardian* a few days later. In his heyday in the 1980s, Ian Botham became the first English cricketer to have an entourage: a gofer-cum-minder, a few select team-mates, fishing pals and even one or two trusted pressmen. There was also a court jester, a talkative fellow known to the gang as “Loon”. This was David English, who arguably did as much as anyone to promote cricket in England over the next 30-odd years, except perhaps Botham himself.



His achievements came in two guises, both using the name Bunbury, a private joke, but also promotion for *Bunbury Tails*, his series of children’s books involving rabbits based on real cricketers (that was turned into an animated TV show by Channel 4 in 1992). David’s Bunbury XI played charity matches wherever there was a good cause that needed help. He had an astonishing array of contacts, and was utterly shameless in banging on at them until he got what he wanted, be it a donation or a celebrity appearance. And in 1987, he took over an ailing annual week-long tournament for under-15 boys run by the English Schools Cricket Association, after it ran out of money, and infused it with his energy and outsize personality. Under his aegis, an annual cohort of four regional teams produced more than a hundred England cricketers. Their number included not only the 2019 World Cup winners (see below) but nine of the England team that won the Ashes in 2005, including Michael Vaughan and Andrew Flintoff. David was sitting at home on the night of the England cricket team’s dramatic victory at Lord’s in the 2019 World Cup final when the phone rang. It was Joe Root on the line. After a few words with England’s star batsman, the wicket-keeper Jos Buttler spoke to David, followed by Ben Stokes, then other team members. “They were in the hotel and they had had a few Coca-

Colas,” David recalled. “They all passed the telephone around and said, ‘Dave, thanks for everything you did for us’.”

Ten of the starting XI in England’s World Cup-winning side had cut their teeth as junior players in David’s Bunbury Festival, and they never forgot his rôle in their development.

After talking to Root and the players after their 2019 victory, David took a call from Trevor Bayliss, the team’s Australian-born coach. Bayliss added his appreciation and told him that “the boys” often talked about how David had encouraged them and set them on their way. “That meant a lot. They are like an extended family for me,” David said proudly. “There’s a real satisfaction to having known them when they were 15 and watching them go through the ranks to the England team.”

David was born in London, to Joyce (née Scoffin) and Kenneth English, a musician turned advertising executive, who left home when David was a teenager. As a boy he went to eight different schools – including Bell Lane and Hendon County – and began to make his name in good-standard cricket for Finchley, partly as a surprisingly dour left-handed batsman – in life he rarely played the forward defensive – but more so as a dressing-room raconteur and an after-dinner speaker. This is an art which does not necessarily require adherence to the whole truth, and many who knew him well remain puzzled by aspects of his picaresque early life. Maybe, as recorded in his autobiography *Mad Dogs and the Englishman* (2002), he did, aged 19, snog Brigitte Bardot while her other half, Gunter Sachs, lurked nearby. And maybe he did teach Robert Redford to play cricket on the set of *A Bridge Too Far*, Richard Attenborough’s 1977 epic about the Battle of Arnhem. But it is harder to believe he voluntarily gave up a job running the recording arm of the impresario Robert Stigwood’s empire, carrying the grand title of president, to take his chance as a bit-part actor.

True, he did appear in *A Bridge Too Far*, but he was not one of the stars who studded it. He claimed to have been given a line as a wounded paratrooper, telling Laurence Olivier: “My boots are full of blood”. But even he admitted that took him 17 takes and did not make the final cut. The peak of his acting career was a Head and Shoulders advert.

Rock and Hollywood’s loss was cricket and charity’s gain, though David’s sources of income thereafter were not obvious. But Stigwood’s two star turns, the Bee Gees and Eric Clapton, remained part of David’s wide circle.

In 1982 he began promoting celebrity-based six-a-side games at Finchley in aid of cricketers’ benefits. Then the Bunbury road show moved towards more pressing needs, drawing big crowds to watch, say, Clapton batting with a Cowdrey and Bill Wyman chain-smoking in the slips, on behalf of organisations such as Childline and Make a Wish.

Perhaps the most grateful beneficiaries of all were the Bunbury boys from the schools' festivals. The graduates from that cricketing hothouse remembered not only the boost it gave their career but also the old-fashioned fun. The annual highlight was the trip to the nearest Nando's for a night of English-led karaoke and japes, such as the teenage Ben Stokes pouring piri-piri into Joe Root's Coca-Cola.

David, who became known as the "godfather of English cricket", aimed not only to impart cricketing wisdom but also to offer lessons in life to his teenage charges. "At that age you are not a child but you are not an adult. You are faintly worldly-wise, but still peeping over the Coca-Cola cans," he said. "I taught them at the festival to relax and have fun along the way."



For his services to cricket and charity, David was appointed MBE in 2003, advanced to CBE in 2010. By 2018, his access to sponsorship began to fade, and the event fell into the hands of the England and Wales Cricket Board. But the day after he died, the England players in the World Twenty20 final wore black armbands in his honour.

He would have loved their triumph and the celebrations that followed. And the fact that they cared enough to mourn cricket's own enigmatic master of the revels. David married Robyn Dunkley in 1992; they divorced four years later. He is survived by their children, Amy and David Jr, and his partner, Lia Lanaja.

Perhaps it is best to leave the final words to David himself. Here is how he opened his autobiography: "He is a disturbing influence on all ages of the school. His act of innocence on being reproved has long failed to deceive us, if it ever did, and his desire for social pursuits is insatiable." (my final report, Hendon County Grammar School, September 1963, Headmaster E. W. Maynard Potts).

This message may have destroyed my father's confidence in my educational ability, but to me it was a tribute, one I'd like etched on my tombstone.

What if I wrote my own school report, now, nearly 40 years later? What would I say about myself? I'm not

sure who I am, really. I don't know if I've ever been myself. I've always felt alone, even when I'm with people; living in my own world, propelled on a wave through a timeless sea. Living from one moment to the next, driven by my instincts into a life of spontaneous combustion. It's funny how people either reminisce or look forward. They seem to neglect the present. Well, I live for the present, keeping an eye open for the chance, an opening, then whoosh, grab the opportunity, seize the moment because it may never come again ...

Every day I wake up enthusiastic, wanting to help others. To entertain them, to fulfil their dreams. I have always believed that fantasy can become reality. In fact, other people's fantasies have always seemed like reality to me. Believe me, everything in life is possible.

**Professor Peter Maitlis FRS (1945 – 1950)** passed away on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2022, aged 89. The following obituary appeared in *The Times* the following month. Peter Maitlis was an eminent chemist, author, fellow of the Royal Society, and a man of decided opinions who freely disparaged his own sartorial sense of style. Yet at faculty parties, dinners or in lecture halls, he had a secret weapon: his three daughters would choose his ties. Drab suits would be transformed by images of bright chilli peppers, gambolling lambs, marijuana leaves and chemical symbols. "He would always report back the next morning that the tie had been the talking point of the entire evening," said his daughter Emily, the broadcaster and former presenter of *Newsnight*. Peter had achieved distinction in his own field of organometallic chemistry, first as a young chemist at Cornell, Harvard and McMaster universities in the USA and Canada, and later at the University of Sheffield, for some 30 years. His main focus initially was on the study of palladium, the silver-white metal in the platinum group. In 1971 he had published what became his magnum opus, *The Organic Chemistry of Palladium*. The work informed the widespread use of palladium as a catalyst that helped to reduce alkenes and alkynes (forming the palladium-carbon covalent bond) in industrial processes involving hydrogen. Peter demonstrated that palladium could be used as a highly effective catalyst for fundamental reactions. He carried out joint research with companies such as BP and Johnson Matthey on chemical reactions that would make industrial processes more efficient, reduce waste by-products, and save distillation costs. His work also proved useful in the development of the "Cativa reaction", which is key to the production of acetic acid, used to treat ear infections. From the mid-1980s he focused on metallomesogens, a term he coined meaning "metal complexes of organic ligands (an ion or molecule attached to a metal atom) which exhibit liquid crystalline (mesomorphic) character".

Peter Michael Maitlis was born in Berlin in 1933, two weeks before Hitler came to power. His father Jacob was a Yiddish scholar of Polish origin. His mother was Judith (née Ebel), who came from a mercantile family.

Luckily, his mother relinquished her German citizenship to marry his father, which made it easier for the family to emigrate to Britain and escape antisemitic persecution in 1937.

Peter attended Hendon County School in north London. After leaving in 1950, he won a state scholarship to study chemistry at the University of Birmingham. He went on to do a PhD at Queen Mary College (QMC), University of London (now Queen Mary University of London), working under Professor Michael J S Dewar. An opera and art buff, Maitlis contributed articles for the student newspaper, *Sennet*, while rejecting the advances of its editor Jean Rook, who would go on to become a columnist known as the “Queen of Fleet Street” and one of the inspirations for *Private Eye*'s Glenda Slagg.

His lab at QMC was equally treacherous. “There was a significant accident virtually every month,” he recalled. “A fire because of lack of care with flammable solvents; an explosion because the quantities of reagents were not judged carefully enough. But no-one cared very much. The atmosphere in the lab was very macho: accidents and injuries were part of life, and the main thing was to get the experiment done and get the right result. And luckily, the Mile End Hospital was next door.”

Peter stayed on to lecture at QMC, and during this time he became engaged to Marion Basco, who was the sister of his fellow chemist and close friend Norman Basco. An Oxford French and Spanish graduate, she had become a teacher, and later retrained as a psychotherapist. When he proposed, she said yes on the condition that they travel to America. The couple married in 1959, and were soon sailing on the Queen Elizabeth as Maitlis undertook post-doctoral study at Cornell University, New York state, as a Fulbright Fellow (1960-1961). Peter moved on to become a research fellow at Harvard University (1961-1962). He then secured a permanent post at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, in 1962, which was becoming a centre of excellence in organochemistry.

With three young children, the couple returned to the UK in 1972, where Peter was appointed professor of chemistry at the University of Sheffield. McMaster tried to entice him to stay with the offer of more money. When that failed, the head of department Dick Tomlinson, a multimillionaire on account of family wealth, quipped: “Would you reconsider leaving if we cut your salary to match their offer?”

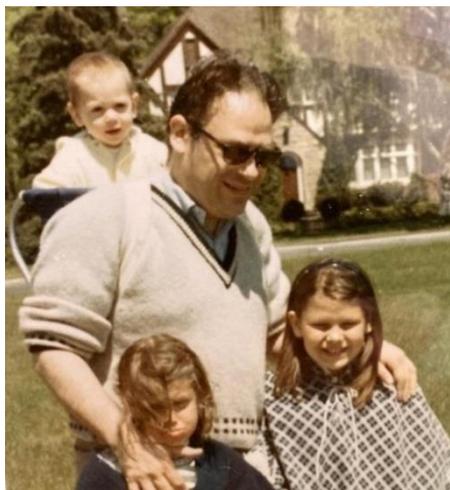
The Maitlises settled in the Peak District, perfect for Peter to co-opt his family on Sunday-morning hiking expeditions that, according to Emily, “always ended up muddier and lengthier than anyone had signed up to”. Arguments about who would get to sit in the front of the car were settled by Peter deciding who was the best map reader that day. “You had to earn your rite of passage to the front seat with Ordnance Survey literacy.”



He is survived by his wife Marion and their daughters: Niccola, a writer; Sally, a professor of organisational behaviour at Oxford University; and Emily. When the children were bored, he would produce a box full of giant plastic molecules and ask them to start making chemical structures. “Go and play with the molecules” became a regular refrain.

The Maitlises travelled the world attending organometallic events. In El Salvador, they stayed next door to the president's palace and witnessed a revolution. Visiting the Soviet Union in 1984, they smuggled in a banned Hebrew Bible hidden within a large hardback volume on the flora and fauna of England, and presented it to his friend, the chemist Mischa Tuvim. In Venezuela in 1991, they were asked to “chaperone” a young woman from post-revolution Iran, and helped her to buy a bikini and drink her first margarita.

Peter remained popular with his old students and was a wise counsellor to his protégés, but would also become increasingly cantankerous, with an ingenious solution for getting rid of visitors who had overstayed their welcome: he would excuse himself and reappear in his pyjamas.



A gifted linguist who was conversational in eight or nine languages, Peter kept abreast of current affairs to the end. “We would turn up for a gentle chat and find dad anxious to debate the new world of bitcoin, non-fungible tokens, Russia’s Swiftnet and the latest coup,” said Emily, who accredited her own “obsession” with current affairs to her father. “He would shush us before the pips on Radio 4 and before the bongos on the *Six O’Clock News*. There had to be silence before every headline.”

**Tony Marshall (1954 – 1957)** passed away aged 85 on 22<sup>nd</sup> August, 2022 after a long illness.

**Jim Ballantyne (1950 – 1957)** writes:

He was my brother-in-law and a classmate of mine at Hendon County School. Tony had moved to Hendon County from Harrow County due to his poor performance there, a fact that he would readily admit to. His performance at Hendon was equally undistinguished – but once again, Tony was quite prepared to admit to this, and indeed it became something of a family joke! Thus Tony was conscripted upon leaving school; but nevertheless Her Majesty’s Government recognised his potential and skills, and he was offered a commission, studying dentistry full-time at University College Hospital in London and with the rank of Captain. Upon completion of his dental course, he became an army dentist as part of the Royal Army Dental Corps. He was based for a time at Holywood Barracks, near Belfast (before the Troubles) and later at Frimley, near Aldershot. Upon completion of his commission, Tony left the forces and joined a dental practice in Wareham, Dorset. He remained there for some years before taking over a practice at Parley, not far from Poole, where he stayed for the remainder of his working career, becoming a popular and successful local family dentist. He remained loyal to the NHS throughout his working life.

Tony was an excellent raconteur, and would frequently entertain us with tales of army life. Family gatherings, and particularly Christmases, at their home near Wimborne were always great fun!

Tony was a very skilled craftsman, and set up his own small machine shop, complete with a lathe as well as a suite of woodworking machinery. He built his own sailing boat – not just a dinghy, but a boat that could sleep four. He also built a kit car, made all the fitted furniture for the family kitchen, built a garden railway and a fine long case (grandfather) clock, both the case and the movement.

He leaves a wife, a daughter and son, and two grandchildren, to whom we offer our condolences.



The photo opposite shows Tony at the track of the Wimborne and District Society of Model Engineers.

**Robin Weston (1944 – 1951)** passed away on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2022, aged 89. The following is taken from the eulogy read at his funeral.

Robin William Weston – known to most as Rob – was born on 12<sup>th</sup> April 1933 at home on a snowy Wednesday. He was the youngest of three boys – his older brothers being Peter and Reginald. He was convinced his mother was disappointed, as she wanted a girl and was going to call her Eleanor. He always said that she didn’t speak to him for weeks afterwards ... but how he would know that we don’t quite know! They lived in Lodge Road, Hendon, for many years, with Rob being evacuated to his cousin’s farm in Shillington during the war. Both of his brothers had been called up, as they were much older than him. Rob attended Hendon County Grammar School from the age of 11, achieving three A-Levels at 18, after which he was called up to National Service, spending two years in the RAF. He is third from left in the front row of this class photo.



Rob was a choirboy at St. Mary’s Church in Hendon until his voice broke, after which he became a server. It was through the church that he met the love of his life, Valerie, and they enjoyed 65 wonderful years of marriage which they celebrated in June last year.

Valerie always said it was Rob’s great sense of humour that attracted her to him – and he never stopped making her laugh. They spent their time at the church youth club, dancing and playing games. He was an absolute whizz at table tennis, and also represented his school at running.

His rôle in the church continued with his duties at St. Albans Abbey, where Val and Rob took great comfort in their worship and made many lifelong friends. Rob was chairman of the Congregational Giving Committee, and was one of the few lay people to give a sermon at the Abbey about stewardship.

Rob had a degree in banking. His career was spent with Midland Bank across a number of their branches in North London, and working his way up to become a branch manager. He was made redundant in 1990. He then joined a factoring company, working for them part-time until he retired at 65.

Rob was blessed with two wonderful children through adoption in Sarah and Paul, seeing them both marry their lifelong partners, Andrew and Jo. He spent many happy years making memories with his family, including time spent with his five wonderful grandchildren.

Rob and Val enjoyed 24 wonderful retirement years entertaining many of their friends. They went on no fewer than 25 cruises visiting 90 countries, and loved every moment of it.

Rob became an active member of Probus 20 years ago, taking on the rôle of honorary treasurer and eventually becoming the chairman. He will be remembered for his great leadership, his fantastic sense of humour, the many rôles he took on, and the many groups he enjoyed being part of.

Rob's interest in acting started when his school was chosen to provide extras for Terence Rattigan's *The Browning Version*, shot at Pinewood Studios, starring Michael Redgrave, Wilfrid Hyde-White and Jean Kent. Hendon County Grammar School spent several wonderful weeks filming there. He received expenses of 7/6d (38p) per day, a fortune to a teenager in 1951!

*[Robin wrote an article about this which can be found on page 79 of the school's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary brochure – the film itself is available to view on [YouTube](#) – Ed.]*

That experience was to begin a lifetime enjoyment of acting for Rob – first from school days, and then with the Breakaway Theatre company, and playing many rôles in the Shakespeare comedies staged in the open-air theatre at St. Albans School.

With panache, he played Long John Silver in *Treasure Island*, acted in the courtroom dramas in the old court rooms in St. Albans, and did the “Beating the Bounds” in costume every year. He played Scrooge, and was also Santa many times at parties and in children's schools, hopefully with rather different portrayals!

His most important rôle undoubtedly came with the staging of The Mystery Plays at St. Albans Abbey. He was chosen to play God, which involved going up high on the scaffolding in a great production while Val was front of house. He always said it was his “biggest part.” You couldn't go higher than that!

Out of interest, Val adds that her late brother Peter Williams, who was six years younger than Rob, also went to Hendon County. He became Head Boy, then went on to the London School of Economics. He did well for himself and forged out a successful career with 3M, becoming head of their European division.

**Robert Frank Stent (1957 – 1964)** passed away on 18<sup>th</sup> September, 2021 aged 75.

Your Editor has been sent the following:

Born in Edgware on 15<sup>th</sup> December, 1945, to two very loving, warm parents, Gladys and George, Robert had a happy childhood in Golders Green, exploring museums, art galleries, marvelling at scientific wonders – all the time, surrounded by a wonderful set of friends. Robert was very gifted, taking A-Levels in Chemistry, Physics, Zoology and Botany. Showing a prodigious talent in the natural sciences, it was no surprise when he graduated from Gonville and Caius in 1967 with a BA in Natural Sciences (awarded an MA in Natural Sciences in 1971), before heading to Chelsea College, London, to complete his Masters in Applied Hydrobiology, achieving a Mark of Distinction, which was awarded in 1973. It was a

little while after this that Robert met Marie. They married on 15<sup>th</sup> September, 1973 at St Andrew's Church in Thornton Heath, before moving to Godmanchester, Huntingdon, where Robert had a long and illustrious career as a hydrobiologist and in water quality; his final post was a Senior Environment Officer, advising on a number of highly significant EU Directives. In 1976, they had a daughter: Denise – highly sensitive with a creative spirit akin to her father's. Robert inspired his daughter and was a great teacher: not only in academia and the arts – even her love of reading, but more importantly, he provided his daughter with the ideal model to emulate. In 2003, Denise bore him a grandson, Andrew. Andrew brought Robert immense joy with his intelligent, lively conversation and fervent curiosity. Always eager to expand his knowledge of all things, Andrew showed a special interest in maths and science, engaging his grandfather with his unique perspectives and canny observations – not to mention his sharp wit and irreverent sense of humour. Andrew's many talents are matched only by his kind, gentle and loving nature. By the time Andrew received the exciting news that he had been offered a place reading Natural Sciences at Robinson College, Robert had reached the final few weeks of his long battle with pulmonary fibrosis. However, he leaves behind a lasting legacy in all the lives he touched, the knowledge that he imparted, his stunning works of art – but most of all, the immense love and joy he brought to the lives of his family and friends.

In Robert's own words, here is how he updated the “Class of 1957-1964” in time for their reunion in 2019: Marie worked as a quantity surveyor for many years. Our daughter Denise was born in 1976. She is an author and lives in the same very old (Roman) Cambridgeshire village as us with her husband John. We have one grandchild, Andrew, who is now sixteen, is a terrific kid (sorry, young man!), is totally brilliant and headed for a career in science. I enjoy living in the countryside and do not like big cities very much – which is just as well, as poor health prevents us from visiting them often these days. Over the years I am very conscious of how fortunate I have been with my family and friends, although too many people have passed away. May you all live long and prosper.

**Bryden Allen (1951 – 1958)** passed away on 9<sup>th</sup> February, 2023, not long before his 83<sup>rd</sup> birthday.

**Jonathan Marsh MBE (1953 – 1960)** – a fellow train-spotter – writes:

Bryden was born in Canberra, and came to the UK when his father, Professor Allen, was put in charge of the University College Observatory in Mill Hill. Bryden lived in Mill Hill, I was at his home many times, and we were in the same scout troop. His brothers Clabon who was two years older, and Russell who was two years younger, both went to HCGS as well. He got a first class honours degree at University College London, and returned to live in Australia in 1960. We lost touch then, and only found each other again in 2017. Bryden

became very well known for climbing, but had an accident and was in a wheelchair from around 2000. Here is a picture of us in Scotland in 1957, where we went on a three-week climbing trip. I am far left looking at the camera, Bryden standing next to me, and Clabon is the next but one after Bryden, they both wore glasses.



Bryden wrote an autobiography, from which Jonathan has sent in the following reminiscences: I went to my local grammar school called Hendon County, and I always felt it was a reasonably good school. Two of my brothers went there as well. It was a co-ed school, which I liked very much. At the end of my first year an incident occurred, which might give you an idea of one of the weaknesses of my nature. Our headmaster came down to our class and addressed us students on a very serious matter. He told us that he had received complaints from some of our parents of some sexual goings-on in our class-room, soon after our lessons were over for the day. So he was forced to investigate as to who was involved in the matter. So the headmaster decreed that everyone in our class had to write down who they thought were involved in the matter. So we all wrote our ideas as to who we thought were involved in these goings-on on a piece of paper, and we gave all these writings to the headmaster. The headmaster first read out all our replies. Then he spoke to us all and said. "Every sheet, bar one, contained two names: a guy called Jennings and a girl called Blondie. And often there are one or two other guys' names mentioned as well. The only sheet that did not name Jennings and Blondie is Allen's. You appear to be the only student who didn't know what was going on in your own class." So I was a bit humiliated by this whole episode. Eventually Blondie was expelled from our school. I thought this was terribly tough on Blondie. To me she always seemed to be a very nice, pleasant, friendly girl. To be expelled from your school, simply because the girl didn't object strongly enough, when some guys were putting their hands where they

shouldn't, seemed very unfair to me. But I am afraid life is always unfair – particularly when someone does not obey the customs of their age. If Blondie is still alive, I would like her to read what I have written here and how I would support her.

But now, of course, I must tell you how I progressed in my academic interests. (By chance, my change from Australia to England also corresponded with my change from my primary education to secondary education as well.) But I followed my natural way – so my progress tended to be a bit erratic – sometimes I would slack and then do very badly. Then the sheer shame of doing so badly forced me to really work. And then I did reasonably well. This erratic behaviour first occurred in the first term of my second year at Hendon County.

Then the term afterwards, I did very well indeed. To appreciate how dramatic this change was, you need to read the details of the two reports (please see below). After this, I was usually in the top three or four people of my year. So I was OK. Like many schools of my day, Hendon County took Maths and Science very seriously indeed. So I specialised in Pure Maths, Applied Maths, Physics and Chemistry. And I did OK in all these subjects. My results in History also show a little of my nature. I love reading about history, because I find it very illuminating to see how all our various civilisations have thrived and then usually have failed. So I have always enjoyed reading about it, and History was naturally one of my O-Level subjects. In the exam, in the year before our O-Level exams, I came top of my class in History. In the exam six months before, called the "mock" exam, I came third. But in my final O-Level exam, History was actually my worst subject.

Sometimes in a subject I can get bored and lose my passion. So then I can do very badly indeed. This boredom, and its resulting slackness, seems to be part of my rather erratic nature. According to my general academic results at school, there should have been a good chance of me getting into Oxford or Cambridge. I went to Oxford to take the entrance exam there. But I didn't get in. I stayed in one of those huge ancient rooms there, and I hated it. And I thought many undergraduates there then were painful in the extreme. I lost any enthusiasm to go there.

Jonathan has kindly gone on to add what was said of Bryden in his school reports, both from when he was in Form 2L. In the first, dated 10<sup>th</sup> December, 1952, his form master, a Mr Smith M.A., observed: "A disappointing term of work, greater effort required. Conduct Satisfactory." Mr Potts added "This is a disappointing report indicating weaknesses in work, neatness and temperament. I trust these defects will not be allowed to continue." But, by the following April, Mr Smith was saying: "Meteoric progress this term in six major subjects, congratulations. Conduct very good", and Mr Potts: "I wish all our pupils could deal with weaknesses in this most pleasing way".

**Barbara Berke, née Fagelston (1943 – 1948)** passed away on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2023, aged 92.

Her daughter Shura writes:

The younger sister of two brothers, one of whom was a twin, Barbara was born in London in 1930. She lived with her family in Stoke Newington until the advent of WW2, when in 1939, together with approximately 450 Jewish children, Barbara was evacuated to the English countryside, where she stayed and continued her education for another four years before returning with her brothers to London.

From childhood, Barbara enjoyed being outdoors and soaking up the sun. As a child she enjoyed cycling, and later in life, dancing. Throughout her life, Barbara would spend many happy hours reading and drinking tea in her back garden, and when she had the chance, she would venture further afield to enjoy the great outdoors.

A positive, energetic, active, giving and caring woman,



Barbara followed her passion of teaching. Inspired by her outstanding and devoted teachers, including those at Hendon County School, Barbara attended Easthampstead Teacher Training College, which she thoroughly enjoyed. Interestingly, she shirked off the advice of a certain school teacher who thought Barbara would not make a good teacher. To her credit, her ability, passion and devotion, Barbara succeeded in helping, motivating

and teaching scores of children to succeed ... and even the offspring of some of those children!

Through example, Barbara instilled in her students the importance of charity and helping those less fortunate. The piles and piles of thank-you cards and notes from the parents of her students are testament to her success as a teacher.

Barbara was a devoted wife of 64 years to Harry, a devoted mother / mother-in-law to their two children, Shura and David, and their respective spouses, and a devoted and hands-on grandmother to her seven grandchildren. Barbara loved the company of her family. She was well known in the local Jewish community, had a nucleus of friends, and was a regular at her local synagogue in Hendon.

For some 55 years, Barbara lived very close to the school, and was a valued friend and neighbour of your Editor, who attended her funeral. David and his family are even closer neighbours.

The following was included in Barbara's eulogy: She and Harry were very different in character, but mutually complementary (and indeed, complimentary too). As soon as they married they settled in Hendon, where they remained for the rest of their lives.

As well as teaching formally in local schools, Barbara would quite often give private tuition to boys and girls in need of a bit of extra help or support with their learning. One of her next door neighbours couldn't help noticing that children arriving at her house for lessons were anything but reluctant: they would run up her front path with smiles on their faces in excited anticipation. When chatting to your Editor about her time at Hendon County, Barbara had particularly fond memories of June Clake, the girls' PE teacher.

Finally...

**Brian Chignell (1943 – 1947)** died on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2022 in Poole Hospital, whilst visiting his family in Dorset, a place he loved.

## FROM THE SCHOOL ARCHIVIST

Your Archivist records grateful thanks to **Elizabeth Ackroyd née McCartney (1957 – 1964)**, for providing Old Hendonians Football Club memorabilia from her late brother John.

Many thanks, in addition, to everyone else who has provided digitised copies of material by email over the past twelve months.

Please send all communications to:

**Alan Freedman – Honorary Archivist to Hendon School**  
c/o Hendon School, Golders Rise, Hendon, London NW4 2HP  
[freedmana@hendonschool.co.uk](mailto:freedmana@hendonschool.co.uk)

*Alan Freedman*

# HENDON SCHOOL



*Photo:  
Frank Cooper*

**Hendon School, Golders Rise, Hendon, London, NW4 2HP**

**Co-Headteachers: Rhona Povey and Craig McGuire**

**Telephone: 020 8202 9004 / Fax: 020 8202 3341 / Email: [info@hendonschool.co.uk](mailto:info@hendonschool.co.uk)**

**Website: [www.hendonschool.co.uk](http://www.hendonschool.co.uk)**

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## THE OLD HENDONIAN

== INCORPORATING ==

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Editor: Alan Freedman

email: [freedmana@hendonschool.co.uk](mailto:freedmana@hendonschool.co.uk)

letters: care of the School

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