

# THE OLD Wellingburian NEWSLETTER

June 2020 | The Old Wellingburian Club | Est. 1897



## A message from the Club President

I am writing this in the middle of May, as the coronavirus emergency continues, although with some signs of an easing of the unprecedented lockdown which has affected OWs all around the world.

The School site has been closed since 20th March, and online learning has suddenly become the new norm. Your OW Club Committee met 'virtually' on 6th May, using Zoom, and we are committed to communicating effectively with you all during the emergency and beyond, and providing opportunities for OWs to communicate through social media such as LinkedIn and Facebook.

My theme for my term as OW Club President is Careers, and before the Lockdown I talked to several Sixth Formers about how we as OWs can help them. A key request was for a panel of OWs with different career backgrounds to meet with them for a discussion forum. Following the success of OW Dan Roan's visit to the School in late 2019, we will be seeking a date for this to take place as soon as is practicable, either face to face or virtually.

We are always keen to encourage younger OWs to become involved in the running of the Club. Through the OW

LinkedIn site last year we invited OWs to put their names forward if they were interested in serving as the Club's representatives on the School's Governing Body, and we were delighted to hear that Joe Smith (98-05, PS) and Rosie Turner (04-15, N) were subsequently elected.



Julian Amey

Regrettably the OW London Dinner which was planned to take place at the House of Lords on 20th March as part of the celebrations of the School's 425th Anniversary, had to be postponed, but we are pleased to announce it has been rescheduled to 19th March 2021.

The reports in this Newsletter cover key projects and events at the School, and meanwhile I would like to underline how the OW Club Committee will do all in our power to support our members at this difficult time. We very much look forward to receiving any suggestions you may have.

Julian Amey (57-67, G)



The School, 1957



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## Your Committee

**This year your Committee comprises**  
**Julian Amey (57-67, G) (President, 2019-20),**  
**Peter Crisp (73-83, Pl) (President-Elect, 2021-22),**  
**Garth Halestrap (56-60, St) (Past President),**  
**Richard Jackson (70-81, St) Treasurer),**  
**Neil Lyon (80-85, W), Simon Marriott (60-71, St),**  
**Alison Mitchell (91-98, W), Peter Phillips (54-65, Pa),**  
**Joe Smith (98-05, PS), Sophie Timms (82-92, W),**  
**Rosie Turner (05-14, N) and Debbie Whittemore,**  
**with Clive Westley (59-64, F) in attendance.**

## Are you on LinkedIn?

There are now more than 700 OWs on the "Wellingborough School – Old Wellingburians" network on LinkedIn. It is a great way of finding out what others are up to and where they work, and to read periodic posts from the Club.

## Aerial Photograph

The splendid aerial photo on the front page comes from the Terry Rice Collection. Taken in 1957, it shows the Biology laboratories under construction.

## The Class of 2014

June 2019 saw the Class of 2014 back at the School for their Five-Year Reunion, where they had the opportunity to catch up with friends and their old teachers, and see who is ageing well and who isn't.



The Class of 2014

## Honorary Membership

The Club is delighted to announce that the following people have accepted the offer of honorary membership, in recognition of their service to the Club and / or the School: Susan Barnhurst (appointed in 1999), Fiona Drye (2001), Claudine Elwyn (2003), Colin Evans (2014), Hazel Hodgson (2008), Janice Hooper-Roe (2002) and Martine Mannion (2004).

## The Class of 2015

Apologies to the 2015 Leavers for the fact that we have been unable to hold your Five-Year Reunion this year. We are planning to re-arrange this for the Family of Schools Day in the summer of 2021.



The Class of 2015



## **Graham Garrett (Headmaster, 1973 – 1993)**

Graham Garrett passed away in September 2019, aged 85. The middle of three brothers, he was educated at Alleyn's School in London, where he ended up as school captain, before gaining a Mathematics scholarship to Gonville and Caius

College, Cambridge. He then had three years in the Royal Navy (1952-55) as an instructor officer, and a short spell in industry. He joined the staff of Radley College in 1961, before being appointed to Shrewsbury School in 1964 as head of Mathematics and, three years later, as housemaster of School House.

In 1973, aged 39, he moved to Wellingborough with his wife Jill and their three children – Caroline, John and Alison – to take up his new appointment. It would not be long before he was christened "Plank". The Garrett era saw a succession of new buildings – the Modern Languages Block (1974), the Spencer Art Building (1974), the Overstone Building (1979), the Sports Hall (1983), Nevill House (1986) and the Gent Centre (1990). The playing fields were enlarged in 1982. The School benefitted from the abolition of the county's grammar schools in 1975 and the introduction of Assisted Places in 1981. The A Level pass rate rose from 65% to 97.3%. A major change came in 1979: Overstone Girls' School near Northampton closed suddenly, and the decision was made to become fully co-ed. The influx of girls more than offset the decline in boarding numbers.

GG was very much a hands-on headmaster, as anyone who saw his desk would verify, involving himself in

all aspects of school life. He led a sponsored walk to raise money for a new organ in the Chapel; he appeared in staff drama productions with great aplomb; and he enjoyed playing tennis with the indefatigable Jack Blake. He possessed the remarkable gift of giving time to everyone, from Shell former to governor, giving each person his whole attention, never looking over your shoulder in search of someone more important.

GG was very fortunate in being Headmaster at Wellingborough at a time when independent schools were booming; and Wellingborough was indeed fortunate in having GG at the helm. Working closely with the Governing Body and a supportive staff, he had the great support of his wife Jill at his side. Together they set a great example of practical Christian service. With his warm charm and his natural smile, he welded together an institution at ease with itself. Discipline was imposed from on high with a sense of compassion: suspending a pupil caught smoking or a group of boarders caught in a pub raid on a Saturday night would be conveyed with a sense of mild regret.

In July 1993 Graham and Jill retired to Cambridge, and his distinctive spidery handwriting on each pupil's end of term reports became a thing of the past. Trademark catchphrases such as "You've got to get it right" and "It's just not on" were consigned to the history books, ditto his reference to "long-haired skinheads". A busy and active retirement beckoned - working with the National Youth Orchestra and, with Jill, immersing themselves in the University of the Third Age, birdwatching and walking, and GG himself remaining an accomplished pianist. In 2008-2009 he served as President of the Old Wellingburian Club. In 2003 the School renamed the Teaching Block as the Garrett Building in his honour. Alas, the last seven years were blighted by the onset of Alzheimer's, but to the very end he was blessed with the love and support of Jill, their children and grandchildren, and many close friends.

Historians will hail GG as one of Wellingborough's greatest headmasters. And for those who knew him, he will be remembered for his kindness and his gentleness.



School Prefects, 1973-1974



School Prefects, 1992-1993



## The OW London Dinner

Well, what can one say? This year's London Dinner, scheduled for Friday 20th March at the House of Lords, was all set to be a triumphal moment in the School's 425th anniversary year. Hour upon hour of hard work had been put in by Club President Julian Amey and by Debbie Whittemore, all 120 tickets had been sold, and there was even a waiting list. And then came the Virus, and steadily everything unravelled to the point where the event had to be postponed – to Friday 19th March next year. Fingers crossed ...

## The London Drinks

Last November around 30 Young OWs gathered in Davy's Wine Bar off Pall Mall for drinks and a bite to eat. We were particularly delighted to welcome the retiring Deputy Head, Susan Barnhurst (1999-2019), and it was an opportunity for those present to say their farewells.

We have pencilled in this year's Drinks for Tuesday 1st December, and Debbie will email all the regular attendees nearer the time. If you have not been to this free networking event before and would like to be added to the mailing list, do please let Debbie know: [dw@wellingboroughschool.org](mailto:dw@wellingboroughschool.org).



Ellie Gough (09-13, M), Erin Shearer (11-13, W) and Sophie Bale (98-13, N)

## "Lovers of Learning"

Copies of Neil Lyon's illustrated history of the School, "Lovers of Learning" (2012) are available from the School, priced £10 plus P&P. With more than 450 images from the School Archives, this illustrated A-Z history is the perfect present for any occasion. Please contact Debbie at the School if you would like to order a copy.

## Murray Witham's slide collection

In last year's Newsletter we invited OWs to help the School raise the £3,000 needed to digitise Murray Witham's slide collection. Between 1954 and 1956 he took some 300 glass slides, capturing the daily life of the School on camera. We are indebted to the following who supported this Appeal: the late James Axe (53-63, W), Richard Barwick (53-57, Pl), Ian Millar (37-42, G), Jonathan Tait (47-56, F), Peter Tait (50-60, F), Michael Taylor (58-63, F) and Arthur Wright (43-51, F),

The Collection is every bit as quirky as one might expect. It includes a World First, when EMW caught on camera a sighting of a ghost at Borley Rectory, alongside informal shots in his classroom and around Platt's. It is a remarkable addition to the School Archives.



CCF Officers, 1955  
Messrs Bowman, Scott, Ogilvy, Flex, Witham & Cornelious



Masters' Tea, 1955  
Messrs Flex, Marson, Peters, Witham, Bowman, Steyne & Croft

## Were you in the Chapel Choir?

Several OWs have expressed interest in the idea of a Chapel Choir reunion. Virus permitting, this may be something the School could host one Saturday in 2021. This would be along the lines of a morning rehearsal, then a buffet lunch, and then a recital in the early afternoon. Do please email Debbie Whittemore at the School if you would like to register your interest.



Chapel Choir, 1968



Chapel Choir, 1986



Chapel Choir, 2003

## OW Club Annual Dinner 2020

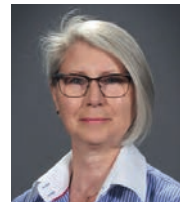
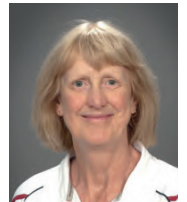
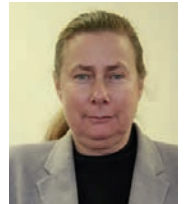
As this Newsletter goes to print, we do not yet know how the Michaelmas Term will pan out and whether we shall be holding the traditional Annual Dinner at the School. The date pencilled for this is Saturday 7th November. A notification will be sent out by email at the start of next term.

## Dates for the Diary

Club AGM: Saturday:	7th November (4pm)
Annual Dinner (School):	Saturday 7th November
Service of Remembrance (Chapel):	Sunday 8th November (10.15am)
London Drinks:	Tuesday 1st December
London Dinner (House of Lords):	Friday 19th March
OW Summer Day 2021:	Saturday 26th June 2021
Class of 2015 Reunion:	Saturday 26th June 2021

## Recent Staff Retirements

Since the last OW Newsletter appeared last summer, the School has said farewell to several longstanding members of staff, including Susan Barnhurst, Sally Booth, Elaine Danby, Fiona Drye, Claudine Elwyn, Hazel Hodgson, Jenny Mason and Sarah Rich. Tributes appeared in last year's edition of *The Wellingburian* magazine, and can be seen on the OW pages on the School website.



## The 2019 Annual Dinner

Thanks to Garth Halestrap (56-60, St), an enjoyable dinner was held on 9th November in the Spencer Room. Many present recalled standing in trepidation outside the door when this room was the Staff Common Room (1962-2000), while a few oldies remembered even further back to the time when it served as the Dining Hall for Platt's, Fryer's and Weymouth. News about the event had clearly gone global, as Andy Hants (73-82, C) came all the way from New Zealand just to be in attendance!





## Mickey Prall

Mickey Prall (JS staff, 64-02) died in May 2019, aged 77. He was born in India, where his father was a Lt Col in the Indian Army Medical Service, and after the family returned to the UK he went to Cranbrook School in Kent. In 1964 Roland Bedford appointed him to the staff of the Junior School as a History and games master. For the next 38 years countless generations would remember him for drumming into their skulls the names of the Kings and Queens of England. Favourite classroom howler: "King Harold died when he found an arrow in his eye".

In September 1965 Mickey became President of Lions (one of the JS Clubs) upon the sudden death of his colleague, Lambert Musgrave, a position he held for the next 37 years. His great love was rugby, introducing the game into the JS in 1979 and running the 1st XV for many years. He refereed outside school in the holidays and, in retirement, served for many years as a referees' assessor, travelling extensively around the country. He was also involved in JS cricket, running the 1st XI for a time, and in 1981 he succeeded Major Allen as Director of Games.



Colleagues at Mickey's funeral  
Mr Ostler, Mrs Nisbet, Mr Moss, Miss Sanders, Mr Rowse,  
Rev Ostler, Mr Lower, Mrs Tyndall, Mr Hickling, Mrs Watts,  
Mr Linfield, Mr Batley, Mrs & Mr Owen, and Mrs Handford

In his early years at the School he helped out in Platt's during the reign of Peter Croft (1960-72), and one morning woke to find that his car, which he had parked outside the entrance to Platt's, had been turned 45 degrees by the boys and so blocked the entrance. Soon he moved into the JS and took over responsibility for the JS boarders, at one time over 80 in number. He would serve under seven Heads – Roland Bedford (until his untimely death in 1969), the interregnum of Ian Ferguson (1969-70), Richard Millard (1970-73), Peter Howorth (1973-77), Richard Dyson (1977-89), Hugh Clifton (1989-95) and Graeme Lowe. In 1995-96 he served as Joint Acting Headmaster alongside his colleague Robin Hickling.

In his 38 years he saw so much change in the JS – caps and shorts fading away, corporal punishment becoming a thing of the past, the arrival of girls in 1979, the steady decline in boarding numbers (boarding ended in 1994) and the vast increase in pupil numbers.

By the time he retired in July 2002, it was estimated he had eaten something like 3,300 school meals, courtesy of the Underhills and the Macdonalds. Despite this, he somehow managed to enjoy a very active retirement, splitting his time between his family home in Kent and his flat in Castle Street, and devoting his energies to the Embankment Golf Club as well as his beloved rugby. To the end he kept in close contact with his old colleague and neighbour, Ian Ferguson (Second Master of the JS, 1955-85), and together they toured many of the finest restaurants and hostleries in Northamptonshire.

Mickey passed away suddenly in May 2019, aged 77, and his ashes have since been interred here at the School. He will be remembered by countless generations of OWs as a dedicated master on and off the games field – small, rotund in stature, his face red as he boomed, but with a bark worse than his bite.

Our thanks go to Robin Hickling (Staff, 62-98) and Mike Askham (Staff, 78-13) for helping to compile this obituary.



The Junior School Tennis VI, 1981



## Memorial Service

A large number of Old Wellingburians and former staff filled the Chapel on Saturday 9th November to remember the life and work of two great servants of the School – Mickey Prall (JS Staff, 64-02) and Graham Garrett (Headmaster, 73-93).

The service was conducted by Rev Christine Ostler and punctuated with wonderful photographs from the Archives and a splendid programme of music provided by former Director of Music, Stephen Ostler. Richard Dyson (JS Headmaster, 77-89) led the tributes and, as soon as he started to recall Mr Prall's rhyme for remembering the kings and queens of England, many in the congregation spontaneously joined in, a delightful moment. Robin Hickling (JS Staff, 62-98) gave a personal tribute to Mickey, and the current Prep School Head, Mrs Owen, read a lesson.

Mr Dyson then paid tribute to GG, as did Charles Linfield (Staff, 73-00). They appraised the significance of the Garrett years at Wellingborough, building on the achievements of his predecessor John Sugden in raising academic standards and improving the facilities. Former pupils Tim Graham (73-83, G) and Mark Kaye (77-82, C) read a poem, and GG's younger daughter Alison then read the same lesson that GG had read in the Chapel every year at the annual Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols. A very fitting end to what was a deeply moving occasion.

A sound recording of the service was very kindly arranged by Steve Swinden (76-79, G), and anyone wishing to purchase a CD should contact Debbie Whittemore in the Foundation Office: [dw@wellingboroughschool.org](mailto:dw@wellingboroughschool.org) – 01933 233441.



Duncan Ellison



Charles Linfield and Chris Ford



Chris Ford and Graham Ogden



Mike Askham and Stephen Ostler

**Memorial Service** Continued overleaf...



## Memorial Service Continued...



Jenny and Ashley Butlin



Robin Hickling



David Clifton, Andy Laurence  
and Tony Brown



Avril and Rod Farey



Richard Dyson, Graeme Lowe, Kath Owen  
and Richard Mitchell



Chris Martin-Sims and Pritesh Patel



Christopher Eve and John Beales



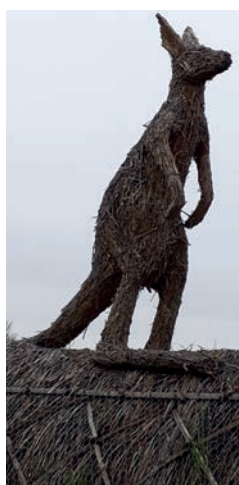
Gordon Milne and Beryl Tyndall



Robert Eshelby, Jon Ostler, Nick Ostler  
and Peter Eshelby

*Photographs courtesy of Charles Ward Photography*

## The Thatched Pav at 90



Murray the Kangaroo

As reported last year, 2019 marked the Thatched Pavilion's 90th birthday, and we launched a fundraising appeal to give it a major overhaul. Led by the School's Estates Bursar James Petrie (93-03, F), every element of the building has been refurbished, from new electrics and plumbing to repairing the steps back and front. There is now even a modicum of heating in the changing rooms – whatever next?! A particularly delightful feature is that a straw kangaroo now sits astride the ridge of the thatch, commemorating the Kangaroos Cricket Club (1948-2005). We are indebted to the following for supporting the Appeal, and their names will be recorded for posterity on a Benefactors' Board in the Pavilion:-

Mike Askham (Staff, 78-13), Jeremy Attfield (80-90, G), Benham Charitable Settlement, the Clifton family (Bill, Mollie and David), John S. Cohen Foundation, Peter Cordrey (61-65, W), Peter Cullimore (47-55, Pa), Richard Dennison (59-67, G), Michael Duck (48-56, F), Simon Enoch (67-77, St), J. Paul Getty Jr Charitable Trust, Groome family, John Higgs (49-58, Pa), Mumtaz Iqbal (54-57, G), D.C. James Charitable Trust, Boris Karloff Charitable Foundation, Roger Kimbell (51-61, Pa), David Laing Foundation, Brian Leadsom (53-58, F), John Macrae (42-52, W), K.A., S.A. and S.M. Marriott, Eileen & Jim McNicholas, Sarah-Jo Millan (88-92, M) & Graham Watson (82-92, G), Ian Millar (37-42, G), Alison Mitchell (91-98, W), Moricca family, Mulvey family, Old Wellingburian Club, OW Cricket Club,

David Peck (49-58, G), Richard Peck (47-55, G), Peter Phillips (54-65, Pa), the late Robert E. Poole (41-47, Pa), Robert Sears (59-69, F), Richard Swindall (42-48, Pa), Jonathan Tait (47-56, F), Peter Tait (50-60, F), Robert Thomas (71-75, F), Jasmine Titmuss (03-07, M), Constance Travis Trust, Wilson Foundation, Alex Woodward (78-89, G) and Arthur Wright (43-51, F).



## News from the School

In September the new School Reception was opened by Mrs Frances Penman. She and her late husband Derek sent their four children here – Anne (92-97, W), Richard (95-00, C), John (96-10, PS) and George (96-05, JS), and they were great benefactors of the School, helping with the construction of changing rooms on the site of the old Tin Pavilion. Those changing rooms have now been converted into the new Reception, and the walls are bedecked with images from the School Archives – a great reminder to everyone visiting the School of its illustrious history.



Anne Heigham (Penman) and Frances Penman

Congratulations to children, staff and parents in the Preparatory School for raising more than £5,000 for the Leon Barwell Foundation in 2019. Leon was a pupil at the School, 1979-84, and died in 2013, aged 46, after an 18-month battle with cancer. The Foundation raises money to support parents affected by cancer by helping them create memories that are everlasting.



Leon Barwell

Congratulations also to last year's Upper Sixth: the A Level pass rate in 2019 was over 98%, with 68% of the grades awarded being grades A\* to B.

## The School in Lockdown

As the impact of the Virus became obvious, the decision was made to close the School site in the final week of the Lent Term. Since then, all lessons have been conducted online. The technology had a few teething troubles at first, and one or two ingenious pupils had a bit of fun by turning down the teachers' volume so nobody could hear what they were saying, but those early acts of sabotage were soon stopped in their tracks.



Andrew Holman, Headmaster

It is strange seeing the cricket squares carefully maintained by the groundsmen but not a single match being played this season. We are certainly in unprecedented times. *The Wellingburian* magazines for 1918-1919 make no mention of the Spanish Flu Pandemic, although some pupils from that era would later recall the Sanatorium being overwhelmed with cases.

Alas, the School community and the OW community have both been touched by tragic losses, and our thoughts and prayers are very much with all those affected. Numerous OWs have been on the front line as key workers, and some of them tell their stories on the OW pages of the School website.

And finally, Miss Jocelyn Everett has announced that she is retiring as Head of the Pre-Prep at the end of this term, after a sterling 12 years in post. We wish her a very enjoyable retirement. A tribute will appear in the next edition of *The Wellingburian*.



The Thatched Pavilion being refurbished



## Memory Lane

A punishment from the late 1970s: a House prefect setting 1,000 words on 'Why I want to make love to Olivia Newton John.'

Mike Taylor (58-63, F) recalls the old stage in the School Hall – Tim Dodds on the drums, Robin Allardyce on rhythm guitar, Vic White on lead guitar and Mike playing bass guitar for the two singers – John Douglas and the yet-to-be-famous Andrew Loog Oldham. Wellingborough's first rock band had arrived. One concert with girls from the High School was deafening. 'It was rather frowned on by the masters but one of them came up to us the next day and praised us: "I have to give it to you all, you don't half practise hard. You deserve the applause". It was Murray Witham! You could have knocked us over with a feather.'

Arthur Wright (43-51, F) has donated to the Archives a magnificent collection of 19 old photos, including the Chapel Choir of 1944 and 1945, numerous JS and Senior School teams, and a photo of the JS boarders and staff in 1946. Those shown seated in the photo are Matron, Mrs Whittaker (Art), Daphne Groves, Happy Haughton, Paul Thorp, Mr & Mrs Britten, Alan Britten, Arthur Wright, Lambert Musgrave, Miss Armitage and Mr Harding (Music) and the Under-Matron.



The Junior School Boarders, 1946

In 1987 James Hasler (staff, 57-90) persuaded former Caretaker Les Simmonds to record his memories on tape. Les recalled arriving at School at 6am on the last day of term, only to find a vast set of traffic cones directing all traffic from the London Road into the Headmaster's drive. He managed just in time to dismantle this great hoax. And during a petrol shortage in the early Seventies, another end of term prank saw a large placard directing traffic into the Quad with the promises of 'petrol here' and 'old masters going cheap'.

Richard Hill (65-74, Pl) was one of those attending the Memorial Service in November. He kindly donated six photos from when his father was here, 1926-29, including this one of the Soccer XI of 1929. The boy seated on the right, C.T. Dufton, was one of the 93 OWs killed in action in WWII.



1st XI Football, 1929

Many thanks to all those OWs who have donated items to the Archives over the past 12 months, and /or helped to identify names on old photos: they include Paul Blunt (51-59, Pa), Eddie Clark (59-69, F), Peter Clementson (51-56, G), Richard Dennison (59-67, G), David Dicks (51-59, Pa), Richard Gaunt (60-65, G), David James (66-75, G), David Lindsay (49-53, G), David Lovell-Butt (66-75, G), Richard Peck (47-55, G), Roger Putnam (44-54, G), John Reddy (62-67, G), Chris Robinson (70-74, G), Peter Tait (50-60, F), Peter Wildman (52-60, St) and many others.

Among the photos received from Eddie Clark (59-69, F) is his father's 1st XI Cricket team photo of 1940. For some reason this shows just nine of the eleven players. It is sobering to reflect that three members of that team died in action in WW2, including the captain. J.E. Lloyd-Price (36-40, Pl). The photo is interesting for other reasons: top left one can see Martyn Young (36-41, Pa), who played for Worcestershire and then Gloucestershire, 1946-1964; and the photo also includes two boys who had just arrived from Weymouth College that term.



1st XI Cricket, 1940



We were very pleased to receive a memory stick from Brian Leadsom (53-58, F) with a series of old school photos spanning three generations – including his father Frank (17-23) and his son Sam (82-87, G). They include some delightful colour shots from the 1950s.



The San, 1954



Boaters galore



John Oughton and Murray Witham

And finally, a memory from 70 years ago: 'I remember a vintage ruby Austin 7 belonging to Latin master Captain Wimbush being manhandled up the wide stone staircase in the Teaching Block and deposited on the teaching rostrum in the Shell classroom. Charles Steyne suspected that I was involved, but the culprits were from Platt's'. Ah, the good old days ...



The Stage Hands, late 1960s



2nd XV Rugby, 1985



School Prefects, 2005



## Personalia

In January we were delighted to receive a visit from Budriz Syed (85-89, Pl) and Muddathir Ariff (85-88, G), making their first visit to the School since they left. They brought news of their various OW friends and their relatives in Malaysia, including Budriz's uncles – Syed S ("King Sid"; 58-62, F, Malaysia's monarch from 2001 to 2006) and Syed B (58-63, F), as well as T.S. Shah (65-67, G), A. Halim (84-87, Pl), S.B. Jamalullail (86-89, M), I. Hassim (84-89, Pl), I. Hassim (86-90, M), A. Hassim (91-95, Pl), Reza Ali (85-90, G), Razally Ali (87-89, G) and Alfred Shukry (85-89, Pl).



Budriz and Muds

We were pleased to welcome back Michael Ellis MP as the guest of honour at Senior School Prize Giving in July 2019. Michael was in Platt's, 1981-86, and has served as the MP for Northampton North since 2010. He has recently been promoted to the position of Solicitor General in the new government.

Many congratulations to Professor Sir Christopher Greenwood (65-73, C) on being appointed as Master of Magdalene College, Cambridge as from October 2020. He succeeds Dr Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury, in this prestigious role.

In January the Politics teachers Mr Farley and Joe Ramsden (95-05, C) took a group of sixth formers around Parliament, and were very pleased to bump into Mark Ormerod, CB, who is now the Chief Executive of the Supreme Court. Mark was a pupil in the Junior School, 1965-70, before moving on to Oundle.

Stephen Ostler (Staff, 66-04) has discovered that Sir Edward Elgar dedicated one of his works to an OW. In 1923 he wrote his *Memorial Chimes* for the inauguration of the Carillon in Loughborough, and he dedicated this short piece to William Wooding Starmer F.R.A.M, who had been at the School 1881-1884. Starmer advised on the installation of the bells and corresponded with Elgar on the nature of carillons and their music. SFO took the opportunity to play this piece in the Chapel during last November's Memorial Service for Messrs Prall and Garrett, together with *A Canterbury March* by H.C. Perrin. Dr Harry Crane Perrin F.R.C.O. was at the School 1879-1882, and later held the post of organist and choirmaster at Canterbury Cathedral from 1898 until 1908.

Congratulations to Mary Davis (02-07, W) on her recent marriage to Simon Caunt (02-07, Pl). There was a large Wellingborough attendance in the congregation: Simon Minchinton (02-07, G) and Rob Kelly (00-07, Pl) were the Best Men, Annie Chudley (Musson; 97-07, W) gave a reading, and John Davis (61-70, St) did his duty as the bride's father. Others present included Will Chudley (02-06, Pl), Jasmine Titmuss (03-07, M), Sophie Bunyan (97-07, W), Libby Collins (02-05, W), Nithya Natarajan (01-07, W), Naomi Gibbs (02-07, M), Ruth Coverdale (02-07, N), Mike Reeves (00-07, N), Jo Lane (Davis) (00-02, W) and Michael Davis (93-03, G).





Peter Cullimore (47-55, Pa) was featured in April's edition of the journal of the National Rifle Association, to mark (Lockdown permitting) his 70th annual appearance at Bisley this summer. He shot there for the first time in 1951, as a young member of the School CCF. A highlight of his shooting career was being a member of the Northamptonshire team that won the King George V trophy in 1985. A Chartered Engineer by training, Peter and his late wife Gillian set up a business, Universal Care Limited, which is now a registered charity and provides carers to enable people to remain in their own homes.

2019 marked the retirement of Jerry Higgins (57-66, St) from the School's Governing Body. He had been on the Board since 1995, and had served as Chairman from 2006 to 2013, in succession to Richard Swindall (42-48, Pa), Peter Knight (30-37, Pa) and Richard Gent (22-25, Pa). He is pictured here with the current Chairman, Dr Jonathan Cox (79-86, C).



Jonathan Cox and Jerry Higgins

Many congratulations to Joe Smith (98-05, PS) and Rosie Turner (05-14, N) on being elected to the School's Governing Body last December. Joe studied Real Estate at Oxford Brookes and then qualified as a chartered surveyor; he is a partner at Drake Commercial in Northampton. Rosie read Business at Nottingham Trent and then studied for an MSc at the Cranfield School of Management; she works for Volkswagen Financial Services in Milton Keynes.

In January the Club's President Julian Amey called in to see Ian Ferguson, who served as Second Master of the Junior School from 1955 to 1985. Born in 1922, IGWF was educated at Reading School and then St John's College, Oxford, where he read Medieval History. His studies were interrupted by the war and he was commissioned into the Royal Berkshire Regiment in 1942. He saw active service in North Africa and Italy, and in 1943 in Italy he

was badly wounded in the left leg. He was invalided out in 1945, after more than a year in hospital, and resumed his studies at Oxford before embarking on a teaching career. In 1955 he was appointed to the JS by Robert Britten as Second Master, and was to enjoy 30 years on the staff. In retirement he has continued to live in Wellingborough, and enjoys hearing from his former pupils and colleagues.



Ian Ferguson and Julian Amey

Many congratulations to Lucy Wilton (99-08, W) on her wedding last November to Christopher O'Reilly. By coincidence, she was driven to the church in a vintage car owned by Peter Walton (65-72, Pl). OWs in the congregation included Lewis Gore (00-10, PS), Lauren Blaber (03-08, M) and Leah Heckstall-Smith (00-06, N).



Lucy Wilton



## OW Key Workers on the frontline

As this Newsletter goes to press, we are hearing from OWs who are Key Workers at this time. We are posting several of their stories on the OW pages on the School website, and here are two examples:

Ben Buckler (97-07, Pl) was working in York District Hospital as a Physiotherapist when the virus arrived. He worked on an acute medical rotation, helping with chest physiotherapy. Throughout April, about half the hospital space was set aside, ready for potential COVID patients. In May Ben made a long-planned move to Aviemore in Scotland, working part-time as a Physiotherapist and part-time as a Reindeer Herder for Cairngorm Reindeer Herd, which is running a Reindeer adoption scheme on their website to help raise funds for their upkeep.

John "Froggy" Froment (76-83, St) reports: 'I am a Postie and life hasn't been busier. Online shopping is keeping part of our economy afloat. I've been a Postie for 20 years and have never seen the level of work rise so much for so long. The community spirit is great and it always makes me smile when the kids and households wave and say thank you. I'm proud to serve but it has been a worry, and continues to be so, for my family, but duty must prevail'.

## OW Sport

Various OW sporting fixtures took place between last year's OW Newsletter appearing and the outbreak of the Virus, ranging from the OW -v- School cricket and hockey matches last June to the regular programme of golf and shooting fixtures.



OW Hockey XI, 2019



Yesteryear - the Cricket XI, 1995







Yesteryear - the  
Hockey XI, 2000

## OW Summer Sports, 2019

The OWs played the annual 20:20 Cricket against the School on Friday 28th June last summer. The OWs returned with a strong XI and, batting first, managed 148-6 thanks largely to 78 from Alex Mills (12-17, C). In reply the School 1st XI lost regular wickets, and fine bowling figures of 4-28 by Matthew Chalcraft (12-17, Pl) and Tom Pope (13-18, C) with 3-4 meant a 34-run victory for the OWs.

On the following day came the annual OW -v- School Hockey match. Eleven keen players (five from the class of 2018, three from 2016 and three from 2015) all welcomed each other, very happy to be back, but not quite so happy to be playing in such scorching heat. The Refs, Miss Livingstone and Miss Irvin, decided to only play for 30 minutes with three breaks, and that proved about right. The game was played in excellent spirit, with a final score of 1-1.

## OW Golfing Society

The pandemic has unfortunately resulted in the cancellation of our two main tournaments of 2020: the Halford Hewitt at Royal St George's GC in April and the Cyril Gray at Worplesdon GC in June.

Founded in 1971, the Cyril Gray consists of the last 32 schools to have chronologically entered the Halford Hewitt. It has a minimum age qualification of 50 and the format is foursomes match play. The OW team in 2019 was Richard Jackson, Martyn Allen, Guy Gilman, Chris Billson, Alan Harlow and Phillip Saxby – as seen in the photo accompanying this report.

We beat Merchant Taylors' 3-0 in round one and Berkhamsted 2.5 – 0.5 in round two before narrowly succumbing 2-1 to Stowe in the quarter finals. The outcome was in the balance until the very end with Richard Jackson missing a 15 foot putt on the 18th green that would have taken the match into extra holes.

The 2019 Spring Meeting, held at Wellingborough GC, was won by Richard Jackson with 35 points and the 2019 Autumn Meeting, at Rutland Water GC, saw Chris Billson emerge victorious with 36 points. He also won the Wright Cup for achieving the highest aggregate total at the two meetings.

The Society always looks forward to welcoming new members, young and old, men and women.

Richard Jackson



Top: Guy Gilman (60-70, G)), Chris Billson (71-81, C),  
Richard Jackson (70-81, St)  
Seated: Alan Harlow (75-81, Pa), Philip Saxby (78-82, JS),  
Martyn Allen (63-70, C)



## Obituaries

We offer our condolences to the families and friends of all those OWs and former staff who have passed away since the 2019 Newsletter. Full obituaries (where available) appear on the Farewell pages in the OW section on the school website:

James Axe (53-63, W), John Elwick (60-65, Staff), Graham Garrett (73-93, Staff), Roger Goodyear MBE (58-63, W), Freddie Groome (06-11, G), Michael Hainsworth (62-66, W), Christopher Hales (45-47, F), Christopher Higgs (78-88, Pa), Peter Keir (73-81, St), Colonel Graeme Olley MBE (42-48, G), Lt Col Richard Osborne (36-43, Pl), Roy Palfreyman (32-36, F), David Popplewell (00-19, Staff), Mickey Prall (64-02, Staff), Lokman Razak (80-83, Pl) in 2018, Bernard Thorne (34-38, G), David Warwick (70-76, St) and John Woods (46-49, Pa).

**James Axe** (53-63, W) died in August 2019, aged 77. A fine sportsman, he played cricket at U15, U16 and then 1st XI level for 3 years, as well as being a member of the Chapel Choir. After leaving school James opened the first disco in Northamptonshire, "The Den" at his home in Loddington. He taught History at Jack Hunt School in Peterborough from 1975 until 1995. After taking early retirement, he went back into education in 2001 as a Boarding House Parent at Peterborough High School. He was diagnosed with COPD in 2006. He had major lung surgery at Leicester Hospital in 2014 which allowed him to enjoy a further five years, playing bridge, watching sport and spending time with his two grandchildren.

**John Elwick** (60-65, Staff) died in February. He taught Biology here, and served also as the resident tutor in Garne's. He played a major role in promoting Drama and organised several winter sports holidays, though not a sportsman himself, and was a great supporter of the Chapel. He then went on to a very similar school (Eton College), 1965-85, before working for several years as a volunteer at Lord Mayor Treloar College, a school for disabled young people. Retiring to Yorkshire in 1992, he became a prison hospital visitor, and was a very keen supporter of the RSC and also the Opera. Some 20 years ago he had developed prostate cancer, and following surgery it was kept under control until recent years. We are grateful to John's god-daughter Jo Pears and also to John Orton (55-64, St) for information in compiling this.



**Freddie Groome** (06-11, G) died in a car accident in April. Our condolences to his family, which includes his twin brother Will (01-10, G) and elder brother Harry (98-07, G), as well as his uncle Tim Poole (77-85, Pa). At the time of going to press, it is hoped a full appear obituary will appear shortly on the website.

**Mike Hainsworth** (62-66, W) died in June 2019, aged 71. He represented the School at football and cricket, as well as swimming. His favourite subject was geography, in which he had no interest at all, but it enabled him to learn all about either cricket, or First World War fighter pilots. He always claimed the most interesting experiences from his school days were watching George Best single-handedly demolishing the Cobblers, and the George Brown incident of 1964 when the senior Labour MP was heckled by some of our pupils, including Mike – a story that reached the *Daily Express*. After school he ran his own business, selling villas in Spain and then a will-writing company in Northampton.

**Christopher Hales** (45-47, F) died in November 2019. After leaving school he went to sea in 1949 with the Blue Funnel Line, and took his masters certificate in 1957. He then took up a career in the law, qualifying as a barrister and then a solicitor with Alsop Wilkinson in Liverpool. In 1965 he joined Holman Fenwick Willan in London, specialising in Admiralty work and shipping law. He always thanked AJ Wright for getting him through School Cert Maths, and would recall CCF Field Days, with Italian POWs looking on. One day a delivery of ice cream arrived (off-ration): Beaky Bowman announced this during lunch and there was a rush to the Tuckshop.

**Chris Higgs** (78-88, Pa) died in July 2019, aged 49. The son of John (49-58, Pa) and elder brother of Julia (82-91, W), he read Engineering at Birmingham and then joined the family Engineering business before setting up, additionally, his own Laser Cutting and Fabrication Company. Outside work Chris was fully involved in Round Table activities in addition to cycling, gardening, travelling and following the Northampton Saints Rugby. He was a member of Overstone Parish Council and also actively involved in the preservation of the village.

**Peter Keir** (73-81, St), father of James (08-16, C) and Tamarah (07-19, N), was taken by Covid-19 in April. Our sincere condolences to his wife and family and to his two OW brothers, Andrew (69-77, St) and David (70-79, St). At the time of going to press it is hoped a full obituary will appear shortly on the website.



**Colonel Graeme Olley MBE** (42-48, G) died in March 2019, aged 87. He had a successful army career, serving in Malaya and Borneo and being awarded the MBE. He was promoted Lt Col whilst on his 2nd tour of Rheindahlen in the NATO HQ. He was largely responsible for the Engineer Logistic Success in the Falklands war of 1982. He ended his military career as a Colonel and commanded the Engineer Resources Hub at Long Marston. In retirement he spent 10 years working for the Royal British Legion and supporting his church in Kent. His younger brother Richard (42-50, G), who predeceased him, became a renowned hospital architect in South Africa.

**Lt Col Richard Osborne** (36-43, Pl) died in May 2019, aged 93. His father Leslie had been a pupil here, 1908-10, and had seen action in WW1: Richard would later recall how, to the very end, his father had an enormous fear of water, brought on by the trauma of his ship being torpedoed at Gallipoli. Richard played for the Cricket XI in 1943, before being called up. He was selected for officer training and was sent to the Indian Military Academy at MAU Ranipur, 1944-45, and then served in India until partition, before being posted to the King's Shropshire Light Infantry. A varied military career followed, including operations in Kenya. He was a generous supporter of the School Foundation.

**Roy Palfreyman** (32-36, F) died on in July 2019, aged 99. Born in 1920 in Crewe, he followed his elder John to Wellingborough, and would later recall the Victorian values, cold baths, meagre food portions and the liberal use of the cane, which would toughen up that generation for the war years ahead. In WW2 he saw action in North Africa in the 4th Armoured Brigade, part of the 7th Armoured Division - the Desert Rats. In 1944 he landed on Gold Beach D-day plus 2 and was sent through the notorious Falaise Gap before the final surrender of Germany. After being demobbed he followed his father and grandfather into the family pawnbroking and furniture retailing business located throughout the Staffordshire Potteries.

**David Popplewell** (Pre-Prep Staff, 2000-2019) died of a brain tumour in May, aged 57, after a two-year battle. He will be fondly remembered by many former colleagues and pupils as such a positive, upbeat teacher and Deputy Head. Former Headmistress Julia Jones describes him as 'one of the nicest people I have ever had the privilege to work with – wise, kind, generous, loyal, and good fun', and the current



Head, Jocelyn Everett, remembers him as 'a brilliant colleague, coping extremely well with being just one of two men in a building filled with a mass of women. His humour was appreciated by everyone'. Just before he was diagnosed, Mr P had taken a sabbatical and travelled extensively. He married last year after being with his partner Ali, for many years. He was stepfather to Frances and Matthew. He is survived by his parents and two sisters.

**Dr John Ward** (Staff, 87-05) has died after a short illness and very happy retirement in France. Many of his former pupils will remember him as a diligent Head of Chemistry. He leaves behind his wife Paula, three children – Mark (87-89, W), Lara (87-92, N) and Philippa (87-97, N), and five grandchildren.



**David Warwick** (70-76, St) died in August 2019, aged 60. He joined the family business, Warwicks of Wellingborough, which has been trading since 1868, working alongside his grandfather Cyril, his father Alan and later his brother Neil. David created the delightful window displays and had the knack of working out a customer's measurements before even reaching for a tape measure. In recent years David and Neil expanded the business, opening branches in Kettering and Northampton. David worked there for 40 years and his illness did not stop him from his daily routines until May of his final year. His children Hannah (95-02, M) and son Sam (95-08, F) were the 4th generation of the family at the School.

**John Woods** (46-49, Pa) died in November 2019. At School he was a member of the Soccer 2nd XI and the swimming team. He went to London Nautical College and then joined the Merchant Navy, working his way up to the rank of Captain. At the age of 37 he came ashore and took a position as berthing master at Immingham Dock. He eventually landed the position of Superintendent Dock Master for ABP, the highest position at the port.





## Supporting the School

### The School Foundation

Patron: The Rt. Hon. The Earl Spencer, DL

Chairman: Clive Westley (59-64, F)

Foundation Director: Neil Lyon (80-85, W)

Foundation Manager: Debbie Whittemore

### Saying Thank You

Last September the School unveiled a series of Benefactors' Boards in the Chapel Porch, commemorating all those who have made significant donations in excess of £10,000 to the School down the centuries. The County's Vice-Lord Lieutenant, James Lowther of Holdenby House, cut the ribbon, and there was then an opportunity for benefactors and their families to enjoy a guided tour around the School site (well, the nice bits anyway).



James Lowther unveils the Benefactors' Boards

### A five-figure donation

We are extremely grateful to one of our oldest Club members for making a generous 5-figure donation to the School. He had fond memories of his time here in the late 1930s and the early war years, and wished to 'put something back', partly in memory of his late brother (also an OW) for the benefit of future generations, with the added benefit of gift aid.

### The School's Hardship Fund

As the financial impact of the pandemic starts to become evident, several families are struggling to afford to keep their children here. The School does have a small Hardship Fund to assist deserving children, and we would be delighted to hear from any OW who feels able to support the Hardship Fund at this critical time.

### Helping the next generation with Bursaries

In 2018 the School marked the centenary of the end of the Great War by relaunching the War Memorial Fund. More than 30 OWs supported the appeal to endow the Fund, which has enabled the School to support a talented youngster from a family which could not otherwise afford



to come here. The Headmaster has also relaunched War Memorial Leaving Scholarships, which are small awards to high-achieving leavers going on to University. Their names have been added to the fine series of honours boards in the School Hall.

### The Douglas Compton James Charitable Trust

Our renewed thanks go to the Douglas Compton James Charitable Trust for their continued generosity to the School. Established by the late Douglas James (28-35, Pa), the Trust offers bursary support to four pupils at the School each year. In 2019 the Trust also made a generous donation to the Thatched Pavilion Appeal. In this way the memory of Douglas James is perpetuated, for the benefit of future generations.

### The Sugden Arts Fellowship

In 2016 four Old Wellingburians clubbed together to endow an Arts Fellowship in memory of their former Headmaster John Sugden (65-73). Generously supported by the Sugden family, the aim of the Fellowship is to support a talented Sixth Former by means of a 10% scholarship in Art, Drama or Music.



Julian Amey and the Headmaster with two current Sugden Arts Scholars



### A new painting for the Chapel

Last year we reported the gift of two paintings to the Chapel by Peter Geiringer (61-66, W) – both by the noted Scottish female painter Dame Ethel Walker (1861-1951). Peter has since donated another significant work of art to the School – ‘The 9th Station of the Cross’ by Sir Frank Brangwyn, RA (1867-1956), which had originally been commissioned for Arras Cathedral in about 1920. This painting has now been hung in the Chapel to commemorate the School’s 425th anniversary this year, and in memory of all those Old Wellingburians and Old Weymouthians who gave their lives in the two world wars. We are indebted to Peter for this major acquisition.



Sir Frank Brangwyn

### Support from the Maud Elkington Charitable Trust

The School wishes to record its gratitude to the Maud Elkington Charitable Trust for agreeing to support a talented pupil from a local family all the way through the School. This is a remarkable act of generosity to the youngster concerned.

### Supporting the School

The School wishes to offer its sincere thanks to all those OWs and friends who have supported it in so many ways over the past year, through gifts to the School Foundation. As a registered charity, many donors have made use of Gift Aid on top of their donations.

Supporters of the Foundation include:- Dr Mazhar Ajaz (81-91, F), Julian Amey (57-67, G), Richard Barwick (53-57, Pl), David Brawn (74-83, Pa), James Browne (79-86, W) in memory of his uncle W.A.C. Browne (31-33, F), Paul Clasper (90-95, Pa), Peter Clementson (51-56, G), David Clifton (63-74, St), Peter Crisp (73-83, Pl), Peter Cullimore (47-55, Pa), Edmund Elmhirst (54-58, G), Sir Christopher Greenwood CMG (65-73, C), the late Christopher Hales (45-47, F), the Harper family (Marcus, 05-14, F; Christian, 05-15, F; and Emilia, 08-18, W), Julian Harris (63-73, C), John Horrell (50-56, G), Marcus Horrell (65-75, Pl), Richard Jackson (70-81, St), Sarah Kapila (Kennard) (88-95, M), Brian Leadsom (53-58, F), Nick Leighton (72-79, W), Charles Linfield (staff, 73-00), Roger Luscombe (62-67, Pl), Neil Lyon (80-85, W), James McNicholas (81-88, G), Sarah-

Jo Millan (88-92, M), Ian Millar (37-42, G), Peter Phillips (54-65, Pa) in memory of Robin Phillips (49-60, Pa), David Pilgrim (59-64, F), Roger Putnam MBE (44-54, G), John Saxby (46-52, JS), Mark Slinn (68-73, C), Peter Tyldesley (75-85, W), David Waller (77-81, St), Graham Watson (82-92, G), the Westley family (Clive, 59-64, F; Richard, 88-93, G; and William, 90-95, G) and Andrew Wingate (53-58, F).

### Remembering the School in your Will

The School is indebted to several OWs and friends who have been generous enough to leave a legacy to the School in their Will. As many will be aware, there are considerable tax advantages in making gifts to a registered charity such as the School, and here we record legacies received

in recent years from the following individuals: the late Rosalie Croft (widow of PJAC), the late Bob Edwards (32-39, Pa), the late Ian Firth (51-56, Pl), the late Michael McAfee (42-45, Pl), the late Mickey Prall (staff, 64-02) and the late Stuart Macwilliam (37-40, F).



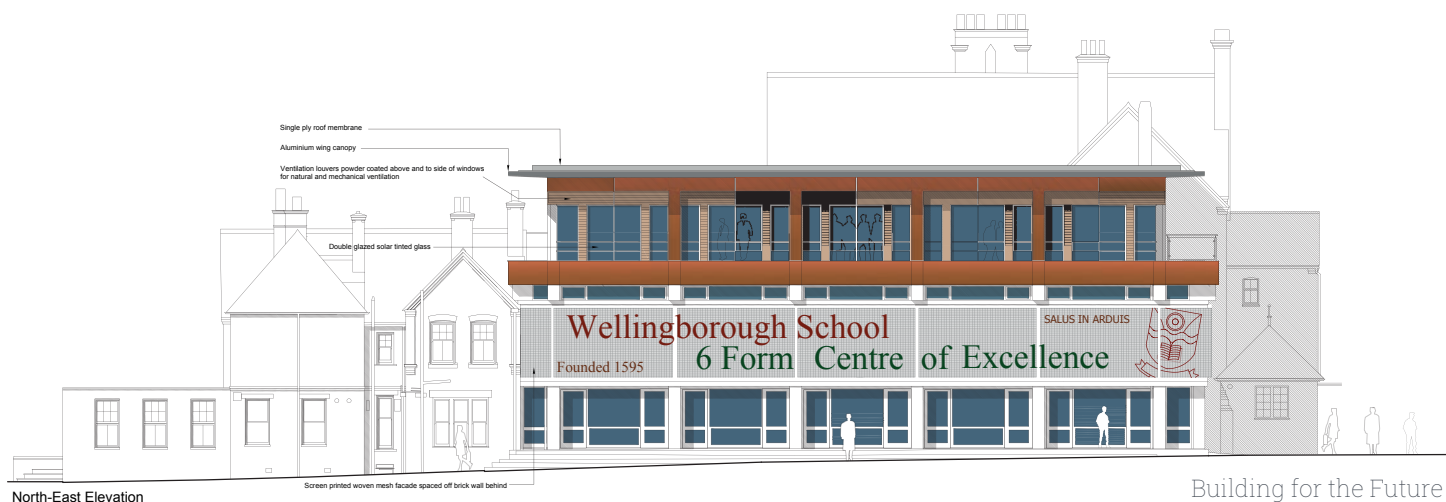
### The Prall Legacy

As we go to press, we have just received news that the Prep School and Senior School have each received substantial six-figure legacies from the estate of the late Mickey Prall (staff, 64-02). The legacies will be used to refurbish the Prep School Hall, to enhance the teaching facilities in the Senior School Teaching Block (the Garrett Building) and towards the Appeal for a new Sixth Form Centre. In Mickey’s honour, the Governors have agreed unanimously that the main Prep School Building should henceforth be known as the Prall Building.



Mickey Prall





## Appeal for a new Sixth Form Centre

The Headmaster and Governors have announced that the School wishes to build a new Sixth Form Centre. Planning consent has been granted for a single-storey building, to be constructed on top of the roof of the Dining Hall.

The estimated build cost is £1.5 million, and the School is asking parents, OWs and well-wishers to support this important initiative, the largest project since the Sports Hall Appeal was launched in 1980. The Foundation Office has been set the task of raising £425,000 towards the target, and in the next few months the School will be posting out an Appeal brochure to you, asking you to

consider supporting your old school. The names of all donors will be recorded for posterity on a Wall of Donors in the new Centre. Donations of any size will be much welcomed. It is envisaged that OWs may 'buy a brick' for a suggested donation of £425, and a breeze block (i.e. the name will be recorded in a bigger size!) for £2,020. Why £425? Because 2020 marks the School's 425th anniversary. There are also opportunities for rooms to be named in honour of donors.

Neil Lyon is spearheading the fundraising, and he would be very pleased to hear from you if you might be interested in supporting the Appeal: [nbl@wellingboroughschool.org](mailto:nbl@wellingboroughschool.org), 07712 129 914.

