



Dear Old Wellingburian

Welcome to this termly eshot. What an extraordinary time we are living through. OWs in every corner of the world have been writing in to say how their daily routines have been turned on their head, and we all wait to see if there is a glimmer of light in 2021. The Headmaster Andrew Holman has the unenviable job of navigating the School through these choppy waters, and it came as a breath of fresh air when the School was lucky enough to receive a visit last month by HRH the Princess Royal.

There are four parts to this eshot – an update from the School, an update from the OW Club, 'Looking Back' with a trip down Memory Lane, and 'Looking Forward' with some thoughts on how we might be able to support our School in these challenging times.

Life carries on, but not quite as we know it!

Neil Lyon (80-85, W)
Foundation Director

Debbie Whittemore
Foundation Secretary/OW Liaison

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## News from the School

### **A message from the Headmaster, Andrew Holman:-**

COVID-19 has been, thus far, a game of two halves for the School, although both have been very well played.

Prior to the summer, most pupils set foot on site for no more than a few hours for the whole Trinity term. Their experience was, therefore, shorn of sport and drama, there was much less music and no trips. Nonetheless, the education provided for them by their teachers stands alongside anything else delivered across the country. On the very first day of Lockdown, 23rd March, pupils were sitting in front of screens at home as the staff had already prepared new sets of lessons suitable for home delivery. For around 4-5 hours a day, for over three months, the pupils matched their teachers' effort, and the outcomes were superb. In many cases, the children are now further through their courses than would have been the case in a normal summer.

It is hard to flip straight to November without highlighting the enormous amount of preparation undertaken by staff across the summer break. The result was that we were extremely well prepared for the return of over 830 pupils, albeit with the site looking quite different from what OWs will remember. Marquees on the Garne's tennis courts as an additional dining space, to ensure adequate social distancing at lunchtimes; boys and girls allowed in each other's Houses as we placed the pupils in year group bubbles; everyone keeping left on both the Prep and Senior Walks; and hand sanitiser at every turn! The pupils have adapted splendidly and, most of all, we are all very glad to have them back.

*Andrew Holman*

## **Princess Anne flies in!**

On Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> October HRH The Princess Royal visited the School, on the occasion of our 425<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Arriving on the playing fields by helicopter, she met a selection of pupils and staff before unveiling a plaque to record her visit. Alas, COVID-19 restrictions meant that everyone presented to her had to wear masks, as did HRH, and strict social distancing meant that this was a very different occasion to the Queen's Visit of 1965. In the circumstances, we were incredibly lucky this visit went ahead at all, and it reflected very well on the gritty determination of HRH to keep the flag flying. [Click here](#) to view some photographs of her visit.

## **Service of Remembrance – Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> November**

Regretfully it is impossible to hold a service inside the School Chapel this year, or to welcome OWs to the School on that day. Instead, there will be a short service outside, when wreaths will be laid by the Headmaster Andrew Holman and Prep Head, Katharine Owen. This will be videoed, and the intention is that it will be possible to view the recording afterwards on the School website.

## **The School Today**

Those interested in the School as it is today might enjoy watching a 15-minute video that has recently been produced by the School's marketing department in conjunction with film maker James Ward (97-07, C). And if you are a recent leaver you may enjoy spotting some familiar faces. The video is geared towards prospective parents, but it will still be of interest to many OWs. It can be accessed by clicking [here](#).

## **News from the OW Club**

### **A message from the Club President, Julian Amey (57-67, G):-**

I send warm greetings to all OW Club members in the UK and abroad, and at this difficult time wish to reassure the OW community that the Club is here to support you and provide news about the School, your contemporaries and activities that are taking place in spite of the restrictions relating to COVID-19.

This eshot contains reports from the Headmaster, the School's Foundation Office and from OWs such as John Wareham who was at Garne's during the Second World War. His account of air raids puts our current troubles into perspective, and gives us the determination to support the School and our Community to ensure our ongoing success.

I was delighted to represent the Club on the occasion of the inspiring visit to the School by the Princess Royal on 14<sup>th</sup> October. It reminds us of the esteem in which the School is held, and during her visit she spoke to many pupils, members of staff and OWs – boosting morale, and building on the previous Royal Visits to the School.

Although the Club has not been able to hold many of its sporting events, the Golf Society was able to hold the Long Johns competition on 23<sup>rd</sup> October, and the Club is offering financial support to all sports clubs to help younger OWs to participate. The initiative by the Club to support the School's Careers Department continues, with the prospect of 'virtual' careers advice sessions by OWs.

During 2020 I have been pleased to meet many of my contemporary OWs in different parts of the country, and the Club is planning to arrange some Vintage Reunions once life returns to normal.

Finally, I encourage you to write to us with your news and any ideas you have about how the Club can be more effective in connecting with you. The Club now has nearly 4,000 members, with 60% on email, and we are increasingly active on social media such as LinkedIn.

*Julian Amey*

## **Forthcoming OW Club events**

### **OW Club AGM – Saturday, 7<sup>th</sup> November**

The Club's AGM scheduled for 7<sup>th</sup> November will be re-arranged to a new date in 2021. Due notice will appear on the OW pages on the School website.

### **OW Club Annual Dinner – Saturday, 7<sup>th</sup> November**

For understandable reasons this event has been postponed until further notice.

### **London Drinks – 1<sup>st</sup> December**

We have decided to postpone the traditional London Drinks for younger OWs **to Tuesday, 30<sup>th</sup> November, 2021.**

### **OW Oxford and Cambridge Dinner – Spring 2021**

Details yet to be confirmed.

### **OW London Dinner – Friday, 19<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

This event at the House of Lords remains in the diary. Watch this space!

### **OW Winter Sports Day – Saturday, 20<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

Football and Hockey matches against the School – TBC.

### **OW Summer Lunch – Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> May**

Being eternal optimists, we are hoping to arrange an informal lunch in the Dining Hall at the School on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> May next year. This would be an opportunity for OWs of all ages to come back to the School (with friends and family), with the possibility of guided tours around parts of the site and a look at the Archives. Details to follow in the spring.

### **Are you following us on Social Media?**

The OW Club has three social media platforms, where you can follow news and connect with other OWs:-

Our [Old Wellingburian LinkedIn group](#) now has 755 members. Not only is it a tremendous way to connect with other OWs, but it is also intended to facilitate the provision by OWs of support to the School and its pupils in relation to its Careers Convention and work experience opportunities.

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/oldwellingburianclub>

Instagram - @oldwellingburian

Twitter @WboroAlumni

The School website has also been revamped, and you can see the OW Club pages [here](#).

### **Obituaries**

We are very sorry to announce the passing of several OWs since the *OW Newsletter* was posted to you in the summer. These include P.A. Hodson (46-50, Pa), P.J. Mantel (47-51, Pa), R.W. Saffery (47-50, W), J.E. Saxby (46-52, JS), M.J.F. Scott (51-56, Pl) and S.G. Wilford (39-43, Pa). Also, we are sad to report that drum teacher, Mr Steve Hamper passed away during the October half term, following a short illness. He joined Wellingborough School in 2004 and will be greatly missed by his pupils and colleagues. Obituaries will appear in next year's *Newsletter*.

## **“Black Lives Matter”**

OWs in many countries around the globe will have followed the “Black Lives Matter” issue in recent months. The Headmaster would be interested to hear from any OWs working in education with relevant experience in the issue of diversity, and to share ideas and best practice. It is timely to reflect that the School has been welcoming pupils from very diverse backgrounds for some 70 years now: across the decades there have been many pupils from the Far East, the Middle East and Africa, particularly in the old boarding houses, and their presence has undoubtedly diversified school life.

## **Your Committee**

This year the OW Club Committee comprises Julian Amey (57-67, G; President, 2019-21), Peter Crisp (73-83, Pl; President-Elect, 2021-22), Garth Halestrap (56-60, St), Richard Jackson (70-81, St; Treasurer), Neil Lyon (80-85, W), Simon Marriott (60-71, St), 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.

Alison Mitchell (91-98, W) has stepped down from the Committee after some twenty year’s dedicated service to the Club, and this means there is now a vacancy to be filled. The Committee meets six times a year, and until further notice all meetings are held online. We would be delighted to hear from you if you might be interested in putting your name forward to serve on the Committee. E: [OWClub@wellingboroughschool.org](mailto:OWClub@wellingboroughschool.org)

## **Are you Presidential material?**

Forget Trump! If you think you might be Presidential material (for the OW Club, that is ....) and have the time and inclination ‘to give something back’, we would be delighted to hear from you. We are acutely conscious that 2020 marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of girls being admitted to the School and that, as yet, we have had only two women OW Presidents – Alison Williams (Willgress; 81-88, M) and Hilary Poole (Jackson; 70-72). Debbie Whittemore can send you a short Job Description of the role, and explore with you how you might like to come on board.

## **Looking Back**

### **Wellingborough in Wartime**

2020 marks the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the Second World War. John Wareham (41-45, G) has sent in a delightful letter, recalling what it was like to be at the School in wartime, and this will be published in full in next year’s Newsletter. A few excerpts:-

- I arrived at the School in January 1941 from Coventry, which had endured many air raids and then the long 12-hour raid on November 14<sup>th</sup>. The Germans termed this “Coventrated”, the first such attack out of London. During that autumn term of 1940 I had spent more time in my previous school’s air raid shelters than in the classroom.
- In Garne’s we had pretty good food, having our own dining room and an excellent cook, but nevertheless we were often quite hungry and bought a loaf from the visiting baker. We did have a Tuck Shop but sweets were rationed. Mr Steyne (Parker; Housemaster, senior maths teacher and Gold medallist at London University) ran this with mixed success, as he was not very good with handling change, which shows that arithmetic is not the same as maths.
- My very best wishes to the School; I am so pleased to know that it is still flourishing – a wonderful place.

## Memory Lane

A pupil to James Hasler (Head of English, 1957-90):

Pupil: "Sir, what did you think about my poem?"

JH: "I didn't think poetry like that was possible".

## News from the Archives Room

We continue to receive some fascinating items. As an example, Simon Knight (73-82, Pa) has deposited some old photos belonging to his father Peter Knight (30-37, Pa) and his grandfather Bob Knight (1890-95). They include the Masters' XI Cricket Team, circa 1902, featuring the Mathematics master James Dyson; an OW, he is better known as the grandfather of the renowned vacuum cleaner entrepreneur, Sir James Dyson.

Many thanks to all those who have donated items or helped to identify faces in numerous old photos – including a particularly hairy Garne's House photo of 1976, when most of the House seemed to be modelling themselves on the *Bay City Rollers*.

We are grateful for help with old photos, etc., from Tim Barlow (57-63, Pa), Graham Bond (61-66, F), Adrian Bracken (57-68, G), Peter Clementson (51-56, G), David Clifton (61-66, Pl), Richard Collier (74-77, G), Peter Cordrey (61-65, W), Tony Coult (60-65, Pl), David Cousins (67-77, G), John Cowell (54-58, Pl), John Crowsley (47-57, Pa), David Dicks (51-59, Pa), Iain Erskine (50-55, Pl), Roly Evans (51-56, F), Chris Eve (71-81, C), Peter Geiringer (61-66, W), Tim Hall (63-66, F), David Harrison (55-59, Pl), Geoffrey Hayward (48-56, F), Jerry Higgins (57-66, St), Mumtaz Iqbal (54-57, G), Bob Lamb (56-60, Pa), Richard Moore (59-64, Pl), James Newman (63-68, Pl), Robert Norum (73-80, G), John Panter (57-60, Pl), Alastair Pattinson (40-49, G), Peter Pattinson (40-45, G), Richard Peck (47-55, G), Peter Phillips (54-65, Pa), Iain Ross (47-50, W), Tony Rudd (51-60, G), Michael Sharp (45-52, Pa), James Sheehan (58-65, Pa), Roger Shelton (54-65, St), David Smith (48-56, G), Bob St Clair-Baker (75-79, G), Peter Tait (50-60, F), Mike Taylor (58-63, F), Mike Tebbitt (57-62, Pl), Mike Till (67-77, C), Gerald Timmans (50-57, G), Michael Webster (58-67, Pl), Clive Westley (59-64, F), Peter Wildman (52-60, St), Andrew Wingate (53-58, F) and Arthur Wright (43-51, F).

## Looking Forward

*"My affection for the School grows as every year goes by, even though I had a very mixed time there"*[a 1960s OW]

*"The School helped me on my way"*[a 1990s OW]

You do not have to be a rocket scientist to realise that there are very challenging times ahead for independent schools like Wellingborough, with so many households and businesses having to tighten their belts.

There are 5 ways in which we can show our support for our old School:-

1. Supporting the Hardship Fund, assisting deserving children whose parents are struggling to pay the fees because of the Pandemic;
2. Supporting the Bursary Fund, enabling talented children to have access to an education at Wellingborough;
3. Supporting the School's fundraising appeal for its next major capital project – a new Sixth Form Centre;
4. Offering work experience or careers advice, or be an ambassador for your university;
5. Leaving a legacy (say 1% of your estate) in your Will.

# *Just say "YES"!*

If you feel you might be able to support the School in some way, whether now or in the future as your circumstances permit, we invite you just to reply to this email saying YES. No more action needed beyond typing out three letters and pressing the reply button!

Neil Lyon and Debbie Whitemore in the School's Foundation Office can then contact you individually to discuss further.

**As the School is a registered charity, and benefits from Gift Aid, giving can be highly tax-efficient.**

**There has never been a better time to show our support for our old School.**

Kind regards  
Neil and Debbie



**OWClub**

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🌐 [www.wellingboroughschool.org](http://www.wellingboroughschool.org)

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