

STONYHURST:  
CELEBRATING  
**20**  
YEARS OF  
FULL CO-EDUCATION



# STONYHURST 20 YEARS OF FULL CO-EDUCATION

The first member of the Chitnis family arrived at Stonyhurst in 1944. We have maintained a continuous and strong relationship with Stonyhurst and Stonyhurst St Mary's Hall ever since. I, myself, am one of eighteen members of our extended family who are proud alumni of Stonyhurst – "OS" in our school's language. In addition, there are currently four members of our extended family at the College.

This year Stonyhurst celebrates twenty years of full co-education: whilst there have been girls attending Stonyhurst for around fifty years, full co-education across the school was made official in 1999. Since then, six girls from our family have attended the school and two more are at the College currently.



ANTHONY CHITNIS  
Chair of Governors

Fr Giles Schondonch SJ was Rector of Stonyhurst at its original school site in St Omers from 1601-1617. He described Stonyhurst as 'a family like no other'. Being a family school is one of the things that defines Stonyhurst today.

As you know, Stonyhurst is the oldest continuously active Jesuit school in the world. This year we are also celebrating the 225th anniversary of the arrival of the school at our current home in Lancashire.

There is an exciting programme of events to come, celebrating full co-education as well as our English homecoming. 2019/2020 will be a year that our current and past pupils will remember for many years to come.

## WELCOME TO A YEAR OF CELEBRATIONS

This anniversary is a great cause for celebration, and there will be a programme of events and initiatives aimed at inspiring Stonyhurst's current girls, focusing on academic excellence, co-curricular activities, chaplaincy and perspectives and horizons.

Alumnae of Stonyhurst St Mary's Hall and Stonyhurst College will be visiting us to speak to current pupils about their time here and what they have experienced and achieved since. Around 20 alumnae, each of whom has gone on to achieve amazing things, will be appointed 'Anniversary Ambassadors'.

These Ambassadors will take on a mentoring role this year: offering careers or university guidance in their respective fields, providing work experience placements and visiting the College to give talks in person or from abroad via videoconferencing. Pictures of our alumnae will be displayed on our historic

corridors to represent these 20 years of full co-education, joining the many portraits of OS from the past five centuries.

We hope this project, with the help of the Stonyhurst Association, will encourage our vibrant network of female OS to be even more interconnected in the future. This will be supported by the launch of Stonyhurst's new social networking site, Stonyhurst Link, early this academic year.

Stonyhurst was one of the first Catholic independent schools to truly embrace co-education. We are now a home away from home for many of the children of our first alumnae, something which makes this year even more special.



JOHN BROWNE  
Headmaster, Stonyhurst



IAN MURPHY  
Headmaster, St Mary's Hall



STEPHEN WITHNELL  
Deputy Head (External)



# A BRIEF HISTORY OF CO-EDUCATION

Although this year we celebrate 20 years since full co-education began in September 1999 – when girls were admitted to Stonyhurst at all ages on the same terms as boys – Stonyhurst had already been educating female pupils for some 30 years by that time, though under different schemes. September 1999 was the culmination of a period of transition.

For the preceding few years, girls had been accepted for entry to Stonyhurst at different stages. This process began with the founding of the Higher Line (Sixth Form) Girls' House in 1997, based in the Old Infirmary under its first Housemistress, Miriam Wainwright. Gradual development continued, with girls also accepted into St Mary's Hall to progress through the school. At this time, a new uniform was designed befitting the College's history, which incorporated the tartan known as 'Lady Borrodale's Gift'; rewoven from a fragment in the Stonyhurst Collections. Stonyhurst's fragment came from a garment given by Lady Borrodale to Charles Edward Stuart, or 'Bonnie Prince Charlie', in 1745 during his flight through the Highlands after defeat at Culloden. With the eventual admittance of new girls into

Lower Line in September 1999, the last stage of the process to full co-education was complete.

Before the 1990s, Stonyhurst had already seen a number of female pupils pass through its doors. These individuals were usually the daughters or relations of members of staff and their presence at the College was on limited terms. As such, their school experience was a little different from that of their successors after full co-education in 1999. They blazed the trail in what was, prior to 1999, very much a boys' school.

The first two girls to be recorded officially in Stonyhurst admission registers were sisters Catriona and Elspeth Vavasour in the early 1970s. As members of the Vavasour family, they are a part of what is almost certainly the longest-running of any familial relationship with the College: a relationship which had started with the arrival of seventeen-year-old Alexander Vavasour at St Omers in 1599. It seems, however, that the first girl known to have attended Stonyhurst – but not officially recorded – was Janet, daughter of the art master Andrew Henderson, in the late 1960s. In both cases a common thread of family ties unites the girls.

Joseph Reed OS 2011  
Assistant Curator of Collections



Higher Line Girls House in the Old Infirmary



Borrowdale tartan

# VAVASOURS & STONYHURST

AN EXAMPLE OF A STONYHURST FAMILY

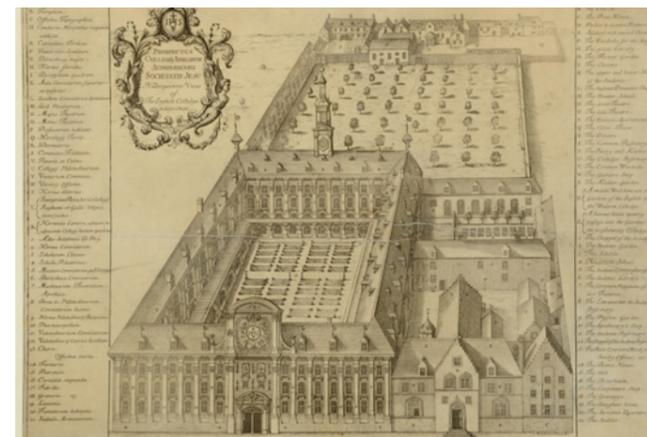
## ST OMERS

Alexander Vavasour	1599-1602
Henry Vavasour	c.1612-1615
William Vavasour	c.1635
John Vavasour	?-1649
Thomas Vavasour*	1662-1665
Walter Vavasour	?-1681
Peter Vavasour	?-1727
Walter Vavasour	1723-1727

## STONYHURST

Edward Vavasour	1827-1832	
Charles Vavasour	1827-1835	
William Vavasour	1832-1836	
George Vavasour	1833-1838	
Philip Vavasour	1833-1842	
William Vavasour	1863-1864	
Oswald Vavasour	1894-1900	
Hugh Vavasour	1932-1936	
Bede Joseph Vavasour	1936-1939	
Paul Vavasour	1943-1946	
Fr Francis Vavasour SJ, Rector of Stonyhurst	1952-1958	
Jeremy Vavasour	1956-1957	
<b>Catriona Vavasour</b>	1971-1973	(married Nigel Wylie-Carrick OS)
<b>Elspeth Vavasour</b>	1972-1974	(married Paul Julian Fox OS)
Dunstan Vavasour	1972-1981	
<b>Matilda Vavasour</b>	1976-1978	

\*may be a pseudonym



'Foundation of St Omers College'  
Guillaume-Lorrain Montbard, 1689



'Stonyhurst'  
JMW Turner, 1799

# SOME HIGHLIGHTS FROM 20 YEARS OF FULL CO-EDUCATION



Full co-education;  
Lower Line Girls'  
House founded

1999

First female  
Stonyhurst pupil  
represents England  
U18 Netball

2000



Shirk opens; Higher  
Line Girls'  
House expands

2008



First  
female Stonyhurst  
Oxbridge History Student  
wins prestigious Oxford  
Scholarship

2017



2019

CCF Girls' Company  
founded

1999

First female captain  
appointed to the CCF  
Shooting Team

2000

SMH Hockey team  
places in National  
IAPS finals -  
U12 Hockey Plate  
Winners

2012

Girls' boarding  
returns to the  
Old Infirmary



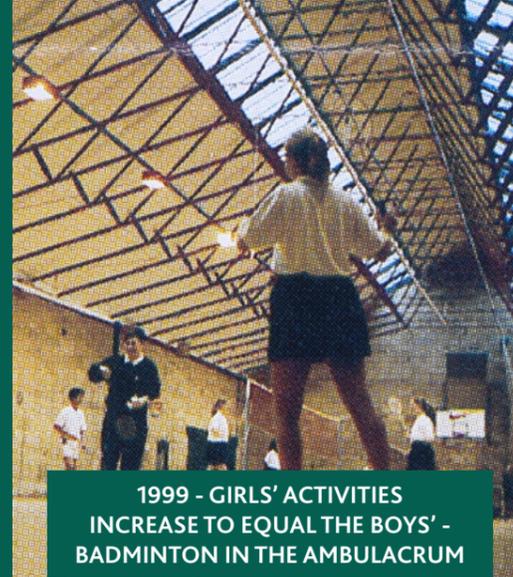
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The girls had to be upstairs at a certain time and were not allowed as much freedom as the boys (who had too much!). It was a nice little female oasis though. The male population was woefully under-prepared for teenage girls. It was all pretty chaotic that first year. We all had a lot to learn especially me. The only thing I really knew how to do was be a mother so that's how I played it and eventually it seemed to work.

By the time I left there were over 80 girls in Lower Line, day and boarding. It was an entirely different place from the one I had started in. Much more civilised and balanced. Girls' sport had come on in leaps and bounds and there were many more female staff.

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GUSSY BIDWELL  
 First Lower Line Girls'  
 Housemistress  
 1998-2008



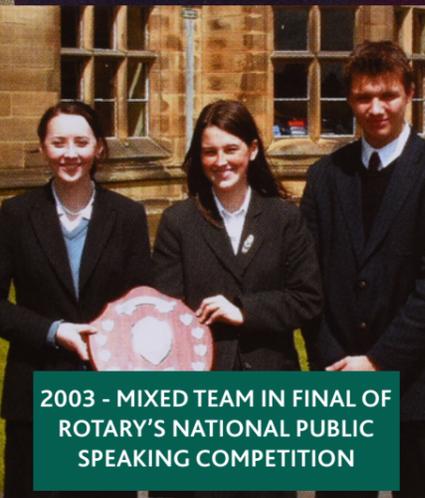
1999 - GIRLS' ACTIVITIES INCREASE TO EQUAL THE BOYS' - BADMINTON IN THE AMBULACRUM



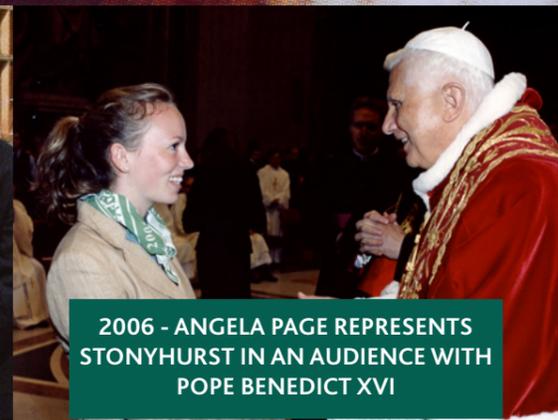
2000 - DANCE DEPARTMENT OPENS



2001 - SMH MIXED HOCKEY TEAM FOUNDED



2003 - MIXED TEAM IN FINAL OF ROTARY'S NATIONAL PUBLIC SPEAKING COMPETITION



2006 - ANGELA PAGE REPRESENTS STONYHURST IN AN AUDIENCE WITH POPE BENEDICT XVI



2007 - LES MISERABLES



2008 - SMH GIRLS WIN IAPS NW CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS FOR THE 3RD YEAR IN A ROW



2011 - SMH TEAM REACH NATIONAL IAPS FINAL - U12 NETBALL



2016 - GUYS AND DOLLS

# NEW SYNTAX BOARDING IN THE OLD INFIRMARY FOR 2019

## DID YOU KNOW?

The Old Infirmary was previously the Jesuits' living quarters.

It now houses 33 en-suite bedrooms across four floors and a dedicated common room.

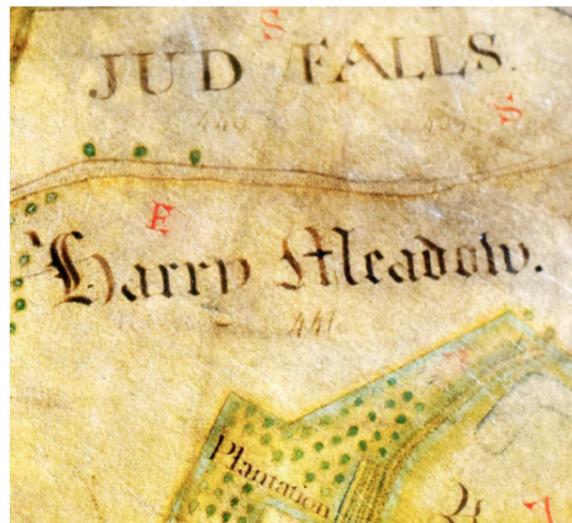
Each room will be named after the meadows found around the Stonyhurst Estate.



Architects' drawing of new Syntax Boarding area



A room with a view from the new Syntax Boarding area



Harry Meadow from the map of the Stonyhurst estate made for Maria, Dowager Duchess of Norfolk, 1733



Architects' drawing of new Syntax Boarding area

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Having been a pupil at St Mary's Hall in the early years of the school's co-education it has been a real joy to return to the College as the Lay Chaplain.

My education began at a time when Jesuits lived and worked in the community here, and it is a mark of the College adapting with the times that we can now see the addition of lay roles to its religious life. As such contributions are being made by women both at the College and St Mary's Hall, Stonyhurst is developing its great and special gift of sustaining its rich historical traditions whilst keeping in touch with today's world.

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CATHERINE HANLEY  
Lay Chaplain

# STONYHURST & BEYOND

LUCY MCFARLANE OS'09



*School Profile:*  
*Committee. Full Colours (Swimming). First Female Captain (Swimming). Music Scholar (Grade 8 Distinction, Singing).*

After leaving Stonyhurst Lucy followed her vocation to become a paediatric emergency nurse having achieved a first class honours degree at Oxford Brooke's University in 2013. She now works in the largest paediatric trauma centre in the Southern Hemisphere, The Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne.

"When I started at St Mary's Hall in 2002 girls were still a minority. I was presented with many opportunities to try different activities. Through music, sport, drama, CCF and various charity committees over the years, including LTC, SCHT holiday week and Lourdes, I enjoyed the sense of camaraderie. I learned the value of kindness, diligence and commitment, thriving in team surroundings and developing leadership skills and good time management.

Being educated in a co-educational, international environment I was shown that everyone has something good to give and an alternative perspective we can learn from. With such diverse backgrounds and cultures in every classroom I learned to be adaptable and open minded. This has created life-long friends for me all over the world.

Caring for young people and their families on what can be the worst day of their lives, I provide empathy whilst being an advocate and critical thinker. I am able to keep a calm level head in situations of high pressure while giving life-

saving treatment and emotional support. My job requires me to be flexible and non-judgmental. I provide the same high standard of care to a wide variety of patients; this has included refugees, teenage victims of gang knife crime, a two day old baby with meningitis, and aspiring rugby players taken down badly in a tackle.

I am a mentor for student nurses and provide support and education sessions for junior nurses. We empower young people and their families by giving health promotion advice and teaching basic life support. Working in a leading children's hospital means I am actively involved in clinical research to ensure we are providing gold standard care.

The strength I have today as a woman in the world stems from the strong men and women who went before me, who taught me to give without counting the cost and to remain humble. I have the confidence and pliancy to live in a different country, doing a job I love where everyday I give 'as much as I can'."

LAURA EREL OS'12



*School Profile:*  
*Prefect. Schola Cantorum, Stonyhurst Choir. DipABRSM (piano). LRSM.*

Laura arrived at Stonyhurst in January 2011 having just completed her O-Levels in Singapore, and left for Durham University to read Music in June 2012 after her A-Levels. After graduating, she took up an organ scholarship at Chichester Cathedral, and completed an MPhil in Musicology at Cambridge. She is now pursuing a fully funded three-year PhD in Music Analysis at Durham.

"Although brief, the eighteen-month period I spent at Stonyhurst has given me some of the fondest memories in my life so far. I can never forget the hysterically giggly hours shared with my friends in our dorm, or the leisurely post-meal walks around Hurst Green, or the warm and familial staff members who ensured that Stonyhurst still felt like home even after all my friends had left (I stayed behind to complete my Licentiate examination after A-Levels).

For someone whose life revolves so heavily around music, however, it perhaps comes as no surprise to hear that many of the best moments from Stonyhurst are music-related: the vivacious piano and organ lessons with the then College Organist, Dr Morgan; rehearsing with the Schola Cantorum in the Top Ref; long weekend practices at the Steinway; and performing at the Headmaster's Concerts, to name a few.

At Stonyhurst, I learnt that music-making was more than drilling and getting the right notes: logical and critical thinking; pragmatism; eloquent writing; public speaking – these are only some of the many life lessons that I gained from my time as a student at the College, for which I largely have Dr Morgan to thank.

I count myself extremely fortunate to have benefitted from a Stonyhurst education which has given me a wealth of opportunities, supported me with excellent facilities and staff members, and most importantly, a mentor for life."





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As Curator of Collections at Stonyhurst for the last eighteen years, I feel privileged to have known many of the young women who have been generous enough to respond to the invitation to celebrate the 20th anniversary of full co-education.

I particularly value my close involvement in the formation of Young Women for Others as a deputy housemistress in the Higher Line Girls' House for twelve years. During those dozen or so years, I worked amid a community of extraordinarily talented girls, watching them grow in strength, grace and wisdom, learning as much from them as they picked up from me. I was struck by the closeness of the bonds they formed, supporting each other through their own challenges, trials and setbacks, some seemingly trivial, some unarguably tragic. I have kept in touch with many of them, and am proud now to acknowledge their friendship, as I have been delighted to witness their success in a wide variety of careers and vocations.

I watched my own daughters make the long journey from SMH to Rhetoric, to Oxford and Cambridge, and to adult life beyond, taking with them the inestimable lessons they learned here among their peers; loyalty, tenacity, hard work, discernment for the right path, mucking in and finding joy in life.

In 1617, the second Rector of St Omers wrote, 'This is a family like no other family.' That is an ambitious claim, but its truth has been proved by the women who helped forge the fundamental change from an all-male college to a co-educational community. No mean feat. The girls and young women who attend Hodder, St Mary's Hall and Stonyhurst today benefit from the example set by the trailblazers of the last twenty years.

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JAN GRAFFIUS  
Curator of Collections

(Former Deputy House Mistress  
Higher Line Girls)



2019:  
HOW  
CO-EDUCATION  
LOOKS TODAY



# SISTERS' WALK



Perhaps one of the most significant landmarks, which remains in our former pupils' minds, is Brothers' Walk. This path, although simple, is an important feature that links the College to St Mary's Hall. Many pupils, past and present have walked, and continue to walk along it, to lessons, Games and to take that leap from the Prep School to the College.

This year, we turn our attention to the path that runs parallel to Brothers' Walk as we rename it from 'Sports Hall Walk' to 'Sisters' Walk'. This path, similarly to Brothers' Walk, connects St Mary's Hall to the College and will be a lasting reminder of our 20th Anniversary of full co-education.

We look forward to seeing the generations of St Mary's Hall and Stonyhurst College pupils who will walk down this path, numerous times during their school career, as they progress to all that they can be. 'Quant Je Puis'.



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