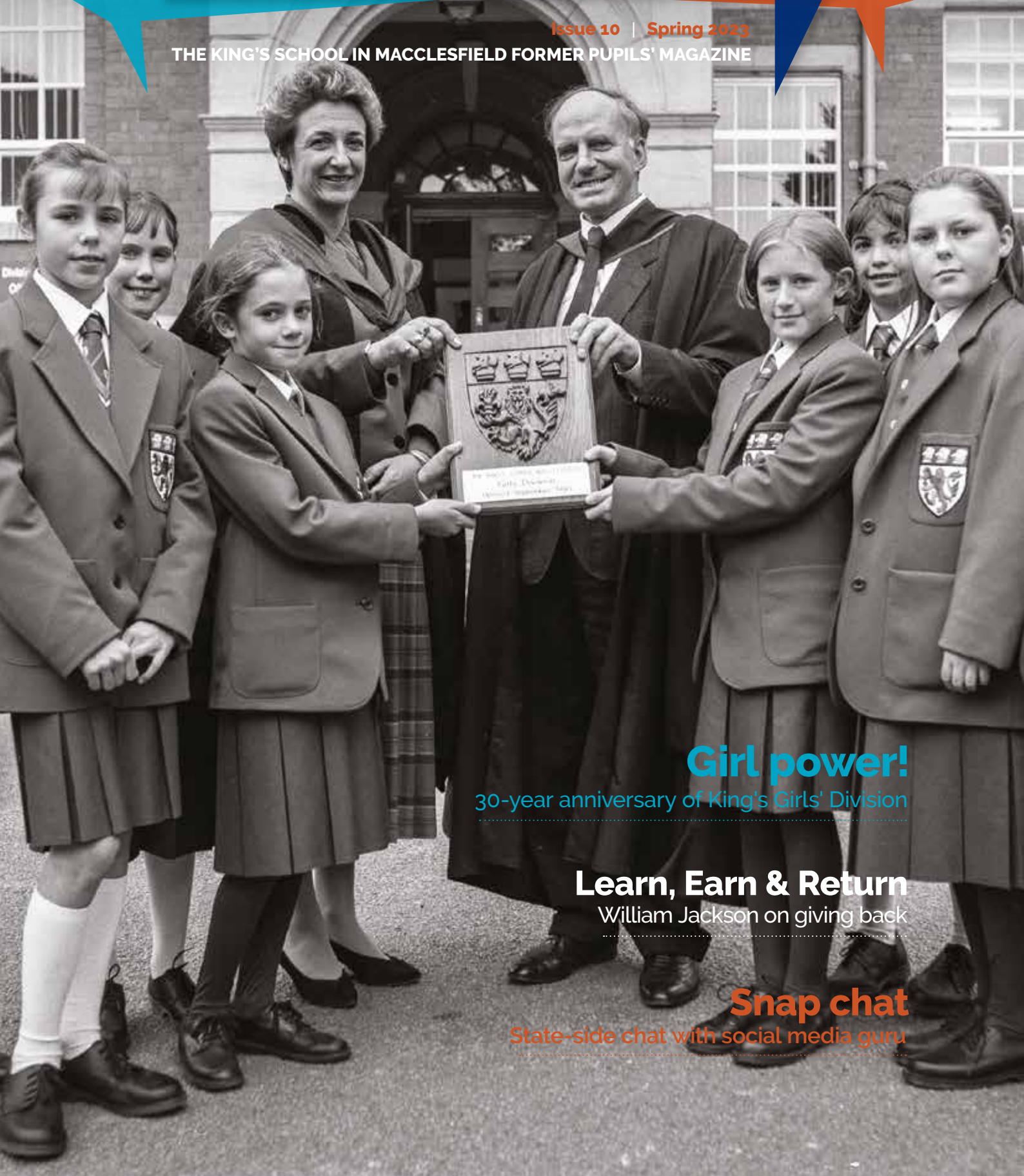


# King's Speech

Issue 10 | Spring 2023

THE KING'S SCHOOL IN MACCLESFIELD FORMER PUPILS' MAGAZINE



**Girl power!**

30-year anniversary of King's Girls' Division

**Learn, Earn & Return**

William Jackson on giving back

**Snap chat**

State-side chat with social media guru

## Editor's Welcome

**W**ELCOME to an anniversary edition! This is the tenth edition of *King's Speech*, as well as being 41 years since the Former Pupils' Association began to produce an annual magazine for its members. The Association continues to develop and grow, and this is reflected in the volume of material from which we had to select when putting together this edition.

We have tried to continue to include the usual spread of items, including both news that we think may be of interest to the readership, and features that as always reflect the remarkable breadth of activities that are engaged in by former pupils. Comments on topics covered, or indeed on any matters of interest to the school's former pupil community, are as always very much appreciated. Equally, comments on the content of this edition would be welcomed.



Ian Wilson, Editor

The past year seems to have seen the passing of more than the usual number of King's figures who have made their mark in their different ways, including sadly two former members of staff, Joan Jenion and Andrew Green. (As we were going to press, we also learned of the sad death of Bary Edwards, Staff, 1970-2005. There will be full obituaries on King's Connect and in the 2024 edition.) But as the Head's report indicates, the year has also been one of remarkable successes for the school in so many areas of activity. As the traditional view through the Cumberland Street front gates changes for ever,

and Fence Avenue continues to be heavily disguised behind cladding and scaffolding, it is most heartening that there is such a positive story to be told.

I must again thank the other members of the team who put this magazine together, and who have worked very hard to do so. Caroline Johnson continues to exercise effective control and long-term planning, and Gill Mullarkey to produce a superb outcome. There has been something of a changing of the guard too, however. In only a short stay as Alumni and Development

Manager, Jenny Armitage made a major contribution and we wish her well in her new venture; she has been replaced by Debbie Dawson, who has already begun to make an impressive mark in the role. Valuable support, too, from Petrona Clayton and Lisa Snook.

But the guard is also changing in the Association, and it would be inappropriate not to conclude by expressing huge thanks to David Barratt, whose 10-year stint as Chair has come to an end. He has been a dynamic and innovative Chair, whose contribution – although it will not be lost entirely, happily, since he has now become President of the FPA – has been vital in bringing the Association to the position of strength it holds today. Finally, it is also a huge pleasure to welcome Amber Owens, the current Chair; I am confident she will take things further forward in the future.

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*King's Speech* is produced by King's Director of External Relations **Caroline Johnson**, Editor **Ian Wilson**, Development & Engagement Manager **Debbie Dawson** and Designer **Gill Mullarkey**. We'd love your feedback or contributions for the next issue. Please contact: [former.pupils@kingsmac.co.uk](mailto:former.pupils@kingsmac.co.uk)

**COVER PHOTOGRAPH:** Opening of King's Girls' Division in 1993 by Michael Patey-Ford

**GOING GREEN:** *King's Speech* is now mailed using compostable polywrap and can be accessed digitally on King's Connect.

## From the Helm

**I**T gives me great pleasure to give this report to former pupils on how the school continues to go from strength to strength, with the last 12 months proving hugely successful. Academically, pupils returned to sitting external exams in a traditional manner (in the Jackson Hall, for the first time following the pandemic) – with all the anxiety and uncertainty that brings. At A-level, a remarkable 20% of all grades were at grade A\* and 52% of all grades were A\* or A. The vast majority went on to join their first-choice university.

At GCSE level, 63% of all exams were at grades 9-7. This represents our strongest performance in external exams stretching back nine years. It should not be forgotten that both these cohorts experienced significant disruption to their learning during the prior two years and showed immense resilience; an attribute that has endured at King's for generations.

The School is also currently enjoying a 'golden age' of sporting success. Both the 1st XV and U15 rugby teams reached the quarter final stages in their respective national cup competitions, while our U16 netball team qualified for the England Schools Netball Finals Competition, as well as also qualifying for the semi-finals of their national cup. And our U13 Boys Cricket Team went one better when they were crowned National Champions (pictured, far right).

A recent league table of school sport saw us feature in the top 25 schools across the country for these collective achievements and competing at this level is where we belong, reinforcing the national reputation for excellence the school now holds.

This last year also saw developments in one of our strategic priorities: to be at the centre of our community.



We have hosted several schools undertaking activities such as bush craft lessons, swimming lessons and cricket sessions. Local schools have attended King's for a Junior Schools Maths Challenge. The Jackson Hall has also become the regular venue for concerts by the Northern Chamber Orchestra and we are hoping this will lead to musical collaboration and opportunities for our pupils.

Our school community is enriched by the involvement of our alumni body, and it has been wonderful to welcome back several former pupils whose collective experience spans architecture, sports journalism, business enterprise, media and healthcare. They have given their time to inspire and encourage the next generation and it is always wonderful to see how much they credit the school with their success

and the fondness they still have for King's. I would also like to thank those who give their time to the Former Pupils' Association, which, like the school, is going from strength-to-strength and thriving.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate paid us a visit last year, giving us a glowing report and I commend it to former pupils (it's on the website). Our current strength, as described in this inspection report and evidenced in plenty of other places during the last year, is not a position we take for granted, nor do we intend to become complacent. We must stay dynamic and ambitious and are superbly placed to progress further in the coming year.

**Jason Slack**  
Head of Foundation

## From the Chair

**A**s we enter 2023, I am extremely proud and honoured to have been appointed Chair of the FPA, given the exciting times that lie ahead of us as representatives of The King's School and all of its history. To be nominated as the first female Chair was a very special moment for me, and I would like to thank the committee and Head, Jason Slack.

I am sure you will all wish Andrew Savill, my immediate predecessor, the best of luck for his new adventures.

As a committee and as the School, we will continue to develop and build upon the recent modernisation of the FPA, both its inclusivity and its interaction with former and current pupils and staff alike.



At the end of the 2022 academic year, we lost Jenny Armitage in the role of Alumni and Development Manager, and I would like to wish her all the best in her new role as Engagement Officer at CHS Events. Jenny was instrumental in hugely improving our communication links, in particular with our online portal Kings Connect, and was our social media queen; she will be greatly missed. Petrona Clayton and Debbie Dawson have now joined the Alumni & Development Office, and we are looking forward to working closely with them.

It was a privilege to join the FPA committee two years ago as a Sixth Form leaver from 1990, and I am excited by the prospect of working closely with our newly elected vice-chair, Matt Forbes, Tristan Wood, our secretary, and of course the entire committee – and, more importantly, all of you.

We are very much looking forward to hosting many events over the forthcoming year and seeing many of you. Here's to an exciting future for the FPA.

**Amber Owens, FPA Chair**

## Your Former Pupils' & Staff Association Committee

**President**  
David Barratt

**Chair**  
Amber Owens

**Vice Chair**  
Matt Forbes

**Treasurer**  
Jonathan Spencer  
Pickup

**Secretary**  
Tristan Wood

**Social Secretary**  
Rob Fox

### Members

Bill Beatson

Robert Bracegirdle

Ken Grant

Stuart Griffiths

Julian Jones

Michael Pedley

Andrew Savill

Chris Shingles

Rob Thorneycroft

Katie Jordan

Steve Moores

Tom Isherwood

Tom MacFarland-Davidson

I joined King's in 1979 and spent the next 10 years trying to avoid doing too much work – much to the despair of my parents and teachers. One of my fondest school memories was when teacher Barry Edwards – trying to broaden our horizons with theatre trips – asked the class if there was something we all wanted to see. A unanimous vote for The Rocky Horror Show ended up with the class in various fancy-dress outfits for a night at the theatre! At King's, I was lucky to be taught by some great teachers including Reg Davenport, Pete Mathews, Ian Wilson, Keith Aikin and Angela Cooper to name just a few of them.

I went on to study Business Studies at Leeds before entering the world of PR and marketing, and now work as a sales and marketing consultant with businesses across the UK.

Whilst at Leeds, I joined the UOTC and was commissioned into the Territorial Army serving in the

### SOCIAL SECRETARY ROB FOX



Cheshire Regiment for several years.

In 2001, I took a leave of absence from work and deployed on operations to Sierra Leone during the civil war where, because of my PR experience, I acted as British Forces spokesperson working closely with the UN.

In 2003, I was deployed to Iraq to support an embedded BBC documentary team, from crossing the border through to patrolling the streets of Basra, and finally hung up my boots in 2011.

I joined the FPA in 2022, and, as the new Social Secretary, will be working with Amber, Matt and Tristan on a number of events over the next 12 months including our first gala dinner at the new school site.

This year saw my daughter join King's Juniors exactly 42 years after I did, and it is great to see how much the school has changed in that time.

# Meet your FPA Committee



### VICE-CHAIR MATT FORBES

I joined King's in 1989. Mrs Turner was my first form teacher, shepherding us into life in big school. I was taught by some of the other great King's teachers of the time – Messrs. Badger, Wilson (both of them), Edwards, Skeens, Percival, Browne, Beatson and the Rev. Craig to name a few.

I enjoyed a number of subjects at school, but particularly took to German and ended up studying this, and Philosophy, at University.

As for sports: Barry Edwards helped nurture my love of sailing, which remains one of my hobbies now; and Messrs. Percival and Hailwood let me sneak into the greatest 1st XV of all time (or so we claimed after an undefeated season). And this was despite the fact, according to my dear friends (still close to this day!) that I

couldn't catch! If there is one thing I am most grateful to King's for – it is the friendships that started there and have given me confidence and support throughout the years.

After studying German and Philosophy at university, I started a career in strategy consulting, spending 10 years travelling around the world to learn the ropes. I am now a Senior Vice President for CBRE's Facilities Management business.

I recently moved back to Cheshire from London with my wife, Joanna, and three young children.

I'm excited to join the Former Pupils' & Staff Association committee, which is an important way to maintain the culture of King's. It allows us to remain part of the school, keeps us connected and gives us the chance to support the school – so it flourishes in the modern world whilst retaining the great things about it from years gone by.

### SECRETARY TRISTAN WOOD

I joined King's at the age of 12, leaving in 1996 after my A-levels. I enjoyed my early adult life travelling and working in various industries, settling back in Macclesfield in 2003, initially working in the finance industry, before I became a director of a wildlife conservation charity, Saving the Survivors, where I oversee all aspects of the charity, from work with endangered species across Southern Africa, to finance, fundraising and social media.

My wife Dawn and I have two daughters and a son, all following in my footsteps by attending King's. In my free time I am a volunteer member of Macclesfield Rugby Club where I coach in the mini and youth section. I also work in the community, coaching rugby in local state schools and as part of the Sale Sharks developing player programme. I still play rugby every week and regularly play in the Alumni Fixtures, usually as one of the oldest to take the field!

## THE DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

King's Development Office has welcomed two new faces:

**Debbie Dawson** joined in January as Engagement and Development Manager. Debbie moved to the local area in 2005 and has a wealth of marketing, events and development experience having worked at another independent school for 11 years, the last four years on the Senior Leadership Team.

**Petrona Clayton** joined the school in September as Alumni Assistant. With a background in sales, networking and business management, Petrona is a welcome addition to the team and has already met a good number of alumni at our recent events. Petrona has a daughter at King's and a younger son.



## YOUR NEWS



Charity still exists in these testing times – certainly among our former pupils! **Mickey Jones** (1981), of local firm PR Jones Jewellers, was instrumental in the firm donating a diamond pendant valued at £15,000 as first prize in an East Cheshire Hospice raffle in November 2022.



### Kilimanjaro climb for charity

**Tom McFarland-Davidson** and **Tristan Wood** (both 1996) recently completed an adventure of a lifetime to raise funds and awareness for Tristan's wildlife charity, Saving the Survivors. Along with 10 other supporters of the charity, the duo set out to conquer Africa's tallest peak in November. Enduring every weather condition imaginable, starting in 30 degrees of African sun, then downpours in the rainforest, a volcanic desert and finally snow and ice on the summit. After four long days of relentless climbing, they reached the peak, raising over £20,000. Tristan is a Director of Saving the Survivors, which provides emergency and proactive veterinary services to endangered wildlife across Africa, as well as managing and delivering other wildlife conservation projects. The funds raised will make a massive difference in protecting remaining endangered species. To learn more go to: [www.savingthesurvivors.org](http://www.savingthesurvivors.org)



The Cheshire Cheese Company, part-run by **Richard Buxton** (1995), made more headlines last year, when it announced a 'strategic alliance' with fellow cheese producer **Joseph Heler**. Richard's business partner became infamous as Boris Johnson's 'that bloody cheese man', after regularly generating publicity demonstrating the huge disadvantages suffered by the firm as a result of Johnson's 'hard Brexit'. Because Heler already has operations within the EU, the company should, in the future, be able to overcome the difficulties.

### SPEAKERS' CORNER

We were delighted to welcome **Matthew Calvin** (2017) back to the classroom in January to talk to pupils from Year 7 through to Sixth Form about careers in architecture, construction and real estate. Matthew spoke about the different career paths, the importance of work experience and the programmes offered by the company he works for, Gardiner and Theobald. It was also good to hear about his passions during his school days, including rugby and cricket and how he recently took part in an alumni rugby match.



It was fantastic to welcome former pupils **Toby**, **Charlotte** and **George** back into the Business department in February, to give feedback and advice on pupil presentations and business plans. If you would like to share your expertise with our pupils, whether a former pupil or local business, please email: [development@kingsmac.co.uk](mailto:development@kingsmac.co.uk)

Pictured (L-R) are **Toby Sayle**, **Charlotte Green**, Miss Jestin and **George Barker**.



**Oliver Holt** (1984), Chief Sports Writer for *The Daily Mail*, visited in March to speak to pupils about his major sporting highlights, his best interviews, and how he got in to his 'dream job'. Oliver studied History at Christ Church College, Oxford after King's, then a post-graduate degree in Journalism at Cardiff. He started as a news reporter on the *Liverpool Echo* before moving to *The Times* as Motor Racing Correspondent, then graduating to Chief Football Writer in 1996 in time to cover England's hosting of the Euro Championships, and then to Chief Sports Correspondent in 2000. He joined the *Daily Mirror* in 2002 as Chief Sports Writer, and in 2015, replaced Patrick Collins at *The Mail on Sunday*. Oliver said: "When I was at the *Liverpool Echo*, I asked if I could cover some sport and they let me cover Tranmere in the lower leagues on my days off. That's how it started. It's always been my dream job and I still consider myself to be very lucky today."

**Guy Laurence** (1980) featured in our 2019 edition, a year after he had taken up the position of Chief Executive at Chelsea Football Club. Despite overseeing a 20% increase in the club's turnover, Guy left in May 2022 after owner Roman Abramovic's era came to an end in light of Russian president Putin's invasion of Ukraine. Guy played his part in ensuring a smooth transition to the new Todd Boehly regime and is now happily retired!



### CONGRATULATIONS TO...

**Will Arnold** (2005) who featured in *The Times* in November 2022; he is Head of Climate Action at the Institution of Structural Engineers. His article proposed a new Grade III listing for buildings as a way to help improve sustainability, encourage re-use and re-purposing of buildings and ultimately reduce climate change.

**Daniel Batchelor** (1992) who has recently been promoted to become Professor of Veterinary Medicine at Liverpool University.

**David Cliffe** (1965) who has recently had another book published. *Treacle Town: Life and Tradition in Macclesfield* is available from Macclesfield Town Hall's Visitor Information Centre.

**Hannah Gibson** (nee Roberts, 2002) who became CEO of Ocado Retail in September 2022. She had previously worked in several different management roles within the Ocado Group since 2012. Before that, she worked with Boston Consulting and as a senior policy adviser at 10 Downing St. Hannah left King's to read Economics at Cambridge.

**Verity Griffin** (2018) who graduated with a 2:1 BSc Hons in Environmental Science from York University. Verity has now started her role with GlaxoSmithKline on their Future Leaders Graduate Programme as a procurement associate.

**Matthew Sherratt** (2018) who completed his Masters in Pharmacy at Keele University, achieving a First. His graduation took place in July 2022 and he is now Matthew Sherratt MPharm, MRPharmS. He accepted a post at University Hospital North Midlands (UHNM) as a Pharmacist.

**Bea Tann** (2018) who exhibited in the 2022 RHS Chelsea Flower Show and won a Silver Gilt Medal. She was the youngest entrant in the Flower Show, with her 'Enchanted Rain Garden' inspired by Manchester's climate and designed to thrive in wet conditions.

**Alistair Thomson** (2015) who left King's for Bath University to study Computer Science and is now running a London-based start-up called LottieLab with his co-founder Andrew Ologunbe. The company has just secured €3.7 million in funding for the next stage of its journey.

**Karen Tonge, OBE** (1965) Macclesfield High School, who advanced from MBE to OBE in the Queen's Platinum Honours List and travelled to Windsor Castle for her Investiture in December.



### Rededication of War Memorials

The November 2022 Remembrance Day saw two former pupils join the school community in re-dedicating three war memorial plaques now placed on the walls of the new Jackson Hall. They were **Major Richard Johnson** (2002) and **Captain Chris Howell** (2001). Also pictured are the Headmaster, the current school captains and **David Hill** (Staff, 1970-2003), the school's former history teacher whose research lay behind the adding of a third plaque to the two that were located in the Hall at Cumberland Street.



### Still Bringing Joy

The late **Ian Curtis** (1973) still features in newspaper articles. In May 2022, the last ever photo of Joy Division's iconic lead singer, taken just three days before his death more than 42 years ago, was sold for £7,500 in auction. And a month later, a 90-second clip was released on Cheshire East's YouTube channel about the new mural, dedicated to Ian, that is situated on Mill St. near Macclesfield bus station.



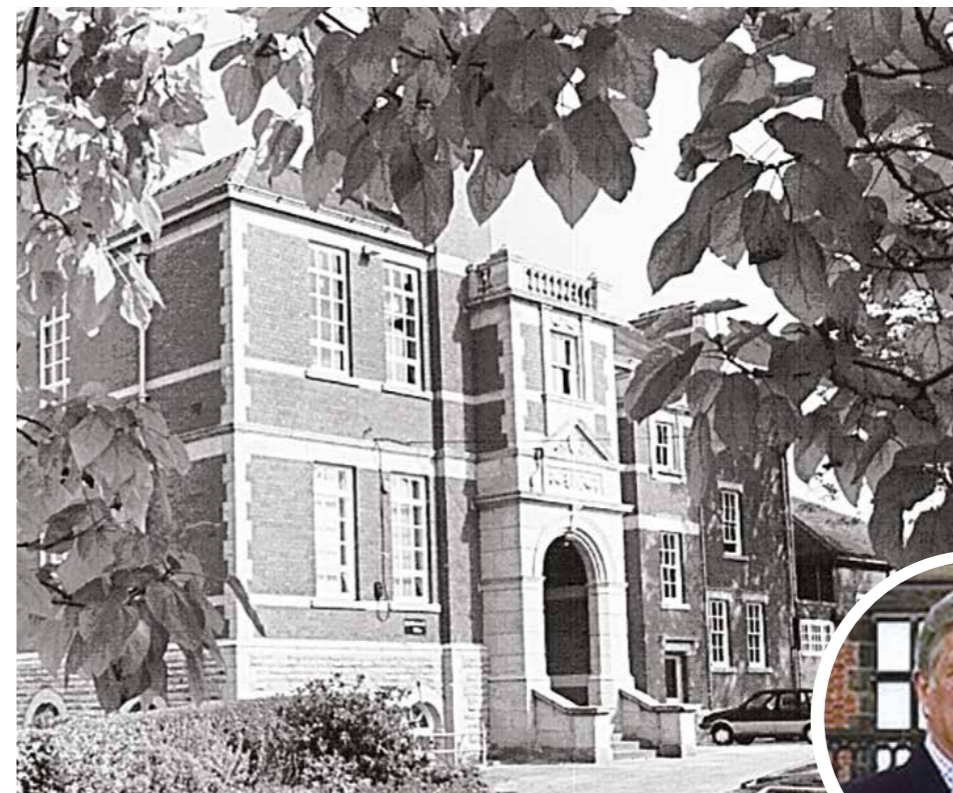


# 30 YEARS of King's Girls

**S**EPTEMBER 1993 saw the opening of a King's School Girls' Division, for the first time, at a school that had already existed for 491 years without one. Quite revolutionary, then. And of course, there were lots of vitally important decisions that had led up to the momentous event. For many years after King's had become largely fee-paying in 1979, questions had been asked as to why its education was only available to boys. Before then, the issue was not really a significant one, since the local authority's Macclesfield High School provided an education for

'grammar school' girls in the area on virtually the same basis as did King's for boys. However, with the old High School now part of the LEA's mixed comprehensive school provision in the area, many parents were asking why an equivalent of King's was not available to educate their daughters. Under Head Alan Cooper, and Chair of Governors Bill Grant, a first move in the direction of co-education had been taken when the first cohort of girls had been admitted into the Sixth Form in September 1986. There were 25 girls in the first intake, and the detailed planning that had been undertaken to prepare for the change

seemed to work very successfully. The number of girls joining King's in the immediately succeeding years was very healthy, the staff showed itself well capable of adjusting to mixed-group teaching in the 16-19 age range, and by the early 1990s King's had a well-established mixed Sixth Form. Adrian Silcock had replaced the retiring Alan Cooper in 1987, and his widow Jenny confirms that 'the most frequent question he was asked at any gathering was: when will King's provide education for girls on a par with that for boys?' There were inevitably discussions at Governor



Adrian Silcock, above, and Bill Bromley Davenport, left. OPPOSITE PAGE: The first cohort of King's Girls

level about the long-term future, and general agreement evolved that there was a strong case for going 'fully mixed'. The actual mechanics of this being achieved, however, was very much another issue. The Cumberland Street site could certainly not be expanded physically to take a full entry of girls, and there was no desire to reduce the number of boys in order to accommodate girls. The prospect of building a new school from scratch was not feasibly financially then, either. But there emerged coincidentally, and fortuitously, a possible solution. The local authority had ceased to use the Macclesfield High School site at Fence Avenue in 1989, and after due consideration, King's purchased it.

Steps were then set in motion that resulted in the September 1993 opening. Once the purchase of the Fence Avenue site had been agreed, the real hard work, and incredibly detailed planning, began. As Jenny Silcock stressed, the first decision concerned the structure for the two-site school, and this was eventually decided as the diamond-shaped one that in due course meant separate Girls 11-16 and mixed Juniors at the new site, with Boys 11-16 and mixed Sixth Form at Cumberland Street. The structure was felt to have some clear intrinsic educational benefits, of course, but another important reason for this choice was to minimise cross-site travelling,

which was recognised from the outset to be an inevitable disadvantage, on top of the obvious cost of having two sites – downsides, yes, but worth the overall benefit, was the judgement. Another decision made early on was that a Girls' Division Principal should be appointed a year in advance of the site opening, which was undoubtedly one that aided the eventual success of the whole project immensely. This was partly because it enabled the person appointed to be integrally involved in the detailed planning – curriculum, staffing, marketing, recruitment, resources – that had to be completed well in advance of opening day.

## Fence Avenue Timeline

1993



**September 1993**  
Opening Ceremony with Headmaster Adrian Silcock and Brenda Despontin, the first Girls' Division Principal



1997



Dr Despontin moves on to Monmouth School for Girls and **Catherine Buckley** becomes second Girls' Division Principal

1999

**Esmé Patey-Ford** is the first pupil from the Girls Division to be appointed King's School Captain



2001



**Liz Spence** takes over the reins as Principal as Catherine is appointed Head of Queen's Chester

2011

**Jo Anderson** takes up her post as the fourth Principal of King's Girls' on Liz's retirement



2015



**Helen Broadley** takes over as the fifth principal of King's Girls' Division

2020



King's relocates to new campus and **becomes fully co-educational**. Helen Broadley becomes Senior Division Principal

# 30 YEARS of King's Girls

Continued from Page 9

But, in particular, in the person who was chosen – Brenda Despontin – turned out to be an absolute master-stroke. Whilst Adrian Silcock, with the indefatigable support of his deputy Keith Aikin, undoubtedly could count a great many achievements in the process of pulling off the feat of establishing a successful Girls' Division in effect from scratch, the most important one was almost certainly the choice of Brenda. She left King's to move on to higher things in the independent education world after just five years, but in that time, she had succeeded in "building a staff team who shared her vision and worked together enthusiastically to achieve it, as well as inspiring her girls to realise their potential in the lovely atmosphere she was able to create at Fence Avenue; a genuinely charismatic leader", commented Keith.

"Dr. Despontin proved more than worthy of the task she was entrusted with, both in ability and in



Fence Avenue staff 1996-97, taken by Michael Patey-Ford

enthusiasm", said Mrs Silcock. New financial arrangements had to be put into place and the Fence Avenue site very significantly rebuilt prior to the 1993 opening day; tasks which a few of the Governors, chaired then by Bill Bromley-Davenport, together with the Bursar of the time, David Smith, managed with great skill. The initial state of the school that had been purchased was well characterised by Nigel Richardson, Academic Deputy Head in 1993-4 and responsible, with Keith Perriss, a Senior Master, for ensuring the smooth logistical operation of the new four-division, dual-site Foundation: "masses of dead flies on window sills, pupil

exercise books strewn around, it looked like the Marie Celeste, abandoned to its fate on the final day of LEA operation."

Keith Aikin stressed how important was David Smith's "grasp of design and insistence on high quality" in rendering the site ready for public scrutiny and then actual operation. However, this followed the huge marketing and recruitment effort, for which Keith had primary responsibility, to first generate the interest and then the actual first cohort of King's Girls' Division pupils. But he also emphasised the even more crucial role played by the team of staff recruited to operate under Brenda's leadership. It is impossible to name them all here, but Keith name-checked Anne Craig as Deputy, and subject teaching staff like Jo Beesley, Angela Cooper and Gill Turner also from the Cumberland St. site, and newcomers Di Barker, Clare Bingham, Christine Harrison, Debbie Inman, Michael Patey-Ford and Val White.

This was now 30 years ago, and as this edition is going to print, the Fence Avenue site is well on the way to being a large housing estate. Nevertheless, the anniversary remains a very significant one in the developing narrative of the King's School in Macclesfield.

## Editor's Note

This feature concentrates much more on the historical background to the opening of the Girls' Division than the one that appeared 10 years ago, to mark the 20th anniversary – and which, for those who did not see it at the time, is currently reproduced on the alumni website. As it happens, I was a member, one of two staff representatives, along with the late David Blamphin (obit.2022) on a Development Committee set up by the school's Governors at the time, whose report led to the purchase of the Fence Ave. site and the setting up of the King's Foundation in 1993 – and can certainly attest to the flies on the window-sills, not to mention the significant presence of Dr. Despontin at Foundation senior management meetings during her time as Principal!

Ian Wilson

# Fence Avenue Memories



Jo Beesley, Staff

"September 1993 was both the climax and the start of an exciting venture! I

recall wonderful vision and courage, concern from some, tireless commitment from many, spearheaded by headmaster Adrian Silcock's passion and a healthy dollop of staff banter: "How are we supposed to get from Cumberland Street to Fence Avenue?" In September 1993, our first glorious cohort of girls arrived, the *five minute dash* and the new King's verb, 'to cross site' were spawned!

The school was immaculate, the girls bright-eyed, eager and earnest, and the staff raring to give them the best days of their lives. From the first occasion everyone came together, there was a universal, pioneering spirit of pride & optimism. Friendships endure, and I am beyond delighted, thirty years on, to be teaching the children of several of those first, fabulous King's girls!"



Aiman Aslam, Head Girl 2013/14

"All staff were fantastic sources of knowledge, support and guidance in both

the Girls' Division and Sixth Form. If I was pressed to name just a few from my time at Fence Avenue: Mrs Broadley (Biology) whose handwriting remains the most elegant I have seen to date, Mr Jones (Maths) who displayed an admirable patience with my friends and I on the front row, Mrs Adams (Latin) and her infectious enthusiasm for role-playing Virgil's Aeneid, Mrs Locke (Science) who was the first to impress upon me the importance of a calm approach during practicals, Ms Walwyn (Librarian) who fuelled my thirst for reading with her weekly

recommendations, Madame Schué, Mrs Seth and Mr Fico (Languages) for inspiring my love for languages and desire to become a true polyglot and Dr Banner (English) who led the small but mighty Writers' Group, with members receiving weekly hand-written invites for literary discussions over lunch. I am grateful to all for their dedication to teaching and pastoral care, which made Fence Avenue such a dynamic and positive environment."



Anna Beesley, Head Girl 2007/08

"My memories of Fence Avenue are predominantly ones of laughter.

Both the teaching and the opportunities outside the classroom were full of support and fun, which was an amazing atmosphere in which to learn. Mrs Buckley was an inspirational coach to our netball team, and it's hardly surprising that many of us still play on a weekly basis. I can still today quote the exact way that Mrs Olsen taught us some of our history topics – her delivery was incredible and her passion for the subject infectious."

Anne Craig, Head of French 1993-2000

"We started off with pupils in first, second and third years, a small number of core staff based at Fence Avenue and a half



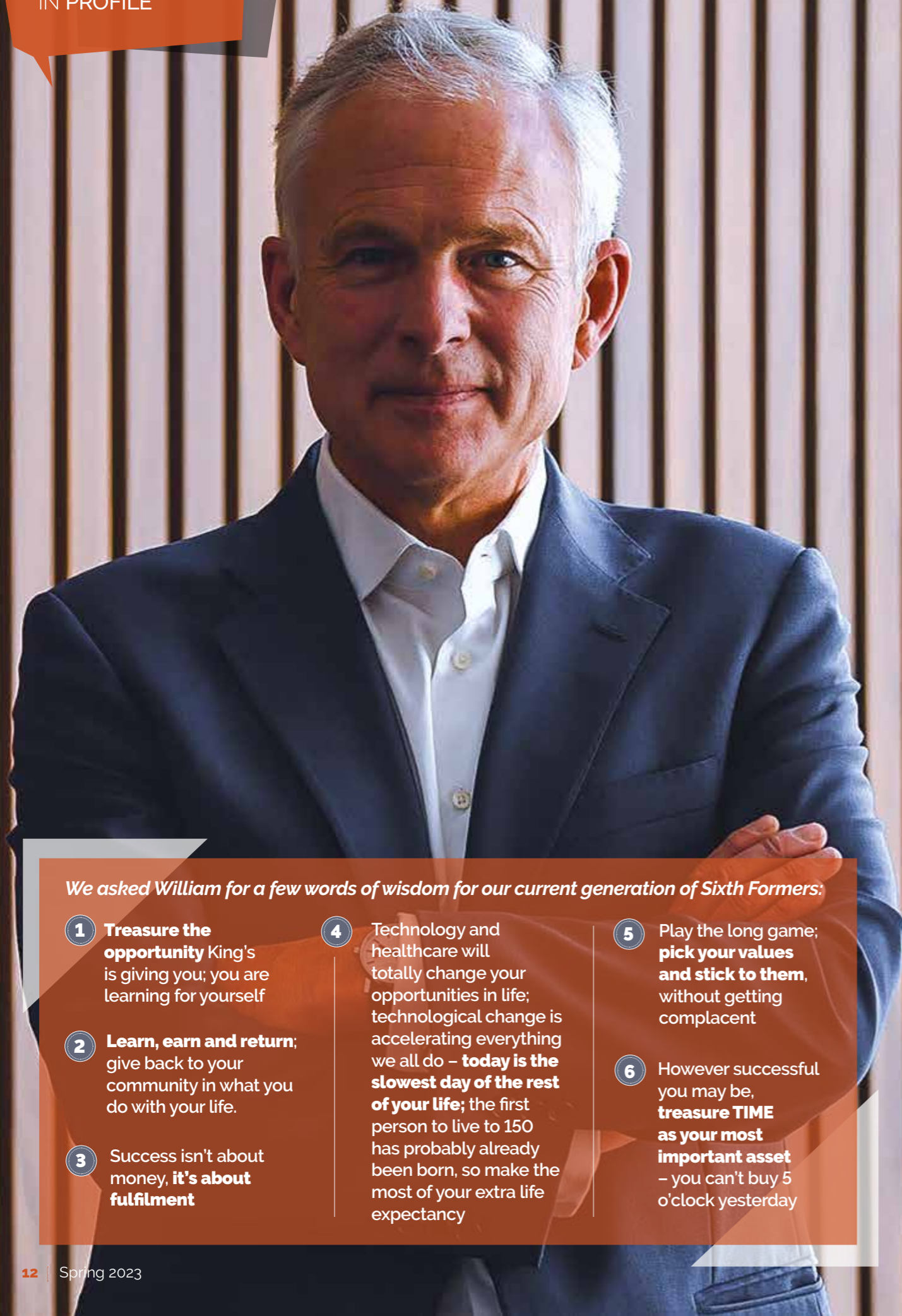
empty building, but it was exciting to be in on something from the beginning. We worked closely as a team and it is this that I remember most – working together to achieve the same goal to establish King's Girls as a successful Division under the King's umbrella. In my role, I used to take a full coach load of first

year pupils to stay in a château in Brittany – some girls had never been away before without their parents – and in this, I was aided and abetted by Debbie Newman, Angela Cooper and Jenny Silcock. We had many hilarious moments – dancing at the local village disco, avoiding a hornet's nest, trying to groom a reluctant pony which cantered off and had to be retrieved, and improvised entertainment after the evening meal. Great memories which I still treasure."

Hannah Gray (2000)

"I joined King's in 1995, a wide-eyed eleven-year-old bookworm who had to take the train from Stockport every day and climb the giant hill up to Fence Avenue. To a child whose constant refrain was 'why?', King's was a treasure trove of learning and discovery, filled with passionate leaders and teachers who initiated us into the mysteries of deciphering ancient and modern languages, in understanding Auden and Shakespeare, and in revealing the complex nature of the natural universe around us. I remember my teachers above all else – fearless people tasked with transforming promising putty into robust intellects whilst contending with years of teenage hormonal upheaval (we all remember the tears shed by some in our class when Take That split up). I raise a glass to them all and to Dr. Palazzo – my last English teacher – whose parting line to me was a reminder to send her a copy of my first novel. I would like to tell her that I never forgot those words: it's coming soon, Dr. Palazzo!"

• For many more recollections of Fence Avenue days from both staff and pupils, please see King's Connect



# Learn, earn & Return

**W**ILLIAM – or Bill as he was known at school – left King's in 1981 to go to Exeter College, Oxford, to read Geography, and in effect took his first steps on the road to his current position whilst working during university vacations. His holiday employers had links to CVC Capital Partners, a venture capital company, and having liked what he had learned, he managed to secure a graduate traineeship with NatWest Ventures.

The venture capital world clearly suited him, as, after helping to build the business across Europe, he went on to jointly lead a management buyout, and to form Bridgepoint as co-founder in 2000.

There followed 20 or so years in which William helped Bridgepoint to become one of the world's leading Alternative Investment platforms, culminating in an extremely successful 2021 listing on the London Stock Exchange. Today it manages £38bn of capital, invested in growth companies across the world through a network of offices from San Francisco to Shanghai. Among the well-known companies that have been owned by Bridgepoint have been Pret A Manger – William was their Chair for 10 years – Pets at Home, Burger King and MotoGP – he is currently its Board President.

Typifying the mantra that if you want a job doing well, give it to a busy person, not to mention illustrating the range of skills and experience that several other organisations

King's Speech has featured several former pupils who have enjoyed successful careers in the business world over the years, but no-one more successful than **William Jackson**, currently CEO of Bridgepoint.

have valued in William, he is additionally non-executive director of both Berkeley Homes, a FTSE 100 housebuilder, and the famous Royal Marsden Hospital Trust, as well as Chair of Governors of Wellington College, and an Honorary Fellow of Mansfield College, Oxford.

We asked William what aspects of his time at King's contributed to his later successes, and he came up with a few fascinating insights. In particular, he recalled one Sixth Form lesson in which the final question in a vital end-of-term test was: 'what is the name of the classroom cleaner?' Not many got it correct, either, but to William it was a remarkably subtle lesson in "the value of respect, acknowledging contribution and treating everyone equally".

He has kept in close touch with a few friends from his King's days, and also got to know well the late **Ian Taylor** (1974), whom he described as 'an amazing man, and one of the UK's most successful business people'. It is noteworthy how much there is in common between the views of the two men about both lessons from King's and recipes for success in

life. (Ian Taylor's lengthy obituary featured in *King's Speech* in 2021). In particular, the down-to-earth values of responsibility, self-motivation and respect are ones William identified as central to the culture engendered during his time at the school.

He says he learned the vital importance of people in effective teaching, a passion for performance which sport at the School in particular fostered, but also the celebration of different avenues to success, whether in academic work, or in the arts, as well as in sport. The School in the 1980s knocked the edge off people, he feels, and generated real humility and respect for others and for diversity. Equally, it fostered the key life skills of being taught how to learn, to think and to organise.

Evidence of William living out his values is all around pupils at King's: William's philanthropic beliefs helped ensure the move to the new campus in 2020, with his donation allowing the School to purchase the land on which the School is now built. In recognition of this, the School's main hall is named the William Jackson Hall.

We asked William for a few words of wisdom for our current generation of Sixth Formers:

- 1 Treasure the opportunity** King's is giving you; you are learning for yourself
- 2 Learn, earn and return;** give back to your community in what you do with your life.
- 3 Success isn't about money, it's about fulfilment**
- 4 Technology and healthcare** will totally change your opportunities in life; technological change is accelerating everything we all do – **today is the slowest day of the rest of your life;** the first person to live to 150 has probably already been born, so make the most of your extra life expectancy
- 5 Play the long game; pick your values and stick to them,** without getting complacent
- 6 However successful you may be, treasure TIME as your most important asset** – you can't buy 5 o'clock yesterday

IN CONVERSATION

# A Snap Chat

with *Reesha* 

Former Head Girl **Reesha Sodha (2003)** is one of many alumni who are now based in USA. We caught up with her in Washington DC to learn of her journey since leaving King's...



*I moved from a big, corporate, well-oiled machine to a tech start-up on the beach. To say it was a culture shock would be an understatement!*

I left King's in 2003 to study Biological Sciences at Magdalen College, Oxford. There I continued my passion for music instilled by Mr Green, Mrs Beesley and my flute teacher, Mrs Hunter, and played in various orchestras as well as taking up rowing (I learnt to cox) which is where I met my future husband (in a rowing boat - he was sitting in front of me and I was yelling at him at 6am during a warm up!). After Magdalen, I took a gap year to travel the world. I visited the USA, New Zealand, Australia, Nepal, India and Uganda. It was the most amazing experience and I returned to the UK to study for a Masters in Management at London Business School. Here, I was exposed to a truly international environment and it gave me the confidence to start my career abroad.

#### **What direction did your career take after university?**

I moved to Switzerland to work in brand management at Procter &

Gamble's European headquarters in Geneva. I worked on various beauty brands including Hugo Boss fragrances and Gucci beauty, and I also learnt to ski and resurrected my GCSE French. I spent 3 years in Geneva and absolutely loved it. I then spent a brief period working in the P&G UK office before transferring to their New York office. Moving to the USA was an amazing, if slightly terrifying, experience. My husband and I loved exploring our new city and country and we made some incredible friends.

I then really wanted to change the direction of my career - I had worked in marketing and on beauty brands for almost 7 years and it felt like a good moment to reassess and try something new. So, I had virtual coffees with a bunch of people working in interesting places and doing interesting things and that led me to start work at Snapchat in Venice, Los Angeles. It was definitely very different from Procter & Gamble.

I moved from a big, corporate, well-oiled machine to a tech start-up on the beach. To say it was a culture shock would be an understatement! But I quickly discovered the joys and challenges of working in a fast-paced tech environment. I worked on advertising and business products (you have me to thank for the non-skippable video ads - sorry!) and then moved onto building and launching products designed for creators such as Spotlight, Stories and Story Replies.

During this time, I also fell in love with California. My husband and I spent our holidays and weekends exploring California, Utah and Nevada. We hiked and camped in many National and State Parks, sipped wine in various Californian vineyards, sought out the best tacos and avocado toasts on the West Coast, adopted a greyhound and had a baby. Last year we left our beloved California for a new adventure in Washington DC - my husband got a job at one of the

universities so we packed up and moved east.

#### **What's next?**

I am just about to go back to work after my maternity leave and will be starting a new job at Spotify in March. I will be leading a team who help to build products for podcast and video creators. I am excited for this new challenge!

I want to continue working with interesting people on interesting products - I enjoy the fast-paced work and the continuous learning that comes from these environments. I would love to stay in tech as it is such an exciting and varied industry to work in, with so many applications. I would like to continue building a dual career with my husband where we take turns to build our careers with different opportunities that allow us to live in interesting places around the world.

I would also like to continue mentoring the next generation

of women in tech. I have loved mentoring many young women through programmes like 'Built by Girls.' We need more diverse teams if we are to solve more critical problems with the technology we have available to us and the technology still to come.

#### **Is there anything you carry with you from King's that has helped you in your career?**

In the business world, there is very little you can achieve by yourself. Almost everything you do is as part of a team. I think participating in various music groups, expedition groups, DofE, etc. at King's taught me the beginnings of the skills needed to succeed in these types of environments.

#### **What advice would you give to current King's students?**

It is almost impossible to imagine exactly what future careers will look like, or what roles will be.

The impact of technology means many of the jobs we will need people to do in the future do not yet exist. The roles I have taken at Snapchat and Spotify definitely did not exist when I was at King's. The app store did not even exist until I graduated from Oxford! So, try to think about the general skills you need to develop and work on those rather than fixating on a specific position or role. These skills do not need to be all learnt in the classroom - you can learn them from your extra-curricular activities, your friendships, the trips you take, etc. The key skills that have set me up for success have been teamwork, collaboration, communication and a curiosity for learning.

Also, as you leave school, remember that you now get to define your own success. For some people that might mean a very different path from yours and that's ok - everyone gets to define success differently.

## IN PROFILE

# Conservation's Breath of fresh Aiers

**Peter Aiers** (1992), received an OBE in King Charles' New Year's Honours for services to heritage. Here, we learn more about Peter's career in conservation and heritage since he left King's.

**P**ETER Aiers left King's in 1992, after taking A-levels in Business Studies, English and History. 'I was not the most diligent student', he admitted, and after falling short of what he needed to take his first choice Social History degree course at Edinburgh, he went to Bournemouth University to take a BSc degree in Heritage Conservation. He very much enjoyed it, but was often told 'you'll never make a career in heritage; there's too much competition for very few positions'. Peter has certainly proved that prognostication wrong, and in 2023's New Year's Honours was made OBE for 'Services to Heritage'!

He began work in the late 1990s surveying historic rural buildings, and gained invaluable early experience working on a project with the Royal Commission for Historic Monuments in England. Then came work for English Heritage, before moving into roles as Conservation Officer, first with a local planning authority, and later becoming the first such officer with a Diocese, when he took that position with the Diocese of London. There were huge challenges there, and Peter found that his experience enabled him to become quite an innovator as he gained increasing responsibility for developing

solutions to problems. He became Project Development Manager, and focused first on enabling assistance to volunteers in parishes to solve their own building issues, and later on using a blend of commercial property development and grant aid to repair and develop historic church buildings in a way that made them more sustainable. For example, he set up a gutter maintenance programme that remains in place to this day; 'gutters are very important on historic buildings', he commented, 'even though having one's name associated with guttering is not necessarily the most glamorous legacy!'

In 2007, Peter moved to the Churches Conservation Trust, and spent fifteen years in various hands-on management roles within that organisation, eventually becoming Chief Executive in 2017. That involved him in leading the organisation – which is the third largest historic building charity in the country – through the pandemic.

Finally, in 2022, came a move to become Master and Chief Executive of The Charterhouse, a very old [fourteenth century] and prestigious charitable organisation, a position which, Peter said, it is an 'extraordinary privilege' to hold. Given that Heritage was not a career he would have thought about when he was at

King's, Peter commented how much he has enjoyed spending time with some very clever and committed people, from the wide variety of specialisms involved in managing our built heritage.

Asked how, if at all, his time at King's had been of benefit in his working life, Peter referenced a recent event he had happened to attend with Stanley Chow, a King's contemporary – who was featured in King's Speech in 2017 – and now a very successful illustrator. 'Neither of us perhaps made the absolute most of our academic potential while at school, we agreed, but maybe King's helped to engender in both of us the grit and determination that have been essential in our achieving what we have so far in our careers'. And they've both achieved quite a lot!

'A career in Heritage has been both exciting and fulfilling so far, with always something new to learn and be amazed by, and every day providing different challenges', summarised Peter. 'Anyone going into the heritage sector may not become the wealthiest in monetary terms, but you would in many other ways.'

*• NB Many will remember Peter's father Mike, who taught Physics at King's (1971-2002).*





(L-R) Andy James, Simon James, Kym Graham and Steve Swindells



(L-R) Steve Moores, Ian Wilson, Mark Harbord & Jason Slack

# Howzat!

## Wilson Field opens

**L**AST July, former King's staff and cricketers from the last 50 years turned out for the official opening of 'The Wilson Cricket Field' in honour of Ian 'The Wizzer' Wilson. Enjoying the series of former pupils' matches and celebrations, a modest Ian said: "I am flabbergasted and humbled. It's unbelievable."

A Cambridge mathematician and Economics graduate, Ian, now 75, arrived at The King's School in 1968, taking over the First Team coach's role in 1972. He held that position for 10 years before stepping aside for his great friend Mark Harbord, working with both the U15s and U14s before returning as the First XI umpire. In 50 years of King's cricket, and well over 1,000 matches, Ian has been ever-present, guiding pupils through the tactical niceties of the most complex of games.

He said: "Cricket develops the character hugely. It develops team spirit. The lad who bats seven, fields third man and bowls a few off spinners is just as important to the team as the superstar. It's that sort of game."

Ian continued: "Mark Harbord and I drew up our best XI, and you would



Patrick Birch & Simon Hope

have to include the record run scorer Kym Graham, an Australian who scored over 3,000 runs in his three seasons. There also was the great all-rounder Graham Jenion, who played for the North of England, batsman Andy Bones, Steve Swindells, spinner Andy James and Pete Moores, who went on to coach England. You'd also have to include leg spinner Stuart White, who took a nine for and could easily have had all ten."

The new King's First team pitch was funded by a significant donation from a former pupil in Ian's tutor group who is now a successful entrepreneur and investor. The Wilson Cricket Field now has a superb cricket wicket, flat, true and sandy coloured, ideal for shot-

making, but also generating pace, spin and bounce for the bowlers.

Record run scorer Kym Graham said: "Ian was very wise, chatting to me at the non-striker's end and spotting if I looked a bit ruffled and telling me calmly and quietly to keep going."

"I remember one incident in particular with the future England batsman John Crawley playing at MGS. He stepped on his wicket and tried to claim the wind had blown off the bails. Ian gave him short shrift and Crawley walked off quickly with his tail between his legs. Ian commanded great respect and wasn't going to suffer any nonsense."

Simon James who captained the side in 1991, added: "Ian was a trail blazer. He, Pete Mathews and Mark Harbord organised our Pakistan tour in 1989-90. What an adventure! We learned so much, we had an unbeaten season when we came back to England."

Current Coach Steve Moores said: "The day was a great tribute to a huge figure in King's cricketering history. A fantastic teacher, friend and mentor to so many pupils and staff, Ian's contribution to King's has been recognised in the best possible way. School cricket will continue to grow and flourish on The Wilson Field."



# Let's get Connected!

King's Connect brings together former pupils and staff on one network to share alumni news and information about events.

As our network continues to grow, we are looking to recruit more members as mentors. The aim of our mentoring programme is for former pupils to support other alumni and pupils in Year 12 and 13 by sharing their wealth of knowledge and skills. It may be that members have been on the same career path, have chosen the same university destination or the same degree course. They may have done an apprenticeship or may be considering doing a masters.

Alumni can find mentors on the online network and connect with them, whether they have a few brief questions or want support with working towards long-term career goals.

Most of us know how valuable it is to be able to seek advice, especially if considering a career change or returning to the workplace. We hope you will join us! If you haven't yet joined King's Connect, you can do so by using the QR code, below. Here are some of the other benefits you can enjoy by joining:

- Keep in touch and re-connect with friends and teachers
- Join specific clubs depending on your location, profession and interests e.g. King's in London, Law Network, '00s Alumni
- Share your stories and photographs
- Register for events
- Advertise your business/services
- Exclusive access to news stories, interviews and archive material

We encourage you to help King's Connect grow by sharing your stories and photos and starting conversations. It is easy to join, simply create a profile, search for and invite friends and get posting!

To join King's Connect, scan the QR code below or visit: [www.connect.kingsmac.co.uk](http://www.connect.kingsmac.co.uk)



SCAN ME!



## Be a King's Ambassador!

Are you a former pupil who would like to play a more active and involved role?

The **King's Ambassador Programme** is designed for people who are still in touch with the School and a number of their peers, and who are eager to help the school grow its alumni community.

If you are happy to help share news from the school and promote events, then you could be an ambassador for your year group.

Please get in contact with our Development Office: [development@kingsmac.co.uk](mailto:development@kingsmac.co.uk)

From the Archive

# From Public TO Private



Head teacher Alan Cooper



**F**ROM 1984-5 the final age group of Cheshire-funded boys at King's completed their secondary education.

Their departure marked the termination of an association stretching back many years. In the distant past, when the School's endowments were substantial, boys were able to benefit from Governors' Foundation Scholarships - each recipient, in fact, having his success marked by the award of a scroll bearing the King's Foundation Seal. Subsequently, though, it became possible for boys at the School to be assisted from public finances under various forms of grant-aid, this eventually being formalised through the Direct Grant System in 1945.

King's, though, had actually left the Direct Grant list in 1946-7, and entered into an almost unique arrangement with the local authority. Cheshire LEA did not have its own grammar school for boys in the town, whilst Macclesfield High School was a very successful local authority venue for girls in the area who passed the 11+ examinations of the era. So the arrangement involved them purchasing the vast majority

The phasing out of the Direct Grant Scheme in the 1970s rang the death knell for publically funded places at King's and ushered in the beginnings of a fee-paying school

of King's places directly. This meant more boys were able to attend the school, and with total, rather than partial, fee remission. But, when the Direct Grant began to be progressively phased out nationally from 1976, the system had to change.

The School's attitude to the need to change is perfectly expressed in Headmaster Alan Cooper's published Annual Report in 1984-5: "For many years, parents and pupils living within daily travelling distance of Macclesfield enjoyed an almost uniquely beneficial situation, which has now ended. It was not the wish of the Governors, or myself, or my colleagues that events should have developed in this way, but it being asserted that the so-called 'democratic will' of the people had determined that no longer should pupils be assisted with public funds to attend independent schools, the choice was stark. The continued independence of King's was seen

to be an absolute priority, and this did not allow any alternative to the course that has been pursued over the past seven years."

A bit of national historic context is appropriate here. There had been longstanding debates between the proponents of grammar schools and an 11+ exam system vs. those arguing for full comprehensivisation of secondary education.

When a Labour government was elected in 1974, after the Labour government of 1964-70 had introduced the historic circular 10/65, which requested local authorities to submit plans for moves to comprehensive secondary education in their area, it was probably inevitable that the existing King's/Cheshire LEA relationship had a limited life. The relationship only had another few years to go, with the mid-80s seeing the last of the Cheshire-funded pupils leave the school.

The decision by the Governors, of course, was one with genuine options. At the time, Robin Forrester was Chair of Governors, although both Maimi Wright and later Bill Grant were to succeed him before the school became fully fee-paying. They could have chosen to, in effect, go in with the LEA, and change their entry to the non-selective one required by Cheshire. This was the option chosen by the governors of Sandbach School, just across the county, which had had a similar relationship with the LEA to that of King's. But, of course, King's opted for full independence as their top priority, as Alan Cooper later stressed.

The Governors' reports from 1971 onwards record year-after-year regret that no long-term relationship had yet been sorted out. "The future role of the School and its relationship with the LEA has not yet been resolved, and since the impression may have

been given from recent local press comments that the delay is down to the Governors, the Headmaster recently circulated the real facts to the press, making clear that there had been no lack of initiatives from the Governors, going back to 1967. To repeat, the Governors sincerely hope that a mutually satisfactory relationship with the LEA can be reached."

Similar comments appeared each year, some detailing interim arrangements that had been agreed pro tem, until finally there appeared in July 1975: 'A long-term agreement between the Governors and Cheshire County Council governing the admission of County Free Places has now been finalised'. This agreement, in fact, would have involved a long-term continuing relationship whereby 25% of King's 11+ places each year would be financed by Cheshire privately, but this was scuppered by the national Government in 1978, with the result

that the final cohort of places paid for by the county would join King's in September 1978. The intake of 1979 would be the first to ever be fully fee-paying.

Of course, the school took a huge chance. To replace almost a whole school full of pupils paid for by Cheshire into one financed largely - except from any public finance that the vagaries of government policy may permit from time to time, such as the Assisted Places scheme of 1981-1997, could easily have been unsuccessful.

There have been difficult times since, too, from time to time. And no doubt, even after the undoubted huge success at this point of the move to the new Prestbury site, there will be challenges to be met in the future. There can be no doubt, however, that the period leading up to effectively full independence during the 1970s was one of the most vital in the school's long history.

SPORTSNEWS

King's confirmed its status among the elite British rugby schools by winning the Freemont Shield at the prestigious Warwick Sevens for the second successive year. Both the King's Year 8 and Year 10 sides were crowned Cup champions, with the U14 and U16 sides also making it to the Cup Quarter Finals, to see King's win the 'best overall school' and Freemont Shield. Only four schools have ever lifted this trophy; Millfield, Sedbergh, Warwick and King's, who have now completed the double.

This caps King's most successful season ever, with success at all age levels. The U13s have remained unbeaten in all 13 matches. At the Myles Marshall Sevens tournament, King's came out as U15, U13 and U12 Cup Winners, with the U14 squad named as Plate Winners. The first XV followed up their second best XV-a-side season, winning 13 out of 15 and reaching the National Cup Quarter Finals, by adding the Cheshire Sevens title to the County Cup XV tournament, which they lifted in November.

The First VII were also runners-up



## King's best ever rugby season

at Oakham Sevens and reached the final of the Vase competition at Rosslyn Park, meeting some tough opposition in the form of Rugby School in the final.

Centre Toby Wilson has been invited to England U17 training camp; Captain Haydn Keogh has represented the North of England, fly-half Finlay Usher and scrum-half Harrison Milner have represented the National U18 Lambs and will tour South Africa in the summer.

The U15 had another magnificent season, reaching the National Cup Quarter Finals after making the semi-final the previous year. They also lifted the Warwick Sevens Cup. Head of Rugby Giles Hetherington said: "Over the summer, the senior squads will tour New Zealand and Malaysia and next year's fixture card sees an even sterner block of opponents to help challenge the very best players that Cheshire, if not the North of England, has to offer."

## Bleak Expectations celebrates English humour

SCHOOLNEWS



The Senior School production of *Bleak Expectations* was a glorious celebration of English humour, full of brilliant bravado and masterful comic interludes.

Adapted from the classic Radio 4 series, the Fifties style farce shamelessly mixed and matched renowned Dickensian scenarios to form a coherent and comic plot. Narrator Sam Harman as Sir Philip



Bin masterfully held the threads together. The inventor of the FlipBin, he reminisced about thwarting the malevolent Gently Benevolent played with menacing evil intent by Sixth Former Yussi Hill.

Will Gandy, as the romantic lead Pip, played the part with both savour and fun. Kirat Kahlon played puppet monster Headmaster Wackwell Hardthrazer with a gusto belying

her tender years. Older students Ben O'Donnell, Annabelle Jordan and Phoebe Harrison graced the stage in this audacious production, with confidence, charisma and gusto.

A fully committed group of young pupils tackled the roles of flying skunks, starving boarding school pupils and puppet jury members with great discipline and mirthful credibility.

## Netballers hit the heights in County championship

King's netballers hit the heights in the Cheshire County Championship Netball Finals, winning both the U18 and the U13 titles, with the U12s making it all the way to the finals.

The U18 netball squad won the County Championship after beating Fallibroome 14-8 and then Wilmslow High School 11-5 in the final. The Cup final marked the end of the season and the end of the school careers of four of the girls in Year 13. Anna Warham, Hope Sutton, Eve Carter and Cordy Kight will move on next year after playing in the same close-knit King's team

for 11 years. A superb U13 team put together some strategically intelligent performances to win the County Cup final against The Grange by an astonishing 16-1 margin, having previously beaten Lymm, Upton, Fallibroome and Bishop Heber and Wilmslow 12-5 in the semi-final.

Melanie Stephens, King's U13 netball coach, said: "The girls also had an impressive run to reach the semi-finals of the National Independent Schools Cup. It is the second successive year this group has won the county title and they

will no doubt continue to contend for national honours as they progress through the school years."

The U12 King's squad seemed on the course to make it a King's treble, but lost 3-1 to The Grange in the final. Earlier, they had been unbeaten winning against Hartford 17-3, Lymm 15-2, AESG 14-1 and Queens Chester 8-1 in the semi-final. U12 Coach Lisa Booker said: "The final really could have gone either way, but these girls will return stronger and even more determined."



# Review of **Growing Down**

By **Graham Wilson**



By **SIMON CARTER**

Former teacher, essayist and philosopher GP Wilson has left a heartfelt parting gift in his fifteenth and final book 'Growing Down'. Penned in the first person, the book is a collection of connected 'episodes' spanning the author's life from cradle to grave. Throughout, GP's alter ego tells of the bitter-sweet experiences of 20th-Century Man and is a masterpiece of satirical reverie. Pricking his own and society's pomposity, this darkly comic exploration is not only an examination of man's failings but also a sabre-like thrust at the politicians' sticking plaster solutions. Previously nominated for The Guardian's Book of the Week and the Boardman Tasker Prize, the King's School's much-loved former Head of English is at his very best in his final words. There is no loss of intellect from the pen of the 80-year-old, who died in 2021, but rather a brilliant mix of both nostalgia and cynicism in this thrilling page-turner. Very much a man's man: A trained lawyer, highly-educated classicist and seasoned rugby coach, Graham Pearce Wilson was widely known

and respected across his adopted town, especially in the hostels. For the thousands of pupils who loved him, this will be a touching read tracing, as it does, his childhood religious guilt, early romantic excursions and anti-climactic elevation to adulthood. The book seems to pose the eternal question: 'Do we ever really grow up?' There is an unnerving sense of fatalism and utter hopelessness that makes the reader shudder.

For those that didn't have the pleasure of listening to him in class or sitting across a pub table from the master raconteur, it's simply a wonderfully thought-provoking read. From boyhood remembrances of falling bombs, religion's fearful power of suggestion and the sense of loss from the urban sprawl of the 1960s, this book also pays homage to his heroes.

One can hear echoes of Shakespeare, Joyce and Orwell across all the episodes as he mocks his own pretension and purposelessness. He could be Ulysses' Leopold Bloom, Lear's Fool or 1984's Winston Smith. Only occasionally does he stop to celebrate his achievements. Most notable are his memories of his early teaching methods and how seriously he took his craft:

"The aim was for each lesson to be a show, a firework display that held the eye and concentrated the mind yet simultaneously informed, directed and warned against unseen pitfalls." GP Wilson. Graham's ex-King's pupil Ian Curtis, of Joy Division fame, and now famously celebrated in a

stunning town centre mural, admired GP Wilson above all teachers, and one can see why as he explains how he tried to turn his class into a theatre and maximise the impact of every lesson. But as the narrator grows older and the book develops momentum, there is a mystical questioning of the anticipated order, with a series of unexpected endings challenging the reader's assumptions.

GP never sets himself up as a hero, just an ordinary, unassuming man, fond of the solitary life and his accustomed chosen

pleasures: mountain life, sporting flair and feminine charm. In this book he is one of those he championed all his life, the common man.

Graham is survived by his beloved wife Tricia who was recently awarded the British Empire Medal for her lifelong work with the Guiding movement; his daughter Jane, an artist

and educationalist living in Yorkshire and his son Paul, an Oxford historian, who is now an author living in Sydney, Australia. He is also survived by his three grandchildren: Archie, Bobby and Alex.

• **Published in 2022, 'Growing Down' can be ordered via SHOP | confingo (confingopublishing.uk)**

• **Former pupil Simon Carter (1979) was taught by GP and went on to become a sports reporter and set up his own marketing agency.**



# Bursary & Hardship Funds

SUPPORTING KING'S

More than five centuries ago, King's founder Sir John Percyvale gifted a chantry school in his home town of Macclesfield.

The school was established shortly after Sir John's death through his legacy, in 1502, and the school has been underpinned by philanthropy ever since.

Over the last decade, the school has received over £1.5m gifted in the wills of our supporters which has contributed significantly to the school's Bursary Fund.

Over the last year, we have received a number of further legacy pledges from former pupils, who all join as members of the Percyvale Legacy Society: formed to recognise and

thank (during their lifetime) those who have chosen to remember their school in their will.

Leaving a gift in a will is a simple and tax-efficient way of making a donation that many would be unable to afford during their lifetime. The School is incredibly grateful for all donations, whatever their size.



## Mike's Legacy

Under Officer and academy rugby captain.

Later in his life, he was awarded a place at Oxford University but was unable to take up the offer as he was required to join his army unit immediately in West Germany. Mike went on to become a board member of Waitrose Ltd in 1992 and played rugby for The Army several times including twice at Twickenham as well as for Wilmslow and The Harlequins.

Mike then moved to Dorset but kept in touch with his lifelong friends David Hutt (1958) and Tim Smith (1958). They regularly met up, including at the 2019 Alumni Gala Dinner held at the Cumberland Street site.

Mike became an Honorary member of the Former Pupils' Association and made regular donations to the Bursary Fund.

He also explained, at that time, why he was motivated to continue to support the School through a gift in his will: "I have chosen to leave a legacy in my will to honour the remarkable teachers who taught me, A.S. (Dickie) Haresign (French), W.S. (Slogger) Logan (German) and R.D (Nobby) Clarke (History), to say nothing of T.T. Shaw and all that King's gave me."

The School is incredibly grateful to Mike for his gifts to the Bursary Fund over the years. These help secure the education of future generations so that they too can look back on King's as fondly as Mike and his contemporaries.

• For more information on donating, leaving a legacy or to let us know of a pledge, please contact: former.pupils@kingsmac.co.uk

Former pupil **Mike Rose** (1957) sadly passed away last year. Here, we remember Mike and the enormous contribution he made to King's:

Mike joined King's in 1950 and was a lifelong supporter of the school.

His colourful time at King's consisted of the roles of School and House Captain, Company Sergeant Major, member of both the 1st XV Rugby and 2nd X1 Cricket team and long jumper in the school's athletics team. After King's, he passed out first in order of merit at RMA Sandhurst as a Senior

## FOND FAREWELL

## OBITUARIES

**Tim Allmand-Smith** (1958) died in September 2022, aged 82. His mother was a King's teacher – 'mum' at home, 'sir' at school, in those days! He credited the school with generating a great love of sport and outdoor pursuits that he carried on throughout his life – squash, and later golf, skiing and sailing mainly. Tim enjoyed a very successful business career, primarily in the Far East.

**Paul Briggs** (1977) died in November 2022, aged 62. He worked in the printing industry, and his main hobby was hockey. Having played 1st XI at school, he later played for several local clubs, as well as the old boys club, the Kobbler.

**John Carr** (1948) died in April 2022, aged 91. After King's, where he played 1st XI cricket, he went to Manchester University to read Dentistry. On graduation, after a period as a house surgeon at the Manchester Dental Hospital, he had a spell in the forces, and spent most of his four years with the Royal Dental Corps in Tripoli, Libya. Thereafter, until his retirement in 1990, he operated in dental practices in first Glossop and then, for over 25 years, Alderley Edge. John's son, **David Carr** (1988) also attended King's.

**Mick Craghill** (1960) died in December 2022, aged 78. From King's, he went to Barclays Bank, where he enjoyed a very successful career. He played cricket at school – a stalwart member of a 3rd XI that was the most successful school cricket side of its year; remarkably, it played no fewer than 11 fixtures during the season! Mick was later a crucial member of the Maxonians CC during the 60s and 70s in particular, both on the field and in helping to run the club.

**Dave Cowburn** (1984) died in June 2022, aged 56. After King's he worked locally as a builder. He had been a tenacious rugby player at school,

Sadly, we were unable to include all tributes to friends we said farewell to this past year, but if you would like to read the full obituary list, please visit: [www.connect.kingsmac.co.uk/news](http://www.connect.kingsmac.co.uk/news)



but his main interest was as a very accomplished sailor.

**Ken Culley, CBE**, (1958) died in September, 2022, aged 80. Ken was a major figure in the UK's Building Society movement, especially during the period it underwent major controversy and change. After King's, he began as a clerk with Cheshire Building Society, then had a four-year spell as accountant with Bradford and Bingley, returning to the Cheshire as general manager 1969-83. Finally, he moved to Bournemouth-based Portman BS as Chief Executive. He also had a stint as Chair of the Building Societies Association (1995-6); in that role, he was described in 1995 by the Independent as a 'dyed-in-the-wool building societies man'. These societies were founded on mutuality principles, owned and run by their members, and fundamentally based on sound and secure money, but as the whole concept of mutuality came under attack, Ken was one of those who argued longest and hardest for its retention as a matter of principle.

**Daniel Dale** (1999) died tragically early in February 2023, aged just 42. Academically very able, he left King's to read History at Christ Church, Oxford. He was passionate about literature, history and film, and forged a career as a screen writer in the film industry. Daniel had particularly good relationships at King's with his A-level teachers messrs Aikin, Keefe, Levin and Murray. He also performed in school dramatic productions such as 'Foursome' and 'The Tempest'.

**Andrew Green** (Staff, 1975-2009) died in October 2022, aged 72. Andrew



showed great musical talent from an early age – and was soon adept at playing piano, recorder, organ and violin. After gaining a 1st in Music at Newcastle University, he opted to move into teaching,

joining the staff at King's - his only school - in 1975, and becoming Director of Music in 1983. Andrew led a music department that flourished in all aspects under his leadership. He made his subject come alive for very large numbers of not always initially willing non-specialists, as well as inspiring and providing opportunities for individual pupils to develop their talents through the school's broad programme of individual tuition. Choirs and orchestras also flourished under Andrew's guidance, and gained national recognition for consistent high standards. Outside school, Andrew was exceptionally busy, performing with, and directing, several choirs and orchestras locally. Andrew was an active Christian and well respected member of Macclesfield Golf Club.

**Vic Hall** (1944) died in January 2023, aged 96. On leaving King's he went into the Navy, and was trained in electronics and naval radar prior to being sent to the Far East in the Second World War. In 1948, Vic took up a place to read Geography at Sheffield University, and after a teaching diploma in Leicester, returned to Sheffield to spend the rest of his working life as a teacher, eventually retiring in 1981 as Head of Geography. A keen fly fisherman, Vic played rugby and cricket at King's.

**Joan Jenion** (Staff until 1991) died on 27 April, aged 91, believed to be the oldest surviving former teacher at King's. She taught in the Junior School until she retired at 60 in 1991. Joan was a long-serving member of staff in the days when the Junior School was based at Cumberland Street. For many years, she settled in the youngest members of the King's community into form 1D where she taught most subjects to seven and eight-year-old boys. She was fiercely loyal towards her charges,



setting them carefully on their King's journey. The foundations she put in place bore fruit in future years for so many King's boys. She retired just before the Junior School moved to Fence Avenue.

**Donald Riseley** (1954) died in November 2021, aged 84. After National Service in the Navy, he spent most of his working life as a Financial Advisor with Confederation Life. As well as his roles as steward and treasurer at Macclesfield Methodist Church, Donald was well known in the town as a member of several choirs, including the Oriana, as well as being a member of a theatre group.

**Duncan Robinson, CBE**, (1962) died in December 2022, aged 79. He was one of King's most distinguished academics, an acknowledged expert in art history since the eighteenth century. Having left King's to go to Clare College, Cambridge, after graduation he became first Assistant Keeper, later Keeper, in the Department of Paintings and Drawings at the famous Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge. In addition, he became a Fellow of Clare College in 1975, as well as a lecturer. In



1981, he moved across the Atlantic to become Director of the Yale Center for British Art, and Professor of Art History at Yale University, whilst also holding the post of Chief Executive of the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art in London. In 1995 he returned to the Fitzwilliam as its Director, a position he held until 2007. He also became Master of Magdalene College, Cambridge in 2002. Unusually, he continued to be director of studies at both Clare and Magdalene whilst Master, and also became deputy vice-chancellor of the University of Cambridge. He retired in 2012, having been made CBE in 2008 for services to the heritage of art. Duncan was also a Trustee of the Royal Collection, Chair of the Henry Moore Foundation in the 2010s, and deputy lieutenant of the County of Cambridgeshire.

## Portrait of a great

**Professor Sir Tony Wrigley** (1949) died in February 2022, aged 90. After being evacuated to N Wales during the Second World War, Tony gained a Scholarship from King's to Peterhouse, Cambridge, and duly emerged with firsts in both the history and geography triposes, before then accepting a fellowship at the University of Chicago.

He went on to become one of the school's most highly-respected academics. His field was primarily population history, and he was revolutionary in that he introduced a new way of researching history, via parish registers.

A lecturer in the Geography department at Cambridge 1958-74, Tony was instrumental in founding the now world-famous Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure in 1964, which is still flourishing and attracts scholars from around the world, who continue to build on Tony's



Artist Robert Priseman.  
Photo credit: Corpus Christi College,  
University of Cambridge

revolutionary work. His academic publications were legion, and he held the posts of Professor of Population Studies at LSE, Professor of Economic History at Cambridge and Master of Corpus Christi College at Cambridge.

He was knighted in 1996, and President of the British Academy 1997-2001.

*(Many may remember Tony's brother, Nick, also a former pupil, and member of the school's Geography department and master i/c cricket, until he moved on in 1971).*

**Michael Rose** (1957) died in May 2022, aged 83. *Please see page 25.*

**Andre Simpkin** (1988) died aged 53 in February 2023, after a short illness. Andre left King's after A-levels to take a degree in Industrial Studies at Sheffield Polytechnic. At school, he was an outstanding centre in an outstanding 1st XV, that not only won all but four of a strong 23-game fixture list in 1987-8, but went on, having lost to Millfield in the annual Roslyn Park Schools Sevens, in the semi-final, to defeat the same side in the quarters at the Oxford Sevens the next day, and then go on to win that major tournament - for the third time in the school's history.

**Gerald Stanford** (1947) previously Steinhardt died in May 2022, aged 91. He was born in Hamburg in 1931 to a German (Jewish) father and English mother, but when his father had an anonymous phone call just before the infamous Krystallnacht, saying 'get

the boy out now', he did – which is how Gerald ended up living with his English grandparents in Alderley Edge and attending King's. From school, he joined the merchant navy, then Royal Navy, and finally the Royal Canadian Navy, with whom he eventually retired as a Lieutenant Commander. After retiring, Gerry studied to gain an LLB, and set up his own chambers in Victoria, specialising in maritime law.



## EDITOR'S NOTE:

*We have also learned of the deaths of David Gifford (1959), E F Lofthouse (1958) and Philip Sproson (1950). More details on these, plus more extensive obituaries on some of the above, are available on King's*

# EVENTS ROUND-UP

## GOLF

The 2022 season opened at Macclesfield GC in early May, when 13 competed for the Frank Moore Trophy and the Geoff Dakin Shield. The Trophy winner was Steve Moores, with a commendable score of 35 points; Tom Coghill won the Shield in a card play-off with Paul Halewood.

In the annual inter-schools competition, King's came a respectable third, 14 Stableford points behind the winners, William Hulme GS. Our 166 points were contributed by messrs. Harbord, Coghill, Hyde, Thorneycroft and Davies/Oehlcke, with messrs. Maudsley, Joyce, Thomas and Wilson making up an excellent 10-strong team.

The final event was the now 23-year old contest between former pupils of King's and Stockport GS, held at Knutsford. We came 2nd on this occasion, our best 5 scorers – Gordon Tebay, Rob Oehlcke, Simon Carter, Katie Jordan and Tim Moore – accumulating 176 points, 10 fewer than our opponents. Messrs. Davies, Maudsley and Wilson made up our team.

## Bursary Fund Golf Day

A record-breaking Alan McInnes Bursary Fund Golf Day was graced by three generations of his beloved family. Wife Gwen, daughter and organiser Nicola Moores and granddaughter Izzy, handed out the prizes at the hugely successful event. Played at Prestbury Golf Club course, the event honours one of

Macclesfield's most famous sporting sons and raises funds for the School's Bursary Fund. A former King's pupil and teacher, who played for Sale RUFC before transferring to Salford and coaching Wigan to the Rugby League Challenge Cup, Alan McInnes was a hugely respected sporting all-rounder. The event was won with a 93 points by the Mobberlonians, captained by King's parent David Clayton but starring the sombrero wearing Ben Foster. A record £7,500 was raised for the Bursary Fund.



## Former Pupils & MURFC XV Rugby Match



A packed club house witnessed a fantastic contest between King's Former Pupils and MURFC XV in the period between Christmas and New Year, in what is now an annual fundraising event. A superb evening was enjoyed by players and a huge crowd of spectators. The score was King's Macc Old Boys – 29, Macclesfield RUFC XV – 19.



## Christmas Lunch

A wonderful lunch was enjoyed by 24 former staff and pupils at The Bridge in Prestbury. It was great to welcome new faces and welcome back regular attendees.



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www.kingsmac.co.uk

t: 01625 260000

e: mail@kingsmac.co.uk

Send your updates to  
former.pupils@kingsmac.co.uk

## STAY IN TOUCH!

Hundreds of former pupils use the school website, Facebook page and King's Connect to keep up to date. These contain events, former pupils news and details of how to get involved and support the school. Please see: [www.kingsmac.co.uk](http://www.kingsmac.co.uk)



SCAN  
ME!

Keep connected with our online King's alumni network, **King's Connect**. Scan QR code above or visit: [www.connect.kingsmac.co.uk](http://www.connect.kingsmac.co.uk)

[facebook.com/kingsinmaccfp](https://facebook.com/kingsinmaccfp)

You can follow us on Twitter  
at @kingsmac

And also on LinkedIn

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY 2023

**Thursday 11 May**  
*Alumni Golf Comp. v Stockport GS alumni*  
Knutsford Golf Club

**Thursday 8 June**  
*Alan McInnes Bursary Golf Day*  
Prestbury Golf Club

**Friday 30 June**  
*Alumni Cricket Match* | King's School

**Wednesday 5 July**  
*Alumni Summer Soiree (art, music & drinks)*  
King's School

**Wednesday 5 July**  
*Inter-schools Golf Competition*  
Bramhall Golf Club

**Friday 8 September**  
*Frank Moore Trophy/Geoff Dakin Shield Comp*  
Bramhall Golf Club

**Wednesday 11 October**  
*Alumni Drinks* | London

**Saturday 18 November**  
*Alumni Gala Dinner* | King's School