

# The *Gossip* Bowl

The Alumni Magazine



*I live in hope*

*"And sometimes lurk I in a gossip's bowl" \**



**PRIOR PARK ALUMNI**  
A Community for Life



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## A community on the frontline

This issue of *The Gossip Bowl* was not originally intended to be a souvenir edition, although that is what it has become. Almost everything in it has been impacted by Covid-19. The virus caused the schools to close, alumni visits to be curtailed, and alumni sports to be abandoned. It should come as no surprise, then, that *The Gossip Bowl's* coverage of the past 12 months takes a different form than usual. We have, of necessity, given a lot of space to the community's varied responses to the crisis. Also, as you might have noticed, we've added a few pages.

The editorial content of each edition of the magazine is comprised of all our interactions with alumni during the course of the year. It is unfiltered. When we put the first assembly together this time and read it through, we were astonished by the portrait it painted of our community: caring, expert, quick to take responsibility, enquiring, selfless, indefatigable, humble, humorous, good-tempered, enterprising, outgoing, inclusive, resourceful, democratic, candid and ready to serve. Frankly, we were moved and humbled. If you want a monument to the spirit of the Prior Park alumni community, read on.

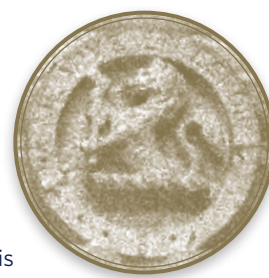
On a more mundane note, we've noticed that alumni sometimes refer to *The Gossip Bowl* as the school magazine. To clarify, *The Gossip Bowl* is the publication of the alumni association, the PPA, produced by and for alumni and funded by your subscriptions. The school has its own magazine, *The Phoenix*, as well as various email and online newsletters and bulletins. *The Gossip Bowl* was detached from the *Prior Park Magazine* (as was) in 2000. Hence, this is the 21st edition of our independent publication.

While on the subject of clarification, for those who are sometimes confused by our parenthetical dating of alumni, we allocate each former student to the year they would have left College had they completed the sixth form, even if they in fact left school at an earlier date. In this way, we keep them with their year group.

TI & CML

## Cover images

**Front cover:** *Je vive en espoir*. I live in hope. This is the capital of one of the stone columns behind the altar in the Chapel. Each column was sponsored by alumni, patrons or parishioners whose donations enabled the Chapel, roofless for so many years, to be completed. In exchange, they were allowed their own commemoration. But there is much mystery about the donors in this case. The motto belongs to the Suffolk family of Sir John Rous. Their crest has the lion with a bay leaf wreath vertically placed. Baron Rous wrote a verse: "I live in hope, and we hope to live:/ Plainer translation who can give?/ That which affords us balm and healing,/ Must naturally rouse our feeling." The perfect sentiment, you might think, for current times. But there is no reference to a Rous having come to the college. In the 1980s, the family changed its motto to: *We fight like lions and breed like rabbits*. This seemed appropriate, as the then Baron had 13 siblings.



**Back cover:** This is the shield of the Clifford family. It can be seen above the Romeo and Juliet balcony on the left-hand side as you look at the altar from the nave. *Semper Paratus*. Always Ready, or Always Prepared. Again, how appropriate at this time. The money that Bishop Clifford donated for the completion of the Chapel meant that his shield would serve as a reminder of his contribution. Clifford was the son of the 7th Baron Clifford of Chudleigh, and grandson of Cardinal Thomas Weld (who took holy orders after the death of his wife). Clifford was also Bishop of Clifton, the diocese of which Prior is a part. His name is commemorated, of course, in Clifford House.







# Interesting times indeed

Welcome to the 2020 edition of *The Gossip Bowl*.

The year that has elapsed since the last edition is certainly the most extraordinary that I have ever experienced and I would like you to join with me in thanking the editors, **Terry Ilott (PPA 1968)** and **Carole Laverick**, for putting together such a professional, informative and enjoyable publication under difficult and challenging circumstances. (Pressure of work this year prevented the usual third member of the editorial triumvirate, **Suzannah Angelo Sparling, PPA 1987**, from participating.)

I have often heard the phrase, "may you live in interesting times", quoted as a Chinese curse. My understanding is that, unlike Covid-19, it did not in fact emanate from China, but, even so, I cannot recall a period in which such an exhortation has been more apposite.

Many of the outcomes of this pandemic will be bad, some tragic. To those of you who have lost loved ones, I extend, on behalf of myself and the PPA, our deepest sympathy and condolences.

However, there have also been positive consequences. Many will have found a renewed love and appreciation of home and family, of the value and joy of friendship and the satisfaction of being able to help and support neighbours and community. Those of you who read the spring newsletter may recall that in it I pledged that the association would do whatever it could to assist anybody who needed help.

I am delighted to say that, under Carole's sensitive encouragement, the association has risen to that challenge. A buddy system was organised (see page 12) and a myriad of disparate groups have met up online utilising



“ renewed love and appreciation of home and family ”

the many social media applications such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams.

What of the Prior Park Schools? Obviously, the locations all had to close, but teaching and learning did not come to a halt. From a standing start, the three heads and their respective staffs have provided excellent online learning facilities (see pages 8 - 10). And the online effort has not just been about academic work. If you have not taken in one of Ben Horan's inspirational assemblies currently available on YouTube (via the PPC website) then I urge you to do so. Special mention must be made of the efforts of the design and technology department, which took the opportunity to manufacture much needed

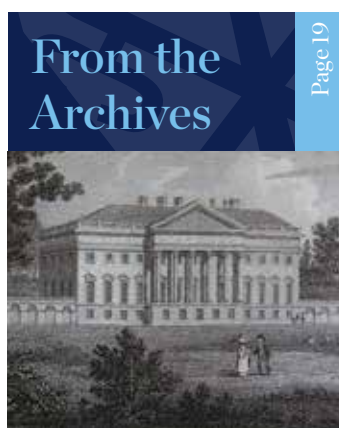
PPE for NHS and care home staff (see pages 16 - 18). It seems that right across the Prior Park community, the crisis has been met with courage, fortitude and, above all good humour.

However, admirable as such qualities are, they cannot mask the harsh realities that confront all commercial enterprises in these difficult times. There is little doubt that in the independent schools' sector there will be a number of establishments that will be forced to close their gates forever. Fortunately, it seems that, between them, the head teachers, the governors and head of development Declan Rainey have been able to steer a steady course between the Scylla of reduced cash flow and the Charybdis of the resources needed to keep the barque afloat (see pages 6 and 7). Any assistance you might be able to provide will, I am sure, be gratefully received.

Finally, we are pleased to announce the winners of PPA medal or, to be precise, medals. When we came to select the recipients, it dawned on us that, with the change of regime from the Christian Brothers to a lay administration in 1981, there were two entirely different communities who needed to be acknowledged. So, we decided to award two medals. One to honour a lifetime of achievement and another to recognise early promise and endeavour. The winners and their stories are related on pages 4 and 5.

Without further ado, I give you this year's Gossip Bowl – enjoy!

**Simon Morgan (PPA 1975)**  
President Prior Park Alumni





# A lifetime of public service

Geoff Cardozo (PPA 1968)



Courtesy of A few good men website

Geoff was born into an Anglo-French family in the Loire valley in 1950. Both his father and his grandfather were educated at Prior. He started in Cricklade in 1959 and carried on through "big" Prior. He was head boy in 1967/8 and was capped for his contribution to the rugby first fifteen. After school, Geoff studied modern languages at Saragossa and Cologne. He then joined the army, being commissioned in the Royal Dragoon Guards in 1971.

He served in several theatres, including Northern Ireland and, notably, the Falklands, where in 1982/83, he was sent as a 32-year old captain, initially to deal with post-combat discipline. But while clearing minefields around Port Stanley, the men under his command came across bodies of Argentinian soldiers, still lying where they had fallen. Geoff was charged with identifying the Argentine dead and giving them decent burials.

Many of the corpses were of young conscripts, who, unlike the professional soldiers, had no identity tags. To assist future identification, Geoff collected each soldier's personal effects and took detailed notes. The bodies were put into coffins and

buried in a specially created cemetery with appropriate ceremony, including a piper from the Gordon Highlanders, a bugler from the Royal Hampshire Regiment and a 10-man firing party.

“  
Something of a  
folk hero in Argentina  
”

Years later, Geoff, who speaks fluent Spanish, was deputed to host a trio of Argentine veterans in London. They told him that they assumed that the bodies of their comrades must have been chucked into a pit. Geoff, horrified at the thought, surreptitiously let them have a copy of his report from 1983. In it, the location of every body and all the known personal details were listed. This led to the foundation in Argentina of Do Not Forget Me, a charity that tracked down the families of the fallen soldiers. This in turn led (via the intervention of Pink Floyd's Roger Waters) to DNA testing that initially matched 90 of the bodies with their families. More have been matched since.



For the diligence and sensitivity with which he carried out this work, Geoff was awarded an MBE. He also became something of a folk hero in Argentina.

He subsequently served in the British embassy in Paris, as the British instructor at the French staff college and as British liaison officer with the French rapid reaction force. His last service appointment was chief of staff to the Supreme Allied Commander Europe.

Geoff left the army, a full colonel, in 2005 after 34 years' service. Almost immediately,





he became secretary of Veterans Aid, a charity assisting ex-servicemen in crisis – picking former soldiers off the streets and out of police cells and putting them on the path to rehabilitation. He did this job with distinction for ten years.

On leaving Veteran's Aid, Geoff moved back to France, where, five years ago, he became president of the Franco-British

Foundation, which provides training and work for 850, mostly mentally handicapped young people in 11 establishments around France.

In a recent letter to the trustees and patrons, outlining the charity's response to Covid-19, Geoff concluded with a quote from Baden Powell: "Ambition to do right is the only ambition that counts".

Geoff still makes regular trips to South America to improve Anglo-Argentine relations. His efforts in this area resulted in the award of the CBE in 2020.

Geoff's lifetime of public service makes him an outstanding recipient of the Prior Park Association Medal 2020. He was nominated by Simon Howell (PPA 1969).

# Bravery, strength and resilience

## Neil Tanna (PPA 2011)

Fi Rae (PPA 2009) nominated Neil for the award. She writes: In 2008, when Neil was in Form Four, his mum received the first of what would become four cancer diagnoses. Neil and his family pushed on, and, with no small amount of grit and determination, battled this hardship together.

Through his resilience and hard work, Neil finished College in 2011 and went on to study law at Exeter University. Despite his mum getting another cancer diagnosis just as finals loomed, Neil graduated in 2015. It was at this point that he had the idea for an app that could combine all of your social media information and your calendar, to make it easier to connect, keep up and meet with people. But with law school exams, training contracts, and professional priorities at the forefront, he stored the idea on a shelf at the back of his mind.

Over the next few years, Neil worked hard in the demanding world of law. However, in January 2018, his mum received a third cancer diagnosis. This was followed in June by a diagnosis that was terminal. She passed away in March 2019. Before she died, Neil promised her that he would dust off his business idea and follow his dream of making it a reality.

In his own words: "I promised her that I would continue to make her proud and I plan to do just that."

Neil worked on his idea in his evenings, weekends, and any spare moment. He roped in two friends from university as co-founders: Duncan Cowan, formerly a spacecraft engineer, as the chief technology officer, and Jake Jenner, previously in private equity/investment banking, as the chief financial officer.

“ I promised I would make her proud ”

The result is Howbout, a social planning app that combines events, group chats and calendar sharing. The app was officially launched in December 2019. The trio set themselves the target of 500 downloads in their first month and, amazingly, reached 500 in the first five days.



Howbout had grown to more than 4,000 downloads before COVID-19 hit. The team quickly noticed that people were finding it just as hard to co-ordinate a group of 10 for a video call as they had to get them together for dinner. Howbout pivoted to build in one-tap integration with Zoom, Houseparty and Hangouts, so that now people can instantly make virtual plans that link straight to their video chat platform, whilst still benefitting from Howbout's other social planning features.

Jake Jenner said that Neil has shown "an incredible combination of leadership, determination and resilience" to develop and release Howbout. He has overcome "extremely difficult personal circumstances" and used them as a catalyst to execute his vision and "create a product and brand that embodies the very traits that make him a great individual: excellence, openness, integrity, and not taking life too seriously".

In short, Neil has made an incredible achievement in his field. His example teaches us that hard work pays off, and demonstrates the importance of bravery, strength, and resilience in difficult times. This is the most valuable lesson that pupils at Prior Park can learn in life. He is a worthy winner of the PPA Medal 2020.

To submit your nomination for next year's awards please contact the PPA office at [ppa@thepriorfoundation.com](mailto:ppa@thepriorfoundation.com) by November 14th, 2020.



# What should we teach, and how?

**Terry Illott (PPA 1968) spoke to the chair of governors of Prior Park Schools, Michael King, about the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.**

In February, the plan was coming together nicely. The new headmaster, Ben Horan, had settled in well at College. Peter Watts and his team were motoring ahead in Gibraltar. Rosie Allen had been appointed to take over from the departing Andrew Harvey at the Paragon. A new director of operations and finance, Emma Sandberg, had been recruited from Badminton to take over from business director Julie Barr. The finances were sound, the school's roll was at an all-time high, the results excellent, reputation solid. Prospects were good.

Then, in mid-March, all UK schools were told to close.

The first priority was to ensure the safety of the students and staff. But after that, what? Clearly, the schools could not just shut down, not indefinitely, indeed not even for more than a few days. There was a duty of care towards students and their families. Teaching and learning had to be maintained somehow and there was a growing need for pastoral care.

At the same time, the lives of parents were thrown into confusion. Some had to start operating from home, converting bedrooms, hallways and lounges into temporary offices and classrooms. Others were furloughed on reduced pay. Some, running their own businesses, found that revenues dried up almost at once. What fees could they now afford to pay in exchange for what kind of education?

Although, like most independent schools in the UK, the Prior Park Schools (PPS) are, in Michael King's words, "fiscally prudent, with operating margins sufficient to recycle surpluses into substantial capital expenditures", there was bound to be a big hit to revenues.



Michael King

These were the immediate questions, mostly affecting the completion of the 2019/2020 academic year. But, of course, there were also pressing questions about the new year starting in September. Plans had to be made to make the school safe. Recruitment to fill the inevitable end of year vacancies had to continue.

The current crisis is likened by King to the catastrophic fire in the Mansion in 1991, which, while seen initially as a disaster, became a springboard for major developments at College, including the sale of the landscape gardens to the National Trust, the building of the theatre - funded by Sir Cameron Mackintosh (PPA 1963) - the conversion of the Ball Court and the laying of a new Astroturf pitch.

"As with the school leadership and governing body 30 years ago," he says, "we have faced up to the challenge of survival and now we have to produce something even better."

The question is not, "Will the schools change?" - that is a foregone conclusion - but "How will they change?"

When the pandemic hit, it was all hands to the pumps as the three head teachers adapted new technology to deliver their assemblies and lessons online. Just as

importantly, students had to learn how to learn independently, at home. Fortunately, says King, some investment had been made in digital infrastructure over the previous couple of years, enabling remote learning to be launched immediately.

"Digital learning had been a priority for some time," he notes. "Teachers were all aware of its educational value, but now all had to embrace it."

When it came to necessary reductions in fees (this happened in most independent schools), the governors had to balance actual and likely fee income with necessary expenditure, and then communicate those issues and reductions to parents. A hardship fund was immediately set aside, to which several parents generously added their fee discounts by way of gift.

"PPS lost a not insignificant amount of its expected summer term fee income," King continues. "This required an equivalent deferral of capital expenditure."

These short-term measures were achievable, he says, "due to the schools' fiscal prudence of recent years". However, it is not a situation

“ We are not into gold taps, but we have to look after our fine buildings ”

that can be sustained indefinitely. With Prior, maintaining the fabric of the Grade 1 listed buildings is a significant financial responsibility, and there is always the goal of upgrading facilities to meet the rising expectations and standards of the education market.

"Schools don't survive if they don't keep improving their offer," observes King. "We





will have to resume our planned capital expenditure at some point. We are not into gold taps, but we have to look after our fine buildings, and ensure that our sports, drama and music facilities are up to date. In addition, we must reconfigure classrooms to provide a safe environment and we have to deliver personal learning devices to every student and member of the teaching staff." All this has to be done in time for the new academic year, starting in September.

The finance, audit, investment and risk committee of the board of governors, chaired by **Tony Alves (PPA 1977)**, met every fortnight during the crisis to grapple with these issues and work with the schools' executives on the important messaging to parents.

The Paragon School has been open for the children of keyworkers throughout the summer term and remote learning "has been very well tackled by Andrew Harvey and his staff", says King. But for the younger children, "it is as much about childcare as education and the strain on both parents and teachers was obvious".

"Prior Park Gibraltar had over 190 students on the roll last year and enjoyed very strong support from its parents through the crisis," says King. It delivered eight hours online teaching every day, right from the start. All the students, those able to come into school and those at home, were offered the same menu of online learning. The school's strong response to the pandemic could open up the market in Southern Spain. So, prospects are good.

Immediately after the lockdown, the governors and Prior's leadership team worked together to create three plans. Plan A was to get the schools safely to the end of the 2019/20 academic year. Plan B was to manage the year 2020/21. Plan C will look at the longer term.

The first plan - online learning, discounted fees, reduced staffing - was completed successfully. The second is more complex. It involves much planning as to what the immediate future might look like and anticipates some further investment to make the schools safe for the students and staff. Added to this, some parents will require financial support, and

contributions by alumni to the hardship fund will be essential, says King.

The third plan is blue-sky thinking, predicated on capitalising on the lessons learned from the crisis to create a sustainable future for the PPS. Governor **Peter O'Donoghue (PPA 1986)** has drafted the framework for this discussion.

"In these changing times," says King, "the schools need to refine and refresh their unique selling points [USPs] to make sure they are still relevant."

“**The schools need to refine and refresh their unique selling points**”

"Our strategy needs to develop yet further," he concludes. "We hope to capture the essence of the question: 'If PPS didn't exist and we were given its current assets to start from scratch, what would we be offering to our young people to succeed in tomorrow's world?' We can be certain that education will be required and that some people will still want to pay for it, but what would we teach and how?"

The Covid-19 crisis has done immense harm, but it has also brought about some changes for the good. As far as King is concerned, whether we call it a crisis or an opportunity does not matter so much. What matters is that it does not go to waste.

## By the numbers

**Peter O'Donoghue (PPA 1986)**, former chair of the finance committee of the board of governors, writes: Net fee income was down in Summer Term 2020, as Prior followed the principle that cost savings made as a result of the lockdown should be passed on to parents. Under the circumstances, to break even is no mean achievement. Of course, as an employer, Prior has had the ability to rely on the UK Government's various support measures, so the situation for the future is kept under close review.

Student numbers for the 2020/21 academic year are holding up. Special arrangements have been put in place to be able to welcome overseas boarders early and to quarantine them where required in line with applicable government rules.

Over time, following a relatively conservative approach, and excluding restricted reserves, Prior has been able to build up a welcome level of general reserves (approximately half of one term's costs), which has created some very welcome financial breathing room.

But, with tight operating margins historically, and the degree of uncertainty the pandemic presents, anyone associated with Prior would of course wish to see that financial buffer bolstered.

<b>£15m</b> Expected annual net fee income before Covid-19
<b>3%</b> Historically typical accounting surplus, before donations, legacies and other charitable giving
<b>10%</b> of annual fee income Approximate cost of fee discounts offered to parents.
<b>Break-even</b> Latest forecast for the current year, after absorbing exceptional costs of Covid-19, including fee discounts*
<b>580</b> Expected minimum College enrolment in September
<b>250</b> Expected enrolment at The Paragon
<b>235</b> Expected enrolment at PPSG

\* Forecast to end August, not yet finalised and subject to audit



Changing faces of Ben during lockdown

# Even more of a community

## Prior Park College

When Ben Horan took over from James Murphy O'Connor as headmaster of College in September last year, he was, he says, "astonished at the warmth of the welcome". He felt that "love was at the centre of everything", making it "a very special place." Covid has simply "deepened that understanding and thrown it into even sharper focus".

Horan thinks the pandemic has highlighted a significant "point of difference" between the independent sector and the state sector, "not only in the quality and continuation of our teaching, but also our social enterprise efforts. It has been first rate".

"Every decision we have taken through this period," he continues, "is because of the centrality of love, whether that meant delivering a comprehensive remote learning provision from the get-go, keeping our pastoral provision going through the Easter holidays, maintaining our assemblies, even ensuring that provision for peripatetic music lessons continues. Whatever it may be, we have put the child at the centre."

Covid-19, he says, has "allowed us to focus on values, on what's important".

Lessons started going online in the week before the Easter holiday. Lessons have been recorded and made available to students in different time zones. Headmaster's assemblies and house assemblies have continued online,

as well as tutor meetings. There was even a live streamed Ascension Day Mass.

Of course, not all subjects are suitable for online learning and Horan estimates that the school has been able to deliver 70 - 75% of the full timetable.

He is candid that students and staff have found it hard to adjust. "Sitting in front of the screen all day, it's a different sort of feeling," he says. Lessons merge into each other, "there is no air, no breathing space". Also, it's not normal to be stuck at home with your family for weeks at a time. "You have to make a conscious effort to look after yourself as a spiritual being."

Upper Sixth and Upper Fifth (years 13 and





11) were especially unsettled. They had their exams taken away from them. "That's been really difficult, really tough," says Horan. "Some parents have asked us for extra help for their children. Counselling has continued throughout the period, and there is no doubt it has been difficult."

But there have been upsides. There is evidence, for example, that some students feel more comfortable and more confident when they seek counselling online rather than in person. And on the pastoral front, Horan believes that Prior has "become even more of a community than before".

"To have a Mass attended by students, staff, parents and governors, it makes our

community even bigger. The definition of the community has been enhanced by this."

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**It's allowed us to focus on values, on what's important**  
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On the academic front there have been positives as well. "I think the nature of [online] teaching is that it's really stark if a pupil hasn't done the prep or the work," he says. "It will show up more quickly than it would in a classroom. So that has been of real benefit." It has also been useful in making students "use the technology better, to

organise themselves, to make their learning that much more durable".

And some of the changes will be lasting. "The days of us throwing books back to the children with marks in are gone. It's going to be reading work online and leaving a voice memo, and, going through it in a collaborative sense, looking at the document we have created."

Horan says the new online teaching and learning is "a complete game changer". Even so, he looks forward to life after the lockdown. "I think we will return to something like the old normal at some point in the next academic year. I don't think society can function otherwise, certainly not in education."

## The joy of learning

### The Paragon

When we spoke to Rosie Allen at the beginning of July, she had not formally started in her new role as head of The Paragon, not contractually anyway. But she had already been spending a lot of time at the school, in part because the circumstances required it and in part because it gave her an opportunity to get to know the school and the staff, as well as many of the pupils and parents, even before her first official day.

A former deputy head at Sherborne Prep, head of Radnor House, governor of Beechen Cliff and City of London schools, and non-executive director of Whizz Education, she came to The Paragon with a reputation as an educationalist.

"All things considered, the situation is very positive," she says. "Numbers are healthy, which is a bonus. But numbers are only a small part of the puzzle. Most important is the community and spiritual quality of the school. Covid-19 has shown how important it is for a school to have strong core values. When the children are not able to be at school, they miss being part of something, of the community. The spiritual side of The Paragon is clearly

immensely important to everyone and I have been very impressed by that."

Allen gives credit to the staff, who have had to learn a new set of online skills. "And hats off to the parents as well. They have had to bear the burden of making it all work."

The Paragon operated a "fairly full" programme of lessons. But there has been very little live teaching: young children can't sit in front of the screen all day. "Instead," she says, "we have provided pre-recorded lessons which the parents can then supervise according to circumstances."

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**It's shown how important it is for a school to have strong core values**  
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Reception, year 1 and year 2 were back at school from June 1st, as part of the government's "phased re-opening". But years 2 - 5 missed out, which is why The Paragon provided them with two days of schooling each week during the holidays in July.

Covid-19 hasn't changed "the big picture", says



Rosie Allen

Allen. "I started putting together a strategic development plan in February, which I then paused when the pandemic hit. But Covid-19 hasn't changed it. What it has done is enable me to focus more quickly on what needs to change."

One of the lessons from Covid-19, she says, is that "children and teachers need to be very dextrous in dealing with ambiguity".

"Who has come out of Covid-19 best? The children who are good with IT, of course, but also the children who are confident enough to know that there is more than one way to approach a task or problem, children who are comfortable with failing before they succeed and who genuinely enjoy the process of learning. That is what The Paragon will harness going forwards."



## Getting back to the classroom

### PPS Gibraltar

A change in the regulations meant that PPS Gibraltar admitted year 7s for the first time in September 2019, adding as many as 40 students to the roll. This forced Peter Watts and his team to make adjustments to the organisation of the school and to change their pastoral arrangements.

"The school is getting quite full now," Watts says. "We are looking at ways to best utilise the space." Creative subjects are moving off-site to the nearby Academy for Performing Arts, while sports and PE will move to a new sports facility at Europa Point. This will create more classroom space.

Watts has also introduced a vertical tutoring system, so that children from 11 – 18 are in the same tutor group. This provides an opportunity for older students to guide the younger ones.

It was towards the end of the second week in March that Watts had to lockdown the school. He kept the buildings open for teachers who would have struggled to teach from home. "People in Gibraltar mostly live in apartments and the apartments are quite

small," he explains. "This made it impossible for some teachers to find a quiet space away from children."

"We went from nothing to 80% face-to-face lessons in one week. It was not something we had planned for. A lot of staff had already been using Microsoft Teams, for file-sharing mostly. So, we had a few experts. But no-one had used it for lessons or recording lessons. We had two staff training sessions

**We have even done PE online**

and, after a few days of it seeming very odd, it became the new normal. We just ran the school timetable, exactly the same lessons, same times. We have even done PE online, with circuits at home and Zumba classes. Staff and parents joined in. So, as much as it could be, the normal routine was sustained."

Parents were very appreciative, he says. "They have valued what we have done for the children, but also what we have done for them. Many had to work at home."



Peter Watts

With years 10 and 12, the year groups sitting public exams next year, PPSG "probably covered 75% of what we would have done if they had been in class".

"It was not perfect and it's hard work for students to sit in front of a screen all day and for staff to plan lessons. But we sustained curriculum delivery, and engagement and the sense of belonging to a community."

Watts is committed to "getting back to mainstream classroom teaching in September". Not only do some subjects require classroom teaching – he quotes art, science and photography as examples – but the human contact is, he says, all important.

## Young alumni back race awareness

On June 19th 2020, nearly 350 alumni took the unusual step of signing a petition addressed to the governors, the senior management team and the teaching staff, calling for greater emphasis on awareness of racial discrimination in the education offered at Prior. The petition was sent by Alex Couling (PPA 2016).

Pointing out that Prior is not a racially diverse school, the petition conceded that "the neglect of such matters is not unique" to Prior and that it is a problem across the education system.

The petition states: "We should be having open discussions from a young age about the

ways in which racism affects all people, from every racial and ethnic background, across all sectors of society. It should not be the case that students leaving secondary school education should have to predominantly teach themselves these vital topics."

The petition ends with seven proposed action points, including a designated head of diversity, awareness days, and bias training for staff.

Headmaster Ben Horan, who took soundings among Prior's teaching and admin staff before making his response, welcomed the petition and reiterated the school's opposition to "racism or discrimination in

any form". He noted with satisfaction that the average leaving year of the petition's signatories was 2016, that 40 will still be students at College in the coming year and that, of these, 14 are members of the College Prefect body. He added that the "student voice" in College had been given a greater hearing in recent years and that this would continue, especially in respect of matters of racism and discrimination. He did not commit to any of the proposed action points, noting that agreement to such a programme all too often results in ensuring that "the issue slides away". Instead, he vowed to work with staff and senior students on a daily basis to "reflect upon and improve our provision".





# Prior needs alumni support

By Declan Rainey

The development office's first big event of the 2019/20 was the very successful Mansion Lecture and Lunch (see page 30). We are sorry that this year's event has had to be postponed. If you have already booked accommodation and are thinking of coming to Bath anyway, do let us know and we can, at the time of writing, meet up for a drink.

Adam Dowdle (PPA 1990) and I organised the first PPA Business Networking event last November. It was a strategy meeting, setting up goals and planning our first steps. It was kindly hosted by Matthew Tobin (PPA 1991) at City law firm Slaughter & May. There were pupils from many year groups, and it was a really beneficial first meeting. We are trying to get as many people as possible signed up to the Alumnet platform, which allows you to join and/or create relevant groups of interest, whether you are looking to offer mentoring to pupils coming into the work place, to grow your own networks, or to offer work experience or jobs to pupils. We have over 200 alumni on there at the moment, so please add yourself by clicking the link: <https://alumnet.social/circle/1590/newsfeed>

“ Covid-19 changed everything overnight ”

Lots can be said about one's *alma mater*; feelings can be good, bad or indifferent. However, few would argue against Prior's ranking as the most beautiful place to study in Britain. We have lots of alumni working in the arts, and a disproportionate number are architects. It's hard to believe that the beauty of College played no part in instilling such aesthetic appreciation. To harness this passion in a sociable manner, we have established a Heritage Society. A gift of £25 a year is all that is needed to be part of this new group. We hope to put on events throughout the year, including tours and seminars. Keep an eye out for invitations and notifications of



Adam Dowdle, Mauro Tarrini, Matthew Tobin and Peter O'Donoghue



Iryna, Louis Tambe and Amy Li

events. If you wish to join the society, please email me at [drainey@priorparkschools.com](mailto:drainey@priorparkschools.com).

The Michaelmas Term ended with the first live broadcast of our carol service. We partnered with Bath Hospital Radio, who broadcast into the wards of the city's main hospital and online across the world. We had alumni listening in from as far afield as Portugal, the USA and the Middle East.

Lent term got off to a cracker. Tom Barton (PPA 2006), founder and owner of Honest Burgers, a chain of ethical restaurants now to be seen in most British cities, shared his story at the inaugural meeting of the London Alumni Network. Simon Moore (PPA

1977) hosted us in his boutique restaurant, Highbury Arts Club, in Islington, London.

The education sector can be frustratingly slow to embrace change, but Covid-19 changed everything overnight, including how we interact with our community. For example, parents were invited to gift their fee discounts to the emergency bursary fund, to help those families most affected by the pandemic keep their children enrolled at our schools. In this way, with the help of alumni, parents raised over £50,000, which is a fantastic coming together.

Finally, special thanks to the 212 supporters who have helped raise £248,100 this year in gifts and pledges. Your help has meant that more than 110 of our pupils are on means-tested bursaries, with six on 100% fee remission. Just as happened 40 years ago, when the Christian Brothers left, and nearly 30 years ago, when the Mansion went up in flames, Prior Park once again needs significant alumni support to help us adapt to the further changes that are sure to be coming our way.



Piers King, Jamie Vivian, Tom Barton and Dominic Williams



# Hey, Buddy!

By Carole Laverick

As lockdown became a reality, it occurred to me that trying to maintain phone contact across the vast expanse of our alumni community would be impossible. Why not share the workload and, at the same time, get some inter-generational community work going? So grew the idea of the buddy-up scheme.

We sent out 350 postcards to the alumni we thought were best placed to help, and the response was overwhelming. It soon took on the air of a dating site, matching characters and post codes to find combinations that might work. The idea was that both parties should benefit from having someone to talk

“  
He is a charming  
man and I hope we can  
continue our contact  
”

to, even if the only thing they had in common was their attendance at Prior Park. Here are some of the results:

We put Izzie Sully (PPA 2011) in touch with John Coulston (PPA 1943), who lives ten minutes' walk away in Dorset.

"I've loved my chats with John," she writes. "It's so lovely to reminisce about Prior Park. There was something very reassuring during lockdown about talking to someone who has faced many global issues (upturns and indeed downturns) over his lifetime. John was so generous with his stories and I am looking forward to meeting him one day."

Christopher Bridge (PPA 1965): "Thank you for putting Marco and me in touch... Both of us thought that the other may be in need of outside contact... In fact, we were both well set up for a prolonged lockdown, with family company, good country walking, good broadband and a sure supply of wine. In due course Marco and I may meet for a drink. But either way, it was pleasant to talk."

Marco Hughes (PPA 1988): "We were able to talk about who was there in both our eras: Mr Ash (Latin), of course; but also, Mr Ferguson (biology), Mr McMahon (English), Mr Symonds (geography) and Mr Moran (physics). The rest of the conversation was about what we got up to post-school, as well as Chris' prowess at golf. We may well meet up after lockdown, but I suspect it will be in the local pub, rather than swinging a club, as I know I'm outclassed."

Tim Pardoe (PPA 1965): "I have really enjoyed talking to Duncan over the phone. I feel as if he is a friend, and we have agreed we might meet up when Corona allows. I hope this will happen soon. I have no idea as to whether our chats have helped him, but I hope so, and I think they have also been beneficial to me."

Duncan Trevillion (PPA 2001): "I have had a couple of really nice phone calls with Tim. It was initially great swapping notes on our relative experiences of attending PPC in very different eras of its existence... He is an absolutely charming man and I hope we can continue our contact... when this lockdown is finally over."

Chris Whitmarsh-Everiss (PPA 1956): "Thank you for your introduction to Mark, we have had some very interesting conversations... Mark and I have not met yet, but that pleasure will be in the future."

Mark Murmanov (PPA 2013): "I have certainly enjoyed the chats with Christopher. We have shared some of our memories from Prior and went on to discuss the history of Bristol... We're definitely staying in touch and looking forward to the lifting of restrictions so that we can meet in person."

Other bonds were forged between Peter Cotton (PPA 1963) and Sarah Biagetti (PPA 1993) in WA13; Andy Milne (PPA 1967) and Sophie Erdozain (PPA 1994) in EX31; Eric Barklem (PPA 1966) and Chloe Morris (PPA 2000) in BN20; Michael Brotherton (PPA 1944) and Harry Palmer (PPA 2015) in SN15; Mike England (PPA 1970) and Tally Butterfield (PPA 2001) in EX17; Adrian Lovett-Turner (PPA 1973) and Tiffany Charles (PPA 2010) in TW1; Richard Sharpe (PPA 1967) and Sharn Soards (PPA 1993) in SW20; Tim Doyle (PPA 1966) and Claire Kisiel (PPA 1993) in SW20; Chris Dowse (PPA 1966) and Helen Worboys (PPA 1990) in PH49; John Bogie (PPA 1957) and Rachel Greaves (PPA 1990) in GL51; Adrian Beamish (PPA 1956) and Louis Tambe (PPA 2012) in NW2; and Mark James (PPA 1970) and Rachel Botley (PPA 1996) in AL1.

*Thanks to everyone who participated in the scheme.*





# #givingback

The alumni are a huge part of the Prior Park community. Here we note some of their contributions to the schools in the past year.

## Vivian Gallaher (PPA 1970)

In recent years, Viv has been an indefatigable researcher into all things Prior Park, from the memoirs of Christopher Logue, through Bishop Baines' rules for teachers and tracking down the stories of alumni who died in the First World War, including Archibald Mankelow pictured here, to the role of Viscount Gormanston in Irish Home Rule. He has added learned commentaries when forwarding his findings to Carole in the PPA office, inspiring her in her own archive researches. But all good things come to an end, and Viv has decided to put away his researcher's notebook and pen.

"This will be my final input to the archive," he wrote in October." The opportunity has provided me with deep insight into 19th Century Roman Catholic life and schooling,

consequent difficulties, but ongoing and upward progress against huge odds. To have been a Roman Catholic in the era mentioned, and all the way through to the present, represents an astonishing, Herculean social, intellectual, philosophical and spiritual journey."

Viv's years at Prior, and before that at Cricklade, were not always happy, and his researches have served a therapeutic function: "My interest in the school archive has allowed me to heal as a former pupil. The value of the alumni magazine in recent years can't be overlooked in this light too. It is a gem, beaming understanding, huge effort in social contact, and a remarkable window into how the school has progressed. Also, permitting those at any stage of physical, mental or emotional distance from school



Archibald Mankelow

to acknowledge and honour the deaths of former friends and pupils. Truly outstanding. With admiration and enormous thanks."

We return the admiration and the thanks many times over, and we wish Viv all the best for the future.

## Claire Williams (PPA 1993)

From the age of 11, Claire wanted to be a concert pianist. She was told by Prior's director of music to think about something else; not that she wasn't good enough, but that the career was so difficult and challenging. Claire persisted, went to the Royal College of Music and joined the staff there. She returned to College for the Inspire conference last year and recounted how she switched from piano to harpsichord, not always solo but as part of an orchestra, in concert or opera. No longer a full-time teacher, she said that when she was teaching, she earned a good salary, but she was not satisfied. Money, she said does not always equal happiness. Now she is earning less, but her life is varied, interesting and more satisfying. When she first stood on the stage of the Albert Hall, she said, all the years of practice seemed worthwhile.





Prof Julian Roberts (centre)

## Julian Roberts (PPA 1968)

Julian, at various times visiting professor in law at Cambridge, Athens, Haifa, Minnesota, Leuven, Brussels and King's College London, co-director of the Criminal History Project at Minnesota, and long-time member of the Sentencing Council of England and Wales, addressed the Headmaster's Academic Society in January 2020 on the subject of crime and punishment. He began with personal memories of transgression and punishment at school. (In those days, the brothers wielded a leather strap.) What, he wondered, was the purpose of punishment,

what was the goal? One student suggested that punishment looks forward, setting an example and acting as a general deterrent to others. Another suggested that punishment looks back, righting the wrong, settling the score. Julian went on to cite a real-life example of crime and invited his audience to propose an appropriate sentence for one of those found guilty. The lecture was well-received, and Julian has offered to give a more wide-ranging session on the criminal justice system online, as well as to provide online tutorials for any student who might benefit.



## Rachel Crellin (neé Wright) (PPA 2002)

Rachel captivated the Art Society with her energy, humility and frank admission of failings. Speaking to students in February 2020, she told them, "I have learned a lot and I've got a lot more to learn in respect of my art". Rachel loved her time at Prior and is grateful to David Wood, the former head of art, whose encouragement and open-mindedness as to what constituted art inspired her. Now she has three children you would think she has her hands full, but she is still target driven: set a date for an exhibition and work towards that; embrace social media but do not take every comment to heart; challenge your comfort zone and push beyond it. She now paints most days. She never thought she would be able to make a living from being a full-time artist, but she's getting there.

## Matthew Tucker (PPA 1988)

Matt and his wife Aneta spoke to students on January 16th, 2020, about their journey to fitness. Matt, who runs a Crossfit centre in Gloucester, left Prior with a good level of sporting ability. He went on to play rugby for Clifton, Bristol. Unfortunately, a bike accident had doctors wondering if he would ever walk again. He pulled through, only to be hammered a second time when he was diagnosed with cancer. 18 months of intense treatment saw him once again back on his feet. Since then, his life's mission has been to encourage people to embrace a healthy lifestyle. He noted that 70% of deaths are caused by chronic diseases (heart attacks, strokes, diabetes, obesity etc). He also advised students not to underestimate the power of exercise to contribute to good mental health.

Aneta spoke with refreshing frankness about how she had underestimated the commitment required to join the ranks of the top Crossfit athletes. To achieve success at elite levels, she said, you have to be prepared to take yourself into a very dark place and drag yourself back up.

Matt concluded the talk with an invitation to the students to visit the Nidus Crossfit empire to enjoy a sample session.



## Oliver Simper (PPA 2000)

Now head of humanities at Downside, Olly, who had previously only come back to College once since leaving in 2000 (with Jack Ashby PPA 2000 to play tennis), was conducting interviews for Oxbridge candidates last September in the Academy Hall. He recalled with a wry smile that it was a very different place now. For one thing, there was no roof on the Academy Hall when he first arrived, just after the fire of 1991.





#### Caspian Johnson (PPA 2007)

Caspian came back to College in January 2020 to speak at a general studies session about his career. Now working at Bristol Zoological Society, Caspian took a gap year after school, travelling around the world and becoming ever more passionate about wildlife. On his return, he studied zoology at Swansea. After graduation, he applied for a challenging role on a remote research station in Tanzania, studying primates. He lived in the jungle for a year, with seven assistants but no electricity or running water. He had so much time on his hands that he studied yellow baboons as well as his primary subject of chimpanzees. On his return, he was advised to do a master's degree. But to do that, he would have to shelve some of his voluminous research data. His tutor advised him instead to upgrade to a PhD. "When opportunities arise, we say

yes, right?" he told the room.

The PhD didn't lead to a flood of opportunities and Caspian worked as a landscape gardener to pay the bills. His next gig was studying black crested macaques in Indonesia. He stayed there for two years. His Prior Park girlfriend, **Victoria Johnson (PPA 2008)**, joined him for the last year. They have since married.

In 2019, he took the job at Bristol, where he works on conservation, both in the zoo and in the field. He has worked on lowland gorillas and is currently working on giraffes in Cameroon. Always keen to exploit technology, he uses drones and thermal imaging to count the animals.

If there is one thing you can do to stem the devastating loss of wildlife habitat, he



told the students, it is to eliminate the consumption of beef. Beef production is driving deforestation, to provide room for the cattle to graze and to grow the soy that feeds them.



#### Christopher Williams-Martin (PPA 1991)

Chris was the first speaker of the day at the 2019 Inspire Conference, which brought together sixth-formers from Prior and St Gregorys. By

happy coincidence, Chris had attended both schools. From the age of six, when he saw a helicopter land in Great Windsor Park, he had a passion for flight. After a business degree and a varied early career, his passion led him to the leadership of Elite Jets, a company providing a full range of services for private jet owners and users. He gave students many useful tips about business life, including how to ensure work/life balance. Most of all, he emphasised that, whatever you do, you should do something about which you are passionate. Your passion will inspire others. He ended with the short poem, *Come to the Edge*, without realising that its author, **Christopher Logue (PPA 1944)**, was also a Prior alumnus.

• **Nicholas Gosling (PPA 1999)**  
• Nick met music tech students and  
• give them an insight to his role  
• supporting major concerts  
• worldwide. Nick, who after  
• Prior went to Salford University  
• to study popular music and  
• recording, is production  
• manager for Nile Rogers. He was  
• previously production manager  
• for Billy Ocean and before that  
• served as stage manager  
• for Chic and Anastacia. The  
• students enjoyed the session  
• immensely.

#### Callum Eaton (PPA 2015))

Callum has just graduated from Goldsmiths with a first in Fine Art. Specialising in portraiture, he has returned to Bath, working in a studio shared with other artists, among them Prior parent Pete Brown. Callum recently awed the Art Society, giving a talk on his own path and how he sees portraiture in an age saturated by images. He noted that portraits are no longer the preserve of the wealthy. (Callum's prices start at £600.)





# PPAs mobilise to fight Covid

All over the country, Prior alumni mobilised in their workplaces and communities to provide material and moral support for those in need during the lockdown. Here are just a few of their stories.

Dr Ian Renfrew (PPA 1989), lead interventional radiologist at the Royal London Hospital, had the idea of an intubation/extubation shield that was developed with, he says, the “immediate and unwavering assistance” of Andy York (PPA 1990), head of manufacturing technology programmes at Rolls-Royce. Working with the Manufacturing Technology Centre, Coventry, the shield went from conception, through several prototypes, to use on patients within eight days. It was soon in about 30 hospitals throughout the UK. Ian expects it to be manufactured in larger numbers after further refinements.



might stop Coronavirus from entering a host cell and hence prevent it from multiplying in the human body.

Bobojon immediately set about recruiting a team of leading academics and clinicians in Oxford, as well as collaborators from the Centre for Inflammation Research at the University of Edinburgh, under the auspices of his not-for-profit company, Latus Therapeutics. Their primary objective is to discover whether treatment with Nafamostat, a serine protease inhibitor, is able to prevent clinical progression of infection, reduce mortality, and speed recovery of patients. Should the trials prove successful, the drug, which has a 35-year track record of safe usage in Japan as a treatment for pancreatitis, could be employed immediately.

John Whittaker (PPA 1960), billionaire businessman and chairman of the Peel Group, which has a large property portfolio in the North West of England, received an unusual request when the pilot of his helicopter asked if he could use it to fly a special calibration

plate to Noble's Hospital on the Isle of Man, where John lives. The plate was needed to start up the on-island Coronavirus testing. The plate was being shipped by courier to the island but had got stuck at East Midlands Airport. The estimated time of delivery was five days, which wasn't good enough for Dr Rachel Glover and her team at the hospital. A full briefing on the nature of the plate and its importance to the island's Covid prevention strategy was explained to John and he immediately approved the use of the helicopter. First, the package had to be retrieved from the courier's transit system. Second, the pilot had to get special dispensation leave the island and return. The package was delivered to Dr Glover seven hours after her initial request.

“ package successfully delivered ”

Lancashire-born John has five children and recently donated £1 million to Royal Manchester Children's Hospital.



Bobojon Nazarov (PPA 2003), who holds an MSc in Pharmacology, a DPhil (PhD) in Chemical Biology and an MBA from the University of Oxford, wrote to say that he had been busy in conceptualising and organising a clinical trial treatment for Covid-19 infected patients. During the early days of lockdown, he used his time to review a number of key studies that presented clear evidence that the existing and proven drug Nafamostat





Prior's head of design and technology, **Rob Faulkner**, and his department were busy from the end of March, designing and producing masks and visors for PPE, responding to requests from vets, care homes, hospitals, GP surgeries and other key workers. Alumni were recruited via social media to help assemble the early versions. (Fifteen minutes after the social media posting, all the required volunteers had been signed up.) The kit was produced with plastic and cardboard, using 3D printing and laser cutting machines - some funded by alumni donations.

Rob said: "We couldn't sit back and do nothing when we knew that we had machines that would help keep our key workers safe. The feedback has been overwhelming. At its peak we had to implement a rota system so that our team could get some rest."

At full capacity, the team produced over 500 visors a day from their production line, located in a school workshop. The science faculty donated its existing PPE and the



Tish Bullman



Rob Faulkner



textiles department produced scrubs, hats and bags for key workers.

The project was supported by the school and funded by donations of more than £20,000. At the time of writing, Rob and his team have produced over 17,000 visors and their design has been freely distributed throughout the world.

Among those to benefit were PPC alumni working in medical centres and care homes, especially in and around Bath, where an emergency medical service (BEMS) was set up in the urgent care wing of the Upper Oldfield Park surgery run by **Kasia Mill (PPA 1992)** and her husband. (They also have surgeries in Northampton Buildings, Bath, and Hillcrest, Peasedown.) Kasia, a current Prior parent as well as a GP, was desperate for PPE. She outlined the problem in her email request to Rob:

"We are advised to wear PPE for all encounters... So, if we could arrange a supply... that would be a massive help. There is nothing like these visors coming down the line centrally. Even simple things like the most basic masks are in such short supply."

The visors were duly supplied, to both Kasia's surgery and to BEMS. Kasia was relieved and grateful: "Thank you truly for all the support from you and the DT team already - it means so, so much...Thank you again and again... You guys deserve a medal!"

“ produced over 17,000 visors ”

In April, **Tish Bullman (PPA 2010)**, who was working at the Royal Surrey County Hospital in ICU, said they were "desperate for kit". She sent a WhatsApp message to Carole early on a Saturday morning: "It may be too far away, but if you cannot do us, can you send some to Jon Luck [former parent] at the RUH?" Days later, 100 visors were posted from Prior. "Hello!!" called Tish. "Just received an AMAZING package thankyou soooo much!!!"

**Annie Frere (néé Taylor) (PPA 1995)** ensured that her brother-in-law and fellow alumnus, **Lawrie Frere (PPA 1997)** received plenty of PPE for his GP surgery in Bath.



As the manager and part-owner of a family-run care home, **Catherine O'Dea-Hughes (PPA 1993)** was desperate for PPE. Prior came to the rescue with 100 reusable visors. Catherine, who had already contracted the virus and been out of action for some time, wrote: "Every day is an opportunity to be grateful right now, so today you will be in my evening gratitude prayers, along with all the angels, here and watching over us, including Dad in his golf course in the sky!!"

**Liz Mallon (PPA 2012)**, daughter of current Fielding housemistress, Anne Mallon, was similarly grateful: "Thank you so much for providing visors for my hospital up in the North West of England. It has made such a huge difference knowing that we can go into the high dependency unit on our ward fully protected. PPE has been a bit hard to come by recently and I'm glad that there are departments like yours helping local communities and beyond."

**Saskia Chapman (PPA 2016)** asked if Prior could supply her father's surgery down the hill in Widcombe. "They are... desperate for any sort of PPE at the moment, especially visors! I was wondering if there was any chance you could ask him [Rob Faulkner] if he could be of any assistance - we understand if he's got different plans!" Rob dropped some visors in the same day.



Bath-based **Izzy Pollock (PPA 2017)** saw the appeal on Facebook and volunteered to help make up visors, only to find that all the volunteer slots had been filled within 15 minutes. She sent a note: "If Prior ever need volunteers to make more in the future let me know. Also, happy to help distributing if you need."



Henrietta Hobbs

**Charlie Gage (PPA 2018)**, a medical student, was worried about the safety of his mother, a speciality doctor (elderly care) at St Martins Hospital, Bath. "They currently have active Covid-19 cases," he wrote, "but lack eye protection." He asked if the school had "any spare visors". Rob Faulkner arranged for 50 visors to be delivered to the clinic.

“ package successfully delivered ”

Similarly, **Martha Handel (PPA 2018)**, a healthcare assistant at The Bath Clinic, asked for and received visors from Prior.

**Andrew Boosey (PPA 1991)**, working for the MOD's Future Capability Group, was charged with gathering examples of companies that have changed their manufacturing processes in the fight against Covid. He asked if he could speak to Rob Faulkner, as an example of the "man in the shed" who answered the call for PPE equipment. We're not sure that Rob, with his output of 500 visors a day, really fitted the description.

## But it wasn't all about masks and visors...

The father of **Tara Mullaly (PPA 2013)** survived Covid and, to celebrate, she did some NHS fundraising in her own way: running 10km a day for nine days (a run for every day her dad was in the intensive care

unit) to raise money for NHS workers. She raised over £4,000. Her father was later featured on *Desert Island Discs* describing his experience.

**Henrietta Hobbs (PPA 2008)** sang to her neighbours every Thursday night after the NHS clap. Hettie's mother is a nurse, so she took it really personally.

**Jack Fisher (PPA 2010)** produced a video of Bath in lockdown which was screened on *Somerset Live*.

Just days after the official lockdown, the dynamo of energy that is **Adam Dowdle (PPA 1990)** was on the case. By March 27th, he had arranged for 10,000 gloves to be delivered to the front line.

**Anna Motylova (PPA 2020)** had to leave Prior before the official closure of the school in order to get back to her family in Slovakia. Before she left, she recorded a four-minute meditation on the impact of lockdown, as part of a series for the Clifton Diocese.



Anna Motylova

In May, during the Thursday clap for NHS, the quiet streets of Tonbridge were regaled with a rendition of *O Sole Mio* by **Luke Price (PPA 1989)** in a unique private concert. Music accompaniment was provided via his mobile phone. In June, Luke, who usually sings at the Royal Opera House, regaled NHS staff and patients at Tunbridge Wells Hospital, standing alone on the helipad. He received a loud ovation - demonstrating the importance of music, especially in a time of crisis.



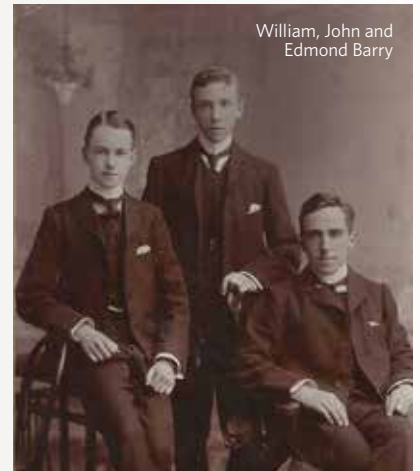


## When Queen Charlotte visited Prior



Tony Jenkins (current CCF commander and junior house master) had a chance meeting with old school friends who turned out to be direct descendants of John Thomas, the

Quaker who purchased Prior Park in 1819 (some accounts date the purchase to 1809) and died there in 1827. Thomas was, among other things, a keen promoter of waterways, serving as superintendent of works on the construction of the Kennet and Avon Canal. He had made his money as a grocer in Bristol (John Thomas, Sons & Co was still trading as late as 1938 in Redcliffe Street). One of his famous visitors at Prior Park was Queen Charlotte, then aged and infirm. In those days, the Mansion had no second floor (there being a double-height hall) and there was no cascade of steps down from the portico. After Thomas' death, the estate was purchased by Bishop Baines with the intention to create the UK's first ever Catholic university.



William, John and Edmond Barry

## A family reunion

In November 2019, Carole received a letter from Desmond Barry, grandson of William Barry, who graduated from Prior in 1902. Nothing unusual about that, until Carole got an enquiry from Helen McKie, who was trying to join the online digital archive site. Not recognising her surname, Carole sent her a message asking about her connection with the college. Helen replied that her grandfather was at College in the 1900s. His name was John Joseph Barry. A quick trawl through the archives revealed that William and John Joseph were brothers.

The Barry boys were natives of Midleton, County Cork. John became a doctor and practised in Liverpool, where he died in October 1944. William chose the law. He became a solicitor and followed his vocation in his hometown until his death in 1945.

Carole asked Desmond if he knew Helen. "No," he said. "I knew the family went to Liverpool, but I have no idea what happened to them." Carole asked Helen if she knew about Desmond. "No," she said. "I didn't even know that great, great Uncle William had any children."

By this time, Carole was beginning to feel a bit like Davina McCall. "Would you like to meet?" she asked. They would indeed. But the planned get together had to be postponed because of Covid. They intend to re-schedule when the dust settles.

## Finding J Groves

For five years, the "J Groves" who is listed on the oak WW2 war memorial in the chapel eluded all research. Carole thought that perhaps the entry was an error, especially as there was mention in the digital archive of a John Groves who was happily married in the 1950s. However, an old letter turned up from recently deceased alumnus Don Emilio Lopez (PPA 1944) (see obituary on page 46). In it he mentions the twins John and Joseph Groves, who came with him to Prior Park in 1940 from St Boniface in Plymouth, which had been bombed. Joseph Groves (PPA 1943) was killed at sea, on a convoy to Murmansk in Northern



Russia, at the tender age of 18. He will now be properly remembered in *The Fallen* memorial in Chapel. We will remember them.

## Postcards from the edge

Ian Coaten (PPA 1958) was recently visiting friends in Ireland, and they were talking of childhood hobbies and passions. One of Ian's hobbies was stamp collecting. His friend left the table and came back with an envelope containing eight postcards that his father had sent during World War I. The first card out of the envelope was posted in 1916. It was from Combe Down. His father, you see, was a cadet in the officer training corps at a small place called... Prior Park. The postcard (shown here) is one of the few visual



records of the uncompleted chapel in St Paul's. Hence, it must date from the 1880s. As it was sent in 1916, one can only suppose there was not much turnover of stock in the Combe Down post office.



# The several lives of James Hull

## James Hull (PPA 1978)

How does one do justice to the extraordinary story of James Hull, a man who should be dead three times over? He failed his A-levels, set up a car restoration business, signed up to evening classes to retake his exams, did a dental degree and opened his first surgery in his hometown of Newport in 1987. For the next 13 years he worked every day, including Christmas days and bank holidays, until, by 2000, his company, James Hull Associates, had 86 branches. He sold a majority of the business in 2006, at a valuation of more than £90 million.

While doing all that, he built collections, notably classic cars. By 2014, his car collection had more than 550 vehicles. He sold it to Jaguar Land Rover, reportedly for around £100 million.

Sleeping four hours a night, pursuing his interests with single-minded determination and generating enough energy to power a small town, he is also a family man. He and his wife Nova have four children. They live part of the time in a Herefordshire mansion that James designed himself (it has its own cricket pitch), and part of the time in central London.

So far, so excellent. But in 2010 James started experiencing stomach pains. He ignored them at first, but they didn't go away. In fact, they got worse. Eventually, he was rushed to hospital for a nine-hour operation in which a vast tumour, much of his intestines and some lymph nodes were removed. It was a stage-three malignant carcinoma. He had just turned 50. Their three children (the fourth came later) were all under three years old.

The diagnosis wasn't a complete surprise, for many members of James' family had died of cancer. What was a surprise was that the cancer hadn't already killed him.

Also surprising was that, throughout the gruelling chemotherapy treatments that



followed, he showed no side effects. He wasn't sick. He didn't lose his hair.

In 2011, he was diagnosed with a malignant tumour of the pancreas, which is fatal in nine cases out of ten. More surgery, more chemo. He survived this too. It was followed, in 2014, by malignant skin cancer. Then, in 2018, secondary tumours were found on his liver.

“ to encourage other survivors to come forward ”

Unable to face any more surgical intervention, James turned down a liver transplant. He had survived against all odds thus far, perhaps he could survive even further.

And so far he has, and to look at him you wouldn't know that he'd had cancer at all. For, while James' body is unusually prone to cancers, it also, even more unusually, seems able to subdue them. The explanation lies somewhere in the fact that not only do his white blood cells survive the hostile environment typically created by cancer, they go on the counter-attack. His skin cancer has receded without the need for surgery, and the secondary tumours on his liver are in regression. So unusual is his case, that oncologists and researchers are agog.

So is James. (Incidentally, he only became a dentist because he didn't get the grades to do his first choice, medicine.) He researched the world of immunology, contacted its top names and set up Continuum Life Sciences in 2016 to co-ordinate research across a number of universities.

One of their first findings was that James' white blood cells, otherwise known as T-cells, didn't just subdue his cancers, they subdued other people's. The team then successfully cloned James' T-cells and these synthetic cells worked as well.

They are now searching the world for other survivors like James. They have found about 40 so far. They need more. T-cells from other survivors have also subdued third-party cancer cells, albeit not quite as emphatically as James'. All have been cloned.

Immunotherapy, while still at the research and experiment stage, now offers a new dimension in the fight against cancer. James, while not being an oncologist or an immunologist, is helping it along. He “gets” science. He understands academic rigour and ethics. He knows that the road ahead is long and there will be roadblocks on the way. But he is determined to use his own medical history, indeed his own body, to pursue the research that could lead to a cure for others.

This year he has been publicising his story in order to encourage other survivors to come forward. He understands that some are reluctant: re-living his own medical history, and the many dark days when he didn't know how much longer he would be with his family, is not a comfortable undertaking. (One scar is the legacy of an operation that left 91 metal staples down his abdomen.)

For all that, he looks well and approaches the task with the same single-mindedness, energy and attention to detail that he put into building his business. There is a reason he is still alive, he says. The scientists need to work out just what that reason is.





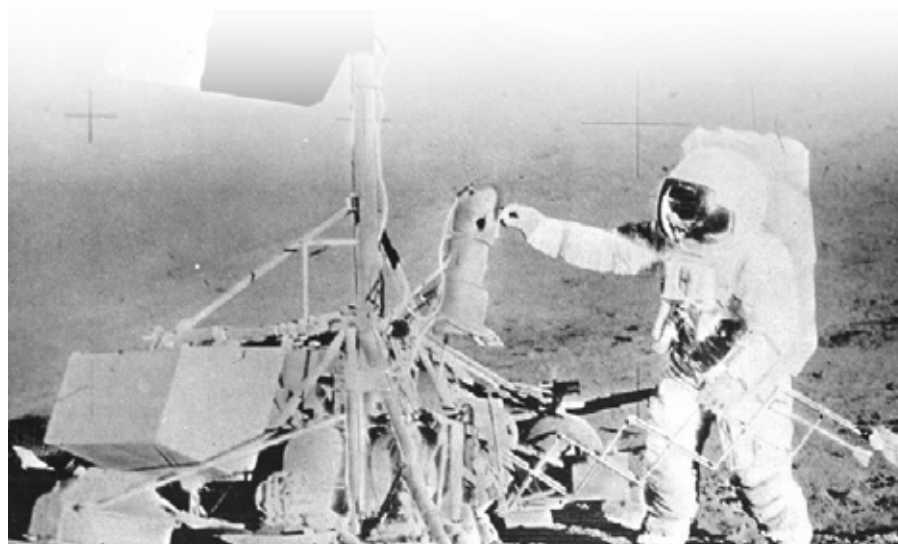
# Making, not breaking, the code

Anthony McQuiggan (PPA 1974)

Half a century ago, Anthony McQuiggan sat in the Round Room in St Peter's and watched the launch of Apollo XI, live on the school's 18-inch, black and white television. Special permission had had to be obtained from housemaster, Bro Miller, who, Tony recalls, was not convinced that the great event merited such favoured treatment. But it was the end of term and Miller gave in. The next day, the boys headed for home.

Tony's parents had just returned from a diplomatic tour in Uganda and had acquired a new house in London. The paint was still wet when Tony arrived. He immediately marched his dad down to the high street to rent a television (in those days, televisions constantly broke down and renting was the most practical option) so that he could watch the moonwalk.

Two years later, Tony wrote to NASA asking for negatives of photos taken on the moon. He thinks now that he had in mind to make his own prints. In any event, an envelope duly arrived containing copy negs of the second moon landings (Apollo 12). It is amazing what a well-written letter from a British schoolboy could elicit from NASA in those days.



That same year, 1971, he was invited to visit the NASA Communications Network (NASCOM) on the embankment in London. This was the world switching centre for NASA's data, voice and television relays. Information flows between Apollo spacecraft and Mission Control in Houston were carried over this system. He listened to the NASA command audio channel and "dropped in" on many other circuits. He was fascinated by the workings of 1,200 and 2,400 bits-per-second digital telemetry channels.

Back at school, Tony helped install a 1,200 bit-per-second link between Bath university and Prior's maths lab, where it connected with a borrowed Teletype machine. He wrote his first computer programme on this, punching out the code on paper tape then dialling the university computer, running the programme and receiving the printed results on a paper roll.

Unsurprisingly, Tony went on to make a career in aerospace, including working with Russian space technicians to launch two British astronauts in Russian space suits. He still has a working MIR space station headset and skull cap presented to him by the Russian engineering team. Having written code that travelled only from Combe Down to Claverton Down, he ended up writing code that actually ran in space.

# Heroes don't always wear capes

Thomas Pugh (PPA 2019)



*At the end of last year, Tom sent us this report:*

"I had a wonderful experience at Prior. My sister is a current student and my mum works in the Paragon, so I feel very close to the institution as a whole.

"Until today, I have been on the north shore of Lesvos, Greece, working in a search and rescue capacity. The rate of refugee arrivals across the Aegean is the highest since 2015, and sadly the death toll is rising. This tragedy is compounded by recent deaths in the camp of Moria, which is insufficiently provided and overstretched.

"On my shift in the transit camp, I was called up at 8 am to help distribution for new arrivals. The camp had over 250 people in it, with groups constantly coming and going, and so it was very crowded and our resources stretched. I was just checking on a batch of tea when I walked into a large, dense crowd panicking, screaming, and crying just outside of the main tent. It took me a second to realise that an 8-month old baby was being passed from man to man, each desperately trying to do mouth-to-mouth while shouting at each other in Farsi. The baby was extremely limp and pale, and I was shocked at how quickly he had deteriorated. His neck wasn't supporting

*Continued...*



*Continued...*

his head as they tried to resuscitate him. Nothing they were doing was working.

"It was the first time I'd ever faced such a situation, and I almost expected to panic, but a sudden calmness came over me as I recalled the training I had had in casualty care. I had almost forcibly to take the baby from his father's arms and put him down on a table. A quick assessment showed that he was completely unresponsive and not breathing, and I passed this information on to the fantastic volunteer team around me who were already clearing the area and calling for doctors. I used a jaw thrust to open the baby's airway but still heard no breathing, so I showed his father how to hold the position and began infant chest compressions.

"Just as I was beginning, I was relieved to hear a thin and quiet rasping noise from the baby. I went back to the jaw thrust until it became laboured breaths, and then crying. Eventually, the baby boy became alert and was even fighting back against the pain of the jaw thrust - a sign of recovery.

"Our doctors and medical professionals - Mohammad, Luisa, and Diego - arrived immediately after, so I knew he'd be in good hands as we waited for the ambulance. The 8-month old was breathing unassisted and healthily by then, and I had checked his airway was clear. There was no foreign object or vomit, and so we suspected the incident had occurred after he reacted badly to a sleeping pill fed to him by a smuggler to keep him quiet.

**" a sudden calmness came over me as I recalled the training "**

"The first thing I did when everything had calmed down was message a big 'thank you' to my casualty care instructor, Dr Sue Body, from the charity Atlantic Pacific, who taught me such essential skills.

"When it was all over, I went back to tasks such as making tea and moving water bottles.

There are always tasks to do in the transit camp, and I didn't have much time to think, but now that I have had a few days to reflect and talk to other volunteers about it, I can say that this was one of my proudest moments. I'm proud to be working with the amazing people at Refugee Rescue and Lighthouse Relief, and I'm so grateful that the whole situation worked out well.

"Alongside my search and rescue role, I was awarded a grant to start my own project for relieving some of the misery in this crisis. Phones4Refugees aims to provide mobile phones to refugee camps across Europe by collecting some of the £8 billion worth of devices that go unused in our country alone and distributing them to trusted NGOs. We mainly hope to collect through schools."

Tom would love to come to Prior to talk about his project. He would also appreciate the chance to talk about his experiences and the refugee crisis as a whole in an assembly, and maybe even hold workshops on search and rescue skills and casualty care. Here's a link to his project: [phones4refugees.org](http://phones4refugees.org)

## A social vocation in Uganda

**Fabian Jowers (PPA 1968)**

*Tim Heining (PPA 1968) writes:* In 2005, Fabian and his wife Elisabeth left Madrid to run a children's home in Uganda. They felt urged to do so following a tour in Spain, organized by Fabian, by a Ugandan choir made up of children from the home. Prior to this, tours of choirs from other African countries had been organized by Elisabeth's classical music agency. Unfortunately, on this occasion, when the children returned to Uganda, they discovered that the home had been abandoned. They were turned out onto the streets.

Fabian and Elisabeth felt obliged to step in, and they took on the responsibility for the home themselves, making a great success of it and giving it the name Music to Save Lives. The home has continued to operate since then, supported by the proceeds of concert

tours in Europe, and also relying increasingly on charitable contributions, notably from Prior Park alumni. The COVID-19 epidemic has made such contributions even more important, as concerts in Europe have all been cancelled.

More recently, Fabian's personal social mission has grown, setting up a project to combat the scourge of the parasitical fungus known as jiggers in a remote village called Gwase, where the infection is common among children (as it is in much of East Africa). The Jiggers Outreach Project has been successful in treating hundreds of children while at the same time assisting local people with a variety of other ailments. Over time, these additional treatments have become increasingly important. In this way, Fabian's project has developed beyond jiggers to a more wide-ranging remit.

With this expansion, it became necessary to



create a more permanent onsite presence. This has been achieved by the purchase of a five-room house and a plot of land in Gwase, enabled largely by donations from Prior Park alumni. Renovation of the building is now under way, with the provision of security fences and reconfiguring the interior to make it more suitable for providing medical treatment. A terrace with a corrugated iron sunshade has been erected to create a more comfortable outdoor area for those awaiting treatment.

The latest development is that Fabian has been in negotiation with members of a Baptist Church that runs a clinic in Kampala





specializing in HIV and other STDs. They have agreed to organize a Medical Camp in the Gwase house. A group of ten people, including doctors, nurses, lab technicians and counsellors, will offer diagnosis, testing and treatment for a range of illnesses, including

jiggers. Supplies of medicines will be made available. The first Camp was due to take place on August 22nd. There is a prospect of this being repeated and even perhaps becoming a regular event.

The Gwase house is to be known as The Good Karma. Fabian welcomes interest and suggestions from PPC alumni and he especially welcomes donations, which are all-important. He can be contacted at: [fabian.jowers@gmail.com](mailto:fabian.jowers@gmail.com)

## Cooking up a new brew

Pete Laverick (PPA 2013) and Barney Butterfield (PPA 1995)

It was in 2018 that Sandford Orchards, a family-run cider company based in the South-West, reached out to the Rugby Players' Association (RPA) to see if any young Exeter Chiefs would be interested in doing work experience in the cider industry. Sandford's owner, Barney Butterfield, is something of an industry guru and has an encyclopaedic knowledge of cider and its many varieties. Seven members of the Chiefs stepped forward, among them Pete Laverick.

It became apparent, says Pete, that the best thing would be "for us to design and create our very own cider, all the proceeds of which would go to charity". After months of planning, researching and tasting, they agreed on their preferred flavour. They named the brew Rib Tickler.

"Our target was to raise £5,000 for our chosen charities," recalls Pete. "After our first year, we managed to raise over £15,000." One of the most prestigious fund-raisers was the launch of Eddie Jones' biography.

But it wasn't until a chance conversation in the cider works that Barney asked about Pete's unusual surname. Barney, it seems, had recently been to a school reunion and there met another Laverick. "Your mother's name isn't Carole?" he asked.

And thus they discovered that they are both PPAs. During the Covid crisis, Pete and another Exeter Chief, Sam Skinner, helped Barney with deliveries, just to keep the show on the road. In July, that arrangement came to end, with Pete, a former captain of Prior's First XV, flying off to Hong Kong to continue his rugby career there.



Barney Butterfield and Pete Laverick  
at Sandford Orchards



## The purpose is friendship

### Old boys' hockey

Darren Crawford (PPA 1988) writes: Prior Park has always produced some excellent hockey players and this year was no exception. What is also true is that you never really know which old boys you will get from year to year. The match is always on a Sunday, so a night in Bath the night before is a likely option. (Probably not the best option for the hockey, but that's, after all, what reunions are about.) I arrived at Prior this year excited not to play but to umpire. Captain Lawrie Frere (PPA 1997) was confident that we had plenty of players. However, an error on the announced timings meant that, when push back time came, we had only six players on the pitch. Sure enough, despite my resolution, I was pressed into playing. Within ten minutes, the rest of the old boys arrived *en masse*. Yes, they'd been out the night before in Bath. The banter on the pitch and in the changing room confirmed that Prior still produces individuals who share a bond. As for the hockey, we lost 3-1. But we gave the school a good warm up game as they started their season.

Players included Ben Williamson (PPA 2013), Darren Crawford (PPA 1988), Lawrie Frere (PPA 1997), Dominic King (PPA 2000), Oliver Williamson (PPA 2015), William Braithwaite (PPA 2016), Finlay Eaton (PPA 2018), James Burwell (PPA 2017), Alex Carruthers (PPA 2017), Maxwell Gall (PPA 2017), Osilamah Momoh (PPA 2017), Harvey Smolarek (PPA 2017) and Alan Hall (former staff).



## No more beach hockey

### Old girls' hockey

Hannah Rokkas (PPA 2017) writes: It was an absolute joy that the women's hockey went ahead this year, bringing back a lot of alumnae. It was a day to remember, with so many old girls returning and heading onto the new Astro, nothing like the beach we'd previously been used to at school. A high level, competitive hockey game went ahead, with many supporters on the side who came to watch and cheer us on. Even better,

the old girls won 4 - 1. It was lovely spending time afterwards in the sports centre, having pasties and drinks! I am looking forward to being involved again and seeing more alumnae returning for another wonderful day.

Players: Fiona Rae (PPA 2009), Lucy Roberts (PPA 2017), Katherine Mallet (PPA 2019), Hannah Rokkas (PPA 2017), Evie Unwin (PPA 2019), Molly Hillis (PPA 2018), Anna Jones (PPA 2018), Imogen Parker (PPA 2018) and Francesca Small (PPA 2018).





# Alumnae triumph

## Old girls' netball

Fiona Rae (PPA 2009) writes: As fans will remember, the Old Girls' suffered a bitter, sudden-death loss (26-27) to the 1st VII in 2019. A year wiser, and with some influential new signings from the class of 2019, we returned to take on the 1st VII on January 5th, 2020. It was clear from the first whistle that the 1st VII had some strong tactics in play, with well-co-ordinated centre passes and good use of the width of the court. As the more experienced side, we hadn't anticipated the need for tactics. However, with the unstoppable passing prowess of **Sophie Trim** (PPA 2019) and **Jo De Pedro** (honorary alumna) in the middle court, we held our possessions and made some respectable threats on offence. Combined with precision passes into the circle from **Hermione Scattergood** (PPA 2019), we got on the scoreboard and managed to end the first quarter with a small lead.

In the second quarter, the 1st VII showed us the importance of maintaining fitness over



Christmas and converted efficiently to close the gap on the scoreboard. Some incredible interceptions from **Katie Mallet** (PPA 2019) and consistent marking pressure from **Kirsty Rae** (PPA 2015) and **Molly Hillis** (PPA 2019) kept us in the game, and half time was met with a sigh of relief. In the third quarter, we managed to dig deep and maintain our lead. **Nell Arendt** (PPA 2019) introduced some clever cross-court passes to open up our offence, whilst **Heather Rae** (PPA 2012) held off the advance of the 1st team with some shut down defence.

Going into the fourth and final quarter, it was all to play for. But, at this point, our secret weapon came into play: our unstoppable sharp shooters **Anne-Marie Layet** (PPA 1993) and **Chantal Marie Hopper** (PPA 1999). Bolstered by our dunking duo, we kept a cool head and managed to close out the game 33-20.

Anyone who would like to be involved in the next netball match, contact Fi Rae at [fionarae@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:fionarae@hotmail.co.uk).



Fi Rae





# On the front line in China

Si Du (PPA 2009), known at Prior as Charlene, lives in Yichang, which in the same province as Wuhan, where the Coronavirus was first identified. Her parents own a chain of supermarkets. She writes: "When the news of Wuhan lockdown came out, we were all so shocked, as we have many friends and colleagues in Wuhan and nobody realised the seriousness of this virus. Before that day, many people thought it was just like a 'flu. Then, one day after the action in Wuhan, my

city was locked down and the control of each residential quarter became very strict. Only one person could only go out for necessities for each family every two days. Everything

“ Everything was just paused in our life ”

was just paused in our life. Firstly, it was a few days quarantine, then 14 days, and then another 14 days... One thing that everyone paid attention to was the number of infected people that the government announced every day."

Charlene sent us some photographs taken in February 2020, during the lockdown. Shown here are empty streets of Yichang (above), the logistics centre of the family supermarket







operations (top-right), Charlene's uncle having a socially distanced haircut (middle-right), employees from the family firm who have volunteered to deliver food to the community (bottom right) and a community worker on duty (below left). Food was assembled and delivered under very strict conditions.

Charlene says her parents' business sustained financial losses during the lockdown.

“ almost back to normal life ”

“The losses have continued to the present,” she adds. “Fortunately, the losses are not huge, because at least we were open throughout the entire epidemic period. So many businesses have been shut during this time and many of them even closed down. The government has given financial help to enterprises, such as lowering the interest on bank loans and cutting social insurance. Now the business is recovering but still needs some time to get back to the original level.”

Charlene, who was sent to Prior on the recommendation of one of her parents' friends, reports that, fortunately, no-one in her family fell ill.

“Nowadays, we are almost back to normal life,” she says, “but in dense areas, like shopping



centres, we still need to wear masks. Thanks to the reaction of the government, the virus was quickly controlled, even though it took more than two months to re-open Wuhan. Community workers and companies that provide essentials contributed so much during the quarantine. My parents' company is one of them; we witnessed the joint efforts that everyone made.”

After school, Charlene, who enjoyed her time at Prior, went to Manchester for her undergraduate degree and then to Cass Business School for her masters, before returning to China to work in her parents' business.







## Class of 1984

For the last few years, reunions held at College have been blessed (or cursed) with blistering heat and soaring sunshine. This 35-year reunion was no exception. The event began with just under 20 alumni and partners arriving in the afternoon for drinks on the portico, followed by a tour of the college. Most made it back for dinner in the John Wood Chapel in the evening. The alumnus who arrived directly from the duty free at Heathrow may have played a big part in the convivial mood and the expressive post-dinner dancing. A great day!

In attendance: Mark Webb, Michael May, Greg Noble, Terry O'Neill, Adewale Onabanjo, Claire Perry (née Platt), Robin Roy, Johannes van Hoof, James Brazier, Kwok-Wai Chan, Christopher Mizzi, Kyran Sze, Kameel Saliba, Adebayo Coker, Nicholas Mumar, Louis Gonzalez, Mariano Proietti, Nicola Day (née Bryan) and Brimah Kebbie.



## Class of 1986

Martin Pike organised a Class of 1986 reunion on Zoom. Martin is based in Johannesburg, SA, and he had nearly 20 attendees from the UK, Caribbean, USA, Scandinavia, Middle East, Africa, Spain and Switzerland.



## Class of 1990

Johanna Gardner writes: An epic get together! For some of us, it had been a full 30 years that had passed since we had seen each other, but it seemed like yesterday when we all got together, and it wasn't long before we were all acting like teenagers again! Even though it took me three days of traveling and I had to wear my travel clothes (due to cancelled flights and a lost suitcase), it felt more like a family reunion than a typical high school get together.

Attending boarding school when my parents lived in Hong Kong left me feeling alone as a teenager. I leaned in on making friends... My teenage friends became family. Being with my "family" during this reunion reminded me of how powerful an experience of attending such a magical school really was.

Many of my current friends query what it was like to attend a boarding school that looks more like Hogwarts? I always respond, "It was the best!"

We had "family" including a NASA astrophysicist, a Royal Opera House singer, the Crown Counsel for Gibraltar, and CEO's of all kinds of amazing businesses. They travelled from as far as Thailand, Hong Kong, Canada, Trinidad, Portugal and America, and as close as Bath.

No matter where we were in life; married, divorced, with children or grown adults and grandchildren, the older versions of ourselves shared funny teenage stories, which had some of us nearly peeing our pants with laughter! Our WhatsApp thread, started months prior by Dean Ammon (the cheerleader behind the whole event), is still going strong. It's become a daily sharing space filled with vacation photos, personal

news, and the occasional inappropriate joke.

Thank you to Dean Ammon, Peter Connolly, and Prior Park staff, especially Carole, for hosting our massively successful get-together. It was definitely healing for us all to time-hop back to our youth for the weekend. So worth the trip, the delays and that nobody cared what I was wearing, we were all just so grateful each and every one of us made it.

Sixty people attended the reunion, which commemorated the lives of the recently departed and much loved James Stratton, Ralph Willard-Chedgy and Nick Flanagan who had set the reunion date three years before his death.







## Class of 1994 (Hong Kong)

Charlie O'Brien met up with Alfred Chan, James Tsao, Eric Yu, Jackie Chan and Jason Yuen for dinner and drinks on a recent overseas trip. "It was great to see everyone," he says, "and to reminisce about school 26 years ago!"

## Class of 2000

The class of 2000 had a 20-year reunion with afternoon tea and drinks in the Mansion and a tour of the college before they carried on into town for an evening celebration. Attendees included Neil Andrews, Dominique Bonnet, Jenifer Coton, Hanna Gerrish, Elisa Goldsbrough (née Castle), Lauren Muehlauer, Tula Penfold and Andrea San Sirvent, and their families.



..... All reunions will be held on Sunday 13 June 2021 .....

## Weddings

Edward Ellis-Jones (PPA 2006) got married in the school chapel on a super hot bank-holiday weekend. The service was followed by a reception at the bottom of the hill in the White Hart.

Clare Over (née Blathwayt) (PPA 2002) writes: For my family, arriving on time for the school assembly was always a challenge. So, it was a familiar feeling when one Saturday last September we drove through the Prior Park gates and pulled up outside the chapel thirteen (well, maybe 30) minutes late for my own wedding! Dad bundled me out of the Morris Minor as I checked I had my things and I looked around to find my bridesmaids: my sister, Flora (PPA 2005), and my friends Hatty Campbell-Clause (née Fergie) (PPA 2003) and Fran Wyld (née Parsons) (PPA 2002). Almost a typical school day!

Beautiful blue hydrangeas and white roses adorned the chapel with foliage that brought the outside in. It is such a beautiful chapel even before it is filled with flowers and music, so we always knew it was going to be special getting married there. We all have



Clare Over wedding

so many happy memories there and I love that it now holds meaning for my husband David too. We were so happy to invite our families and friends to help us celebrate our wedding, managing to convince a few Prior Park alumni and even a former headmaster back into the fold.

We were married by former school chaplain, Father Malcolm [Smeaton] and David's minister. After the service we all gathered on the Mansion steps for a group photo and to take in the spectacular views across Bath, before heading back home to celebrate.





## Recollections and re-connections

Seventy veteran alumni attended the Mansion Lunch, which took place on October 12th, 2019, in the Academy Hall. One table was occupied by the class of 1979, among them **Dominic Cronin, Demosthenis Christakis, Albert Codali and Simon Langley**. They were celebrating their 40th anniversary reunion. Another table was taken by the veterans of the late-60s/early-70s, including **Will Lee, Simon Beck, Tim Heining, Neville Dyke and Terry Illott**.

Some stalwarts were, unfortunately, unable to attend this time, including **Gerald Walker (PPA 1948), Fergus Lyons (PPA 1948), Peter Ashworth (PPA 1946)** and the Haddon brothers. They were much missed. But our oldest alumnus, the indefatigable **Brian Warren-Peachey (PPA 1937)** was there, as were **John Bogie (PPA 1957), Michael and David Corrigan** and, for the first time, **Stephen Hilton (PPA 1965)**, who had been brought along by his brother and former PPA president, **Peter Hilton (PPA 1962)**.

**Ian Coaten (PPA 1959) and Peter Keenan (PPA 1959)** were like two little boys, it was so long since they had last seen each other (60 years and counting). They checked in side by side, almost touching, each asking at the desk for the other. Then that precious moment: "Peter, it's me, Ian." The years suddenly dropped away. They were inseparable for the rest of the day, telling story after story, only letting up when their contemporary, **Tim Dean (PPA 1960)**, managed to get a word in.

Lunch was preceded by drinks in the foyer and the usual group photograph on the Mansion steps. **Sir Adrian Beamish (PPA 1956)**, former British Ambassador to Mexico, gave an amusing talk about his life and times, including some insightful memories of life in Mrs Thatcher's Downing Street. There was a musical recital before food was served. After lunch, there was a tour, accompanied,



Chris Blunden, Peter Keenan and Ian Coaten

as ever, by Carole's illuminating historical commentary.

“by far the best  
veteran's reunion I have  
attended”

For Father Tim Dean, the experience was "fascinating", "surprise after enchanting surprise". He said Mass in chapel on the Sunday, something he had never done before. It meant a lot to him.

Among the raft of thank-you letters that reached the PPA office in the days following the lunch, were the following comments: "Everybody seemed to be having a good time and there was a very happy atmosphere"; "An excellent lunch, the food was superb and it was good to have a crowd from the fifties"; "...a complete success"; "... excellent organisation"; and, "by far the best veteran's reunion I have attended".

The Mansion Lunch had to be cancelled this year (another victim of the pandemic) but it will be back in all its glory on Saturday 6 March 2021 (we hope).

### “Tell it like it is” corner

Rev Frederick Neve, writing from the English College, Rome, Jan 12th, 1867: "I do not feel inclined to congratulate you about the purchase of Prior Park. I think the place has a curse on it. This you will say is superstition; perhaps it is, so I will not insist upon it. Still, you had better let it - for a madhouse, [rather] than make a college of it, and worse still to put old Prior Park men at the head of it - *meo male* [not quite so bad] if it is to be only a lay college. If you put Church students there, it is certain that people will point to it and say, here is the old system over again, and future Bishops and Clergy will protest that it yet owes the Diocese £20,000, and has only been whitewashed by insolvency, so that is my grumbling."





## 1930 - 1939

**Brian Warren-Peachey (PPA 1937)** celebrated his 99th birthday just before last year's Mansion Lunch. During lockdown they have been doing as they are told, says Brian's wife Jennifer, who adds that they have found it a challenge. However, their allotment is only a two-minute walk away, so they are still managing to do a bit of work. (Well, Brian sits and does the crossword, while Jennifer is pulling up the last of the leeks and hoping to redeem the purple-sprouting broccoli.) They have enjoyed online chats with the family over the weekends; it has helped them feel more connected, especially with a cousin in northern Italy. Their philosophy has been to deal with this one day at a time.

## 1940 - 1949

Aged 92, **John Coulston (PPA 1943)** is in the fortunate position that his daughter and grand daughters live in the house at the bottom of his garden, so he has been well looked after. He remembers his time at Prior Park fondly and asks after his peers, including **Tom Wade West (PPA 1945)**. John remembers hitting a six off Tom's bowling. In John's time, he says, when you left St Peters and joined St Pauls you became a fag for the first year, made to look after the older boys. Any disputes were resolved in the boot room. He asks to be remembered to **Rosie McNiff (PPA 2014)**, who spoke to him during the Telethon a few years ago - he so enjoyed the conversation.

**Michael Brotherton (PPA 1944)** was so inspired by the very successful Mansion Lunch lecture from **Sir Adrian Beamish (PPA 1956)**, that he offered to give the next lecture, on the subject of his road to Westminster. He promises it will be a light-hearted, non-political account of how he became an MP.

**Peter Ashworth (PPA 1946)** has weathered the storms of Covid. He says he has been well looked after in his village, adding that they have a great community which has really come together during the pandemic.

**Mike Corrigan (PPA 1947)** has found the lockdown tough. He lost his wife in 2018. Fortunately, his daughter came to look after him during the crisis. He was proud and impressed that Prior rose to the challenge of providing PPE for the NHS.

Not so lucky was **Gerald Walker (PPA 1948)**, who was in the dire position of having no close neighbours to help during the lockdown; they were all in a very similar position. But, never afraid of technology or having to adapt to changing circumstances, Gerald managed to sort out internet food deliveries.

## 1950 - 1959

**Peter McGovern (PPA 1951)** died in 2009. His son, Kim, and daughter in law, Liz, were visiting from the USA earlier this year and they popped in to have a look at the college. Kim found it very different from his father's descriptions of post-war Prior Park. The family moved to the USA in the mid-70s.

**Patrick Mason (PPA 1953)** called to say that he lived through WW2 and the Gulf war, but the invisible threat of Covid scared him more than either of those. Life, he thinks, will never be the same again. Life in the home where he lives was disrupted, with staff not cooking meals for the residents: they were leaving food in tubs for each inhabitant to reheat themselves. Fortunately, Patrick's family live close by.

Also living in the Exeter region is Patrick's old friend **Laurie Tollemache (PPA 1956)**. Prior's head of development, Declan Rainey, dropped in on them both earlier this year, before the lockdown.



Laurie Tollemache and Patrick Mason

Laurie was devastated to be told by Carole Laverick of the death of **Andy Owen (PPA 1953)** (see obituaries), but he was grateful to hear the news from a friendly voice. Laurie says that isolation has not been an issue: if he and his wife see more than two people on their daily walk, they wonder what all the commotion is about. Their daughter, who lives only five miles away, has been getting shopping and odd jobs done for them.

**Terry Tory (PPA 1954)** was in the UK last Christmas, visiting his daughters. He managed to get together with Patrick [Mason] and **Ian Reid (PPA 1957)** for a very enjoyable lunch in Salisbury. Terry, who lives in a retirement village about five minutes from Umhlanga Rocks, on the Natal coast in South Africa, reports that they were in total lockdown for several weeks, only being allowed out for essential food shopping and visits to the doctor, and then only if they wore masks. He sends good wishes to all his old friends.

Another PPA from that era, **Paul Taft (PPA 1955)**, described life under Covid as not much different from his normal routine. "It's not too challenging," he said.

**Christopher Whitmarsh-Everiss (PPA 1956)** visited College with an old Army buddy. They enjoyed a walk around the college and spent some time looking at *The Fallen* art installation in the chapel, contemplating the sacrifice of so many. Both served in Germany in the time of the Cold War, and they have remained friends ever since. Christopher was recovering well from recent ill health.



Christopher Whitmarsh-Everiss and his army friend

As Christopher got back into the car and drove off, a couple approached the Mansion on foot. **David Thompson (PPA 1958)**, returning to school for the first time in 63 years, missed his former classmate by seconds. David described his visit as "a great pleasure" and said it brought back "a lot of memories", including his first (and, thus far, only) encounter with a corpse (a deceased Christian Brother laid out in the Mansion), and catapulting, with no success, grey squirrels in the woods. David left college at the age of 16; their father having taken a job in Essex, David and his brother **Andrew Thompson (PPA 1958)** moved to a day school there. The boys had not enjoyed their time at Cricklade, David said, but he loved Big Prior, where he excelled in sport. He went on to represent Essex in cricket, hockey and rugby. After school, he attended a management course for 18 months, joined a window company, moved into sales and set up a business in vertical blinds. His business became the largest such company in the UK, and he sold up in 1990. He and his wife Renata now live in Spain.



David Thompson

Not everything about the lockdown has been bad. **Ian Reid (PPA 1957)**, isolating at home with his wife, received a call from fellow alumnus **Anthony Watts (PPA 1959)**, who is a professor at Cambridge University and lives near Ian's cousin **Alec Motts (PPA 1955)**. Ian hadn't spoken to Anthony in 50 years. The crisis has given people the time and motivation to seek out old friends. They are planning on getting



together at the next Mansion Lunch, whenever that now takes place. Ian noted that the crisis has revealed "how fragile our society really is". Ian's son **James Reid (PPA 1989)** was in isolation with his sister in Weston super Mare.

**George "Harry" Good (PPA 1958)** has loved talking to his family and friends on Zoom, Skype and WhatsApp. He has particularly enjoyed catching up with his bellringing group on weekly Zoom meetings. Harry and his wife live in a small village where it is easy to self-isolate. He plans to attend the next Mansion Lunch with his brother **Adrian Good (PPA 1971)**.

**Barry Plews (PPA 1958)** has been enjoying his garden in lockdown. He has also been supporting local firms like his greengrocer, who was at the point of going out of business but adapted to do local deliveries. This proved so successful that it quickly expanded to a 7-day service. Barry's neighbour is a doctor who has been checking up on him every couple of days to make sure all is well. Barry loved the buddy-up scheme (see page 12) and welcomes the idea of a memorial mass for **Andy Owen (PPA 1953)** (see obituaries) being on the Sunday after the Mansion Lunch, whenever that might be.

**Peter Keenan (PPA 1959)** mentioned at the Mansion Lunch 2019 that **John Ainslie (PPA 1959)** is a fellow parishioner at the Catholic Church in Barnet. According to Peter, John's is an influential voice.

## 1960 - 1969



**John Conran (PPA 1960)** returned to College after an absence of 59 years. Expelled weeks before graduation, following confusion about riding a Vespa to Bristol art school, he never managed to pass his chemistry exam, which would have enabled him to join the medical profession and thus follow in his father's footsteps. Instead, he became an architect. Now retired and living in London, he remembers vividly his part in the school play, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, details of which, with photos, Carole found on the digital archive. John also recalled his friendship with classmate **Tim Dean (PPA 1960)** - which he hopes to rekindle.

For his part, Tim attended the Mansion Lunch (see page 30), where he sat next to **Peter Keenan** (see above).

Tim described the encounter as "an absolute delight". "We went right through our school years together," he wrote later, "starting with Cricklade, where I once fell off a school appointed horse and broke my arm, so we have many shared memories. Every term, for years, we would have a falling out that would last for a frosty couple of weeks, during which we didn't speak to each other. Then, just as suddenly, all would be back to normal". Tim remembered that it was "all boy boarders in the 1950's, no more than 250 I think... On the first night back, the silence of the dormitories was disturbed only by the muffled sobs of the homesick. But as boys always do - with everything - we got over it." Tim, a priest, was delighted to say Mass on the Sunday after the Mansion Lunch. "It meant so much to me," he said. "Another first."



**Patrick Thomas (PPA 1962)** sent an email in response to a Covid posting on Facebook, asking if anyone remembered the Asian Flu in the winter of 1957, adding that "we were obviously so well looked after in our freezing dorms". The digital archive notes that 120 students in St Pauls and 60 in St Peters were affected by the epidemic.

**Ben Rosevink (PPA 1963)** wrote to say that he and his wife Maggie have been living in Mylor, Cornwall, for the last six years. They walk, sail and cycle. Ben's main hobbies are oil painting and wood engraving. "We have three lovely grandchildren who normally keep us on our toes and provide a lot of fun," he wrote. "Sometimes I think of Prior and laugh as odd words come into my head like Masher, Percy, Squibbs and Hop-along. These were nicknames for teachers, but Percy was a piece of rubber tubing. Mr Hunt would say on entering the classroom for the first time, 'My job is to teach you science and Percy's job is to keep order in the class'." Masher, adds Ben, "was one of the best maths teachers around". Ben and his wife were keeping safe during the crisis. They spent most mornings online with the grandchildren, trying to help with homework and keeping them entertained. Many years ago, Ben wanted to find out how his father had been shot down in WW2. His journey of discovery eventually led him to meet the German pilot responsible. In the spirit of compassion and forgiveness, the two families met. It was, Ben says, a very moving experience. Here's a link to a programme made about the journey to find forgiveness: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bl8XXYsjhvs>

When **Geoff Ferreira (PPA 1964)** attended last year's Mansion Lunch, he was pleased to see the plaque commemorating renowned biology teacher **Vic Ferguson**. Geoff was responsible for the fundraising to upgrade the biology lab in honour of Mr Ferguson. Earlier this year, Geoff reported that he was selling his house and moving to be near his daughter and family. When the lockdown eased, he enjoyed a happy day



with the family, his first face to face meeting for eight weeks.

**Maurice Glover (PPA 1964)** recently joined the archive site, noticed gaps in the records and promptly sent in four photos, one of which was of the boys doing Gaelic dancing. Who knew?

**Christopher Bridge (PPA 1965)**, who volunteered for our Buddy-up scheme (see page 12), also volunteered to be the village organiser at his home in Suffolk, only to be told that he was in the age group that should be receiving help not giving it.



**Charles Dean (1968)** visited College with his son last September and was given a full tour by Declan Rainey. When **Terry Ilott (PPA 1968)** and **Tim Heining (PPA 1968)** heard that Charles had visited, they immediately got in touch. Charles, known as Dixie in his schooldays, is now a Buddhist and goes by the name Saccavicya. He was a regular participant in the weekly Zoom meetings organised by Terry during the lockdown. Other participants included **Andrew "Spike" Colter**, **Peter Coates**, **Peter Rippon**, **Ron Turley**, **Geoff Cardozo**, **Jeremy Reyburn**, **Joe Loughlin**, **Niall Aston**, **John Evans**, **Ted Bennitt** and **Tim Heining**, all from the class of 1968. Spike is living in Jersey and enjoying his long-distance walking. For 17 years he accompanied disabled and terminally ill pilgrims to Lourdes, and he is now involved in a charity that supports Gurkhas and their families in Nepal. Peter Coates has retired from the NHS, where he was a haematologist. Peter volunteered to return to the NHS to help with the pandemic, but, on account of his age, in a back-room rather than front-line role. Peter Rippon is still running





his design business in New York City. Ron is living in Norwich with his family. Geoff is settled in Brittany (see the story on page 4), not far from Jeremy, a retired educationalist. Joe is in Dorset. Niall is still working as a surgeon in South London, travelling back and forth from the family home in Gloucestershire. John and his wife divide their time between Sussex, Portugal and (except during the Covid pandemic) their children and grandchildren in Arundel, Cambridge and Balsall Common in the Midlands. Ted lives just outside Rotterdam and still plays guitar in bands. Tim and his wife Rosenilda divide their time between Recife in Brazil and West London. Tim and Rosenilda's son, George, who runs the JCB operation in Spain and Portugal, had a bad case of Covid-19, from which he has made a full recovery.

For his part, Terry, a former PPA president, reports that he and his wife Heather have enjoyed a harmonious and uneventful lockdown in North London: working at their respective tasks, walking in the woods every day, and keeping up a round of Zoom meetings with friends and family. He put himself forward as an NHS volunteer but was never asked to contribute, probably, he thinks, because of his age. Their older son, Oliver, a senior civil servant, is a member of the Covid team in the Cabinet Office. Their younger son, Luke, is doing a PhD at Cambridge.

Other members of the tight-knit 1968 cohort include **Robin Camacho**, who lives in Bristol, **Dave Peckham**, who is working as hard as ever building the education consultancy business he runs with his partner Carrie, **Mike Brotherton**, living down in Devon, and **Phil Hamerton**, whose commitment to the East Somerset Railway is unwavering. **Ken Edwards** is writing poetry and novels in Hastings, **Chris Cutcliffe** is creating a new garden with his wife Julia in Surrey, and **Steve Sturton Davies** is looking after stray animals in Sussex. Steve reports that he and his wife have never been so busy. They have built yet another aviary, their utility room is full of cages and the house is deafened by the noise from the ducklings (they appear to have their own indoor pond!). **Norman Sparrow** is still living on Lanzarote in the Canary Islands. Since setting up and running a scuba diving business, followed by a RYA Powerboat training centre, Norman is now involved as the boat captain running a whale and dolphin watching venture with his wife Liz. He reports that the islanders are keeping their fingers crossed that tourists will return after the lockdown and that life will get back to normal. **Rick Jarrams** is a retired GP in the Midlands. He's happy that his beloved West Bromwich Albion (he used to be the team doctor) recently achieved promotion back into the Premier League. **Mike Callander** and **Charlie Murray** are also retired GPs. Mike (was due to speak at the Mansion Lunch in 2020) is living with his wife Ros in Ireland, and Charlie and his wife Awatif have moved to the Gulf. **Rafe Pigott** is still working as a solicitor in Essex. **Kieran Shaw**, now retired from Consulting & Engineering New Zealand, is accommodating business retreats and wilderness adventure activities at his property in the mountains outside Wellington. It's been a good place to be during the pandemic, he says, and he's hoping that city dwellers will now be

feeling an even greater need for a break in natural surroundings. Kieran's daughter Amber, a veterinary surgeon, was stuck in London during the pandemic, unable to return home. But, Kieran says, at least she got out of South America in time. Kieran is hoping to be back in the UK for Christmas.

Another member of the class of 1968, **Fabian Jowers**, is still running an orphanage and a project to eliminate the scourge of jiggers in Uganda (see page 22).

Also organising alumni Zoom meetings during the lockdown was **Will Lee (PPA 1969)**. Will, having retired from his day job, can now focus full time on his photography business. He is also the



administrator of the Facebook group INTOAS (It's Not the Official Alumni Site) that he set up eight years ago and which now has nearly 40 members. These include many of the 1968 group as well as **Paul Turner**, **Dom Eedle**, **Gonzalo Medizabal**, **Mike England**, **Adrian Lovett Turner**, **Chris Bailey**, **Tony McQuiggan**, PPA president **Simon Morgan**, **Robin Aitken**, **Kevin Smyth**, **Adrian Good**, **Brian Wake**, **Brian Camacho**, **Neville Dyke**, **Simon Howell**, **Richard Cutcliffe**, **Rob Thomas**, **Simon Beck**, **Philip Sales**, **Peter Gravelle**, **John Green**, PPS governor **Tony Bury**, **Andy Colombini** and **Tony Brannon**, all of them from the late 60s to early 70s era.

In July 2019, a group of INTOAS members convened, with their partners, at the house of **Dominic Eedle (PPA 1970)** near Saint Antonin-Noble-Val in France. The group included **Tony Bury (PPA 1970)**, **Geoff Cardozo (PPA 1968)**, **Simon Beck (PPA 1969)**, **Tim Heining (PPA 1968)**, **Philip Sales (PPA 1969)** and **Simon Howell (PPA 1970)**. Geoff and Simon Howell live in France, Tim in Brazil and Phil in California. Simon Beck used to live in France but returned to the UK, where Tony, having spent many years building businesses in the Gulf, also lives. As well as the expected meals, fine wines and conversation, there were day trips, including to the farmers' market at Saint Antonin. Dom and his partner Judica won the Prior Park Trivia contest devised by Phil and his partner Barbara (aka Barrie). The festivities were topped off with a Bastille Day firework display.

It looked for a while as though **Philip Sales (PPA 1969)** would be visiting College more frequently. When he and Barrie were in Europe last summer, they decided that they would buy a property in the Bath area. Covid, however, has put paid to that, at least temporarily. Phil is a Morris Minor enthusiast and was delighted when his 52-year old Morris Traveller, Violet, which carried them around the UK and Ireland, recently got its (or her) California registration. Phil adds that he tried very hard on their travels "not to leave any oil spots on alumni driveways".

## 1970 - 1979

**Tony Bury (PPA 1970)** reports that he has spent more consecutive nights in his own bed under lockdown than at any time since university. Tony, a PPS governor, has sold his holdings in his remaining business interests in the Gulf and recently moved to a house on the northern slopes of Bath.

**Julian Fonseca (PPA 1970)** recently donated a PPC sports blazer badge that belonged to his father (**Amador Fonseca, PPA 1932**). The badge has been added to the PPA archive.



Amador Fonseca



Tony Crowsley

**Tony Crowsley (PPA 1971)** visited College after a gap of more than 50 years and "laid some ghosts to rest". He was impressed by the new additions, especially the Bury Sports Hall. He was even more impressed that the "atmosphere in the school is now more in keeping with today's care and education". Tony, who left PPC after Lower Five, recently retired after nearly 40 years as a teacher, mainly of sports and outdoor education. A visit to see family in Bath gave him the opportunity to return to College and recount stories of ghosts and gauntlets, good friends and bad food. He regaled the present Clifford boys with stories of the days when their common room was a dormitory for the youngest boys in St Peters. He and his best friend **Peter Milne (PPA 1971)** (now deceased) were lying awake one night when they saw a ghostly glow come in from the shower end of the dorm. As it drifted between the beds, it grew to almost the size of a man and then disappeared at the altar end. The next morning, the matron told them that it was the familiar ghost of Bishop Baines. One of Tony's least favourite memories was the gauntlet: running through lines of boys who put soap in their rugby socks to whack their unfortunate victims. Tony now divides his time between Jersey and France.

**Lawrence Wang (PPA 1972)** was back in the UK for a few weeks last November, visiting friends and family. He toured the college and had a story for every corner and corridor. He saw the Ball Court for the first time, as it was out of bounds when he was at school. He said he was one of the few boys who was able to wangle



his way out of doing sports. Instead, he became the teaboy. But he was, apparently, a great marksman. Lawrence would like to get in touch with any peers who remember him.



Lawrence Wang

**Cordell Bailey (PPA 1975)** moved to Hawaii three years ago. Before the pandemic, he was spending Tuesday afternoons working at the church distributing food for the poor and homeless. But, at 63, he was considered too vulnerable to carry on. He writes: "Now as neighbours we live the old Hawaiian way. We look out for each other. If you don't have, we share... This was how life was before the days of 'pay for everything'. It is my childhood: we are all aunts, uncles, brothers and sisters, even if not related by blood." This mentality, he thinks, is only found far away from city life. "Two years ago, we had some fires," he continues, "and the people of the west side were preparing food for the firefighters. A reporter from CNN asked, 'How do they afford it? Most of the west side are poor folks, not affluent like Honolulu'. The mayor said, 'You don't know these folks. They have nothing, but they will give you everything.' In Covid, we the people of west side have little, but we will give you everything. God Bless."

**Paul Howard-Kyan (PPA 1976)** recently reconnected with Prior through social media. His family still live locally in Combe Down, but his wanderlust means he moves around a lot. Sitting out the Covid crisis in the Lake District gave him time to catch up and reflect on his time at Prior, recalling a CCF exercise on Dartmoor with the chemistry teacher, Mr Ryan, who, commenting on Paul's wiry physique, gave him words of encouragement that have stayed with him to this day.

Also part of the 1976 year group, **John Teo (Teo Yu Chai) (PPA 1976)** says he wishes he could get to one of the cohort socials. He misses those days at Prior. **Joe Bradley (PPA 1976)** has discovered that their old classmate, **Simon Spencer (PPA 1976)**, is a borderline neighbour, being just ten miles from him on the coast. They managed to meet up a few times before the lockdown. And **Steve Ryder (PPA 1976)** is still working in broadcast television and living in the Cotswolds. Steve's brother, **John Ryder (PPA 1974)** is living in Rome with his wife Karen.

**Roberto Vargas (PPA 1976)** and his wife Maria called in just as the school had closed for the Christmas holidays. It was a flying visit, as they were off to pick up their son, who is reading behavioural economics at Bath University. Roberto was amazed by the Bury Sports Centre. After Bath, they were off to

the Canaries to see his mother, before returning to Houston for Christmas.



Roberto Vargas

**Tony Alves (PPA 1977)**, a Prior Park Schools governor, visited College with friends from California. The look of bewilderment on their faces at the thought that Tony actually wanted to visit his old school was wiped away when they stood in the portico and surveyed the view down to Bath. It never fails to impress.

**Mark Williams (PPA 1978)** continues to paint. His work can be seen on Instagram. He is there as markwilliamsartist. Mark says that colour and contrast are important elements in his work.



In January, **Christopher Liu (PPA 1979)** was installed as president of the Sussex Medico Chirurgical Society, one of the oldest medical societies in the United Kingdom. Christopher delivered his presidential address, *The Humble Cataract*, to a packed lecture theatre. Christopher grabbed everyone's attention at the outset by showing a video of a cataract being removed. There was a mix of stunned silence, gasps of awe and a collective sigh of relief when the video was over. (Watch it here if you dare: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=9pLwhkJu55M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9pLwhkJu55M).) Close friends and colleagues joined him for a celebratory dinner afterwards. As ever, Christopher was accompanied by his wife Vivienne. Congratulations, Christopher.

**Kevin O'Donnell (PPA 1979)** made his first visit back

to College since leaving in 1977. Kevin and Roz were taking a short break in Bradford on Avon from their home in Chislehurst. Now with three children over 20, they are finding time to take short breaks. When Kevin left Prior, he went to work in his father's hotel in London, then joined his uncle in a building business. He currently runs his own property portfolio. He remembers fondly the friendships carved out at school and the incredible record-breaking rugby team. He felt he was part of something really special.

## 1980 - 1989

**David Thomas (PPA 1980)** was recently promoted to pro-vice chancellor for research and impact at Bangor University. But, after 24 years in North Wales, he has now accepted a post as Professor of Arctic Ecosystem Research in Helsinki. David's recent research projects have included work on plastics in river and coastal waters.

**Karim Ghaidan (PPA 1980)** was passing through Bath with a friend and decided to show him his old school.



**Adrian Lumley-Smith (PPA 1981)** visited College on a miserable afternoon, laden with a bag of goodies for the archive site. He produced each goodie from the bag like a magician pulling rabbits out of a hat. The most splendid of them was the morning bell that was used to rouse the St Pauls students from their slumbers. The Christian Brothers were about to leave the school, and the bell must have seemed like a great souvenir. The culprits and the stolen swag were already on the school bus ready to travel for their DofE expedition when the school-wide search got underway. Happily retired with his wife, he devotes his time to voluntary work in Somerset for the Orchard Vale Trust, with which his father (**John Lumley-Smith, PPA 1949**) was heavily involved, and, nearer to home in Harpenden, working with a Connect service that means he even drives the bus occasionally to make sure that outlying residents are looked after.

**Joe Terreni (PPA 1981)** visited with his partner last summer to look out from the portico. Joe's favourite teacher was Denis Clarke. He currently works in London for Global Data and would be interested in coming back to College to talk to students.





**Paul Wolstencroft (PPA 1982)** has been living overseas and snowed under with work for the past few years, so it is nice, he says, now that life is a fraction quieter to be in touch with the school again. He caught up recently with **Nick Gompels (PPA 1982)**. Nick had been head boy and Paul vice head boy in 1982.

Just before the Covid lockdown, **Chris McMahon (PPA 1982)** went on a business trip to South Africa and Nigeria, where he managed to catch up with a couple of Prior old boys. In Johannesburg, he met up with **Martin Pike (PPA 1986)**, who is well and running a very successful international executive placement firm. And in Lagos, he was able to catch up with **Adetola Fowora (PPA 1981)**, who is also well and is the CEO of a thriving IT firm. Both send their best and wish to be remembered to old classmates.

**Michael Roberts (PPA 1983)** wrote to say that a group of alumni of the 1983 vintage resorted to Zoom calls during the lockdown to help stay sane. Those taking part hailed from New Zealand, Hong Kong, Nigeria, Malta, Gibraltar and the UK. As well as Michael, those involved were **Martin Fowler**, **Kamlesh Khubchand**, **Adewale Onabanjo**, **Simon Archard**, **Adetola Fowora**, **Chris Mizzi**, **Simon McCarthy**, **Simon Willson** and **Steff Ravenkilde**. According to Michael, "some of us hadn't seen or spoken to each other for several decades, so apart from joking about how kind (or otherwise) the passage of time has been to us, we had plenty to catch up on without needing to spend too much time talking about pandemics and the like".



Work by **Stephen Rodger (PPA 1984)** was featured in The British Wildlife Photography Awards 2019 (pictured above). Steve, who gets up at first light, publishes photos on social media almost daily.

Former professional rugby player **Brimah Kebbie (PPA 1984)** fondly recalls Brother H, who handed him his first ever rugby ball and also watched him play his first ever professional rugby match. Brother H did not announce that he was there, he just watched his protégée shine. When Brimah later found out, he contacted Bro H and they spent an evening in a soup kitchen reminiscing. Brimah Kebbie played for Widnes, St. Helens, Huddersfield and Bradford Northern. At the end of his professional career, Brimah switched to Rugby Union and played for Saracens. In 2010, he entered the coaching ranks with London Nigerian RFC.



**Mark Gallen (PPA 1985)** wanted to organise a reunion for his class this year, after meeting up with Class of 1984 in September 2019. But Covid-19 has put things back. There is now an open invitation to all alumni to come back on Alumni Day, Sunday 13th June 2021.

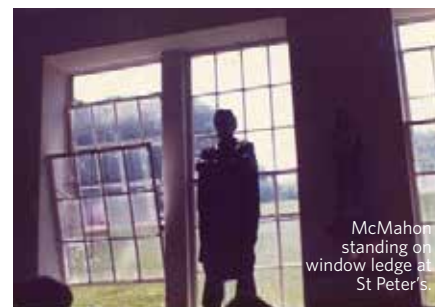


**Juan Nigorra (PPA 1985)** spent two years in St Peters before leaving for Mount Saint Mary's College. He has been living in his birthplace, Mallorca, for the last 30 years. He hopes one day to visit the school with his son Miguel, now five years old. The photo shows the two of them hunting a wild goat.



**Arnold Lasrado (PPA 1985)** visited College with his son, Leo, who was having a look at Bath university with a view to reading biology there. Arnold and Leo had a tour of the school, during which they met headmaster Ben Horan. The trip downstairs to the refectory was interrupted by Arnold searching for himself in the 1985 school photo. After reacquainting himself with his full head of hair, the tour moved on to the sports centre. Arnold was impressed. The tour ended in St Peter's which now houses the art rooms. Arnold commented on how inspirational art teacher Mr Wood had been.

**Andrew Strangeways (PPA 1986)** married his Prior Park sweetheart, **Alison Hawkins (PPA 1986)**, who was one of the first girls at PPC. They moved to Australia in 1998 and have been in the Alice Springs area for the past 18 years. Andrew reports that life in 47-degree heat has its challenges. It has rained twice in the entire year, which has led to severe droughts. But at least they have not had the extreme fires that the Sydney area has experienced. Andrew got back in touch because he wanted to track down Mr Desmond, who, he says, made his experience at PPC manageable.



**John Bagwell (PPA 1986)** sent this photo of English teacher Patrick McMahon. He was, says John, "The best teacher I ever had. Super eccentric. Awesome".

In addition to the two festivals that **Ben Moorhouse (PPA 1987)** already organises, last November he also launched the Tring Book Festival. And he's opened an independent bookshop in the process. Ben bumped into **Adrian Molloy (PPA 1990)**, who lives in Tring. Adrian is involved in the music industry and invited Ben to see the band Leftfield at the Brixton Academy.

**Nick Bishop (PPA 1987)** is a DC at Wiltshire Constabulary, happily married with a growing teenager. His biggest accomplishment of late is that he completed an Ironman at Tenby last September. Having got into triathlon about 15 years ago, he had always wanted to do an Ironman and finally bit the bullet last year. He only chose Tenby because it was the closest one to his home, but he then discovered it was regarded as the toughest on the circuit. He says it was a brilliant experience. He completed it in 13 hours 32 minutes. Not bad for 50!

**David Stubbs (PPA 1987)**, representing Bath Mayor's guides, is keen to link up with the PPA to share information, including all the archaeological and historical research to which the National Trust and



the Mayor's guides are privy. Carole Laverick will host a tour for the guides later in the year.



Oyeneye Coker

Oyeneye Coker (PPA 1987) got married last autumn to Chioma Akurienne. They have started their married life in Florida. Good luck to them both.

Peter Smith (PPA 1988), returning to the UK from Shanghai, visited to Prior with his sons George and William, wondering whether they should follow his footsteps at Prior. In the end, the boys ended up near family in Bristol. Peter has attended alumni sporting events. He was nearly roped in to play in Old Boys' Hockey, but a good pair of brogues saved him. Not so lucky was his close friend Darren Crawford (PPA 1988), who tuned up in trainers to umpire the Old Boys' Hockey in 2020 but ended up on the old boys' team. Schoolboy error, Darren.

Tolu Peters (PPA 1988) arrived at College on a Saturday afternoon last summer only to find the place all locked up. Fortunately, Carole was on the premises, just finishing an afternoon reunion tour for the Class of 1999. She opened up the Mansion again to let Tolu and his girlfriend take in the view. Tolu lives in Canada.



Allan Hodgkinson

Allan Hodgkinson (PPA 1988) came with his family last summer, some 32 years after he left the College after completing his GCSE's. He described the culture shock, having been sent from Barbados to the cold, the strange foods and the quirky language of Prior. He had a fight on Day One with a big lad called Reggie, who turned out to be Ralph Willard Chedgy (PPA 1989) (now deceased). One broken snooker cue and a session with Mr Tobin later had everything sorted out. Allan and his family are still in Barbados, where Allan

set up his air conditioning company, Subzero Services Ltd, in 2002. He now has more than 20 employees.

Adam Tjolle (PPA 1988) is delighted that his niece Eliza is becoming a student at Prior.

Marco Hughes (PPA 1988) very kindly sent in scans of newspapers that were in the cellars during his time at College. He remembers being asked to collect them when the Christian Brothers wanted to gather old newspapers for bonfire night. Marco saved some. These are cricket reports from late 1800's. Marco participated in the Buddy-up scheme during the lockdown (see page12).



Anthony Healy (PPA 1988) is a trainer and a motivational mentor. He has offered alumni a 10% discount on a 12-week programme, based on nutrition and exercise, to ensure they do not come out of lockdown anything but fit. He is currently writing a book about health and fitness with special emphasis on older generations and slower metabolic rates.

Douglas Ho (PPA 1989) returned to College for a reunion in 2019. Living in Hong Kong, he is a part-time Kendo teacher, part-time artist and full-time worker in a design firm. Douglas recently gave a work experience opportunity to Jason Chiu (PPA 2013).

## 1990 - 1999

Andy York (PPA 1990) spent three years at the University of the West of England gaining an MSc in manufacturing and information systems and a further three years, part-time, at Cambridge doing an MSt in manufacturing leadership. He has been head of programmes, manufacturing technology, at Rolls Royce since 2006. Andy was instrumental in getting a protective intubation shield into production to protect against Covid (see story on page 16).

Miles Dyton (PPA 1991) posted on Facebook photos from a school prospectus from the period 1985-86. He sent the original document to College for inclusion in the digital archive. It makes for very interesting reading and includes photos of former staff Gerald Davies and Denis Clarke. Thank you, Miles.

Last August, Stephen Tsao (PPA 1991) and his wife Chloe arrived at College while on a whistle stop European trip. Stephen has been back several times since he left after Upper Fifth in 1989. He likes seeing the things that have stayed the same as well as the

changes. He completed his education and medical training in the UK before going to Singapore, where he is currently a hospital consultant in gastro-enterology at NTU Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine.



Stephen and Chloe TSAO

Luke Mutter (PPA 1992) had booked Monday, March 23rd for his visit to College. That was a day that will be marked in the history of not just the college but of the country, for that was lockdown day. Luke's visit has been postponed until further notice.

Claire Williams (PPA 1993) visited College as a guest speaker and wrote to Carole: "I just wanted to say thanks again for taking the time to make me feel so welcome back at Prior on Wednesday. Your tour was simply wonderful - so many fantastic memories, and so many things I didn't know! It was great to meet you in person, and I feel so proud to be part of the alumni network."



Suzanne Witt

What started with a little idea about an online cake school in 2011 has led Suzanne Witt (néé Mills) (PPA 1993) to the 2020 finals of Digital Women's Entrepreneur of the Year. In the intervening years, she turned her "little idea" into a multi-million-pound business, with a school, shop, training courses and magazine. In 2010, Suzi, then a 35-year old lawyer, quit her job and launched a cake-making school. Within a year, she had students flying into the UK from over 35 countries. She moved online and soon had 39,000 clients signed up. Then she discovered that her IT platform was about to undo all her good work. So she learned how to code and restarted her entrepreneurial career using a platform she had designed and built herself. It's a business academy for cake makers, focusing on helping them start, build





and grow their own cake businesses. She also became, to her surprise, “a role model for so many women... who are now following my path and building their own sites and learning more about digital”.

Last August, **Eddie Ho (PPA 1993)**, wife Nicola and their daughter, Carisa, arrived in Bath on their way up to the Peak District. They were on holiday from their home in Hong Kong. Eddie is now a senior manager of student recruitment at the HK Polytechnic University, but he is contemplating returning to the UK, especially if it means that Carisa could come to PPC in the future.



Eddie Ho and family

**Vince Mehers (PPA 1994)** had planned to speak to sports scholars at College about sport and social development, looking at his experiences in southern Africa, especially in the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area, and the role of “purposeful play” in education. Sadly, this had to be cancelled due to the Covid crisis. We will reschedule.

**Rebecca “Bex” Jackson (PPA 1995)** was in Bath to celebrate her friend Sally’s (**Sally Barker neé Price, PPA 1995**) birthday and wanted to look around. She bumped into **Malcolm Bond**, also a 1995 leaver and now a member of staff, before he headed off to take rugby matches. She enjoyed a walk in the National Trust gardens and a quick peek around St Mary’s garden, which brought back many memories.

**Hugh Padfield (PPA 1995)** hosted Laura Stotesbury, head of economics, and sixth-form economics students at his place of work, the Bath Soft Cheese Company. Much in the news during the Covid crisis, Hugh experienced a surge in online business to start off with, but this fell away as shops began to re-open. He has had to re-invent his business to match the needs of the new normal. No wonder that Laura found it useful to take the students there. They learned that having to adapt is essential for business survival.

Declan Rainey, the school’s director of development, was in Brighton and met up with **James Cockle (PPA 1995)**. James, a former professional rugby player, is now working in tech and finance. He reminisced about his time at College and said how much he and his brother **Steven (PPA 1992)** had enjoyed it. There are more than 30 alumni that we know of in Sussex, and James is keen to get them all together for a drink. If this is of interest to you, please email Declan: [drainey@priorparkschools.com](mailto:drainey@priorparkschools.com)

Covid meant puzzle time in the household of **Ruth Fielding (neé Westwood) (PPA 1998)**. In particular, a jigsaw of Prior Park in winter. Ruth’s mother bought it as a present about 15 years ago, but this was the first time that Ruth had got it out of the box. Now living in Victoria, Australia, Ruth said it was “really lovely to feel connected to school”.



**Fionnuala Kennedy (PPA 1998)** has been appointed head teacher of Wimbledon High School, where she is currently senior deputy. A graduate of Exeter College, Oxford, she worked in publishing before moving into teaching at Royal Hospital School Holbrook, where she was promoted first to deputy housemistress and then head of Middle School. She then moved on to Woldingham School as head of Sixth Form, before joining Wimbledon High in 2015 as deputy head pastoral. She was a choral scholar at Oxford and choral singing remains a major passion. She also enjoys theatre and stand-up comedy, is a voracious reader, and practises Pilates.

It is not just the NHS staff who have had extraordinary pressure put upon them. Teacher **Sally Newman (neé Ashby) (PPA 1998)** has been extremely busy during the Covid crisis, not just teaching online but attending to key workers’ children on site. And she has her own children to home school. She is hoping that the “new normal” will be less stressful for all professions.



Stephen Bowman

**Stephen Bowman (PPA 1998)**, a member of the close-harmony group Blake, attended the Children’s Variety Concert at Buckingham Palace last October. He writes: “Took our BMW E30 Alpina to Buckingham Palace today, for an evening supporting Variety, the children’s charity. We got lots of lovely compliments from the palace guards and police: our red convertible looked

rather unique in the sea of black saloons for all the dignitaries there. I’ll admit I did give the throttle a good hard blip as we left... hopefully I didn’t wake up the corgis! Was a lovely occasion! Myself and the Blake boys were made ambassadors for the Variety charity a few years ago, so we joined up with fellow ambassador David Walliams to host the 70th anniversary of the charity at the palace this week. Certainly a high point in our career as a band!” Always happy to talk about music, Stephen offered to come down from London to address students but Covid has put that plan on hold, at least for a while.



Daniel Delaney with twins

**Daniel Delaney (PPA 1999)** reported the safe arrival of twins Francis and Fleur last June. Many congratulations to Dan and Nadine, who also moved to a new house in New York. What a year.

**Andrew Owen (PPA 1999)** came into College for a week’s work experience in October. He shadowed different members of staff, with the idea of taking up teaching in a complete career change. His enthusiasm and ideas impressed Ben Horan, who had him working in all departments.

## 2000 - 2009

**Gabriel Vick (2000)** has been an actor for 15 years, living and working mainly in London. He was recently playing in *Can I help you?* at the Clapham Omnibus. His children are now five and two years old. More info on Twitter [@TheGabrielVick](https://twitter.com/TheGabrielVick).





**Dominique Bonnet (PPA 2000)** is living in Cardiff and working for the NHS as a GP. She's a keen surfer, so living near the coast suits her well.

**Tim Ching (PPA 2000)** is still in shock to realise that it is 20 years since he left Prior. He writes: "In 2010, I took my girlfriend to the school for our pre-wedding photos - that just felt like yesterday! And now we have been married for 10 years with three amazing girls - Vanessa, Theadora and Savannah. Memories of PPC seem to have special place in our hearts and they often come into our conversation with the old folks. Last April, I met up with **Paul Hon (PPA 1999)**, Will and Maggie in Hong Kong, where they are now based, and it was amazing to see how our friendship extends to next generation!"



Tim Ching

On seeing a report on how well PPC is doing with its language progress during the Covid crisis, **Charlotte Boyce (PPA 2000)** wondered, as an English teacher based in Spain, whether the pupils from PPC would like to connect as pen pals together. Jack George, Head of MOD at PPC seemed delighted with the idea. Watch this space.

**Katie Grote (née Playfair) (PPA 2000)** couldn't make the 20-year reunion. She wrote: "I'm afraid we simply cannot get away from Norwich at the weekend. My husband's job involves commitments in the cathedral on both Saturdays and Sundays. We are quite used to turning down invitations for weekends, especially during term time! Sorry that we won't be able to help swell the numbers." Katie keeps in regular contact with director of music Roland Robertson, the families getting together in the summer and at Christmas. Katie's parents still live on Bathwick Hill and her mother "is always updating me about anyone whose parents she sees in town/at church/at The Rec".

**Joseph Robinson (PPA 2002)** had had no contact with Prior since he left, but he was early for a meeting in Bath and thought he would show the school to his wife as they are both heavily involved in architecture and design. Joe is still based locally and has agreed to help out with the Heritage Society in the future.



Chris Roxburgh

**Chris Roxburgh (PPA 2003)** is the proud father of the last ever baby to be born at Trowbridge community hospital before its closure in June 2020. Welcome, baby George. Chris is a paramedic at the Lovemead Group Practice, for which PPC supplied PPE visors during the lockdown (see photo above). Chris immediately responded to the call on social media for sports speakers. He offered to talk to Prior students about elite sport, linking it with his day job.



**Toby Nowlan (PPA 2005)** continues to live the dream as he completes a four-year assignment as assistant producer for the Netflix production, *Dancing with Birds*. His talk at College five years ago still has students asking for his details.

**Oli Lawson (PPA 2005)** and his wife Amy welcomed daughter Isla into the world in February. Oli lives in London and works in the City. He also co-owns a gym.



Matthew Osment

**Matthew Osment (PPA 2005)** reports that he is now living in London and has been working for the Barclays investment bank for the last 5 years. He also serves as a captain in the Army reserve and was recently awarded a VRSM (Volunteer Reserve Service Medal) for efficient service over 10 years. Matt was deployed to Afghanistan in 2012. Before Barclays, he was at PwC for five years. He married Isabela in 2015 and they have a three-year old son, Philip.

**Emma Halliday (Stubbs) (PPA 2005)** has a baby son, Laurie, who was born in January 2019.

**Sara Imon (née Budd) (PPA 2005)** married Imam in September last year, near St Paul's Cathedral, London. It was a lovely day, she says, and a great chance to catch up with lots of school friends from across year groups. From left to right: Izzy Burton (née Graham Brown), Sian Gulliford, Sara Budd, Nina Spencer, Emma Halliday (née Stubbs).



Sara Imon

**Lucy Oatley (PPA 2005)** has opened a houseplant shop, Pilea Plant Shop, at the top of Catherine Hill in Frome. She also has a stall at Frome Independent Market and runs plant-themed workshops throughout the year. Go to [www.pileaplantshop.com](http://www.pileaplantshop.com)



Lucy Oatley

**Sian Roberts (née Gulliford) (PPA 2005)** is finding out what it means to be a year group rep, taking over from Hannah Twiname. Sian started to organise a reunion





for June 2020... Well, there's always Alumni Day 2021. Sian welcomed her third child, Clementine, in April 2020. Congratulations!

**Emily Swift (née Coles) (PPA 2006)** is living in Maui, Hawaii, with her husband Dave and two little boys, Finn and Max. They are hoping to return to the UK at the end of this year.

**Joe Janiak (PPA 2006)** has written another winning song, Avicii - *Bad Reputation* (Lyric Video). Joe performed at the Avicii Tribute Concert celebrating the life and music of Tim Bergling (aka Avicii) at the Friends Arena in Stockholm, Sweden. Bergling was a Swedish DJ, remixer, record producer, musician, and songwriter. At the age of 16, he began posting his remixes on electronic music forums, which led to his first record deal. He committed suicide at the age of 29. Click here to make a donation to mental health awareness: [www.aviciitributeconcert.com](http://www.aviciitributeconcert.com)

**Harry Smith (PPA 2007)** is directing/producing his first short film, *Emerge*, co-written with Tom Eckersley. It explores the necessity of survival in the face of the climate crisis. They are attempting to raise £5,000 via Kickstarter and would love your support. Go to: [www.kickstarter.com/projects/edemerge/emerge-0?ref=discovery&term=Emerge](http://www.kickstarter.com/projects/edemerge/emerge-0?ref=discovery&term=Emerge)

**Megan Cooper (née Humphreys) (PPA 2006)** had a second daughter in September 2018, Penny India May, sister to Evie. Three months later, Megan was bridesmaid when her sister, **India Menzies (née Humphreys) (PPA 2004)**, married Tom Menzies. **Laura Newmarch** and **Alice Shoebridge** were the other bridesmaids, and Merope and Johnny Ippiotis were amongst the guests. India now has a daughter, Jettie Luna Wren, born in April 2019.



**Tom Alexander (PPA 2007)** visited College in July 2019, while taking a six-month sabbatical from emergency medicine at an Adelaide hospital. He enjoyed seeing so many transformations, yet finding the whole still very familiar.

**Iheuk Duru (PPA 2008)** visited for a brief tour of St Paul's. He was scheduled to speak to the Sixth Form about a career in medicine, but this had to be

postponed. Iheuk trained as a surgeon and is on the move to Liverpool.



In February, **Alicia Hempleman-Adams (PPA 2008)** took off in a hot air balloon from the wide open spaces of Calgary, Canada. An hour or so later, she had risen to the height of 4,604 metres (15,100 feet) to set a new world record. She thus added to the tally of records acquired by the adventurous Hempleman-Adams clan. At the age of eight, Alicia became the youngest person to stand on the north pole. At 15, she was the youngest to walk across Baffin Island on a 200-mile Arctic route.

The balloon ascent lasted one hour and 46 minutes. The temperature fell to -30 degrees Centigrade. Alicia described the flight as frightening and cold and has talked of feeling "lonely and a little bit helpless" while aloft.

**Kelly Keene (née Griffiths) (PPA 2008)** got married in 2016 and welcomed a baby girl, Grace, in 2018.

**Rosie Mackean (PPA 2008)** now works in London as a freelance chef, home economist and food stylist. She specialises in fresh pasta and Italian food. After working in the kitchens of Angela Hartnett and running her Pastificio in Covent Garden, Rosie spent time working and travelling in Italy, "getting to know the craft". Rosie has offered to talk to students about careers and maybe even host a pasta workshop. Go to: [www.rosiemackean.com](http://www.rosiemackean.com)

**Bertie Lawson (PPA 2009)** is now working in Myanmar, having set-up a boutique tour operator, Sampan Travel, organising tailor-made journeys through the country. Last year, they were named Best Responsible Tour Operator at the Myanmar Responsible Tourism Awards, recognised for their efforts in helping Myanmar become not only a better place to visit but a better place to live. Sampan was the third organisation in Myanmar to achieve Travelife Gold Certification.

100 visitors were sent from PPC to **Tor Tuckey (PPA 2009)** at her hospital ICU to help in the fight against Covid.

## 2010 - 2019

**Freddie Searight (PPA 2010)** was featured in the 10-episode BBC series *Island Medics*, which follows life at the UK's most remote hospital, the Gilbert Bain in Lerwick, Shetland. Freddie is a junior doctor there.



**Elsa Partner (née Frere) (PPA 2010)** married **Orlando Partner (PPA 2008)** in October 2019 in Bath. They asked Roland Robertson, director of music, to find a singer to grace the wedding service. Step forward current student, 14-year old **Emma Hallam**, who sang beautifully. Both Elsa and Emma are from English House, so another point of connection.

Another young alumna worried about the risks her GP mother was taking without adequate PPE, was **Emilie Milton-Stevens (PPA 2010)**. Rob Faulkner's team at College stepped into the breach, supplying not only GP surgeries but also the main emergency hub for Covid care in Bath.

Following the award of the Lord Denning and Lord Haldane Scholarships at Lincoln's Inn, **Charlotte Wilk (PPA 2010)**, is currently completing her Bar professional training. This coming autumn she will be joining Hailsham Chambers as a pupil barrister, with the intention of specialising in medical law. Charlotte welcomes contact from anyone, particularly women, interested in a career at the Bar.

**Sam Knights (PPA 2012)**, son of former staff members Martin and Lisa Knights, was based in Canada for two years, coaching the Bayside Rugby Club. He is now in the Caribbean as the head coach of St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Bayside say they would welcome him back "any time".

**Nick Pitts (PPA 2011)** visited College with his mum, current governor Anne Shepherd, and his girlfriend to show her the view. He is currently based in Edinburgh working at the Scotch Whisky Research Institute.

**Frazier Christie (PPA 2011)** responded to the request for speakers to address sports scholars at College. As an elite athlete, he will have a lot to say, especially with the challenges of funding and combining paid work with a punishing training schedule. The school hopes to host his visit in the coming year, Covid permitting.



Geraldo Fragapane (PPA 2012) and Marianna Cordon (néé Fragapane) (PPA 2005) write: "We are running the Bath Half to raise money for the wonderful Dorothy House, as this is a charity close to our hearts. After a long battle with cancer, our mum was an inpatient at Dorothy House for the last days of her life. The care and support she received during her stay was outstanding... Training on dark and rainy nights, the sore muscles and feet, will be worth it if we can give something back to this amazing charity. Any donations, however little, will be greatly appreciated."

Jason Chiu (PPA 2013) has written a book which features the story of former head of art, David Wood, and how another alumnus, Douglas Ho (PPA 1989), helped him with his first ever work placement in HK. Beautifully illustrated and perhaps something that could help future pupils and families making the decision to send their child to Prior, the title of the book can be translated as "Going boldly to England for high school education". It's a book for both parents and kids alike, to let them know that school life in a boarding school is not scary at all. [www.cosmosbooks.com.hk/index.php?route=product%2Fproduct&product\\_id=988219756&fbclid=IwAR2imuPTTW\\_XEDNTcVc\\_8-nyAlne0rUCO0jMYPPy7QYpmozKroZ2LrldfRM](http://www.cosmosbooks.com.hk/index.php?route=product%2Fproduct&product_id=988219756&fbclid=IwAR2imuPTTW_XEDNTcVc_8-nyAlne0rUCO0jMYPPy7QYpmozKroZ2LrldfRM)

Harry French (PPA 2013) contacted Sarah Davies in the drama department to see about setting up a two-man play to put out for charity during lockdown. Harry was a keen and talented drama scholar.

Juliette Eden (PPA 2013) came in to collect her Icarus painting, but had clearly forgotten exactly how huge it is. It took a lot of rearranging of the Polo's interior before she managed to get it safely in. The painting had hung for many years in the head's office. With JMOC's departure, fresh paintings have found their way onto the walls. Juliette is back at university for a one-year law conversion course. She will be attending the alumni choir event in December.

Bella Hayward-Rodgers (PPA 2013) was back in Bath during the lockdown, as the show she was supposed to be doing was put on hold. She says that "almost all" her work post drama school has used all four disciplines - acting, singing, playing a musical instrument and dancing. "All the years of singing lessons and choir at Prior have definitely paid off," she says. When the world starts turning again, she would be "very happy to come up to school to chat to pupils" about careers in theatre. Meanwhile, she is "trying to keep positive".

Jae Woo Kim (PPA 2014) visited College with his mother and sister on a warm, slightly muggy, summer's day. This was Jae's mother's first visit to the college, and she declared herself impressed with the view, the buildings and the various statues. The former deputy head boy has just qualified as a doctor, graduating from Plymouth University. His family were over for graduation ceremony. In August, Jae takes up his new role at a hospital in Torquay and he hopes eventually to become a surgeon.



Jae Woo Kim with family

Ed Clifford (PPA 2014) responded positively to a request that he talk to a current Prior student about a potential career in paramedic medicine. Many thanks.

Verdigris Management took on Maria Torres-Massouras (PPA 2014) from January 2020 in order to build and develop her own roster of music artists. She currently works with four artists, including post-punk poet Sinead O'Brien, who is signed to Chess Club Records.

Alice Guiton (PPA 2015) has been offered a graduate position with former Prior teachers Martin Knights and Steve Capon at their school in Kuala Lumpur. Meanwhile, she is due to climb Kilimanjaro in September - Covid permitting - in aid of the Meningitis Research Foundation.

Director of music, Roland Robertson, has news of Alexander Butt (PPA 2015): "Since graduating in music from Oxford last summer, he's been working as a composer and pianist. For his professional music and composing activities he is using his first two names, Alexander Joseph." It seems that Alex got in touch after seeing Roland's rendition of the school song, of which Alex, like a lot of younger alumni, was completely unaware. Since graduating, Alex has been working on his own composition portfolio, as well as performing at corporate events. The latter, he said, was "really starting to pick up" just when the lockdown started. He suspects there won't be "nearly as much" business for musicians in that area even when the lockdown is lifted. Looking on the bright side, it means he can focus on his own composing and collaborative music projects, as well as building a community online.

Kieran Kelly (PPA 2015) came into college for work experience last November. An outstanding sportsman - 1st XV Captain, 1st XI hockey and cricket for a number of years - he is currently studying at Exeter University, where he has been part of the Exeter Chiefs Academy set up and was a member of the England 7's team at the Junior Commonwealth Games. Not surprisingly, he came back for work experience in the sports department. In 2018, Kieran spoke to the student body about his role as an ambassador for Oddballs, the testicular cancer charity.

Callum Smith (PPA 2015) was about to start a work placement as a data handler in London - before going back to finish his final year at university - when he

returned to College with his girlfriend and another couple. They seemed to enjoy the chapel most, until both girls practised the bridal walk down the central aisle - giving the boys a bit of a scare.

Sophie Atkin (PPA 2016), formerly a sixth-form rep on the PPA committee, graduated this year and is looking for work in public relations and events. Her previous experience includes events co-ordinator for Fuller, Smith & Turner and assistant landscape architect for One Associates. Please feel free to contact her directly through linkedin or email [sophieatkin43@gmail.com](mailto:sophieatkin43@gmail.com) or via Carole in the PPA office.

Joseph Zhong (PPA 2016) came back to College to visit his old teachers before returning to Exeter University, where he is taking his Masters in material engineering. Joseph makes an annual visit to see the tutors who made his time in Bath so wonderful.

Emma Lyons (PPA 2016) has been awarded a first-class degree in international history by the LSE. Many congratulations.

Since graduating in the summer of 2019, Hugh Doyle (PPA 2016) has fallen into operations management at Legoland, where he had started as a seasonal worker between university terms. He has now turned it into a career. He was disappointed there was no Old Boys cricket this year and says he is looking forward to the match in 2021. He promises to visit College "some time before then".



Seb Parker back row far left

Seb Parker (PPA 2016) got a first in product design from Brunel University. During his placement year, he worked at Avon Protection, a gas mask manufacturer based in Melksham. "The job turned out to be quite a big success," he writes. "I settled into the work environment very well, working on new design projects, prototyping and helping with the construction of new manufacturing lines." But perhaps the most notable work during his placement at Avon was contributing to their entry in the televised Red Bull Soap Box Race. The Avon entry, a "zombie apocalypse rat rod jeep", came first out of 70 entrants. Avon decided to sponsor Seb for his final year and offered him a job as a design engineer after his degree. His final year project was to integrate a respirator with





current ballistic combat helmets for special forces. He started full-time with Avon in August.

Actress **Georgia Butt** (PPA 2017), who was due to star in *Fagin the Musical* at Bath Rondo in March, seems destined to be forever connected with Oliver and Fagin, having played the role of The Artful Dodger in a school production. Sadly, the new show, like all theatrical and musical productions, had to shut down during the pandemic.



Georgia Butt

It was strange to see recent leaver **Justin Avenell** (PPA 2018) in his Prior PE kit helping out for several weeks at the beginning of the year with Burton housemaster and director of rugby, Paul Hull. Justin, looking for work experience, certainly has the interpersonal skills needed for teaching, coaching and personal training. He said it doesn't seem two minutes since he was leading groups of tiny children at rugby camp in the summer. It was, he recalled, like herding kittens. How funny it is to see life from the other side of the desk, or whistle.

**Finlay Dove** (PPA 2018) is having a great time reading music at Somerville College, Oxford. He has been appointed president of the OU East African Society. He recently played a selection of Wagner and Bruckner with **Rhiannon Harris** (PPA 2018) in the Oxford University Orchestra, which was to have represented the UK at the International Beethoven Festival in Bonn this Summer, after a planned Somerville choir tour to Singapore and Hong Kong.

**Felix Robertson** (PPA 2018), son of director of music Roland Robertson, took a gap year to try journalism, writing for *Commonweal* magazine in New York City and *The Reykjavik Grapevine*, among others. His posts have been shared on social media. More recently, he has been sitting out the Covid crisis at home with family.



Millie Manning

**Millie Manning** (PPA 2019) and **Hermione Scattergood** (PPA 2019) visited College before heading off to university. Millie is studying geography at Cardiff. Her ultimate aim would be to come back to Prior as a teacher. Hermione is in Birmingham studying biology and has already signed up for the alumni choir event. She said she was desperately trying to think up other reasons to return and join in. Millie and Hermione were joined on the portico by long-time receptionist and Sixth Form secretary, Margaret Hill, who supported both girls in many different ways.

**Charlotte Hickie** (PPA 2019) visited College with a friend to collect her A-level photography work. She is presently studying at Manchester Metropolitan doing a foundation course in fashion.

A current pupil of St Marys wanted to find out what Glasgow University would be like so contacted **Louisa Tobin** (PPA 2019) for help and guidance, not just on the university but on her chosen subject as well. Louisa was happy to help out. Many thanks.

Last November, **Jake Brookes** (PPA 2019) and **Andy Reed** (PPA 2019) went to King Henry VIII College in Kuala Lumpur, to join former PPC teachers Martin Knights and Steve Capon. "We had a role in helping out with boarding duties as well as supporting the sports teachers with games sessions," writes James. Living in Kuala Lumpur allowed them to travel to neighbouring countries, and both played rugby for KL Tigers. They loved the variety of different cuisines, such as the local street foods, which, says Jake, are "very healthy with



Jake Brookes and Andy Reed

lots of rice and vegetables". They are now back in the UK, starting university in September.

## 2020

Returning a trophy from 2019, **Max Hall** (PPA 2020) offered his assistance with research whilst he has spare time. He has since found information on three of the column sponsors in the chapel. When the chapel lay dormant and roofless for nearly 40 years, it was the alumni, parishioners and clergy who, with generous donations, enabled the building work to be completed. Each column that was thus sponsored had an icon or monogram, coat of arms or initials added to the capital (see front cover photo).

## Staff News

**Andrew Harvey**, head of The Paragon School, has been appointed to a new Headship at Twyford School in Hampshire, starting in September 2020. After seven years of service at The Paragon, Andrew and his family feel the time is right for a change. Andrew showed vision at The Paragon, as reflected in the ISI report of 2017. He opened a dedicated music lodge and a new art studio, and he expanded Year 5 to meet the increasing demand for places. Andrew can be credited with nurturing the family atmosphere for which the school is well-known.

**Nicola Thomas** is leaving her post in the learning development team. Nicola has been with Prior for 15 years. Her work with students, which has been integral to ensuring that they have been able to achieve their best, has been built on outstanding personal relationships. Nicola will be taking up a



Andrew Harvey

position as a support tutor at Bath Spa University.

**Jack George** has led the modern foreign languages department for the past four years. He leaves to take up the position of head of modern foreign languages at Aiglon College in Switzerland. Jack will be replaced as head of department by **Kate Ryan**, who is joining from the Bristol Free School.

**Kate Ashby** leaves the physics department after six years. She will be replaced by **Tom Howes** who is joining from Bridgewater and Taunton College.

**Martin Fisher** retired from the position of deputy head at Downside School and went on to work at Prior Park for a further 15 years. Martin would never have been satisfied with a normal retirement. He taught classics at Prior on a part-time basis and was an engaged member of the Common Room. Headmaster Ben Horan writes: "He [Martin] was recently described to me by a parent as 'one of those teachers - the ones who make a real difference and who you always remember'. To have a colleague with such experience, wisdom and tact has made my first year as head that much easier."

**Helena Walters** joined Prior in 2018 as a PGCE student in the classics department. She has been a resident tutor in St Mary's House. Having successfully completed her NQT year, she leaves us to take



up a teaching position at Haileybury College in Hertfordshire. Helena's replacement in the classics department is **Stephanie Bloomfield**, who has worked at Moor Park School in Shropshire and is currently completing her PGCE at the University of Sussex.

**Colette Byron** retired from Prior Park at the end of this academic year. Colette has taught maths at Prior since 2008 and has been the housemistress of English House since 2011. Ben Horan notes that she has led English House "with enthusiasm and compassion and has cared for hundreds of young women with great tact, sensitivity, and an irrepressible sense of fun". She also directed nine senior musicals. Her three children were at Prior: **Nell (PPA 2010)**, **Grace (PPA 2012)** and **Will (PPA 2013)**. Colette's replacement in English House will be **Sukey Holder**. Sukey has been at Prior for two years and has been a key part of the design technology department as well as



Colette Byron

boarding tutor in St Mary's House.

**Sue Forshaw**, deputy head (pupil progress) and parent to two alumni, is leaving after 17 years of service as chemistry teacher, sports coach and housemistress. In recent years, Sue been a key part of the College's senior management team. In wishing her well, headmaster Ben Horan said: "Schools like Prior Park run on the efforts and dedication of people like Sue. She has always kept the young people we serve at the centre of everything she has done... Over the past year, she has been a real support to me as I settled in to Prior and her sage wisdom and advice will be much missed from the school's management team. She will be greatly missed by all her colleagues and her pupils. We wish her all the very best."

**Chris Bartlett**, head of history since 2016 and author of science fiction fantasy novels, is departing for greener pastures.

**Malcolm Bond (PPA 1995)**, who has been Clifford housemaster for three years, has been promoted to assistant head in charge of activities from September 2020. He says he will miss the Clifford boys. Of the seven new assistant head positions, Malcolm is one of the three who are alumni of the college.

**Isobel Burton (néé Graham-Brown) (PPA 2005)**, who has been housemistress for Brownlow and covering Baines house, has been promoted to assistant head in charge of pupil intervention.

Geography teacher **Natalie Cordon (PPA 2008)** has been promoted to assistant head in charge of teaching and learning.



Olivia Matthews and Sue Forshaw

## Former Staff News

Former staff members, **Tom Owens** and **Rachel Owens** (aka Miss Fox) still live in Weybridge with their twin sons, Willem and Arthur, who were christened in the chapel at Prior. Rachel continues in her role as headmistress of St George's College, Weybridge, while Tom is still head of politics at the Royal Grammar School, Guildford. Tom reports: "We recently had a lovely lunch with Mr and Mrs Pepler, catching up on all news of their daughters. Meanwhile **Stephanie Young** (néé Forester, PPC alumna) is Rachel's goddaughter and we hear from and see her family frequently."

**Steve Capon** (former PPC Director of Sport 2003-14) has been promoted to acting head of school at King Henry VIII College in Malaysia. The school opened in September 2018 and now has nearly 600 students, from age three to 18. Steve's wife Louise is a teacher of Spanish and French in the senior school, and their son Evan is about to move into Year Seven. Steve reports that life in KL is great fun and the Capons have made the most of the fabulous travel opportunities. In 2018, the Capons were joined by their good friends **Martin and Lisa Knights**. Martin arrived as director of boarding but has recently been promoted to deputy head pastoral. KH8 has welcomed many PPC alumni



Martin Knights, Steve Capon, Mike Gatting and Sam Yang PPA 1995 in KL





in the past two years. Molly Hillis (PPA 2018) and Holly Ewen (PPA 2018) spent their gap year there. They were followed by Andy Reed (PPA 2019) and Jake Brookes (PPA 2019). Lolo Lewis (PPA 2020) and Eve Wagstaffe (PPA 2020) will arrive in September, as will Alice Guiton (PPA 2015), who joins as a graduate assistant.

Martin and Lisa made a surprise visit to College after their first year in Kuala Lumpur. They are loving the school, the lifestyle and the travelling opportunities, but they do miss PPC... just a little bit. Son Sam (PPA 2012) is off to coach rugby in the Caribbean and Ellie (PPA 2015) qualified with a 2:1 from Norlands and has just landed her first job in London.

Clare Ford says she is so glad to be still part of the extended Prior family. Having retired three years ago, she is enjoying a relaxed, gentle way of life. However, the lockdown brought home 22-year old Will Ford (PPA 2016), currently on his industrial placement year from Manchester. "Suddenly, our routines changed significantly," writes Clare, "requiring so, so much more food shopping (we'd forgotten how much our sons can consume!)" Their other son James Ford (PPA 2010) is working at Vodafone, while also studying for a part-time MBA. Clare learned new skills under lockdown and felt it was very much like a "snow day": "unexpected, but somehow a guilty bonus and oddly, rather lovely". However, it was her role as a governor for the local primary school that brought home the impact of the lockdown on others. "Suddenly I was virtually recruiting for staff, signing online petitions, writing to my local MP and Parish Council and applauding the generous installation of donated hand sanitisers around the building, marking out two metres on small classroom floors and offering support to the staff." Clare had read that Prior had done amazing work in producing visors for the NHS, so she called the college and asked if she could buy some for her school. "The generosity and warmth of Dee [Miller] and Dan [Moore] in the DT department was overwhelming. After making a donation, I carried my masks into school the next day, to the excited grins of the teachers." Clare concludes: "Lockdown for us has been a time of learning new skills, (apparently cutting hair is not one of them!), but mostly to appreciate even more the people in our lives, and that includes still being part of the extended Prior family."



Clare Ford, her husband and son Will

Eileen McPeake, former matron, moved to Australia to live with her son three years ago. Now in a care home, she enjoys regular visits from the family, as shown in the photo (photo below).

Vicki Reed (néé McConaghie) secured a new job in September 2020 as head of geography at Harrogate Ladies' College. She says they are moving "to the Bath of the North!" She will have the Yorkshire Dales as her new stomping grounds. A geographer's dream.

Lara Price is settled in Banbury with her husband. She has moved out of boarding and returned to being school librarian at Tudor Hall School. She finds it odd having time again and living off-site after over a decade, but they are loving it.

Anne Lynch has now retired from The Royal School.

John Desmond is still working at Bath Academy but not teaching now. In addition to managing the study centre, he organises trips, mainly for international students. Son Matthew Desmond (PPA 2007), who married Jess Cottam at Prior in July 2017, had a beautiful daughter, Lucía, in 2019.

Alan Hall retired from Prior in 2016 and, with his wife Sandra, bought a second home on the South Coast. He says it's "a couple of miles from the beach and

about 20 metres from a river!" Life has been filled with surfing, paddle-boarding, kayaking and cycling. Grandchild duties still keep them close to Bath and Alan is still connected to Bath Buccs, through coaching and umpiring hockey. For the last three years he has spent the Lent term coaching at Downside School. He says he has "many fond memories of Prior and still find little reminders everywhere. I have met former pupils in pubs, restaurants, at matches and even a lifeguard on the beach! Such a small world".

Alison Tutt (néé Pitt) went out to work in Hong Kong for four years as a housemistress at the new branch of Harrow School. On her return, she became housemistress and teacher of English and PE at Eastbourne College. She and her husband have two children who are now 13 and 14. When they have finished their schooling, Alison expects to return to the Bath area, as they have a house in Bradford on Avon and her mother still lives in Frome, which is where she grew up. She still plays hockey, golf and tennis, and when not competing she walks and cycles. "I loved my years teaching at Prior," she writes. "I still believe that it has one of the most beautiful situations for a school in the country and remember many happy days of gazing out over Bath when up on the Astro or in the Mansion."

Jack Penrose, former Burton tutor, Spanish teacher and rugby coach, moved to Tampa Florida in 2018. He is teaching French, Spanish and drama at "a cracking school called Academy at the Lakes". He says he's "having a blast!" He has even started playing rugby again.



Tony O'Sullivan and his wife Breedge are "doing okay" under lockdown. Tony is still in touch with many of the staff from his era.

Robin Francis with his wife Asha and daughters Elise, Paige and Margot visited College recently. They moved to Singapore 18 months ago. Robin says they are loving life overseas. In Singapore, the school day ends at a very civilised 3pm, enabling Robin to join the family most afternoons - usually in the pool.



Eileen McPeake with granddaughter and daughter in law



## Patrick Tobin (headmaster 1981 – 1989)

*The is an edited version of an appreciation written by Giles Mercer, headmaster of Prior 1996 – 2009. The full text can be found on the alumni website.*

On the last assembly of the school year in 1989, the deputy headmaster, Wilfred Hammond, paid the following tribute to the outgoing headmaster:

"Mr Tobin committed himself, and his family, to Prior Park and did so totally. The school did not fall into the terminal decline many people predicted. It did not 'fold' as many other Catholic schools did when the religious orders withdrew. Instead it underwent an incredible renaissance. Mr Tobin changed the day, the curriculum, the house and tutorial system, changed structures, changed standards, changed expectations, changed image. He insisted, uncompromisingly, on the highest standards of effort, conduct, courtesy, honesty, and appearance... even when this meant confronting times and trends and being unpopular. He projected confidence in the school and its future, and he inspired it. He won over parents. He won over prep schools. He displayed enormous financial and commercial acumen, for the school cannot exist, let alone develop, unless it pays for itself. He 'watered the cultural desert' in his commitment not only to intellectual performance but to music, drama, and the arts. And above all, he made sure that the school demonstrated its commitment to the faith, not only in worship but in action, in service, in personal and social values, in right relationships, and in committed work for a better world. Mr Tobin drives hard for standards and excellence, but he drives himself hardest of all...

"I remember a brilliant market research report Mr Tobin produced in 1984... Out of it he developed a coherent strategy to take the school into the 1990s, carried it through governors' meetings, and then steered Prior Park towards and into the co-educational future he planned for it. Thanks to his skill and management, the strategy worked. In 1982, he had already introduced sixth form day girls into the school. In September 1985 came day girls at eleven-plus. In September 1986, he introduced girls' boarding at thirteen-plus... Under Mr. Tobin's bold and imaginative leadership Prior Park has become the leading co-educational Catholic boarding school in the United Kingdom...

"Far from witnessing the demise of Prior Park, his headmastership has been one of its Great Ages. Rather than a continuator, he has been more like the creator of a new and different school... If you want a basis of judgement look around you. *Si monumentum requiris circumspice*. You see a full school, a happy school, an achieving school. No headmaster could achieve more than that."

The Tobin family left Prior Park for Edinburgh, where Patrick was appointed principal of Stewart's Melville College and The Mary Erskine School (MES), a merger of two great Scottish merchant-company schools. Those who know Edinburgh will know that its independent schools are bastions of the city's establishment, woven into the Church of Scotland (even in the 1980s). That a Catholic should have been appointed to lead two of its bulwarks was in itself a reflection of Patrick's magnificent



Patrick Tobin with Margery and John Cooke (PPA 1986)

achievements at Prior Park and of his educational prowess and strengths of personality, marked by determination, affability, compassion, eloquence, and integrity. At meetings of the Headmasters' Conference (HMC) I was told by colleagues from Scottish schools of the enormous respect and affection in which Patrick was held.

When I became head of Prior Park in 1996, I had a sharp appreciation of Patrick's legacy. All heads, while rightly seeking to place their own stamp on a school, cannot but be aware of their predecessors. I was privy to the many files and folders in a large cupboard in the office. How thorough Patrick was. How much I learned from browsing through the volumes of paperwork, such as his notes for assemblies and Speech Day addresses. I marvelled at his persistence and unrelenting energy, which resonated through every page.



Patrick wanted the chapel to be the living heart of the community and one of his recurring themes was that lay Catholics must take full baptismal responsibility in the life of the church. His vision was that of the fully co-educational Catholic family school, carefully organised, properly staffed, and appropriately balanced. From that vision he took over the house

(the Priory) of the Christian Brothers' Provincialate and had it converted into a girls' house. He drove the project, ground-breaking in the Catholic sector. Whether it was being the first lay head or introducing co-education, Patrick was a pioneer.

Patrick was elected Chairman of HMC in 1998. His address at the annual meeting in Jersey enunciated in his inimitably persuasive way the core purpose of education, characteristically blending sweeping themes with telling anecdotes. In my twenty-four years of headship I had not seen its quality equalled.

Patrick had a formidable intellect and breadth of learning, which he brought to bear on his teaching and headships, but which spread further into a rich mental and emotional hinterland. His read prodigiously and he thought deeply and often about issues that matter. Being shown round Quarr Abbey and Osborne House by Patrick was a joy.

Days before he died Patrick's book on medieval history was published, *The Gong Tormented Sea: the Norman Kingdom of Sicily and the Byzantine Empire*. It is a tour de force.

The two older children of Patrick and Margery, **Matthew** (PPA 1991) and **Emma** (PPA 1993), completed their schooling at Prior after the family moved to Edinburgh, and did so with distinction. The childhood memories of Lucy and Sophie (who was born at Prior Park) were made the happier by their Prior Park years.

The greatest blessing for Prior Park was Patrick's appointment as its headmaster, with unstinting and wonderful support from his wife Margery. He was a great teacher, an inspiring educational leader, the prime mover in a Prior Park renaissance, a wonderful family man, the kindest of friends, an unswerving servant of the Lord. May he rest in peace.

Patrick Tobin, born October 4th 1941, died of cancer 29th April 2020.





## Richard Hills (former staff)

*Emily Azis writes:* Richard Hills was head of English at College from 1994 to 1996, before retiring from teaching to take up a totally new challenge. He moved to Herefordshire and became a blacksmith and qualified welder. He was a delightful person to work with, as his special blend of enthusiasm and concern for others always seemed to make him much better-tempered than the rest of us. We remember with great affection his loyalty and the countless times he made the day go a little more smoothly by his personal

kindness. He always seemed to have time to help the pupils, who liked and trusted him. His great passion and enthusiasm for literature inspired us all. Among the highlights of Richard's time at Prior were his productions of *Facade* and *A Soldier's Tale*. The level of intellectual, professional and musical excellence he encouraged was something not usually expected, let alone seen, in a school production.

Richard Hills died on June 27th 2020, in a nursing home near Cardiff.



## Richard Hudson (PPA 1944)

Richard, a keen sportsman, was in Prior's first teams for rugby and hockey, and in 1944 was captain of cricket. After school, he briefly joined the Royal Marines but resigned his commission in 1948 to take up farming. He married Rosalind, who had served in the WRNS in the war at Bletchley Park. They were married for 64 years, until her death. They had five children: Henrietta, Charles, Richard, George and Clare, nine grandchildren and three great-grandchildren

Richard Hudson, born April 5th 1927, died December 14th 2018.

## Patrick O'Connell (PPA 1944)

Paddy died in Calgary, Canada, in December 2017, at the age of 90. Described as "a proud and principled man and a devoted, caring dad and grandpa", his chief legacy is his large and loving family. In his own words, Paddy was an Englishman by birth, a Canadian by choice and, by the grace of God, an Irishman all his life.

On leaving Prior, he took a degree in pure science at Birmingham University. He started work as a petroleum engineer in Trinidad. Then he moved to Iran and the Middle East before moving to British Columbia, and, finally, Standard Oil's head office in Calgary, Alberta. In head office, he worked as a specialised economist whose job is to value potential oil and gas finds.

Paddy is survived by his loving wife of 60 years, Ann O'Connell, his six children - Lu, Liza, Kate, Tisha, Anny and John - and sixteen grandchildren.

Born January 16th 1927, died December 27th 2017.



## Michael Anthony Sutton (former governor)

Tony Sutton, a former governor, trustee and patron of the Prior Park schools, died last summer at the age of 98. Tony, then a solicitor with Tozers in Devon, was brought in by Fergus Lyons to assist in relaunching the college and its prep school as independent trusts when the Christian Brothers announced in March 1980 that they were closing the schools. He helped negotiate both the agreement with the Christian Brothers in 1981 and with the National Trust in the 1990s.

Educated at Ampleforth and Oxford, he played cricket and rugby for both, as well as rugby for Bath and cricket for Somerset. His war service earned him the Military Cross and the Legion d'Honneur.

Husband of Gillian, who pre-deceased him, he had three daughters, two sons, 15 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Tony was born in March 1921 and died in June 2019.



## Mervyn Scott (PPA 1933)

A former governor and instrumental with Fergus Lyons and others in saving the college when the Christian Brothers left. He was also the driving force behind the adoption of Prior Park's coat of arms, for which purpose he negotiated with the College of Heralds. Scott was in the very first group of boarders in the school when it was reopened by the Brothers in 1924.

Born January 5th 1916, died September 9th, 1983.



## Elson Gomes (PPA 1939)

Born in Georgetown, British Guyana, Elson spent the first two years after leaving Prior working in his father's business. In 1942, wanting to contribute to the war effort, he worked his way in a bauxite freighter to Canada, to join the Canadian Air Force. Having completed his training in Montreal, he

was sent to Europe and served continuously from the landings in Normandy all the way to Germany. While awaiting repatriation in England, he filled many roles, one of which was that of an Egyptian soldier in the filming of *Caesar and Cleopatra*. Back in Canada he took a course in business administration. He subsequently settled, with his family, in Port of Spain, Trinidad.

Elson was born on October 8th, 1921, and died in Windsor, Canada, on November 22nd, 2019, at the age of 98. Loving husband of Maria, with whom he celebrated 72 years of marriage. Beloved father of Peter, Mary Jane, James, Annie and Maurina, he had eight grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren.





## Donald Emilio Lopez (PPA 1944)

Don Emilio died in January 2019, the day after the death of his wife of 68 years. He was 92.

He was born in Almería, Spain, but sadly his father died when he was two and he was then abandoned by his mother. He, his sister and two brothers were split up, sent to orphanages and looked after by different relatives until, at age 10, he was taken to England by a neighbour of his father's. Don became a successful businessman in fishing, saddlery and luggage and at one point employed 1,800 people. He was master of two Masonic lodges and, well into his seventies, was a volunteer at Exmouth's National Coastwatch.

His autobiography, *Don Emilio*, published in 2005, tells jaw-dropping anecdotes of being born to a wealthy Spanish family, being related to General Franco's brother-in-law, orphanages, stolen inheritances, mobs and unrest in civil war-torn Spain, the killing of priests and teachers, escaping to Gibraltar to be looked after by an old English neighbour, being sent to an English boarding school in Plymouth and being bombed twice, helping the boats as they came back from the Dunkirk evacuation, being sent to Prior and being bombed, discovering a German spy and reporting him to the police, meeting the Queen Mother and the two princesses at College as he hurtled around the corner taking a short cut for tea, running into a burning building to save a neighbour's child who had stayed in the house to look for her doll, throwing paper pellets at the strange Indian cycling around Exeter (he happened to be Mahatma Gandhi), and playing rugby for the Exeter Chiefs.

He invented, among other things, suit carriers, the talking book service, and alternating pressure mattresses used by



hospitals. He learned to paint and soon people were buying his paintings. (He couldn't keep up with the demand - it was supposed to be a hobby.) In 1963, he returned to Spain and met his brothers, sister and mother for the first time in nearly 30 years.

Even the manner in which he met his future wife was beyond most people's idea of normal. Out for drinks one night, he drove home and mistakenly demolished his neighbours' privet hedge. Thinking it would be a good idea to apologise at 3am, he met not just the parents, but the beautiful daughter, Helena, who he then pursued relentlessly (sober). They married in 1951. In 1953, they had a daughter, Rosalyn (named after the rugby club, Rosslyn Park, as Emilio had just played rugby there the week before), and then in 1954 twin girls, Teresa and Rosemary. They retired to Exmouth 22 years ago.

United in death as they had been in life, Don Emilio and Helena had a double funeral service and are buried at St John in the Wilderness, Exmouth. They leave their three daughters, Rosalyn, Rosemary and Teresa, five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

## Gabriel Ryoji Matsumoto

(PPA 1944)

Matt Matsumoto died in St Petersburg, Florida, in October 2017 at the age of 90. He was born in New York to Ellen and Kenji Matsumoto. After graduating from Prior, he served in the US Air Force until retiring from the military in 1965. Matt saw action during both World War II and the Korean War. In civilian life, he was for many years a trust officer at the First National Bank in St Petersburg. He was a life member of the National Rifle Association, the Retired Officers Association and Safari Club International, as well as a member of the St Petersburg Yacht Club. Matt was preceded in death by his wife, Nanny. He is survived by many close friends and colleagues.

Gabriel Matsumoto, born February 8th 1927, died October 9th 2017.



## Gerald Davies (PPA 1944)

Gerald was born in Kew in 1926 and attended Prior with his younger brother Anthony (PPA 1946). On leaving Prior, he initially worked at the GEC Hirst Research Centre. He obtained a BSc Hons in physics (with radio) and mathematics at University College London, before embarking on a career in the aerospace industry. Gerald worked on various projects for Saunders Roe Aviation: as a development engineer on flight test instrumentation in the days of the Princess flying boat, then as a rocket trials engineer planning ground and flight trials of the Black Knight test vehicle to meet RAE requirements. In these early years of his career, he made his home on the Isle of Wight, where three of his four children were born. In 1961 he joined the Royal Aircraft Establishment and moved to Farnborough in Hampshire. In 1986, after 25 years of government service, Gerald retired and moved to Alton. There he was able to indulge his passions for walking and industrial archaeology, working as a volunteer on the Mid-Hants Railway and, briefly, as an administrator at the Gilbert White museum in Selbourne. He later moved to Petersfield, before returning to Alton for the last few years of his life. Gerald died a month short of his 93rd birthday. He is survived by his daughter and three sons, four grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

Gerald Davies, born November 18th 1926, died October 22nd 2019.



## Frederick Clarke

(PPA 1947)

Nuclear physicist Dr Freddy Clarke PhD, who had a highly distinguished career at the UK Atomic Energy Authority (AEA), attended Prior during the war years. Ever curious about the world and everything in it, the word most associated with Freddy was "focus"; and it was focus that was needed in his lifelong hobby of magic, skill in which permeated every aspect of his career.

During his time at Prior, the school received a visit from Mary, the mother of King George VI. Freddy entertained the visiting VIPs with a conjuring show and, a few weeks later, he received a box of magic tricks, a present from the highly impressed Queen Mother. In 1950, he returned to Cricklade where,

"famed even in his school days for his nimble patter and sleight of hand", he impressed his young audience. He had just been admitted into the hallowed Magic Circle.

His skill was put to highly practical use when he defrayed the costs of studying physics (degrees were not government-funded at that time) at London University by performing at children's birthday parties.

At the AEA, Freddy worked alongside scientific luminaries of the age including Monty Finniston, Hermann Bondi and Walter (Lord) Marshall. But



by the early 1970s, Freddy sensed that politicians and the public were increasingly questioning the role of nuclear power and he spent the rest of his career fighting for, and indeed leading the authority's diversification into sustainable energy sources, including wind and solar power, biofuels and energy conservation.

On retirement, he bent his considerable talents to teaching himself accountancy in order to better support his chosen charities, including Age Concern and the Alzheimer's Society. Slowing only in his eighties, he nevertheless continued to study physics and the philosophy of time, and theories of an n-dimensional universe.

Frederick Clarke, born April 19th 1929, died July 19th 2019.





## Anthony Clive Lacey (PPA 1949)

Tony Lacey, known as Algy to his Prior Park friends, died on September 5th, 2019, in Musgrove Park Hospital, Taunton. He was 88. Tony was born in India in 1931. Following his father's retirement from the army, when Tony was seven, the family moved to Glastonbury. After National Service and a short time in the army, Tony lived in London, where he worked for Heinz. But he was a Somerset man at heart, and he moved to Wedmore in 1967. He worked for Cow & Gate in Wells as manager of distribution. After taking early retirement in 1986, he spent ten very happy years working at the Somerset Rural Life Museum in Glastonbury.

Tony loved most sports, especially cricket and rugby, and was a lifelong supporter of Somerset County Cricket Club. He was chair of the mid-Somerset area cricket group for 20 years, and in 2012 he was made a life member of the club in recognition of his outstanding contribution. His well-earned retirement was spent watching cricket and rugby, spending time with his large family, doing the *Daily Telegraph*

crossword and taking long holidays.

Tony was husband to Celia, father/stepfather to five, grandad to 15 and great grandad to seven. "More of a tribe than a family", he once said. Tony loved his time at Prior and was delighted to attend the 50th and 60th anniversary dinners.

Tony Lacey, born July 9th 1931, died September 5th 2019.



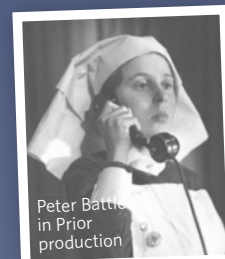
## Peter Battle (PPA 1950)

Peter died in January at the age of 86, after four years with dementia. He was looked after through that time by his wife, Patsy, who described him as "a kind, caring, loving, intelligent and capable man". A keen golfer who had once represented Sussex, he knew Cormac Murphy O'Connor well and the two played golf at Peter's home club, St Enodoc, in Cornwall.

Peter's time at Prior was difficult. He described the regime as "harsh", especially the reliance on corporal punishment. He struggled to get through his exams. When he was 16, his father died and, having completed Upper Five, he left. He took a job as an office junior in a television company. He then became, successively, a salesman at Southern TV, sales manager at Anglia TV, general sales manager at Southern, managing director of Television South West and director of Ulster TV.

Despite his tribulations at Prior, Peter wanted his own son to enrol at the school, only to be turned down by the Christian Brothers. His disenchantment was thus redoubled. Even so, he had expressed an interest in returning for a reunion.

Peter Battle, born July 12th 1933, died January 7th 2020



Peter Battle in Prior production

## Bernard Kelly (PPA 1951)

Bernard Anthony Kelly QC, who died of a heart attack in February 2020, was head boy (1950-51) and a governor of Prior Park (1995-2004). He loved the school and took a great interest in its Catholic life.

Born in Cheshire, Bernard followed his elder brother, Peter Kelly (PPA 1946), to Prior. He enjoyed playing in the 1st XV rugby team and acting in Hedley Goodall's plays. He developed a love of literature, excelling in English and Latin. He had a remarkable memory for poetry and, even in his 80s, would surprise his family by reciting poems he had learned at school. He made good friends, including Brian Auty (PPA 1951) and Peter Cunningham Davis (PPA 1949), with whom he remained in touch for the rest of his life.

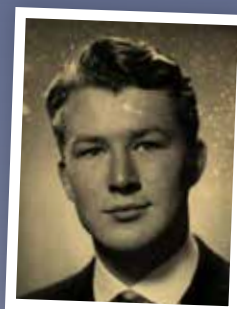
After National Service, Bernard read law at Cambridge and was then called to the Bar. He spent most of his career as head of the legal department at Mobil Oil and, in 1987, was appointed to Mobil's board of directors. One of his great interests was the Bar Association for Commerce, Finance and Industry (BACFI). In 1985, he was made chairman and thereafter remained a

vice-president. In 1991, he was appointed QC. After retiring in 1994, he served as part-time chairman of Employment Tribunals for ten years.

Bernard was a kind and cheerful man, deeply cultured, with a passion for walking, the arts and Roman history. His Catholic education gave him a strong sense of duty and compassion for others and he supported numerous charities.

He died on 12th February 2020 at the age of 86. He is greatly missed by Myra, his wife of 55 years, his three children, James, Jonathan and Elizabeth, and his five grandchildren.

Born April 25th 1933, died February 11th 2020.



## Peter Brooks (PPA 1954)

Peter Anthony Brooks died in March 2020 of lung cancer, aged 82. He was the youngest of six children, five of whom went to PPC, the other four being Edward (PPA 1946), Michael (PPA 1947), John (PPA 1950) and Francis (PPA 1954).

After leaving school, Peter joined the family firm of Summers Henderson Loss Adjusters where he obtained his ACII and FCILA qualifications and worked his way up to senior partner. He stayed there until his retirement.



He met his wife Sheila in 1965 and they married in January 1966, settling in North London, not far from where he was born. Sheila died suddenly in July 1974, leaving him with their three small children. His sister

Margaret left her home in the USA to help him look after them, but she too died suddenly from a stroke in 1978.

Peter never remarried, dedicating himself to his role

## Anthony Finnigan (PPA 1952)

Dr Anthony Finnigan of Arnesby, Leicestershire and former GP of Summertown Health Centre, Oxford, died in December 2019 aged 85, leaving his wife, Janet, children Mary, Bridget, Edward, Jacqueline, Veronica and Peter, as well as grandchildren and great grandchildren. At Prior, he was a good all-round sportsman and academically strong. He was awarded the Prior Park Medal.

Born July 31st 1934, died December 19th 2019.



as a single parent. His family was his whole world. He was an active member of the Catenian Association, and the local tennis and golf clubs, serving as both captain, vice president and president of the Muswell Hill Golf Club. On several occasions he attended the PPA annual golf day, one year attending with three of his brothers.

Peter was diagnosed with small cell lung cancer in May 2019, and he spent his final months as much as possible at home with his children and beloved grandchildren.

Born January 26th 1938, died March 1st 2020.



## Andrew Owen (PPA 1957)

*Tim O'Donnell (former PPC parent and fellow Catenian) writes:* Andy was someone you wanted to be with. Always cheery, interesting, stoic, never complaining and of course, up for a chat; and an active member of the Guildford Catenians for over 30 years, including six as secretary. After training as an accountant, he joined BAC, Bristol, as finance director at an exciting time during the construction of Concorde and its roll out in 1969. In 1977, the family moved to Farnham and Andy became MD of a Lloyds underwriting agency, commuting regularly until his retirement. Andy was a keen sportsman, playing hockey for Bristol University, West Gloucester and Basingstoke, where he served as club president. He was an active member of the Bourne Club, playing tennis, squash and table tennis, as well as being a valued member of the management committee. He also found time for golf at Blacknest and Farnham golf clubs.

Andy's other great interest was music. He was a member of the Farnham and Bourne Choral Society for 40 years and served at times as treasurer. He was also in the Odd Fellows male voice choir for many years and was treasurer of the Farnham Youth Choir Trust.

Andy always valued the foundation and love he had received at Prior Park. It was his second family. He served for 47 years on the PPA committee, including a spell as president, as well 13 years as a school governor. He was, until last year, a regular attendee at all Prior Park meetings, functions and events.

After his retirement, Andy immersed himself in the Farnham scene. He acted as trustee and/or treasurer of the Farnham Institute Charity, Brightwells Gostrey Centre, The Bourne Children & Youth Initiative and The Maltings. As an only child, he loved his family life. He and Liz married in 1966, having met at Bristol University. He had a son, Simon, a daughter, Lucy, and grandchildren, Luke and Gemma, of whom he was very proud.

Andrew Owen, PPA committee member 1968 – 2015, president 1999 – 2002 and governor of Prior Park 1997 – 2010, born February 19th 1939, died April 6th 2020. *We are hoping to organise a memorial Mass for Andy after the next Mansion Lunch.*



## Richard Blenkin (PPA 1953)

Richard died of prostate cancer in September 2019 at the age of 82. Having spent two years at Cricklade (1947 to 1949), Richard moved up to "Big" Prior, where he stayed until 1953, at which point he joined the family business. He studied in London for three years, followed by two years National Service, seeing action in Aden. Richard married Willma (deceased) and they had five children, eleven grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Born March 21st, 1937, died September 14th, 2019.

## Paul Gomez (PPA 1958)

After graduating from PPC in 1957, Paul earned his medical degree from St Thomas' Hospital in 1963. He became a registered paediatrician in 1964. In the same year he married his sweetheart, Catherine "Kitty" Kenny, a nurse he met at Stamford Hospital.

Paul was a brilliant paediatrician and he loved caring for his patients. He was also creative and resourceful. He used his talents to invent the Derbyshire Oxygen Chair, a lifesaving device for children whose lungs aren't fully developed. Paul's invention has saved countless number of premature babies worldwide and is still being used today.

Always an adventurous spirit, Paul moved his young family to Kampala in Uganda, Africa, where he studied tropical medicine and cared for the children of local tribes. When dictator, Idi Amin Dada took over the government, Paul left and moved his family to Nashville (sight unseen), where, from 1971, he worked for Vanderbilt Hospital. Soon after, he opened his private practice.

In 1975, he contracted encephalitis. Despite pulling through the illness, Paul developed Parkinson's Disease. He nevertheless worked tirelessly until his retirement in 1986.

Paul was a devout Catholic. He accepted illness without complaint, and he used it to inspire others. Our thoughts are with his widow, five children and his many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Born February 2nd 1938, died May 25th 2019.



## Michael Francino OBE (PPA 1959)

*Mounir EL Khoury writes:* Michael passed away on 25th October, 2019, after battling with cancer for some time. His wife Danielle, and their children, Catherine, a doctor in France, and Matheo, were by his side. Michael joined Prior Park in 1954, in St. Peters. His parents lived in Johannesburg, South Africa. What Michael did not achieve on the playing fields, he more than made up for academically, in debating and on stage as the Canon in Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*. After Witwatersrand University, he went to St. Catherine's College, Oxford, where he took his second maths degree, which formed his initial career as a statistician.

In London, he joined J. Arthur Rank, dealing with films prior to their release. His love for Africa landed him a civil service job in Rhodesia, which was ended by Ian Smith's Unilateral Declaration of Independence. He emigrated to Ottawa, Canada, in 1967 and held various senior positions in the Canadian civil service.

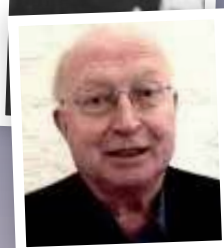
After retiring from the government of Canada, he served as an IMF adviser in several countries in Europe and Central Asia, as well as the World Bank and the United Nations.

In 2000 – 2001, Michael went to East Timor after its independence from Indonesia, as finance minister, part of the UN Transitional Administration in East Timor, UNTAET, led by Sergio Vieira de Mello, who later died in a bomb blast in Baghdad. Michael went on to other trouble spots: he was in Baghdad as part of the British effort to help restart the Iraqi economy, for which he received an OBE, and later in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

In 2013, Michael was a co-founder of Konung International, a UK-based specialist international development consultancy, delivering innovative and politically aware governance and public financial management programmes globally.

Michael did not always see eye to eye with the Christian brothers, but he was a formidable character.

Michael Francino, born September 1941, died October 2019.



## Malcolm Sykes (PPA 1960)

From 10 years of age, Malcolm was brought up first in Punta Cardon, Venezuela, and then Point Fortin, Trinidad, attending Mount St Benedict school in Tunapuna, where he developed a zest for life which never left him. Malcolm attended Prior in the late 1950's, as his father felt he required more discipline. Charismatic and flamboyant, he participated in the Round the World Yacht race on *British Steel* in 1976, became an award winning developer for barn conversions in Northamptonshire, and later in life relocated to Vermont, USA, taking up a new career within the wholesale garden trade which thrived until a heart attack in 2006 forced early retirement. Malcolm returned to the UK in 2014, where ill health continued to plague him. He died in St Thomas' Hospital, London, in June 2019, with his wife Lorraine and step-daughter Taricia by his side. Always, always colour in a world of grey.

Born March 14th 1942, died June 26th 2019.







## Errol Field (PPA 1968)

Errol was a much-loved family man and a respected expert in martial arts who, due to severe mental ill health, took his own life in 2017. Before his death, Errol had given presents to friends and made a significant donation to a local church. According to his son, he had also taken steps to ensure that his family had access to his bank accounts.

Errol was at Cricklade and St Peters but did not progress to St Pauls.

A well-known figure in his local community in Coulsdon, Surrey, Errol, 7th Dan judo, 6th Dan jujitsu

and 5th Dan karate, was the founder of Yoshin Ryu Martial Arts club and owner of Coulsdon Martial Arts.

Born January 1st, 1949, died September 13th 2017.



## Howard Lys (PPA 1969)

Howard de Courcy Lys died in May 2019, in Hastings, New Zealand, at the age of 67. Loved husband of Anne, adored father of Genevieve and Kaitlin, father-in-law of Greg, step-dad of Tania, and beloved grandfather of Theodore.

For nine years, Howard was a fieldworker in the Prisoners Aid and Rehabilitation Trust. For 23 years before that he was a probation officer in New Zealand's Department of Corrections.

Born July 22nd, 1951, died May 19th 2019.



## Timothy Garner (PPA 1971)

Tim Garner died, after a long struggle with dementia, in April 2020, at the age of 67. An outstanding sportsman, Tim was capped playing rugby for the school (the school magazine described him as "a very good scrum-half who served the team splendidly. He showed determination and an individual flair which on many occasions made scoring opportunities for the backs"). He also played hockey ("Timothy Garner often proved deadly in the circle") and in cricket he was a fearsome fast bowler.

Tim's approach to sports was much the same as his approach to life in general: courageous, heedless of risk, always looking to be in the thick of the action. He went at everything full tilt.

He followed his father's footsteps into estate agency. Indeed, he initially worked for his father's firm, Saturley Garner & Co, starting there in 1971. He moved on and, once he had sufficient experience under his belt, he formed Garner Lamb, with partner Steve Lamb, in 1989. They were in partnership for 23 years before Steve moved on.

In 2008, Tim had the great satisfaction of seeing

Garner Lamb merge with Saturley Garner, bringing the two Garner names back under one roof.

Tim's interest in sports did not diminish after leaving Prior. In the 1970s, he was a driving force in Hornets RFC in Weston Super Mare, serving as an aggressive and effective scrum half. A team-mate from that time described him as "a real character on and off the pitch and always great fun in the bar afterwards!"

Tim joined school mates in Marseilles, at a memorable weekend hosted by PPS governor Tony Bury, during the 2007 Rugby World Cup.

For the past few years, Tim had been looked after in a care home. Not one for self-pity, he remained cheerful despite his predicament.

Timothy Peter Edward Garner, born October 6th 1952, died April 30th 2020.



## Feargal Glennon (PPA 1980)

*Feargal's brother Kieran (PPA 1975) writes:*

Feargal Glennon, affectionately known as "Fluff" to many at Prior, was sadly taken at the age of 58 from a sudden and unexpected heart attack. Feargal attended Cricklade and graduated to "Big" Prior in 1974. For the last 20 years, Feargal worked for the MOD, running the accommodation facilities at RAF Fairford, whose principle users were the US Air Force. This suited his character to a tee, as he was always smiling and most accommodating. So much so that his Catholic funeral had to be moved to a larger, multi-faith church to cater for the large number, many in full military uniform, who joined the family to pay their last respects.

Feargal, much-loved husband to Jane, father to Adam and Verity, brother to Kieran, Julie-Marie and Jacqui and third child to Monica, was born on May 29th 1961, and died on June 15th 2019.



## Carina Matos

(PPA 1999)

Carina Matos died on February 24th 2018, in Madrid, Spain, and was buried in Luanda, Angola. Her full name was Carina Dinamene de Matos Sardinha. She was married with two children, a boy and a girl.

Her father died three months before her from the same illness, an aggressive form of pancreatic cancer. Her godbrother, Sergio, describes Carina as having lived "a very good, full and happy life".



## Other deaths

**Peter Handley (PPA 1942).** We were informed of his death by his son, **Philip (PPA 1974).**

**Peter McGovern (PPA 1951)** Former consultant anaesthetist at the Rotunda Hospital, Dublin, died in 2009.

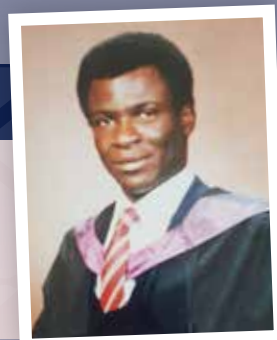
**Daniel Rogeau (PPA 1951)** died on May 21st 2013

**Andrew Thompson (PPA 1956)** died of renal failure in January 2019.

**Christopher Anyaorah (PPA 1976) (right)** died of the Covid-19 virus in April 2020 at the age of 62.

**Michael Mintowt-Czyz (PPA 1984)** Born March 22nd 1965, died 2017.

**Bruce Arnold** (former parent) died of Covid-19 in March 2020.





# A house creaking in solitude

By Carole Laverick

What a year in the PPA office! Where to start? For the Class of 2020, it was the year of missing out on all their precious "lasts": year, exams, dinners, leavers concerts, sports matches, graduation, speech day (and making speeches), receiving prizes. Nor was there any PPA Music Prize or William Genders art prize. It was their year of not being applauded out of the Speech Day marquee by the entire college, of gap years postponed or abandoned.

Things started to go askew around the beginning of March, when the Six Nations matches were cancelled. Rosslyn Park, which has been held every year since 1939, making it one of the sport's oldest continuous tournaments, was cancelled a week before it was due to start.

In March, too, the PPA had been invited to hold a whole school assembly. We talked about the role of alumni, about the many past pupils who come in and talk to students, and about how the history of the college is tied up with every pupil who passes through. The sixth form PPA liaison reps, **Ned Clarke (PPA 2020)** and **Sasha Kariy (PPA 2020)**, spoke of their year with the PPA and how interesting it had been.

Looking around the chapel, we pointed to the special features that resonate with different houses: the altar that was donated by Countess Isabella English, with her name inscribed on the reverse; a column that was engraved and sponsored by Bishop Brownlow; and the plaque by one of the Romeo and Juliet balconies with Clifford's insignia on it.

Public speaking is one of my biggest fears, but when I talk about the history of the school, and the role of every student in that history, I become so impassioned that the nerves are forgotten. It is now another fact of our history that that assembly was the last whole school assembly before the lockdown



The empty school was bad but the chapel has seen worse

on Monday 23rd March. Who knows when it will be before more than 600 students again cram into the college chapel?

The atmosphere in College became emotionally charged. Worried international students were anxious to return home as quickly as possible, for borders were closing daily. I was privileged to be the guardian of two of these students, one from Ukraine the other from Slovakia. How much joy they had brought me over the previous two years. Their fear was real. Although they knew there would always be a bed for them at my house, they of course wanted to be with their families, even if it meant two weeks in quarantine on the other side.

As we officially locked down with the rest of the country, there were just a handful of international students still awaiting their departures, having difficulties with booking flights home and so on. They wandered around the site in solitude, strictly adhering to social distancing. It would be hard to

imagine the depth of their isolation at that traumatic time. The housemasters and housemistresses took really good care of them, and, finally, they were all safely home. A sigh of relief went up. The house stood empty.

Doors that for decades had been thrown open with abandon soon started creaking with disuse. It was as if the very house was sighing with loneliness. The lack of life was a palpable thing, as if the house were sleeping until the students returned to breathe life back into it. Their energy, laughter, chatter and footfall are all essential to keep the beautiful place alive.

On Monday June 15th, 2020, after nearly three months of emptiness, the preparations for deep cleaning and social distancing were all in place. A group of students was allowed back in. Some lower fives and lower sixes, one tutor group at a time, were returning, just for a few hours. The house was glad to have them back.





## Gap-year report

Each year the PPA makes financial awards to a small number of departing sixth formers who intend to make their gap years socially worthwhile. Unfortunately, all but two of the recipients this year had their plans postponed by Covid.

Riccardo Casonato (PPA 2019) and Suryavijay Battenberg (PPA 2019) travelled to India. They write: We might have met more interesting people in three months than in the 18 years before that... so many unusual and inspiring stories! We spent a month working with Ritinjali, a second-chance school for boys who had either not finished their studies or had never been able to access education. The charity's mission is "to provide a holistic education that nurtures empowered, responsible citizens, capable of providing for themselves and also contributing actively to their local communities".

As we got to know them, we got into sessions like "English without the grammar", "How to deliver presentations" and "How to behave and prepare for interviews and jobs". We also touched on niche subjects like "Beware of pyramid



schemes" and "What is Halloween?" The most directly beneficial session was probably on CV writing; we had one-on-one sessions writing them up from scratch.

At the start, the boys, aged around 15, were all very shy and quiet, insecure about their English. It was so rewarding to see that, as the month progressed, each of those we worked with became more confident with their speaking. This was especially clear once we got them debating!

It wasn't all work. We'd stay some evenings to cook and eat with them, and the friendships we formed would never have happened had we just gone to India as tourists. We learned so much, not just from gaining and maintaining the group's respect and attention, from planning and delivering sessions; we learned so much from the boys themselves. Each came with a story, a context and an experience of life completely different from our own. Getting to know them was incredible.

## The Last Word

*Simon Morgan*

*writes:* I must commend Terry Illott (PPA 1968), my predecessor as president, for his most successful and productive period of office. He



oversaw the drafting and implementation of the revised PPA constitution and a new memorandum of understanding with Prior Park Schools that makes our task so much easier. However, I think that his most impressive achievement is the very magazine that you are now reading. Over the past six years, he has turned *The Gossip Bowl* into a publication that attracts a readership that extends beyond those connected with the school. (I wrote all this last year, but, in typically hard-nosed fashion, Terry cut it from the "President's letter".) The effort involved is colossal and the expertise deployed is impressive. Terry would be the first to insist that today's magazine reflects the vast pool of archive information and the extensive network of contacts that Carole Laverick has built up in recent years, as well as her management of our databases and her meticulous recording of every call, email and visit, not to mention her excellent eye for a photograph. I am very happy to have the opportunity to acknowledge her contribution, as well as that, in past years, of Suzannah Angelo-Sparling (PPA 1987). It has been a very happy collaboration. Sadly, but understandably, Terry has decided that, as he will be 70 next year, this is the last edition to go to press under his guiding hand. On behalf of us all, I offer the most sincere thanks.

## Alumni choir brings back memories

Chris de Souza (PPA 1960) writes: Speech Day 1960 was the last time I had performed in the college chapel. And here I was again, 59 years later joining a group of old boys and girls, in a Mass to celebrate PPAs who had died in the previous year. I had much to think about, from my earliest memories of sitting timidly in the front pew, where all the juniors sat, to the privilege of leading the singing from the college organ right at the back as a sixth former. At my last concert for the school we sang the prelude to Elgar's *Apostles*, and Faure's *Requiem*. I still have a very crackly LP of the event. I had visited College in 2017 with my younger brother, Philip de Souza (PPA 1962), who lived in Canada. "I won't be coming here again," he said on that occasion. He was right. At his funeral I told of his many escapades, one of which was to have squeezed around the whole circumference of the pediment above the chapel's columns. He had a head for



A candle for each lost alumni 2019-2020

heights. Mind you he was one of the tallest boys in the school, I the shortest.

I thought about all this and more in that wonderful chapel. My brother remained an avid chorister all his life. So, it was marvellous in a sense to bring him back and have his name remembered in the Mass. I knew several of the people commemorated. When I got home, I phoned Philip's widow in Canada to tell her all about it. Please be assured of the value of this event.

## CALENDAR

**Saturday 5 September at 10am**  
Year group reps Zoom meeting and AGM

**Sunday 6 December at 11am**  
Alumni choir

**Saturday 6 March 2021**  
Mansion lunch

**Sunday 13 June 2021**  
Alumni Day with Old boys cricket  
All alumni invited

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