

Eagle News



Issue 121 February 2020 - April 2021
The Magazine of the Old Bedford Modernians' Club



Bedford
Modern
School.

COVID-19 Precautions



Hands

- Wash your hands regularly using soap
- Use hand sanitiser



Face

- Wear face coverings in corridors and communal spaces
- Observe the current recommendations in other areas



Space

- Maintain social distance wherever possible
- Keep to the left and walk in single file in corridors

COVID-19: The BMS Community Responds



The Magazine of the Old Bedford Modernians' Club

Founded 1892

Issue 121
February 2020 - April 2021

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Registered in England:
Company Number: 3475202
Registered Office: Pilgrim Centre,
Brickhill Drive, Bedford, MK41 7PZ
Registered Charity Number: 1066861

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Modern School

Design by:
The Answer Machine
www.theAnswerMachine.co.uk

Printed by:
Merrys Limited
www.merryprinters.co.uk



COVID-19: the BMS community at its best. See special feature on pages 6-9.

Eagle News *update to* Publication Schedule

Following a recent OBM survey we were delighted to hear that *Eagle News* is still widely read and enjoyed by so many of you. However, we have also been working hard to provide news in other ways, including email updates and regular posts on social media, which have been welcomed, in particular, by our more recent leavers. Unfortunately, the cost of producing and posting *Eagle News* twice a year has increased significantly of late and it has therefore been decided, with the agreement of the OBM Advisory Group, that we will now issue *Eagle News* annually. Please rest assured that it will still contain all the regular news, sections and features that you have come to expect.

Provisional Dates for Your Diary

London Lunch - Friday 04 March 2022

Founder's Dinner - Friday 17 June 2022

Please be aware that these are subject to change

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Letter from the Head

Alex Tate

Writing this letter has afforded me time to reflect on this historic and most extraordinary of years. After a relatively normal start to the spring term in 2020, all the elements of everyday life, both at school and beyond, changed and on Friday 20 March, I stood on the steps at the front of school as staff and students left to learn how to work and study from home. There was none of the excited 'buzz' of the last day of school. It was a rushed and rather subdued occasion and the most challenging I have experienced in all my time in education.

While it would have been easy to dwell on the sadness of the situation, it was all the more important to look for the positives. The move to remote learning and coming to terms with new technology and ways of working was very successful. Although it was a significant challenge and a fundamental change to the way that a school operates, staff worked hard to develop a new approach and they continue to refine it even now. The first time I taught my Year 7 History class online using Microsoft Teams I made mistakes. The students helped me correct them. It made me realise that we were all developing new skills together and that was a tremendous feeling.

Following a last-minute change in government directive in the summer, we found ourselves having to award GCSE and A Level grades to our own students. Known as centre-assessed grades, they were derived primarily from assessments made by school staff and based on an individual's past attainment and performance. Thanks to the robust and professional way our teachers and others undertook this task, the results really were a true reflection of our students' personal hard work and dedication and their grades were richly deserved. These remarkable young men and women endured a great deal of upheaval and missed out on so much, but they conducted themselves with dignity and good humour throughout. I could not have been prouder of them.

At times we also felt rather like a part of the health service. We were required to set up a mass testing centre for staff and students after the second period of lockdown which was run with military precision, thanks to the efforts of staff, OBM, and parent volunteers. This was followed by twice-weekly lateral flow device testing at home to identify asymptomatic cases to take steps to control the spread of the virus here on campus. The ongoing process of contact tracing and periods of self-isolation for some groups of students then began which was possibly one of the biggest challenges we faced as it caused so much disruption. But we managed it and we continue to do so.

The BMS community is a very special one and that shone through even more this year. From volunteering to producing visors for healthcare workers and donating equipment to help those working on the frontline, I was very proud indeed of the way we all pulled together and helped others when they needed it most.

Looking through the pages of this magazine, it is clear that we all made the best of a remarkable situation and adapted in true BMS style. In some ways the new methods have transformed how we work and who would have believed that this time last year we would have replaced our annual Open Day with a virtual alternative conducted on Zoom and invigilated entrance assessments for all year groups online? The show must - and did - go on!

With my very best wishes

Alex Tate
Headmaster

Save the Date - **Saturday 11 December 2021**
OBM Club Christmas Lunch

COVID-19 restrictions permitting, we hope to be able to hold this event at school this year

OBM Events Gallery (February 2020 - April 2021)

London Lunch 2020

On Friday 06 March we were extremely lucky to be able to host what was to be the last physical event for the OBM Club before lockdown, the annual London Lunch. We had an excellent turnout as always, with more than 150 OBMs and former staff meeting up at the House of Commons. There was a brilliant atmosphere, old memories shared and new ones made, albeit with lots of hand sanitiser!

Thank you to Mike Lilley, Simon Diffey, and James Stonor's group who all sponsored places at the event, which allowed 13 OBMs in full-time education to enjoy the day.



Online Beer Tasting Event with Brewpoint

In lieu of our usual London Lunch in 2021, celebrations, we were able to hold an online beer tasting event with the Wells & Co facility, Brewpoint on Friday 19 March. The event was especially significant as Charles Wells, founder of the brewing company, attended BMS in his early life and made several generous donations to the School in the late 1800s. We enjoyed a virtual tour of the new, state-of-the-art brewing facility just minutes away from the BMS campus, and a talk from the brewers about the tasting notes of the specially selected beers sent out to OBMs in advance. The Headmaster gave a speech to conclude the event, before attendees were placed in their own private breakout rooms to catch up with old friends.



Online Events - OBMs Live

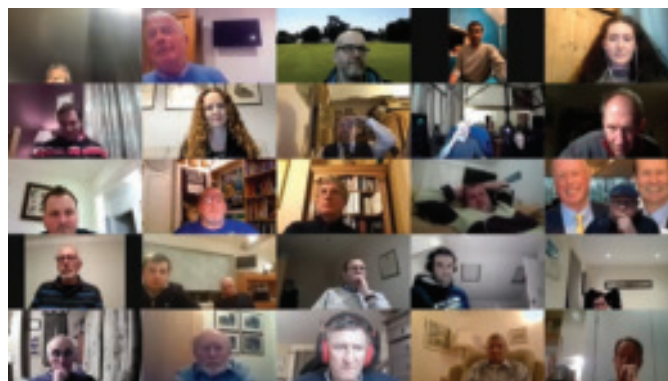
After national lockdown was announced in the UK, the External Relations team instated a programme of online events over Zoom featuring OBM guest speakers.

Chat with Chads

On **Wednesday 08 July**, we launched our new online event series, OBMs Live, and were joined by former master Richard Chadwick (1971-09) talking about his life and experiences. More than 40 OBMs joined us from around the world from California, Texas, and Australia (at 3am their time). We enjoyed hearing Richard reminisce about his adventures whilst at the School, from the slopes of Kilimanjaro, to the cricket tour in the Caribbean, to the BMS staff room!

The School of the Black and Red

On **Wednesday 22 July**, we were joined by Peter Boon (1951-61), one of three OBMs involved with updating the book dedicated to the history of BMS: *School of the Black and Red*. Peter spoke about his role in revising the book and the new chapters that were added, including the abolishment of Saturday school and BMS going co-ed, as well as the 'sporty school' and 'culture and clubs' sections.



From Science to Showbiz

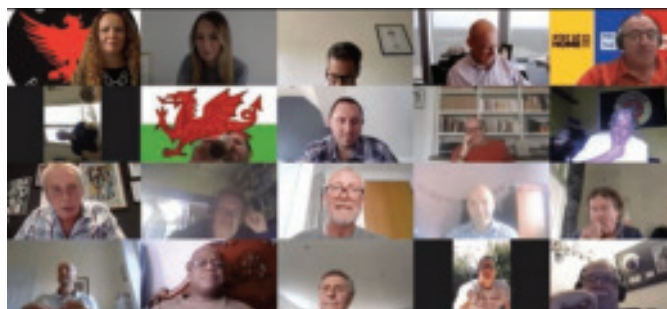
On **Thursday 03 December** two BMS Sixth Form students interviewed Dr Harry Brunjes (1966-73) about his wide-spanning career, which has seen him involved in science, show business, music, medicine, comedy, and commerce. The evening ended with Harry and his wife Jacquie giving a rousing rendition of *Wouldn't It Be Lovely* from *My Fair Lady*.

Chat with Chinneck

Former sports master Nigel Chinneck (1974-2017) was the speaker for our event on **Thursday 04 March**. More than 100 OBMs joined us as Nigel gave a talk in which he provided a history of sport at BMS, discussed the impact of the School going co-ed, and shared some of his own anecdotes and nicknames accumulated over the years.

Marketing Double Header

On **Thursday 19 March**, Adam Nicoll (1986-93) and Caitlin Abbey (2003-14) hosted a double interview about their marketing roles with Randstad UK, the largest recruitment and HR consultancy business in the world. The event finished with a fascinating Q&A session, in which Adam and Caitlin shared their insights into what it takes to be a successful marketer in the modern world.



The Theory of Happenings

On **Wednesday 12 August**, Dr Adam Hill (1993-98) shared his insightful and fascinating thoughts on the four concepts of the Theory of Happenings: the spark, growth, peak and decline of epidemics. This was followed by some interesting questions asked by OBMs about the COVID-19 pandemic.

Making Mischief

More than 40 OBMs, current Sixth Formers, and former staff were entertained on **Thursday 17 September** by Charlie Russell (2005-07), an original creator and cast member of the Mischief Theatre Company. We were delighted to hear about Charlie's route into acting, her experiences on Broadway and in television, and her work with Mischief Theatre. Charlie spoke fondly about her time at BMS and how grateful she is to the Performing Arts faculty.

The Tenor's Tale

Internationally recognised operatic tenor Justin Lavender (1960-69) was our guest speaker on **Tuesday 20 October**. He told us about his career and how the operatic business works, as well as sharing some of the many anecdotes about his life and experiences - including why the mafia were in his dressing room!

COVID-19: The BMS Community at its Best

It was a year like no other for us all, and despite the challenges we faced, students, staff, parents and OBM's all rallied together in order to stay connected and offer support to each other. Since the beginning of the national lockdown in the UK, we have dealt with many changes and overcome enormous challenges. Here are just some of the ways we coped, adapted, and developed.

Adjusting to Change

Keyworkers ranging from medical staff and paramedics to retail assistants, mental health workers, volunteers, police officers and carers all form part of the BMS Community. Their collective commitment and determination was vital in keeping the country going.



Lessons began online on 23 March 2020. As well as academic lessons, students were also encouraged to pursue a range of co-curricular activities such as participation in virtual choirs and ensembles, art, baking, and sports.

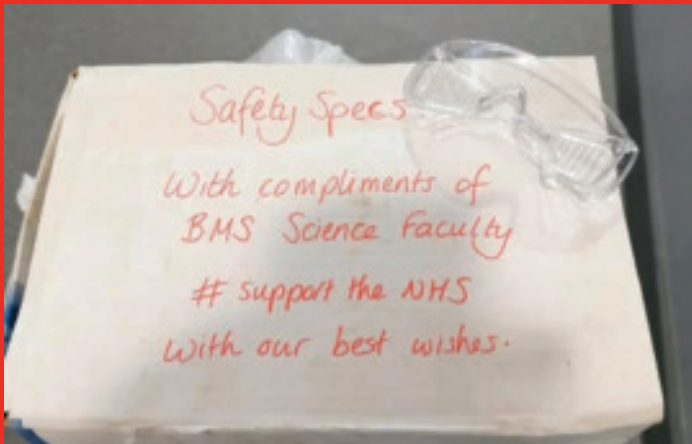


Deborah and Lilia were busy working from home, phoning and speaking with some of our more senior OBM's to help them stay connected. They found the conversations hugely rewarding and heard some fascinating stories about life at the school when it was still in the centre of town.



Giving Something Back

On 28 March, Dr Clare Oswald, Head of Science delivered 250 pairs of lab safety specs to Bedford Hospital to support our local NHS colleagues in the fight against Coronavirus. Such personal protective equipment was essential for healthcare workers.



In the first week of April, DT teachers Andy Jones and Catherine Benson were busy creating polypropylene face shields using our laser cutter. They also made expanders for masks from high-impact polystyrene, designed to reduce the strain on the wearer's ears. The equipment was bagged up and delivered to GP surgeries, pharmacies and hospices in the local area.



Industrious Year 7 student Louis Bordas worked with a nationwide network of volunteers as part of an initiative with the volunteering group 3Dcrowd.uk and the National 3D Printing Society to produce PPE shields for the NHS on his personal 3d printer.



Meanwhile, two BMS students completed separate cycling challenges to raise money for NHS charities. Louis Bunker cycled 50km in his back garden and Pierre Botha completed the third leg of a 525km cycling challenge on the virtual cycling platform, Zwift. Between them they raised an impressive £2678.75.



Supporting Students

On Thursday 18 June, our Year 12 Design and Technology students had the opportunity to attend a live online presentation from OBM Mark Heard (2000-08). Mark is currently a Lead Design Engineer at Dyson and was happy to share his experiences and to answer questions about careers in this area.



In July Jeremy Irvine (2000-08) gave up his time to speak to some of our drama students about his successful career to date. They had a glimpse into Jeremy's life: meetings in LA, auditions, *Mamma Mia*, and much more. He answered the students' questions so thoughtfully and gave a really frank and open insight into the life of an actor.



Students from Years 11–13 joined OBMs at an online 'Question Time' event focusing on engineering on 17 November. A panel of five OBMs representing different areas of the industry answered students' questions, and discussed the multiple pathways into engineering, the range of roles available, and the exciting projects that they have personally worked on.



We also received videos from OBMs, parents and others to create an inspiring enrichment programme for our Year 13 students. These included advice about life at university, information on careers in banking, TV and music production, engineering, consultancy and more, as well as interview tips and guidance on travelling and gap years.



Staying Safe

When we opened our doors again in September, things had to change. As well as erecting temporary marquees across the school campus to allow for more flexible spaces and ensure social distancing, students remained in zones around the school and within their own year group 'bubbles'. Hand sanitiser and disinfectant wipes were available in all rooms and temporary handwashing facilities placed around the site. Staff and students were also expected to wear face coverings while at school and on school and public transport. Resourceful student Georgina cleverly repurposed one of her old school skirts to make a face covering which was perfectly in keeping with the BMS uniform and helped to protect her and others by reducing the spread of infection.



In March 2021 we set up a mass testing facility in our Sports Hall where more than 3,000 tests were conducted onsite in less than two weeks by our parent, staff, and OBM volunteers. Staff and students then began twice-weekly Lateral Flow Device (LFD) testing from home to help identify any asymptomatic cases.



Meanwhile our musicians and singers were busy putting together an amazing virtual summer concert, which was premiered on Facebook on 03 July. The annual Christmas concert, recorded at school but streamed online, included year group ensembles and choirs.



Enjoying Co-Curricular Activities

It was important that our students and staff stayed active whilst at home and so a significant number of them participated in the #stayactive challenge, sending in pictures to show us how they were keeping fit and taking care of their mental and physical health through exercise.



Dr Oswald hosted the 2020 Science Fair virtually. Topics ranged from rubber eggs to handwashing to optical illusions, all submitted from home. Our guest judge, OBM Charlie Rex (2004-15), commented on how impressed she was with all the entries and the creativity shown in the presentations.



And with our theatre still closed, our Performance Arts staff secured the rights to stream the fantastic 2014 production of *Les Misérables* for one night only. 1,300 people tuned in to watch the show, which starred several of our talented alumni. The link was shared with OBMs via email and was enjoyed by all. It was just the tonic we all needed after such a challenging year.



School Music Prizes 2020

On Tuesday 04 February, adjudicator Craig Patterson presented the annual BMS Senior School music prizes to a group of deserving students. The day showcased a wealth of talent across categories including preliminary, intermediate and advanced standards for each instrument group, plus prizes for singing and composition. Performances took place throughout the day with Craig announcing the winners for each category.

Craig is a professional trumpet player and has received several prestigious awards during his career. He regularly performs with orchestras such as the CBSO, BBC Philharmonic, English National Opera and Birmingham Royal Ballet, and has recently become the MD of Bedford Town Band.

Director of Music, John Mower, commented: "It was great to welcome Craig back to BMS to adjudicate the Senior Music Prizes on Tuesday. The standard of playing was high throughout the day, with many enjoyable performances. Staff and students alike appreciated the variety of music on offer from our Senior School students, and thanks should go to all who took part."

The winners were as follows:

Preliminary Music Prize

Harvey Lookes – Year 7 (voice)

Intermediate Music Prize (any instrument)

Ananya Chandra – Year 10 (drum kit)

Intermediate Music Prize (Strings)

Evelyn Piper – Year 9 (harp)

Intermediate Music Prize (Piano)

Charlie Blades – Year 9

Deveson Prize for Strings

Amina Eldin (violin) – Year 12

David Warren Prize for Broken Voice Singing

David Bygraves – Year 12

Joly Black – Year 12

Deveson Prize for Woodwind and Brass

Evie Hrydziusko (flute) – Year 9

HW Stewardson Prize for Keyboard

Niall Townley (piano) – Year 12

The School Prize for Singing

Immy Churchill – Year 13

Composition Forum

Michael Chamberlain – Year 12

Greg May – Year 13

The Prize-Winners' Prize

Greg May – Year 13



OBM Featured on BIMA 100 List

In May 2020, former Head Girl Rosie Cross (2007-12) was featured in the British Interactive Media Association (BIMA) 100 list as a Rising Star in the digital and technology industry. She was nominated by her employer AKQA for her work as a Strategist. BIMA's 100 Rising Star's list celebrates the future leaders of the industry and those who they describe as the 'ones to watch'. Rosie has a passion for diversifying the industry and supports social impact projects in her spare time, using her skills to aid the founders of two businesses that support young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.



House Poetry

It was lovely to welcome back former Head Boy, John Richmond (1965-69), to judge the House Poetry competition in March 2020, which was on the theme of the environment. After BMS, John studied English Literature at Trinity College, Cambridge and went on to establish a successful career including writing and editing, as well as teaching and educational broadcasting. He is a published author, with titles including *My Proper Life*, dedicated to his BMS English teacher Peter Hetherington (1958-77), and *Bring Me the Sunflower*. Congratulations to the winning House Oatley.



BAFTA Nomination for OBM Performer

Sopé Dirisu (2002-09) starred in Sky Atlantic's nine-part series *Gangs of London*, which began in May 2020. He played Elliot Finch, a low-life chancer driven by rage, starring alongside actors such as Joe Cole, Michelle Fairley, and Lucian Msamati. Before this he had already had a very successful career starring in films such as *The Huntsman: Winter's War* and *His House*, as well as television and stage work.

Sopé was subsequently nominated for the 2021 BAFTA Rising Star Award, which honours a performer who has shown truly outstanding talent on the big screen and has captured the attention of both the public and the film industry.



Lockdown Live

During their time at BMS, friends Ollie Granger (2009-2020) and James Russell (2009-2020) started their production company The New Scene which helps to promote musicians and manage concerts. Like many, due to the struggles with lockdown and event cancellations, they had to find a new way to promote their musicians so launched Lockdown Live, a series of online music gigs. They held many events, including a set from BMS teacher Pete Davis, which was edited by the team and premiered on YouTube in August 2020. The video was free to watch, but accepted donations to raise funds for NHS Charities and Help Musicians UK.



Royal Academy of Music Offers for BMS Students

Talented musician Immy Churchill was awarded a scholarship to study jazz singing at the Royal Academy of Music (RAM) from September 2020.



The RAM is the oldest conservatoire in the UK, founded in 1822, and one of the most prestigious music schools in the world. Each year, the RAM offer places to just nine jazz students and Immy will be the only singer across the four years of the course. The practical course contains elements of performance, composition and arrangement, as well as offering the opportunity to study abroad in the third year.

Immy said: "Performing and composing jazz wasn't something that was available at my previous school so I am grateful to the BMS music department for allowing me to pursue it here. Being surrounded by such incredible musicians as fellow students Greg May and Michael Chamberlain has also inspired me to follow a career in music."

Together with Greg and Michael, and with support from fellow student composers Ben Williams, Anna James and Jennifer Khan, Immy took a lead role in the composition of the music for the BMS production of *Our Country's Good*, which was performed in March 2020.

Immy added: "The opportunities I've had to compose at BMS proved vital ahead of my audition which involved performing one of my own pieces. Having had the experience of composing and conducting the music for the show has really set me in good stead for the RAM."

Assistant Director of Music at BMS, Mary Perry, commented: "Immy is an asset to the Music Faculty at BMS and her enthusiasm for all we do is infectious. I am delighted that she has been accepted by the RAM. She was a leading light whilst rehearsing the ensemble for the production of *Our Country's Good* and her commitment is never in doubt. *Our Country's Good* was an opportunity for Immy to venture into new territory as she conducted the ensemble, and helped to realise the music that has been written, entirely, by her and her peers. These compositions span a wide range of styles from folk, orchestral and eight-part vocal music so she won't be without a challenge."

Year 7 student, Evelyn Piper, has also been offered a place to study harp at the RAM Junior Department from September 2020. She will receive tuition there for her second and third study instruments: violin and piano, and will gain experience playing in various ensembles and choirs alongside some of the best instrumentalists in the country.

Evelyn started playing the harp when she was seven years old and currently studies with Felicity Meakins. She also plays with the National Youth Harp Orchestra of Great Britain and with the National Children's Orchestras of Great Britain.



Healthy Return for BMS Investor

BMS student Oliver Neilson successfully qualified for the semi-finals of the Student Investor Challenge at just 15 years old. As a single applicant, he finished in 56th place against 6000 other four-player teams, the majority of which consisted of students from Year 12. As a result, he also won the BMS PPE Society Share Dealing Challenge.

The Student Investor Challenge is run by The London Institute of Banking and Finance and is open to teams of students aged 14-19 from anywhere in the world. The first round of the 2020 competition ran from 14 October 2019 to 24 January 2020. Each team was given £100,000 of virtual money to invest in two portfolios: an Active Investor portfolio, which can be traded every day, and a Strategic Investor portfolio, which only allows a limited number of trades per month, and therefore encourages long-term thinking.

Oliver explained: "I started the challenge by reading articles in the *Financial Times* and by following the BBC news. I realised that I would have to be careful to invest in companies that wouldn't be negatively affected by a possible no-deal Brexit. The companies I invested in included: BT, Just Eat, BP and Experian. I've really enjoyed this experience and I hope to pursue this line of work in the future."

Head of Business, Richard Smith, commented: "This is an amazing achievement for Oliver especially in the context of his age relative to the majority of those taking part. He has demonstrated a great level of maturity when developing his investment strategy."



Kenyan Adventure for Hill Scholarship Winners

Sixth Form students Amar Parmar and Jules Caresmel were named as the 2020 recipients of the Hill Family Scholarship. They impressed the judging panel with their proposal to work with the Sure Foundation as part of the Utange Orphan's project and the Celebration High School project in Mombasa, Kenya. The Scholarship, provided by OBM Adam Hill (1993-98) and his family, is awarded on an annual basis to a student who commits to taking a degree in medicine or in the medical sciences. Professor Adam Hill is a dual-qualified clinician and mechanical engineer, as well as the CEO of immuno-diagnostics company Oncimmune. The purpose of the Scholarship is to fund, or part-fund, the successful candidate for a challenge, preferably in another country, which improves the health of children in disadvantaged parts of the world.

A member of this year's judging panel commented: "The proposal submitted by Amar and Jules was such a fascinating read. It was clear they had spent many hours researching their plans and have been liaising regularly with the charity

coordinators. I know this will be a life-changing experience for both boys; they will make some amazing memories, but more importantly they will be helping those less fortunate whilst there."



BMS Student Wins Marine Biological Association Writing Competition

Year 10 student Ellie Sillar has won the Marine Biological Association's (MBA) Ocean Decade writing competition for her age group. Her piece, including her own illustrations, was published in the *Guardian* Seascape section in March 2021.

The MBA exists to support and serve the marine biological community, and their Young Marine Biologist membership category is dedicated to under 18s who are passionate about marine biology. Their annual essay competition invites members to 'submit pieces which are well researched, imaginative and thought-provoking'. Ellie's piece ticked all of these boxes and really impressed the panel of judges.

Ellie said: "The competition is usually launched at the Young Marine Biologist summit in Cornwall. However, in 2020 it took place online which allowed me to attend along with 300 participants from 38 different countries. I'm so pleased to have won and look forward to seeing my piece in print."

Head of Year 10, Ed Kerr, added: "I am thrilled that Ellie has seen such success supporting a cause she is so passionate about and the fact that she also produced her own illustrations is very impressive indeed! She is fully committed to supporting marine biology and has a very bright future ahead of her."



My Ocean Decade



"Quickly! Come quickly! The Otters are back!" My voice rings out around the house, inciting a scramble for shoes and a race to the door. My family and I pile outside, then make lots of noise shushing each other, before settling into an awed silence as we witness an otter devouring its latest victim: a sizable shanny.

I have often seen otters whilst on annual holidays in Kildonan, Arran, but each new sighting is almost as exciting as the first. During their time on shore, otters chase around rock pools, tease unsuspecting fish from their hiding places and find some comely basalt rock to sit on whilst enjoying their meal. But they never stay long, soon swimming out to sea in search of more food. Otters eat 15-25% of their own body weight every day, snacking on crabs, clams, fish, and urchins.



When walking along the beach, I often find broken shards of urchin shells along the strandline. But by far the best chance to get a good look at complete urchins is by snorkelling. Edible sea urchins live on the seabed at up to 40m deep, but at low tide I can usually find some nestled in cracks and crevices in water barely a meter deep.

I take a deep breath and dive down for a closer look, my hands search the rocky surroundings for wedges to hold myself down to the shallow seabed. Now, secured in position, I can observe the urchin. Urchins are grazers feeding on many things such as barnacles, plankton, mussels, and algae.



One such algae is *Garweed*. A brown seaweed, commonly referred to as kelp, *Garweed* has a broad body which separates into finger like digits (hence the Latin name *Laminaria digitata*). Once I have swum out to deeper waters the tangling masses of loose seaweeds give way to swathes of kelp forest, with just enough room between the seaweed and the surface for me to glide over. *Garweed* grows very fast, increasing by up to 5.5% per day.

While kelp forests make up a large proportion of Arran's seabed, there is another habitat that is equally rich in wildlife: maerl beds. "Maerl" is a collective term for certain red coralline algae that grow on the seabed. There are 3 main species found in the UK, two of which I have seen in Arran: *Phymatolithon calcareum* and *Lithothamnion glaciale*. I plunge down into the water, but maerl tends to grow at least 3m deep so by the time I have a clear view, I don't have long to explore my surroundings before having to return to the surface.



The main way in which maerl reproduces is through fragmentation. Pieces of maerl attached to sugar kelp can be transported considerable distances during storms, allowing maerl to colonise new areas. Maerl beds support an incredible biodiversity (providing a nursery for juveniles of many species), however individuals only grow 2cm a decade. The formation of a substantial maerl bed can take an extremely long time.

However, it can be decimated in days. Dredging exploits the rich resources of prawns and scallops, ripping up countless tons of maerl and kelp leaving behind a barren waste resembling a freshly ploughed field.



In 2006, Arran's Lamlash Bay No-take-zone became the first community led marine reserve in Scotland, with 50% improvement in biodiversity noted in the first decade. This 2.67km² marine reserve protects one of the largest maerl beds in Scotland, which has probably been growing since the last ice age. Building on the achievement of the NTZ, protection of a further 280km² around Arran's coast (including Kildonan) was proposed in 2012, with legal enforcement in 2016 outlawing dredging.

This is what we can achieve in a short space of time. So, yes, these habitats grow slowly. Yes, they can be destroyed in mere hours. So? In less than a decade we can protect them for centuries to come.



Former OBM Club President Receives National Recognition

OBM Vaughan Southgate (1954-62) has been awarded an OBE for services to the community in Bedfordshire. The Queen's Birthday Honours Lists recognise the outstanding achievements of people across the United Kingdom and of the 1,495 people who received an award in October 2020 just 260 were selected at OBE level.

Dr Vaughan Southgate spent his entire working life researching the parasitic disease schistosomiasis, more commonly known as bilharzia. He was based in the Department of Zoology at the Natural History Museum, London, but during this time made frequent visits to the tropics and sub-tropics of the world, especially sub-Saharan Africa, to carry out field studies. At the Museum he was Head of Biomedical Parasitology, Director of a World Health Organisation Collaborating Centre, and a member of the Expert Panel on Parasitic Diseases of the WHO.

However, it is for services to the community in Bedfordshire which Vaughan has been recognised. After retiring from the Museum nearly 16 years ago, he became High Sheriff of Bedfordshire (2007-08), was appointed a Deputy Lieutenant and has recently become Chairman of the Trustees of Bedford Hospital Charity and Friends, which does sterling work for a very worthy cause.

He is also a loyal and generous supporter of Bedford Modern School, where he served as the President of the Old Bedford Modernians' Club in 2013. He said: "I spent my formative years at the School and it was there where I discovered my love of the natural world and received much help and encouragement."

Speaking of his award, Vaughan added: "I am delighted to be honoured by the Queen and would like to take this opportunity of thanking colleagues, friends and family for their support over many years."

As well as this, Vaughan was made *Honoris Causa* at the 231st Anniversary Meeting of the Linnean Society of London, held in Burlington House, Piccadilly. It was stated that "Dr Vaughan Southgate had a singularly productive term as President of the Linnean Society of London, 2009-2012, attracting a record number of Fellows and building links with the Royal Society of Medicine, and internationally with His Majesty the Emperor of Japan, the Ambassador of Nepal and colleagues in Sweden."

The Linnean Society of London is the world's oldest active biological society. Founded in 1788 by Sir James Edward Smith who was its first President, the Society takes its name from the

Swedish naturalist, Carl Linnaeus (1707-1778) whose botanical, zoological and library collections have been in its keeping since 1829. As it moves into its third century the Society provides a continuous forum for the discussion and advancement of life sciences.

Many congratulations to Vaughan for whom both honours are richly deserved.



News

Boosst Scoops Accredited Financial Planning Firm of the Year Award



Congratulations to OBM Josh Batten (2002-10), Director of Boosst, which won the 2020 Accredited Financial Planning Firm of the Year award at the Chartered Institute for Securities & Investment (CISI) Financial Planning Conference. Although the event was held online, Josh and his team were still able to celebrate in their offices. CISI said: "Boosst demonstrate excellence in everything they do and are recognised as some of the most trusted financial planning firms in the UK."

Junior School Charities Club

In October 2020, our Junior School Charities Club were busy collecting donations for the Harvest Appeal to support Bedford Foodbank. Overall, they raised an impressive grand total of £850.30.



Debating Success

Year 13 student Miles King finished as runner-up in the 2020 English Speaking Union (ESU) Public Speaking Competition, the largest of its kind in England and Wales.

The competition, conducted online for the first time last year, was composed originally of 48 entrants from ten schools. The students progressed first through the local stage, and then the regional stage, before just six of them remained in the national finals. For each round, Miles gave a four-minute speech about the topic of his choice – the importance of small political parties – and took questions afterwards.

The English-Speaking Union, founded in 1918, plays an important part in improving literacy

in students around the UK, offering free programmes in which young people can develop their confidence and oracy skills. Their Public Speaking Competition is a prestigious and challenging event, emphasising the importance of presentation, cooperation, and critical thinking.

Miles commented: "The competition has enabled me to present myself well; not only in person but also online which I think will be increasingly important in the future."

Head of Politics, Stuart Baker, added: "Miles did a great job presenting his detailed research on the role of smaller political parties in democracy and his answers to questions were detailed and very thoughtful."



OBM Lodge Award

Every year, 'The Old Bedford Modernians' Lodge Award for Personal Achievement' is awarded to a deserving student from Year 13.

Previous winners have included Thomas Forster (2014-18) for his exemplary contribution to outreach activities, especially for his dedication and leadership with the Dementia Walking Project, and Padmi Fordham (2012-19) for her support and overall involvement in the life of BMS, especially in her final year as Head Girl.

The 2020 winner is Carrie Whittaker for her positive mindset, which has had a significant influence on her fellow students' sense of well-being. Carrie joined BMS in September 2018 as a Year 12 student and was appointed a Senior Monitor the following year. At the start of lockdown in March 2020, Carrie volunteered to work as part of the School's provision for the children of key workers which she undertook with commitment, sensitivity and maturity. For these reasons, she is considered a worthy winner of the award.



BMS Pianist Hits the Right Note

Talented Year 13 student Niall Townley has been successful in gaining an offer from Leeds Conservatoire to study piano from September 2021. This highly selective course will give Niall the opportunity to study a broad range of disciplines alongside world-class musicians.

During his time at BMS, Niall has made a significant contribution to the musical life of the School, performing in a range of ensembles and choirs. He was also a recipient of the David Ball Piano Scholarship, an annual award established in memory of OBM David Ball (1937-45), which has helped contribute to the cost of his piano lessons at school.



News

Lest We Forget

At Bedford Modern School, the Service of Remembrance has always been an important part of the school calendar when we remember not only those who have lost their lives, but also those for whom conflict has had an ongoing effect. In November 2020, our students observed the two-minute silence and watched a video assembly for Senior School students led by Andy Whomsley, Senior Deputy Head, which included a recording of the Sixth Form choir. For the first time we shared the recording of the event with OBMs. In addition our caterers, Holroyd Howe, themed the day's lunch menu accordingly, and students were treated to traditional dishes including shepherd's pie and Irish soda bread, as well as a beautiful cupcake display.



Multiple Awards for Office S&M Architecture Practice

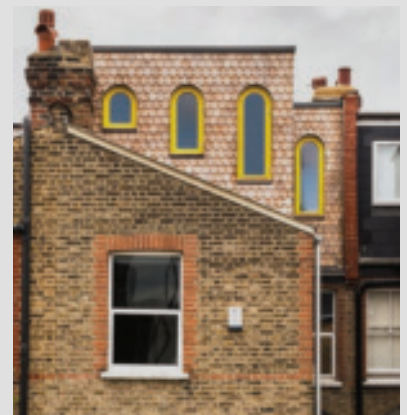
Architect and OBM Hugh McEwen (1994-05) is the successful co-founder of the Office S&M architecture practice, which in 2020 won both Building Design's Young Architect of the Year Award and *The Architects' Journal's* 40 under 40 Award.

Office S&M was created seven years ago by Hugh and his business partner Catrina Stewart. Since then, the practice has expanded to include two more members; Beth Bird and Boulérin Adepipe.

The team are known for their experimental approach and creative use of materials, with a particular interest in recycling and reimagining old items. Their work is bold and colourful, creating extraordinary spaces for everyday use.

Hugh personally won the Royal Institute of British Architect's Rising Star Award in 2019. The prestigious Rising Star Award celebrates talented individuals who

demonstrate an impressive level of dedication, passion, and confidence in their work. Speaking of this award, Hugh commented: "To be recognised as one of the top emerging architects in the UK, with a focus on how we are collaboratively designing and delivering buildings differently, was a real boost."



Arkwright Scholarship Awarded to BMS Engineer

Year 12 student Ollie Bridge was awarded a coveted Arkwright Engineering Scholarship. The programme is administered by The Smallpeice Trust, the UK's leading STEM Education Charity, and is the most prestigious scholarship scheme of its type in the UK. The scholars complete a rigorous selection process which assesses their academic, practical and leadership skills in engineering disciplines. The scholarships consist of an annual financial award to each scholar and to their school, together with enrichment activities such as mentoring and industry visits that enhance a scholar's experience of engineering in a real-world context.

Talking of his success, Ollie explained: "I was surprised and excited to hear that I had been awarded an Arkwright Scholarship sponsored by the Scientific Instrument Makers. Although different this year, it was still a tough application process and involved interviews and an exam, including an exercise on problem solving.

"As an Arkwright scholar I get access to events and 'connect days' run by companies representing different sectors of the engineering industry as well as universities. I am looking forward to making the most out of this opportunity during the next couple of years."

Andrew Rock, Teacher of Design Engineering and Arkwright Scholarship Coordinator at BMS, said: "I am very pleased, once again, to be able to highlight the success of our students in achieving these scholarships, which encourage and support the country's best students to pursue a career in engineering.



Ollie's award was richly deserved and in such a challenging year we are delighted that his engineering and leadership potential has been recognised."



Celebrating National Apprenticeship Week

To celebrate National Apprenticeship Week (NAW) in 2021, we highlighted the successes of two OBMs who have chosen an apprenticeship route in their career journeys: former Deputy Head Girl, Hannah Tyers (2013-18) and former Head Boy, Thomas Saunders (2008-19).

This year marked the 14th annual NAW, in which employers around the country hold events and connect over social media to recognise the diverse opportunities that apprenticeships can bring to individuals building their careers.

Hannah is in her third year of studying commercial management and quantity surveying with Walter Lilly, a company involved in both residential and educational construction. Her learning takes place mostly on site, which she feels benefits her studies greatly. Speaking of her decision to choose her apprenticeship, Hannah commented: "Full-time university was never something I had my heart set on as I didn't like the idea of not earning money until I graduated. Instead, I applied for apprenticeships in the area I was interested in. I am currently part of the team working on the biggest project our company is involved in, worth circa £87 million."



Thomas began his apprenticeship in rural surveying in 2019 with Berrys, a firm of chartered surveyors and valuers as well as property and business consultants. Similarly to Hannah, being able to work and gain direct experience in his chosen industry from a younger age appealed to him. Speaking of his time at his company, Thomas said: "In my 18 months at Berrys I have assisted with compulsory purchase and compensation work, mostly on the subject of HS2. I have also helped draft grazing agreements, farm business tenancies and stocktaking valuations. Every day is very different, and you never experience the same day twice."

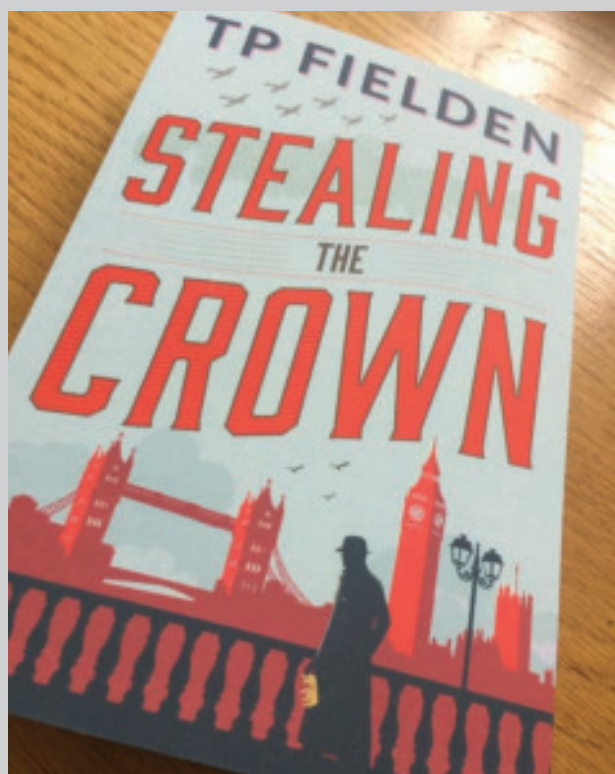
Higher Education and UCAS Officer at BMS, Richard Smith, added: "Both Hannah and Thomas demonstrate the different pathways open to students at BMS and the importance of carrying out research to understand the range of routes available into specific occupations."

"Apprenticeships, and particularly degree apprenticeships, continue to grow in terms of variety and availability across a wide range of industries and government. I remember both students exploring both the apprenticeship route alongside applying to study at university to ensure that they had a choice of pathways once they left BMS."

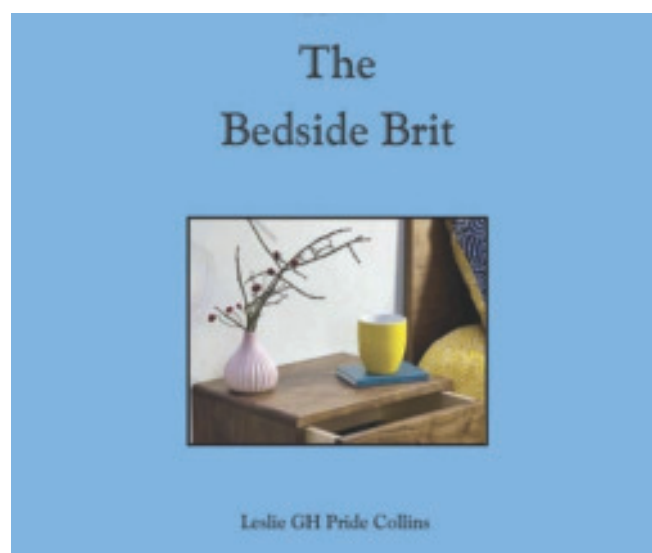
"It is pleasing to see both enjoying their career choices and responding to the opportunities these apprenticeships have given them."

Publishing Success for OBMs

In July 2020, Christopher Wilson (1957-65) had his forthcoming novel, *Stealing the Crown*, feature in a story in *The Times*. The novel, written under his pen name TP Fielden, is set in Buckingham Palace during the Second World War and is influenced by Christopher's many years as a royal biographer and commentator. It is the first in a wartime trilogy published by Thomas & Mercer.

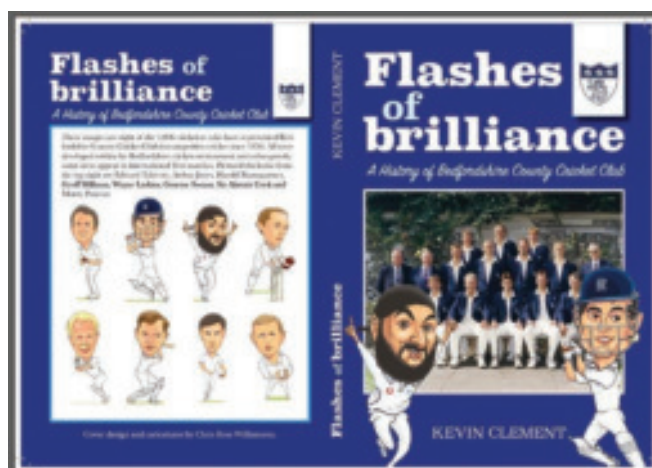


Congratulations to Leslie Pride Collins (1941-47) on the production of his first book, *The Bedside Brit*. In the book, Leslie provides the reader with a selection of his short stories that have been published previously in a newspaper in New York. The stories cover a wide variety of topics from politics, current affairs, changes in society, and world travels



81 OBMs Feature in Flashes of Brilliance

Flashes of Brilliance is a 100-page paperback book about Bedfordshire County Cricket Club, published in March 2020. Written by Kevin Clement, it's the first publication on the subject and contains a compact history of the Club, every competitive result since 1850, and 1006 player biographies along with their career records and a selection of photos. Of these 1006 players, 81 were educated at Bedford Modern School, three of whom played cricket for England: Arthur Jones (1954-62), Geoff Millman (1943-53), and Monty Panesar (1998-2000).



News and OBM Club Survey

#GreatNightOut

From 16 to 20 March 2020, just a few days before the first national lockdown came into force, a cast of talented students in Years 11, 12 and 13 staged a powerful and moving performance of Timberlake Wertenbaker's *Our Country's Good* with a quite exceptional musical score composed and performed entirely by students. Set in the 1780s, the play tells the extraordinary true story of a group of convicts and a young officer who rehearse and perform a play in a penal colony in New South Wales – Australia's first theatrical production. The contrast between moments of light-hearted comedy and dark tragedy was intense and created an emotional rollercoaster for the audience. It was a triumph not just theatrically, but also musically.



In 2020 we commissioned a survey to find out more about the views of our alumni community. We appreciated your feedback enormously and would like to thank each and every one of our respondents. Here are some of the things you told us.

OBM Survey 2020

527 responses



Key Interests



Rugby
48%



Music
40%



Performing Arts
33%



Cricket
31%

Valued Services



Eagle News
49%



Events
29%



Archive
25%



BMS Updates
23%

“

BMS changed my life, I arrived as a timid, uncertain boy and I left with a huge amount of positive experiences that shaped the person who I am today.”

Reunions were our most popular and in-demand event by far, with **66%** of OBMs saying they would attend.

Now or in the future:

62%

would consider
volunteering

60%

would consider
donating

“

I made friends I am still in touch with, despite being on the other side of the world. BMS gave me a great start in life and instilled/reinforced a lot of values – perseverance, resilience, drive to achieve, creativity – which have served me well.”

Sport

Athletics

GB Call Up for BMS Para Athlete

Year 9 student Becca Scott has been invited to join the GB Para Athletics Programme. The programme is the first of three tiers of the Paralympic Development Academy, which aims to prepare athletes for the 2024 Paralympic Games in Paris.

Becca, who has an arm deficiency, was spotted at the 2019 National Junior Disability Games and was selected for the long jump. She will also be expected to compete in other disciplines, such as 100m and 200m, as well as developing her overall athletic capability. The programme focuses on supporting athletes through specific technical development, learning from some of the best athletes in the country. There is a tough selection process, prioritising those who have potential to win medals at future paralympic games.

Becca commented: "It came as a surprise but I am so pleased to have been selected. It has been a great experience to work with the GB long jump coach, Roger Kellar, and I am looking forward to continuing the programme. Teachers in the BMS Sports Department have been really supportive, helping with strength and conditioning work, as well as training me in athletics and other sports."

The programme started in January 2020 at Loughborough University, with a baselining and testing day, before Becca was invited to three full-day coaching sessions in Newham, London at an indoor track and jump pit. She will also continue training with Paddy O'Shea, a long and triple jump coach, at Bedford Athletic Stadium.



Swimming

Five BMS students picked up an impressive 23 gold medals and 12 county trophies between them at the Bedfordshire County Swimming Championships in January 2020. Representing the Modernian Swimming Club, they travelled to Luton Sports Village to compete against seven other clubs from across the region.

The stand-out performance came from Year 10 student Ben Ashdown who won eight gold medals in 50m and 100m freestyle, 100m and 200m breaststroke, 200m individual medley, as well as the mixed medley relay, freestyle relay and mixed freestyle relay. He also took the Junior Championship titles in all of his

individual events, making him the fastest U15 swimmer in the county.

The other gold medal winners were:

Oliver McCulloch (Year 8)
100m, 200m breaststroke, 400m individual medley, 1500m freestyle and 200m butterfly.

Jess Watson (Year 10)
100m, 200m breaststroke, open medley relay and medley relay.

Henry Jones (Year 10)
Mixed medley relay, freestyle relay and mixed freestyle relay.

Emily Jones (Year 12)
Open medley relay and open freestyle relay.

Congratulations also go to Year 6 student Jonathon Regan who reached three finals in the 100m freestyle, 50m and 100m backstroke.



Hockey

Year 12 student Grace Brady has completed the Level One Hockey Coaching Award delivered by the Federation of International Hockey (FIH). Grace was the youngest on the programme by nearly 10 years and one of the youngest to have achieved the award.

The programme involved three online sessions which she completed during lockdown, followed by a presentation and a formal interview with the facilitator. Grace took part alongside hopeful coaches from around the world including participants from South Africa, USA and Europe.

The award is the first level of the FIH Coaching Education Pathway which focusses on the role of a coach, the coaching environment, coaching theory and practical ability.

Grace said: "I am delighted to have earned this qualification as it enables me to further my current coaching at BMS as well as coaching externally. I found the process intense but very enjoyable and it has really helped in developing me as a player as well as a coach in lots of different aspects of the game. I plan to reach the higher-level qualifications in the future and the connections I have made with coaches from across the world will be of great value to this."



FIH Coach Developer and Head of Hockey at Oundle School, Grahame Mansell-Grace, added: "Grace was very impressive and clearly has a good hockey brain. She is a credit to BMS."

England Hockey Performance Centre Selection for BMS Players

Three talented BMS athletes have been selected to attend the England Hockey Performance Centre in Northwood for the 2020/21 season. Only players who consistently demonstrate strong skills are invited to Performance Centres, and these young women have done just that.

Year 10 Mia Dunkley has been playing in goal for Bedford Hockey Club and Bedfordshire County for the past three years and will now attend the U15 Northwood Performance Centre following her successful selection.

Sophia Warren, also in Year 10, continues her journey with England Hockey Performance Centres, having been selected from the pool of players from seven counties in the East Region to the U17 girls' squad which is a significant achievement for a player of her age. Sophia plays for Southgate Hockey Club U16 Girls and Ladies 2nd and 3rd XI teams at Bedford Hockey Club.

Also selected for the U17 age group is Year 12 student Lucy Willis, who explained: "I have been playing hockey since I was three years old with the Juniors at Bedford Hockey Club. I was selected for the Bedfordshire County U13 squad when I was 11 and two of my proudest moments were captaining the County team to wins in the Eastern County Finals Day at U13 level in 2017 and U17 level in 2020."

"I was selected to attend the Northwood Regional Performance Centre in 2018 and again this year where I am proud to be representing my school, club and county in the squad again."

Head of Hockey, Harry Benjamin, said: "It is fantastic news to hear that three BMS students have successfully been selected for Performance Centre. Their commitment to hockey both in and out of school is second to none and I know they will benefit from the opportunity to train in a highly competitive environment. Good luck to all three girls as they continue their hockey career."



Sport

Football

OBM Ruth Fox (2010-17) appeared on *The Ultimate Goal* on BT Sport at the end of 2020. Ruth, who currently plays for St Ives Town, was picked by a panel of experts to join 29 other footballers to compete for the chance to play in a one-off match in front of scouts from women's teams all over the world.



Rowing

In April 2020, the BMS senior rowing squad finished in first place in the education section of the World Erg Challenges. A total of 31 students took part between 15 March and 15 April and clocked 8,533,992 meters, with an average of 275,290 meters per person. This was particularly impressive considering the team who finished in second place had 84 members with an average of 99,140 meters each.

Luton Town FC Signs BMS Footballer

In March 2021 Year 11 student and talented footballer Jake Burger was offered a two-year contract deal with Luton Town FC which commenced in June 2021. During the next two seasons he will play in the U18 Youth Alliance League, South East Conference as well as compete in the Youth Alliance Cup and the FA Youth Cup tournaments.

The contract will offer Jake the opportunity to play against some of the best players in the country at his level and at some of the best stadiums in the region. He hopes to be offered a full professional contract at the end of the two years, giving him the opportunity to break into the first team at Luton Town FC or move out on loan to get first team experience at a high level.



Jake commented: "I am really pleased to be offered this contract. I know I am in a privileged position and I have worked hard for this since I was nine years old. To get to the next stage will be tough but it is a great opportunity for me to build a pathway into a career in football. I would like to thank all the people that have helped me to get to this stage."

Head of Football, Michael Park, added: "Jake is a committed and determined player both on and off the pitch always striving to better himself, so it is no surprise that he has gained his scholarship at Luton and I am very happy for him. I wish Jake all the very best on a tough but an amazing journey towards a professional football career."

US Scholarships for BMS Students

Year 13 students Brennan Connelly and Kai Squires were offered prestigious sports scholarships to study in the USA, and began their four-year courses in the summer of 2020.

Brennan Connelly will be taking up a tennis scholarship at Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia. He is hoping to major in Industrial Design, while playing tennis for the Jefferson Rams. Brennan said: "I am really excited about this opportunity. I currently train at Riverside Tennis Club and in Letchworth for around 14 hours per week, including competitions and strength and conditioning work. I'm so grateful for the support I've received from BMS and I am really looking forward to seeing what the future will bring."



Meanwhile Kai Squires will be attending Ohio Dominican University on a golf scholarship. He has been busy maintaining consistent scoring in all his competitions, with a current handicap of four, whilst still managing his busy academic schedule.

Kai explained: "It has been my dream to study in the USA for the past three years. I've been working with a company called Pro Dream USA who have helped me with everything from my GCSE and SAT exams to ensuring my golf standard is improving."

"Although I don't have to choose a major at this point, I am interested in Finance and considering a minor in Spanish. I am looking forward to seeing where golf takes me and hope to end up working in the industry in some capacity."

Club Sporting Contacts

Cricket

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kevin.appleton@hotmail.com

Fives

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Football

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Golf *Open for appointment*

If interested, please email:
externalrelations@bedmod.co.uk

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Netball

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Sophie Randall
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Rugby

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James Pollard
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Water Polo

Mark Bullerwell
1999bars@gmail.com

Memory *Stir*

Jack Pooley 2002-12

In order to promote the benefits of outdoor exercise to both physical and mental health, Jack Pooley and three friends planned and organised a unique event. IROWMAN took place on Saturday 12 September 2020 and included a 17.5km row up the length of Lake Windermere, a 183km cycle around the Lake District, and finished with a marathon on the UK's hilliest road course. The team completed the event in an impressive 16 hours and 59 minutes and raised more than £5000 for The British Heart Foundation, Fix the Fells and Mind.



Kieran White 2011-18

We welcomed back Kieran White who assembled and led a team in setting up and filming the virtual TEDxBedford event in October, which was streamed on Friday 06 November 2020. The event was filled with inspirational Bedford speakers, one of whom was OBM Johnny Luk (2003-09), discussing the topic of 'resilience'.



Ashley Staines 2001-09

Ashley Staines was busy during lockdown co-founding Volunteero, a platform designed to help charities deploy and manage their volunteers. Volunteero has partnered with various Age UK regions to pilot the platform which, as well as providing enhanced safeguarding tools, quickly showed improved volunteer productivity and saved significant amounts of time for charity staff. This has been a great initiative which came at a time where we all needed to support one another as much as possible.



After our Free on Friday event in 2020 was postponed, it was great to see some of our OBMs catching up online over video call instead. On 05 April Callum McIntyre (2007-17), Toby Harris (2010-15), James Owen (2008-17), William Tillet (2008-17), Dylan Patsanza (2015-17), Edward Else (2008-17), Iona Wilson (2015-17), Corinne Jenkins (2010-17) and Georgia Goddard (2012-17), met to enjoy a quiz.



Bryan Simmons

1943-45

It was lovely to be sent this photo of Bryan Simmons in response to the OBM 90th birthday card he received in February 2020. He celebrated hitting this milestone with a small family dinner and still fondly remembers his time at BMS.



Dean Cowley

1965-73

writes: 'For those old members who were taught by the splendid 'Buffer' Elliot, you may remember him as I do, as a truly inspiring history teacher. With the help of the classic textbook by G R Elton, I became deeply and enduringly fascinated by the Tudors and, especially, by the first Tudor, Henry VII.

Having just retired, I therefore decided to follow the footsteps of Henry and his small band from his landing at Milford Haven to the Battle of Bosworth. Starting, as they did, at Mill Bay on 07 August 2020, I stopped each night within a few miles of where they were known to have camped and completed a total walk of 225 miles in 15 days, raising just over £2,500 for Diabetes UK (I am now Type 1) in the process. Best of all, Henry won again this year!

I am eternally grateful to the many great teachers that BMS provided (and, of course, to George's brilliant rugby coaching). They are still having a profound impact on my life.'



Mike Stanbridge

1950-58

In Issue 119 of *Eagle News*, Trevor Corfield (1952-57) submitted an article from the *Bedford Today* newspaper which showed the BMS CCF Corps of Drums in Norfolk in 1957. In response to this, Mike Stanbridge writes: 'I started as a bugler in the mid 50s and then, after some quick tuition by Mick Cheshire, the senior Snare Drummer. I spent just one term as one of his group before moving on to be a Tenor Drummer during 1957-58. The wearing of a leopard skin as well as beating and twirling the tenor drum sticks was a real show piece when on official parades and in competitions! Even more so after I quickly learnt during one of our training camps, alongside the Argyle & Sutherland (A&S) Highland Pipes & Drums, that we could be even more flamboyant by attaching some crocheted tassels to the drum stick heads and twirl our drum sticks in complex movements, whilst still being able to beat or brush the drum as each stick passed over the top of it. After obtaining a pair of these drum stick hoods and tassels from the A&S

Memory *Stir*

Bandmaster, shown in the photo, I took them home to my mother who was a very able knitter and she quickly crocheted four pairs of these drum stick attachments for myself and my fellow tenor drummer, whose name I cannot, regrettably, remember. One pair of tassels each for practice purposes, plus a spare pair each for official parades and competitions. Major Greenwood was most impressed and I have no doubt that all of this showy stuff added to our, already established, credibility as a smart, well dressed and very capable band. As Trevor states in his article, we were, indeed, our Commanding Officer's pride and joy. I might add that some of the snare drummers then, also, became quite showy, under the instruction of Mick Cheshire again, with the spinning of their drum sticks whilst playing - but only when stationary and not when marching. Why, you may ask? Their snare drum sticks were not attached to their hand with strong cord as our tenor drum sticks were to ours and if they dropped them whilst spinning and marching they would be lost and probably trodden on by the buglers behind them.

I remember that the band practiced almost every day, during morning breaks or lunch time, in one of the classrooms on the West side of the quadrangle. There was always another five-note, lip-muscled bugle tune to learn and for the drummers to practice the required rhythm and volume to match the tune.



CCF band being inspected by an unknown Senior Naval officer accompanied by Major Greenwood with Drum Major Somerville and the CCF RSM in the background. Mike is the Tenor Drummer complete with leopard skin immediately in front the Inspecting Officer.

We also learnt other marching display patterns and movements, from the various Regular and TA bands that we served alongside at our Training Camps, taking our marching direction signals from the Drum Major's mace movements whilst still desperately trying to concentrate on the rhythm and tune we were playing! There is a photo somewhere, taken from the St Paul's side, of the Drum Major's mace well into the air, looking like a missile above the crown of the town bridge, without any visibility of the Drum Major leading the band up the bridge from the St John's side! Where that photo is now I do not know but perhaps someone reading this article may have a copy. I think we were returning from the Cardington Road area where we had been playing at an agricultural show.

One key benefit of the band, as Barry Watson (1953-58) will probably remember, was that those who were 16 and over, were quickly recruited by the 5th Battalion of the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire TA Regiment, at Kempston Barracks, to become boy bandsmen and more professional musicians. I remember that Barry learnt the clarinet and I went on to become a cornet and trumpet player, learning the necessary three valve movements to supplement the five lip-muscle notes. As a consequence, we played in various concerts and attended all the TA Training weekends and camps being paid, what appeared in those days, to be a lot of

extra pocket money whilst still at BMS! In my family genealogy records, I have the letter that my father had to write, in 1957, giving his permission for me to join the TA as a boy soldier. If you wonder how I gained possession of that letter it was, surprisingly, amongst the huge volume of my Army documents that I received, many years after I retired from the Royal Engineers in 1989, under the Freedom of Information Act of 2005 and after the Army Record Office had digitised them all!

Edward Pumfrey 1946-55

travelled all the way from Hampshire at the end of February 2020 to visit the School. He donated various items to our archive, including his old BMS hymn books, a painting of the Cricket Pavilion and a selection of photographs, including one of him and the other boarders that lived in Shakespeare House in the late 1940s.



Mick Statham

1967-72

writes: 'Now this is a coincidence that happened a few years ago.

I left Bedford when I was 19, but travelled back regularly as my mum lives in St Bede's. I moved to Hull, then London and now Leeds where I've lived with my family ever since. I taught Science in Bradford for 36 years and one day, some years ago now, I was sat in the staff room with some other teachers at lunch time. One of them, Stewart Ellinson, was reading *The Times* Educational Supplement looking for jobs in Sharnbrook. "I know where that is, in Bedford" I said, Stuart replied: "I know Bedford, I went to school there, Bedford Modern". And we quickly learnt that not only did we attend the same school but we both lived in Brickhill... on the same street... two doors down from one another.

And so the colleague I had always known as Stuart from Leeds, now suddenly became the three-year-old Stuart who I so well remembered from many years previously. As we both stared at one another realising the coincidence, the hairs on the back of my neck stood up. And of course I have had other meeting coincidences in my life but there has never been one that has made such an impact on me than that one!

Philip Green

1961-67

&

Peter Wakefield

1959-68

were brought back into contact through our 'Find a Friend' service. Philip and Peter were best of friends at school and even went hitchhiking around Europe together for a month at the age of 16. Sadly they lost touch in the 1970s but can now reminisce about old times. Pictured is the two of them (top right) in the 1960s. Please visit our website if you wish to try and reconnect with an old friend.

Eddie Rutt

1943-52

writes: 'I was privileged to be the 1st XI scorer for four seasons – from 1949 to 1952. What happy times they were! So I suppose I can claim to have been the only person to have seen every ball bowled in those matches. They were golden years in the history of school cricket, with such fine players as Geoff Millman (1943-50) - later of England and captain of Nottinghamshire - Bob Gale (1943-50) (Middlesex), Graham Jarrett (1948-53), and Colin Garratt (1947-53). The Old Boys matches were two-day affairs in those days and I sat in the old wooden scoreboard with my great friend Peter Garratt (1943-52).

One Old Boys match I remember vividly. The Old Boys had brought along a seriously fast bowler in Gordon Brice (1935-41) who played for Northamptonshire. He rattled through our first five wickets before Bob Gale came in and crashed Brice's first ball, with a splendid square cut, for four and then went on to make 50.

I remember the cricket masters Toots, Cooper, father of Old Boys Richard and Jerry, and Charles Deveson, together with that memorable groundsman and umpire 'Fiddy' Rogers. And how we all looked



forward to those delicious lunches and teas in the pavilion generously provided by the Parents Association. Such happy memories!

Eddie celebrates his 65th wedding anniversary in 2021. He married his wife Sylvia on 16 June 1956 at the Church of St Andrew, Biggleswade. Eddie and Sylvia have three children: Mary, Andrew, and Simon (1983-89) who is an OBM and played rugby in the 1st XV and football in the 1st XI. Eddie was especially good friends at BMS with contemporaries Peter and Colin Garrett, Pat Beavis, Geoff Millman and Bob Gales, and would be very interested to hear from others of that era: philiprutt312@btinternet.com.



Memory *Stir*

Paul Dancer 1961-67

writes: 'On leaving BMS I passed for three Apprentice Schools and the Joseph Lucas Engineering School, which had just won an award for the best in Europe... so that was my choice, and a good one too.'

Continuing my apprenticeship, I went to Poly in Birmingham, now the University of Central England and then bridged to University of Aston for a degree in Engineering. I worked in several departments and roles: the buying office, group services, lighting factory, running new product introductions, then I went to production engineering, and was fortunate to run some huge projects, one involving Hot Melt Adhesive Application equipment. The next thing I knew I was offered the MD's position at the Hot Melt suppliers. After three years with this company I was not happy with the way the owner was running the business and I therefore contacted the manufacturer in Germany. It was agreed that I would start the company under the name Meltex in the UK. This I ran until 1990, when Meltex were approached by the Nordson Corporation in the US. So that year I was asked to become part of the Nordson team with my staff of specialists.

With Nordson's worldwide links I travelled to virtually every country in the world and presented papers at many conferences. In 2000 Nordson bought a UV Lamp Company and I was asked to manage the European Operation, but unfortunately a meet with the 'Big C' and heart issues along with arthritis that was diagnosed in 1994, started to take its toll. In 2003 I was made Chairman of the British Adhesives and Sealants Association but in 2004 Nordson were cutting back on management, and the opportunity to take retirement on a full pension due to ill health came about, so I took it.

A passion of mine from school is shooting. I shot for the School and Bedford County, gaining school colours in 1967, and continued to shoot for Joseph Lucas and Warwickshire County and higher levels on leaving BMS.



Unfortunately on leaving Lucas and venturing into a new career path I did not have the time, but I did attend a few corporate clay shooting events and from then on I was 'hooked'. By 1996 I was shooting at the British and English Opens and other international competitions on a regular basis, actually getting into the final on one occasion.

By 2004 my arthritis was causing me issues so I decided to put something back into the sport I love. In 2005 I became a Clay Pigeon Shooting Association instructor and in 2012 a coach. I was awarded CPSCA Coach of the Year in 2014 and also become a staff tutor for safety courses, and following that with instructor and referee courses, I'm also now an assessor for instructor courses.

I was fortunate to instruct Birmingham City Women and Aston Villa Women on several occasions. Last year I persuaded the Major of Birmingham to present the prizes. Hopefully by the end of this year I will be officially coaching a local RAF cadet group and I also spend my time writing articles for shooting magazines.

What started as a bit of fun at home with an Air Rifle at 22 years old, with the BMS CCF, became a successful hobby and now a retired career.

Thank you BMS for the attention given to me at school, especially PJ King who seemed to see

potential in me. Once you have qualifications you are rarely asked for them again and employers want people with experience and good communication skills with confidence... given to me by BMS. I have never had an interview for a job in my life.'

Nigel Armstrong 1964-72

writes about his memories of a school trip to Turkey, 50 years ago: "Had we come to look for the American plane that had crashed?" The question came from the spokesman for the 30 or so Turkish villagers that stood at our tent. They'd arrived just as Dylan Thomas's bible-black night (I must have done it in English) closed the brief gloaming. Some carried rifles dating from the Ottoman Empire. Some looked as if they served in it. Their arrival startled us in what we'd assumed was our secluded wild camp, but they were friendly. No, we'd five days to get across these harsh and dusty mountains to where we hoped to find the school minibus, two other four-boy groups and Andrew 'Angus' Cairncross. As our leader he was energetic and indefatigable. But could he, could we, read a Turkish map? The jury was out. Some of the finer points of this international exchange may have been lost in translation.

The minibus was temperamental. And it was rumoured that the trailer had served either in the Western Desert or on a local Brussel Sprout farm, possibly both. But they'd gotten the rather grandly titled 1970 BMS Asia Minor Expedition into, across, and out of Europe, so a bit like the Conservative Party.

Looking back, dimly but very fondly, I don't know whether it was the £45 all-in cost or my six week absence that appealed to my parents. This budget proved to be tight and also collectively mismanaged. We'd all voted for cheap local wine to complement our evening rations through the Alps and Balkans; for educational purposes, you understand. It worked. Even now, 50 years on, I can still tell red from white. But throughout most of the return up through Italy, the Swiss Alps and a visit

to Radio Luxembourg, meals centred on industrial quantities of jam sandwiches. I lost six kilos over the trip.

But what highlights for teenage lads:

- Meandering through some then Yugoslav highlights: Plitvice Lakes, Dubrovnik and Split in Croatia, even the then fawningly named Titograd in Montenegro
- Flirting with local girls in Bulgaria's Plovdiv Workers' Lido
- The amazing, extensive and then-unmanicured Ephesus ruins
- Sleeping out on the roof of Patrick Molony's (another teacher) Athens flat - how exotic was that for Bedfordshire's finest?
- Swimming in mid-August in the crystal blue water off Corfu, with barren and rocky southern Albania as a backdrop.

I've been sceptical (and, yes, envious) of Paddy Fernor's books on his walk from the Hook of Holland to Istanbul in the late 1930s starting out as an 18 year old. Surely it wasn't plausible to write them 40 years after the fact? But if the experiences are vivid enough, they remain. And for that, and my first European transit, I'll be forever grateful to BMS, Angus and even that battered old Ford.'



Justin Lavender

1960-69

an internationally recognised operatic tenor was busy during lockdown working with the Arcadian Opera Chorus, a local company which he established in 2016. With the remit of trying to debunk the elitism of opera and to encourage new audiences, Arcadian Opera was founded to perform specifically at Stowe. In July 2020, when their *Magic Flute* rehearsals were abandoned, they delivered a virtual

performance of *The Magic Hoot*, which was written by Justin in the back of taxi on a seven-hour drive in Rajasthan in January 2019.

The Arcadian Opera also held an open-air event at Stowe House at the end of August. They performed Henry Purcell's famous *Dido and Aeneas*, which was conducted by Justin.



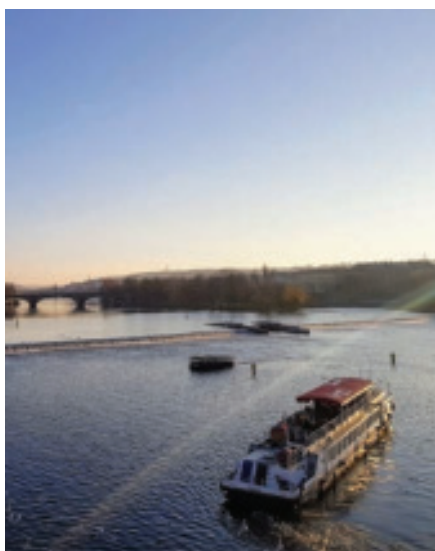
Memory *Stir*

Akeil
Akhtar
2010-17

writes: 'I am currently studying medicine within the Czech Republic going into my third year. I applied to the universities there through a company called Medical Doorway who were very helpful in the application process. Within the entrance exams you had to sit *multiple choice* papers consisting of the Sciences and Maths. Following on from the paper you would have an interview discussing why you would want to study medicine. Once you received offers from the different universities, you were able to select which one to go to and Medical Doorway helped with the enrolment phase by taking us as a group to the university.

Studying abroad can be very different - for example, our anatomy exam was an oral exam, whereas in the UK we are used to written exams. The level of detail required for each exam is higher when compared to the UK, as during oral exams the examiner can ask very detailed questions on a variety of topics and will only pass you when they are satisfied with the level of your knowledge. Within the first three years of the course we are expected to attend lessons teaching us the Czech language. This is useful within our proceeding clinical years in the hospital as we would be able to communicate with the patients better.

The Czech Republic is a very beautiful and historic country to live in with amazing architecture. The public transport is very reliable and cheap. Living costs in comparison to the UK are cheaper too. Studying abroad is also great as you meet people from lots of different countries which allows you to understand different cultures. The Czech Republic has great links to other places, for example Vienna, therefore it is a lot easier to travel and visit new places. It can be difficult being away from your family for long periods however I have really grown as a person by studying abroad and would recommend it to those potentially considering a degree abroad.'



Oliver
Crocker
2006-16



writes: 'Following school I read Classical Archaeology and Ancient History at Oxford, graduating with a first in 2019. In 2020 I undertook a Masters at Oxford. I have a research interest in the History of Collecting, and realised, briefly looking into the history of museums in British secondary schools, that very little had been published on the subject. When I was at BMS, I was always fascinated that the school once held a vast museum collection, one of the best in the country, but that this history had been largely forgotten by the School.

On visiting the Higgins Museum, which now houses the collection once belonging to BMS, I realised there was a huge amount of research potential in looking at how, and perhaps more interestingly why, these objects were acquired. I focused on the Classical collections (Greek, Roman and Cypriot) that the school collected, tracing their provenances and acquisition methods. What was clear is that these objects ended up at BMS through a variety of means - often given by alumni, but also by institutions who knew of the school's museum. It is thanks to BMS, and specifically the most enthusiastic curator of the museum, P G Langdon, that the Higgins Museum now houses such a comprehensive collection of local archaeology. Langdon made it his mission to acquire every object found near Bedford, in a time when archaeological discoveries were often lost, sold privately, or even destroyed. The collections are truly exceptional (particularly the Cypriot material donated largely by Langdon himself), and so I also produced a

small catalogue of the collection. Perhaps the most exciting discovery was finding that one of the Greek vases (pictured) was once in the famous Hope Collection, acquired by Thomas Hope in 1801 from Sir William Hamilton (most of whose vases are now in the British Museum), after which it was bought by Langdon, and then donated to BMS.



I then contextualised the BMS collection with other school collections in Britain - namely Harrow, Eton, Winchester, Oundle and Charterhouse (all of which have been briefly published, but with many more presumably remaining unknown). It became evident these schools were collecting not just for educational reasons, but for prestige, competition, and also because of the passion of individual school masters in these institutions for material heritage - in the case of BMS, the masters P G Langdon and F W Kuhlicke. Researching these individual personalities became a really wonderful part of the project.

The thesis did particularly well at assessment, scoring 76. My tutors have asked that I publish the material, and so I am currently in the process of publishing an article on the findings of the research. I am about to start a PhD back at Oxford on Greek vase-painting, but am hoping to continue this research project of collections in secondary schools in the future, as a long term project with the aim of publishing a larger tome on the subject.'

Oliver's full article has now been published: Ollie Coker, Teaching classics with objects? The acquisition of classical antiquities by British schools, 1860-1950, *Journal of the History of Collections*, 2021.



Alex Monk 1981-88

writes: 'this motley crew had a terrific day (and night) out when we finally got together back in Bedford to watch the Blues play the Jersey Reds. It was Saturday 01 February 2020 pre-lockdown and I'm glad we got this in before the craziness began.

Mostly 1988 leavers with a couple of earlier finishers. Thanks to Richard 'Baggy' Manning for organising us.'

L-R back: Alex Monk, Richard Manning (1978-88), Ben Brock (1983-86), Ian Stubbings (1980-86), Mark Lay (1979-86), Justin Wycherty (1979-88), Chris Weatherill (1981-88), Andrew Cannon (1978-88).

L-R front: Adrian Lee (1978-88), Simon Pritchard (1979-88) and Gavin Simkins (1979-88).



Memory *Stir*

John Wells 1952-59

writes: 'In the summer of 1956 I was with a party of the School CCF under Lieutenant Dibley as guests of the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment in Goslar, West Germany. They were stationed there as part of the British Army of the Rhine. We sailed overnight from Harwich to The Hook of Holland on a Troopship, sleeping in dormitory bunkbeds in the dark, stuffy lower decks. We arrived at our destination by military train, observing much wartime destruction on the way.

Between excursions around the Harz Mountains and badly bomb-damaged Hanmower, we were invited to compete on the Regiment's firing range, where I won a trophy for best shot. Next to our barracks was a WWII refugee camp. We could see the occupants, looking very bedraggled and forlorn, and were firmly instructed to keep our distance at all times. It was a harrowing experience I will never forget.

Outside the base, when not in CCF uniform, we occasionally experienced public hostility. This was due to the School Eagle on our blazers which resembled the Polish Eagle. We had been mistaken for Polish nationals. Fortunately one of our party knew some German, which helped keep the peace!



In my final year at school I was selected as a member of the School shooting eight, under the charge of Major Joe Greenwood, and Lieutenant C G Came. The firing range was behind the School Cricket Pavilion with most matches decided by post. The range at the Territorial Army barracks, Kempston was also used. I'm informed the School range was shut down in 2016.'

BMS School Shooting Eight, 1959



Ian Gotts 1971-79

In October, we received this great photo all the way from San Francisco from Ian Gotts in his old school blazer, tie and cap, after his BMS 60th birthday card arrived. It was fascinating to hear about all that he had done since he left school.



Ian studied Mechanical Engineering at Southampton University, sponsored by British Railways Engineering. He then joined Accenture as a Management Consultant and worked there for 12 years, managing high-risk programmes and teams of staff, the largest of which numbered more than 500 people. He then went on to create and become CEO of a tech company before briefly retiring to San Francisco. However, he soon came out of retirement to found another tech company based in San Francisco.

Ian began competitive dinghy sailing at BMS, and has gone on to represent the UK at Olympic, national, and world events in dinghy sailing. He also now plays bass in a dance rock band with his wife of 26 years.

Bill Avery

1951-57

writes: 'The school I started at 70 years ago no longer exists. Sure, there is a school with the same name and in the same town: Bedford Modern School. And certainly there is a façade I recognise, opposite a renovated Library. But the school is long gone from the Town Centre.



My BMS was a boys' school with perhaps a thousand kids. It was also a partial boarding school with 100 boarders in three houses; a contrast with today's co-ed day school. My BMS was also a few years older than today's BMS which has managed to shed two centuries.

When I arrived as a twelve-year-old boarder in School House, it was my 11th school, including two in Egypt (Army and RAF). Like many other boarders, I was there because my parents (RAF) moved frequently, or were boarders because their parents lived overseas and wanted an English education for their child.

My BMS flourished on discipline. Caning on the backside was normal not only for bad behaviour, but any deemed offence, such as walking in the street with one's jacket open.

While teaching was solid, the School was also a military training operation. Finish school at 18 and straight into the military with a commission in months, deferred only for tertiary education (college, university, etc.).

If you were not interested in Oxbridge, career guidance was non-existent. I doubt if the Head, J E Taylor, could point to Leeds University on a map, and would struggle with the concept of 'Chartered Accountant'.

Based on that solid teaching, on Leeds U and training as a CA, I have had a great career, first in London and for 55 years in Canada. I hope today's kids are so lucky!

Erinna Pilbeam

2009-2014

Erinna Pilbeam has been appointed as one of two UK Ambassadors for International Adolescent Health Week (IAHW), an annual period of health observance for teenagers around the world, which in 2021 was held from 21-27 March.

She writes: 'I am delighted and astonished to have been appointed one of two UK Adolescent Ambassadors working as part of an international team. Having had to leave BMS at 14 due to ill health, leaving a great hole in my educational experience, this has boosted my confidence and helped me to travel the world without leaving my home. International Adolescent Health Week began in 2016 initially as a teen health awareness week within the US. Since then, it has grown internationally with 16 countries participating.

With the support of adolescent health and societal professionals, 28 of us between the ages of 14 and 24 advocate both as a panel and individually to address health and wellbeing issues seen in our countries.

The 2021 theme for the week was 'Resilience in the Face of the Pandemic'. Many adolescents worldwide currently need mental health support and grief counselling due to the drastic changes to everyday life. Many who



have been in the health system for chronic illness care are needing alternative support because of the reduction in available resources and the understandably static nature of care at the moment.

The wonderful thing about being involved in an international role like this is to be able to advocate and support others in bringing certain topics to the fore that have never been an issue in my lifetime in the UK, for example gun violence, lack of vaccination (non COVID-19), and menstrual health education and product availability.

My passion within this role is to create growing awareness around chronic invisible illness such as ME, Sickle Cell and Thalassaemia, Ehlers Danlos Syndrome, and Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia. Having been ill for eight years, I have the everyday experience of life under the cloak of invisible illness. For an adolescent, the things other people don't see are the hardest to manage. It is a most important lesson to learn, that we cannot see everything. Showing compassion to each other is a simple way to create a strong bond to develop change for the future.'

Memory *Stir*

John
Lloyd
1960-69

writes: 'Thank you for the last edition of *Eagle News*. Good to see so much noteworthy news. Two items resonated with me; Memory Stir and the piece about David Bedingfeld (1958-68) and the item on Cross Country. Back in the 60s Cross Country and Athletics were a major sporting choice for some of us. I have included some photographs that show the Cross Country Team circa 1966/67 (I'm seated second from left), an article from the *Bedfordshire Times* after we won the Ranelagh Harriers Cup in Richmond Park along with the photograph of the team, and the full BMS Athletics Team (I am standing on the left next to a member of staff whose name escapes me, David Bedingfeld is seated front row second from the right). The team was coached by Mr Allison and the late great Joe Cox (1954-83).

As you can see from the trophies, we were a very successful team cleaning up in inter-school and county championships. Those awarded full colours by the school for Cross Country and Athletics are wearing red and white braid on their running vests and around the shorts. Paul McGuckian (1962-68) seated front row left along with Richard Perry (1959-69) and Ian Kemp (1958-68) also have Eagles on their vests which denotes honours badges having been awarded for outstanding success. I was, in my time, Secretary for the Cross Country Team. I continue to run (though not as quick as I was) and am a founding member of Cobra Running and Triathlon Club in Halesowen which celebrates 30 years in 2021.'



● The winning team (above) with, left to right, John Lloyd, Andrew Conquest, Richard Perry, Ian Kemp, Keith Johnson, and Simon Benson.

GOOD RUNNING REGAINS CUP

BEDFORD Modern School won the Ranelagh Harriers' Cup at the Ranelagh Harriers' Public School cross-country invitation race in Richmond Park, London, on Saturday. Twelve other teams competed.

The race, which is run annually, was started in 1927 and its purpose is to promote cross-country as a team event rather than an individual one.

Out of a field of 80 runners and in almost freezing conditions, BMS certainly showed the value of good team running. Kemp (6th) was first home for the school with a time of 21 min. 43

sec. for the 3½-mile course, and good packing by Johnson (9th), Benson (10th), and Conquest (11th) enabled the school to gain a clear victory. The school's remaining runners were Lloyd (26th) and Perry (31st) out of a field of 78.

BMS, who have run in all 32 races, regained the cup previously won in 1964.

The individual winner was Robson, of Queen Elizabeth, Barnet, with a time of 21 min. 2 sec. The team result was: 1. BMS, 56 pts.; 2. Allerton's Grammar, Stevenage, 62 pts.; 3. St. Nicolas Grammar, 78 pts.



David Keep 1945-55



writes: 'I have just read the belated March issue, starting at the back and pleased not to find too many contemporaries. I would like to correct one point in Harvey Pallett's (1952-58) Memory Stir. The long swim continued until at least 1955, as I participated in 1954 and 1955. To my annoyance, my friend, who smoked every morning in Debenham's staff toilets, still beat me. I had been a feeble child with very flat feet but tried rowing then took to swimming and became strong, but slow. In 1953 I became captain of West House, who were then bottom in the competition. A point was given for entering the Long Swim and I managed to drum up sufficient entries to rise to fifth place. JET was displeased because we played on the weir at the end of the swim. I also took part in a canoe race and a novice four after A Levels. I was also dragooned into the Corps, which was trying to reach 500. This led to my most distinctive moment at the school. There was a new Cert. A part 2, at which the school usually excelled. 42 of us took the test. Only three passed. I was one. There was a stunned silence when JET announced this. I learned Russian at the Joint

Services School for Linguists and later came under two OBM Sergeants, Brian Page (1945-52) and Rex Quail (1935-44). I finished my National Service in Berlin, where we played rough water polo every week. I formed a water polo team at New College, Oxford, which got me a few games with the Dolphins - six good swimmers and me with a long reach. I played against BMS and my colleagues remarked that the boys made sure that I did not score. I played for Fitzwilliam when I was studying Theology at Cambridge.

In early retirement, I became a Royal Navy Officiating Chaplain at the Royal Marine Commando Training Centre so I have served in all three services, despite my purely academic aspirations.'

Howard Smyth 1952-56

writes: 'The photo attached is of David Rumball (1948-56), Geography Master Norman Friskney (1948-58), and me in 2004. Rumball was my first friend when I started out in 2B2 in 1952. A towny, he lived in town where his parents owned a grocery store on the other side of the Ouse. David, my brother Walt (1952-55) and I all agree that Norman was our favourite teacher, though some of the others almost met that standard. Four years later and in LVA, I took my O Levels and returned to the States. After graduating university I was being drafted, so I applied for and was accepted in OTS (Officer Training School) with the United States Air Force. Serving on active duty and the Reserve for 36 and a half years, I retired as a Lt Col, and have been in Florida for 32 years. I have four sons (57 to 34), six grandchildren (30 to 7) and one great grandson (four and a half). Retired for 20 years, I enjoy travel, have been to 35 countries and hope to return to England once the virus farce is over.



On Armistice Day, Wednesday 11 November 2020, RW Bro Anthony P Henderson, Provincial Grand Master for Bedfordshire, (left) and W Bro Dennis Stott, (right), a Past Master of the Old Bedford Modernians' Lodge No5268, laid wreaths at the Embankment Memorial. This is something we have done on a regular basis for the last few years, albeit usually on Remembrance Sunday, but due to the restrictions this year, we were not able to join in the main ceremony.'

Memory *Stir*

Dick
Glynne-Jones
1941-49

writes: *The Times* of 06 July 2020 published an article about Bill Spray (1935-39), an OBM whose war diary and photographs had come to light in an auction after 75 years. I'm proud to say I knew him well.

For all of WW2 and for a time afterwards I lived in St Neots, a few yards away from the Sprays. Bill's father was the minister of the St Neots' Methodist church, which some of us regularly attended. There were two sons, both BMS boys: Bill left a few years before I joined the school in 1941, Bob and I overlapped for a term or two. As far as I remember both went on to Peterhouse, Cambridge, then Bill went into teaching and Bob into medicine.

After my degree I stayed on at Cambridge to do the teaching certificate year, which involved a term of teaching practice at a school of our choice. Knowing Bill was on the staff at Marlborough I chose to go there, and I'm glad I did: I went to several of his History lessons, which were most impressive, inspiring even. One of his less rewarding tasks was to teach some English (my degree subject) to Sixth Formers who were not studying the subject for A Level and were therefore not wholly committed to it. One day Bill asked me to help him perform a stunt on this class to liven them up and give them something to write about. The plan was for me to mark some essays written by these boys, then storm into the classroom when Bill was in midstream, wave these essays aggressively at him, telling him how appalling the boys' English was, and that he was failing in his job. He would protest, and demand that I left the room. When I refused he would strike me on the head with a newspaper he was holding, and I would retaliate by hitting him with the bunch of essays I had brought with me. After a few moments of this battle Bill would stop, turn to the class and say: "Now you've witnessed an extraordinary confrontation, the like of which you have probably never seen before or thought possible at a reputable institution like Marlborough College. It was all a sham of course, which we laid on for your benefit, because I want you to write about it."



We performed exactly as planned. The reaction of the boys while the battle raged was interesting: some looked horrified, some looked frightened, some embarrassed. A few laughed, apparently aware that it was a scam. There was some relief when Bill confessed. The subsequent accounts were interesting, often funny, and well enough written to make the stunt seem worthwhile. Years later when I was teaching a similar class at Whitgift School I got Jeff Abbott, a young colleague, to stage the same stunt with me, and ten years later (you couldn't get away with it until the first 'witnesses' had left school) did it again with Tom Savage - who incidentally was so nervous the papers in his hand were visibly shaking.



Bill went on to be headmaster of Leighton Park School, which has strong Quaker connections. In WW2 he had refused to fight, but instead trained as a paramedic, joined the Friends Ambulance Service, and was attached to a French unit, at first in North Africa and then in Normandy. On many occasions he rescued wounded men in No Man's Land, showing remarkable courage under fire, for which he was awarded the Croix de Guerre, one of France's highest military honours. Old Marlburian friends tell me that no-one in the school knew that their adventurous but modest teacher was in fact a war hero. Nor did I, until I saw the article in *The Times*.

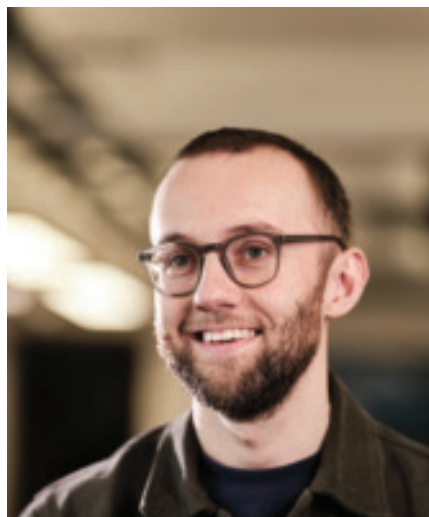


Nick O'Quinn

1999-2010

writes: 'March, 2004. I was a bright and bushy tailed Year 9. And it was the first time I had to contemplate what I might do with my life. Naturally, you need to know what you want to do as a career in order to decide whether to choose French or German, Drama or Geography, double or triple Science. I've always thought it's a strange expectation that life puts on young people.

John Lennon lyrically proclaims that: "life is what happens to you while you're busy making other plans". School was a time filled with to the



Peter Luce Gilmore

1962-70

writes: 'Why I was in remedial maths class in 1966. The original mathematical weakness was not mine, but my dad's; filling the form for my entry examination, he put my birth year not as 1952 but 1951 (that was my sister Caroline.) Entering BMS in September 1962, Mr Hussey and Mr Howell-Jones decided there and then, in the playground, to put me, aged nine, not in a J2 form but in J1B with the ten-year-olds, seeing that I had scraped through a ten-year-olds' exam.

brim with making those 'plans' - the big ideas for how we wanted our lives to pan out. And in truth, that's where BMS was surely a wonderful place to be - opening minds to possibilities, and fuelling enthusiasm with opportunities. Helping you to shape and solidify not only the plan, but the route to achieve it.

But it's a plan determined by working back from an end goal. 'I want to do X, so therefore I need to do Y for my GCSEs (and A Levels, Degree, Grad Scheme). 'Wouldn't it be a much more interesting and exciting experience to flip the equation? 'I like doing Y, so I'll keep doing that. That might turn into X, or A, or even 43 squared. Who knows?'

Since leaving school 11 years ago, that's what I've learned to embrace; a less linear, more fluid approach to life. I didn't plan to become a brand strategist in advertising (I didn't even know what that was). I didn't plan to return from travelling in the midst of a pandemic without a job to go back to. And I certainly didn't plan to end up spending nine months setting up a sustainable and ethical e-commerce business with a friend entirely over video calls. The opportunities presented themselves, and I felt my way through. You can plan all you want, but the biggest lesson I've learnt is that progress is about living the now, not chasing the tomorrow.'

Nick launched his new business hibana.co.uk, a new online shopping experience to discover inspiring independent brands, in early 2021.

I did moderately well in the Senior School first and second forms and in 1965 was in form 3A1, the top stream. I hit a snag then. The maths teacher was a mild and pallid man, Mr Bullock, always known as 'Clint'. How good a teacher he was is matter for conjecture: as a disciplinarian he was hopeless. One boy, who shall remain nameless, systematically disrupted every lesson. We learnt nothing; boys nattered freely. Was the disruptor a troubled lad, or just evil? The latter, I suspect. Weak maths blighted my science subjects, especially Physics. I was held back and retook the year. I was put in remedial Maths, where Mr Howarth did an excellent job: the very first lesson dealt with transformation of equations, about which I had not an inkling, but which suddenly made Maths tractable. At O Level I took a three in Maths but, even today, my Maths is poorer than my natural ability. (Maybe I flatter myself.)

I don't know what happened to the disruptor. Being held back, I lost touch with that year. I don't know whether he stayed on in the sixth form. I doubt it. But I bear him a grudge. He warped the pattern of my development, a privilege reserved for God, not County House scatterbrains.'

Obituaries

Stuart Houghton 1943-50

County House. Died 01 October 2019.

Eddie Rutt (1943-1952) writes: 'Stuart died aged 88 in a care home close to his home in Twickenham, following a fall.

Stuart entered the School in 1943, a contemporary of Peter Garratt (1943-52), Pat Beavis (1943-52), John Bye (1943-51) and myself. He played cricket in the 1st XI for four seasons and rugby in the 1st XV, alongside Dickie Jeeps (1943-49) and Peter Miller (1943-50). Strangely enough, Mr PJ King (the illustrious 'PJ') rated Miller as a better player than Jeeps, who of course went on to captain England and the British Lions.

In the 1947 season – his first in the XI, while still only in the Fourth Form - Stuart enjoyed remarkable success as a spin bowler: in two consecutive matches he took sixteen wickets. He could never regain that same form in later seasons but he did develop into a stylish and talented batsman.

After his National Service in the RAF, Stuart went up to Oxford – to St Catherine's College – where he joined his older brother Mick, who had also been to BMS. After coming down from Oxford, Stuart made a career in banking. He is survived by his wife and four children.'

Ted Howarth Staff 1964-68

Died 14 October 2019.

Ted's wife, Anne Howarth, writes: 'Ted started teaching Maths at BMS in September 1964 having changed careers to teaching from working for English Electric as a Mechanical Engineer for eight years, two of which he

spent in South Africa. Having a degree in Mechanical Engineering but with no teaching qualification, while at BMS he embarked on an external London PGCE qualification in his spare time. He thoroughly enjoyed his time at BMS being involved in the Venture Scouts and sharing leadership of school expeditions to Lapland, canoeing round the sea lochs of Western Scotland and skiing in the Cairngorms. He was also able to indulge his love of music, singing in the joint staff and boys' choral concerts, and being a backstage helper for the school plays. We met in Bedford. My first job in 1964 was teaching PE at Bedford High School and we met at a party in December 1965 at the home of Chris and Sally Perry. We married in 1966 and had a wonderful social life with all the young members of staff from the four Harpur Trust Schools.

In 1968 we moved to the West Midlands where Ted was appointed Head of Resources at John Willmott Grammar School and second in the Maths Department. From there he moved to be Head of Maths at Bishop Walsh Roman Catholic School also in Sutton Coldfield. We lived south of Birmingham in Hampton in Arden where our two children grew up, Katie now a partner in a London law firm, with three children and lives in Cheshire and James a Mechanical Engineer, is Technical Director for a firm inventing latest technology. He lives in Cambridge with his two children.



In retirement Ted continued his interest in music and outdoor activities and recently has been instrumental in securing a collection of valuable original books of Captain Scott's Antarctic expedition to be housed in the library of his own university, Birmingham.'

Peter Taylor 1951-58

East House. Died 07 November 2019.



Peter's daughter, Sue Kemp, writes: 'Peter enjoyed his secondary education at Bedford Modern School. He was involved in many school activities, being part of the cross country, rowing and rifle shooting teams. Peter played trumpet in the Army Corps Band, and with dance bands outside of school. Peter was proud to have been an OBM.

After school, Peter studied for a sandwich degree with the Eastern Electricity Board at Northampton College, obtaining a Bachelor of Science degree in Electrical Engineering. In 1968 he moved to Kent with his wife, Marion and family, taking a position with SEEBOARD.

In 1987 Peter moved to West Sussex when he was promoted to Senior Planning Officer at SEEBOARD's head office in Hove. This role eventually saw him preparing SEEBOARD's

privatisation document before he retired, aged 55. After this he carried out some consultancy work for a short time in Thailand.

Following retirement Peter indulged in all his hobbies and interests and joined endless societies, being treasurer of many and on the committees of most. The cornet was Peter's first love, being a talented player. He played solo cornet with Medway Band, Lancing & Sompington British Legion Band and Worthing Silver Band and more recently trumpet with Lancing Orchestra.

Peter's second love was steam engines and model railways. He was always involved in model railway clubs and preserved railways before he bought himself a 10 and a quarter inch gauge steam engine.

Peter also enjoyed being on water. In the earlier years he went sailing, he had his own two-berth boat and loved canal boat holidays. Latterly he was a member of the Way and Arun Canal Trust, being in charge of their GIS mapping systems.

Peter had a great interest in history, especially local history, and family history. He spent many hours tracing back family trees and got a lot of pleasure from it.

Peter had two children and four grandsons. Whilst his children were young, he and his wife also fostered about 50 children, two of whom he was still in touch with. He will be greatly missed.'

Edwin Douglas Ramsay Shearman

1934-36

North House. Died 13 December 2019.

Article published in *The Times* on 25 January 2020 reads: 'Edwin Douglas Ramsay Shearman was born in 1942 in Cambridge, the only child of Sir Harold and Lady Shearman, and was educated at Bedford Modern School and King's College School in



Wimbledon. Shearman rowed at Imperial College London, where he was awarded a first-class degree in electrical engineering in 1945.

His first job after graduating was with the Admiralty Signal Establishment in Haslemere, Surrey, where he worked on high-frequency communications. He then joined the government's Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, where he worked with Sir Robert Watson-Watt and Arnold Wilkins, the first British radar pioneers.

In 1955 Shearman met Rosalind Morris at a dance after a London University weekend school on science civilisation in China. She was a chiropodist, voluntary social worker and Liberal Party activist with a passion for ballet. They married that year and had three daughters: Susan, who is a district nurse; Naomi, a British Museum conservator; and Zoe, an art curator. Rosalind died in 2010. He is survived by his daughters.

In 1962 Shearman became a senior lecturer in electromagnetism at the University of Birmingham, later becoming head of the postgraduate school. He continued to advise the Ministry of Defence and GCHQ.

In retirement Shearman wrote and lectured on the history of electronics, radio and radar. He enjoyed attending concerts at the English String Orchestra. "He taught himself to play the piano in retirement and loved dancing with our mum," said Zoe.

He also converted a dressing room at home into a miniature workshop with "all the tools with which one wants to make things, repair my wife's antiques and fix things when they go wrong".

Francis John (Frank) Boston

1949-57

County House. Died 22 December 2019.

John Quenby (1953-58) writes: 'Following the funeral service held for Frank in January in the packed All Saints church, Wilstead, I was reminiscing on school days with fellow contemporary Peter Sharpe (1954-61). Peter reminded me that Frank had played a significant role in the setting up of the BMS Young Farmers' Club. This prompted a little research in our excellent school archive which led me to the Christmas 1957 edition of *The Eagle*. This confirms that Frank was a founding member of the Club in 1956 and is listed as a committee member and 'Reporter'. Peter remembered that Frank was a great advocate for the Club and would brook no excuse for non-attendance of any meeting. The report in *The Eagle* tells of a wide range of activities undertaken, including lectures on subjects as widely juxtaposed as beekeeping on the one hand and the development of selective weed killers on the other. Film shows including tractor manufacturing at Ford Motor Co and other visits featured in the Club's busy schedule, although two had to be cancelled due to an influenza epidemic (sound familiar?).

Frank was an accomplished athlete and rugby player but farming ran through his veins and that theme was to stay with him

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throughout his life. He was a good pupil at school and excelled in Maths. Thus he had originally thought of going on to take a Maths degree at university, however in the end he opted to attend Moulton Agricultural College in Northampton. This of course reinforced the existing farming foundations to Frank's life and he then joined the family farm in Wilstead where he remained for life.

In 1966 Frank married Rosemary Roff from Pavenham and they had two children, Thomas and Alison. Sadly Frank was widowed in 2002. Thomas follows in his father's footsteps and continues to run the farm.



Alison recalls that her father enjoyed collecting his granddaughters from BMS on half days. He often told them about his time running in the steeplechase, having swimming lessons in the river (!) and tales of his headmaster Mr Taylor (aka JET!).

Curiously, although we left school in the same year I don't remember Frank from those years. However, we became properly acquainted over the years following my return to the UK to live in Wilstead in 1975. Although he was not often seen at OBM events he did on occasion enjoy the London Lunch and retained an interest in BMS as his granddaughters Grace (now in Y12) and Izzy (2010-18) attended the school. Coincidentally Izzy was a contemporary of my own granddaughter Sacha (2011-18); thus we had much in common.

Frank was a true countryman and very community spirited, being active in the Wilstead and Bedford bowls clubs and a staunch follower of Bedford Blues, which we especially enjoyed together. He was well known and respected throughout the farming community and his quiet presence and good humour will be widely missed.

The photograph (kindly provided by Frank's family) shows him 'relaxing' while working on the restoration of a stone wall in the garden at Church Farm.'

Jim (James) Burston

Staff 1981-99

Died 15 January 2020.

James's friend, Eileen Carter, writes: 'James was born in Bedford and grew up in Queens Park. His early education commenced close to his home in Queens Park, then moving on to Harpur Central in Bedford. James married a Bedford girl and had a family of four, two girls initially, followed by two boys. Sadly he lost both of his girls at an early age.



On completing education James joined W H Allen, Bedford where he studied engineering and completed his apprenticeship. He was employed with them for many years prior to joining the Army.

His Army service began with National Service. During it and following on, it took him on tours. He served in Egypt, Cyprus, Germany, and later Korea. Following these tours, he was recalled to serve in the Suez Canal episode. Following the extended service, he was recognised as a regular soldier. In addition to his deserved medals, he was awarded the HM Armed Forces Veterans Badge.

On return to the UK he returned to W H Allen for a period. He then joined Kismet Engineering whom he was with for several years. Following this venture, he spent some time teaching at Polam School, Bedford.

Moving on, his engineering experience put him in good stead to join Bedford Modern School as an engineering technician/ teacher, plus Maths teaching. James's length of service with the school extended to 20 years. James was very interested in and supportive of his students, including those interested in shooting. He spent many weekends taking the boys away for their shooting practice.

James had many interests: he enjoyed gardening/allotmenting, dancing, outdoor bowls and fishing. He maintained his strong interest in the army as a practising member of the local branch of The Royal Anglian Regiment. He was also a supporter and active member of The British Legion. As an individual, I am sure his school colleagues experienced James's possessed friendly nature, always very willing to assist his students, caring for their wellbeing and for many others.

My intervention in James's life occurred some twelve years ago. We became very close friends, shared each other's lives, our homes and gardens, holidays, we enjoyed a very happy time together. For me it has been an absolute privilege to have shared his life. I am certain James will always be remembered fondly, by so many.'

Peter Sheppard

1941-50

North House. Died 05 February 2020.

Peter Rogers (1945-51) writes: 'Pete Sheppard was never a member of the OBM Club; nevertheless he was a renowned naval aviator of whom the School can be proud. Pete and I shared a desk at school in 1945 and onwards. He was North House and I was County. He left school early and went to the Navy. I stayed on and went to the Air Force. Over the years our paths crossed a number of times, each a cause of great celebration.

Pete, the outstanding Fleet Air Arm aviator of his generation, gained his Wings in time to participate in the Korean War flying a carrier-borne Sea Hawk. In subsequent years he flew most if not all the types of aircraft the Navy operated. His exploits are legendary, not the least being his air displays flying the Sea Fury, a brute of an aircraft, around the country. I don't know the full details of his flying career but from 1973-74 he was Landing Safety Officer on HMS Ark Royal and then from 1977



Lt Cdr Flying on the Ark. In 1983 he was a Hawk Instructor at RAF Chivenor; it was during this time that he survived a mid-air collision and had to eject from his aircraft. He retired from the Navy in 1985 and then, for many years, was a civilian flying instructor. He was a founding member of the Royal Navy Historic Flight and was awarded the Air Force Cross in 1977.

Here are a few comments made recently by his contemporaries:

"It was a privilege and pleasure to have flown with him."

"His exploits will live forever."

"Pete's Sea Fury displays were always superb occasions."

"If there was an article written about his life and times, it would make a great film."

"A wonderful man who will be much missed."

"I count it a great privilege to have spent just a little time with such a gentleman."

"Surely one of the most well-known and respected FAA pilots."

"Really lovely chap – we will miss him so much."

"A great guy in every respect, and a brilliant pilot to boot."

Donald Anthony Waterhouse

1938-45

East House. Died 24 March 2020.

Donald's nephew, Nick Hamp (1969-79), writes: 'Don was brought up in Bedford in the Castle Road area and was therefore in East House. He did not venture far from Bedford, living for the last 60 years in Bromham. He was an architect employed by Bedford Borough Council, where he designed a number of care homes and educational facilities in Bedford and across the county. He ended his career as the Deputy County Architect.

Outside of work he was a very practical man, with a love of wood turning and nature. But his overriding passion was beekeeping, having kept bees in his back garden for many years.

He is survived by his wife Connie having been married for 60 years. They did not have any children.'



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David Southgate 1952-62

South House. Died 01 April 2020.

David's brother, John (1946-54), and daughter Suzanne write: 'It is with great sadness that we record the death of David Peter Southgate, an Old Bedford Modernian of considerable sporting achievement who subsequently followed a professional career as a Chartered Accountant and Business Development Consultant. Aged 77, David died peacefully at home with his family in Winchester, Hampshire. He was a man of great strength, determination and courage who showed the same resilience and bravery through ill health towards the end of his life.

He leaves a daughter, Suzanne, and granddaughter, as well as his elder brother, John Southgate, who is also an Old Bedford Modernian and lives in Australia.

David was born in Bedford in 1942. He spent his early childhood in the Cameroons in West Africa with his engineer father, Reginald Southgate and his mother, Kathleen, who together spent many years in West and East Africa as well as in Jordan and Hong Kong.

David returned to the UK and was first educated at the Bedford Training College School - established in the 19th century on the lines of German educationalist Friedrich Froebel. Famous playwright and OBM Christopher Fry also trained as a teacher at the school.

He then attended BMS from the age of nine, initially in the Junior School. In the senior school, David was a very talented, athletic and accomplished sportsman with a significant record - being Captain of Boats, rowing at Henley, and a member of the 1st XV. He was also Head of the Combined Cadet Force and a Senior Monitor. His friends and contemporaries included his cousin Vaughan Southgate OBE (1954-62), former Fleet Street Editor Sir Nicholas Lloyd (1953-61), celebrity journalist Michael Cable (1953-61), Philip 'Walt' Beard (1953-58), and Jeremy Joslin (1954-61), among many others.

Leaving school, he played first class rugby for Bedford (Blues) RFC and was then an active member of the club administration for several years. He lived in Bedford while articulated to a local accountancy firm before taking up his professional career. After some years spent in Haynes, Bedfordshire, David and his family settled in the beautiful Hampshire city of Winchester.



David retained a keen interest in sport throughout his life - following predominantly rugby and rowing; a proud supporter of his daughter's sporting accomplishments; and in later life enjoying walking in The New Forest and sailing on The Solent.

He was a gifted, intelligent and charming man who made everyone smile with his lightning wit and infectious sense of fun and adventure. Gracious and sincere, David took a genuine interest in others and was a kind and wise counsel. His integrity, warmth, generosity, and affable ways instantly put people at ease.

Dedicated to his family, he was a wonderful man, a loving brother and an exceptional father and grandfather. We miss him greatly and will forever remember him with immense love, joy and good humour.'

Graham Humphrey 1965-67

West House. Died 01 May 2020.

Peter Thomas (1960-67) writes: 'Graham moved to Bedford from Winchester as a Sixth Former in 1965 following his father's appointment as Principal of Bedford Teacher Training College. His arrival at BMS was reminiscent of the eponymous hero in



Le Grand Meaulnes which we were studying in Joe Cox's French classes. We quickly became good friends, playing tennis on the college courts and flirting with the female students. He was an excellent cross-country runner and we both enjoyed skiing in the French Alps on many holidays together.

As law students we shared some of London's less desirable accommodation, being joined for some of the time by fellow OBMs, Howard Morrison (1966-68), now an international judge in The Hague and the late Simon Benson (1963-68) who was 'something in the City'.

Back in Bedford, where Graham had begun a distinguished career with Borneo Martell and Partners, we jointly bought a house in the now trendy Castle Road area. Here we would host many lively parties, often after a session in the Castle or Ship which we frequented on most evenings.

Unsurprisingly for one with such a love of all things French, Graham soon met an elegant jeune fille called Agnès whom I was able to bring home to him at weekends from deepest Hertfordshire where she and I worked in neighbouring towns. They duly married and brought up their family in Biddenham, sending their son Christopher, now a civil engineer in Adelaide, to BMS. Their daughter Claire, a teacher in Oxford, attended Bedford High School where Agnès was on the staff.



Sadly, as he approached retirement, Graham developed Parkinson's Disease, weakened by which, though not positively tested, he is believed to have succumbed to COVID-19 after a short stay at Anjulina Court. He died on 01 May at the age of 71.'

Donald Storton 1939-44

West House. Died 09 May 2020.

Donald's son, Stuart Storton (1961-68), writes: 'Don Storton was born in December 1926 in Bedford. He was educated at Bedford Modern School until he was 17. He was then taken on as an apprentice at Percival Aircraft factory in Luton where he worked on Mosquito fighter bombers.

Following completion of his apprenticeship he then joined Cryselco, who ran a light bulb factory in Kempston, as an engineer. He studied mechanical engineering and became a Chartered Mechanical Engineer. He met and married Pamela who had settled in Kempston when her father Squadron Leader Hobbs retired from the RAF.

When Texas Instruments came to the area, he joined them and his career took off. He became Bedford Plant Manager and then progressed to European Facilities Director. He, and the family, moved to Munich, Germany in 1968, and he set up new semiconductor plants/clean rooms in Portugal, Italy, UK and Germany.

Upon reaching 50, Texas Instruments had a policy of moving senior managers to less stressful positions in advance of retiring. Don refused to accept this and he was headhunted by Inmos in Newport, Gwent as Facilities Manager to set up a new fabrication plant and clean room, from which he retired.

Don inherited a love of motorbikes from his father, which he passed this on to his two



sons. He and his wife, Pamela, enjoyed playing golf together for many years as members of Greenmeadow Golf Club, and enjoyed many golfing holidays together.

When that became too much they concentrated on the garden and the fish pond which gave them great joy. He and Pam enjoyed 71 years of happy married life and enjoyed being together. He always said that heaven is on earth and you make your own paradise.

He died of a heart attack, having just finished cutting his lawn, aged 93.

Don leaves a widow, Pamela, and three children - Stuart, Adrian (who both attended BMS) and Catherine.

He was a father in the true sense of the word. He inspired, he taught, he encouraged his family - to be the best they could be and maybe even better! He encouraged learning and by working on various cars, motor bikes and building projects he imparted his huge mechanical and practical knowledge. He encouraged us to learn and develop our own skills, and it gave him great pleasure when he saw those skills take on a life of their own in us.'

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Gordon Richard Whittington

1955-62

East House. Died 20 May 2020.

Gordon's brother-in-law, David Keep (1945-55), writes: 'Gordon was born on 12 January 1944 and died on 20 May 2020 in the house in Putnoe he bought with Ann his first wife, a fellow student, in 1967. They parted in 1971. He grew up in Risborough Road and went to Goldington Road School, as his mother had done. He joined BMS the term after I left and won the form prize in 1B2. He rose up through the School and went to the University of Nottingham to read Horticulture. From there he joined Unilever at Colworth House – the Unilever lab at Sharnbrook - where he had worked before university and remained until retirement in 1999 as Head of Crop Science. He was responsible for vegetable freezing, especially peas, and made many long drives to inspect field crops from Lincolnshire to Devon.



He was keen on sport. His father followed the Eagles and his maternal grandfather The Blues, where he met my sister, Mildred Keep (DAHS 1956-63). They were married in July 1972 and had one son, Neil, in November 1975. Milly died in April 1992 after a long illness.

Gordon followed cycle racing and speedway and latterly non-league football, which he continued to photograph in 35mm and to which he often presented a ball. The Bedford Film Society was another interest and steam railways. He was very sociable and in February 1993 Gordon married his PA, Rosemary, with whom he shared over 27 happy years. They travelled widely, developing an interest in Inca and Aztec civilisations, and caring for nine grandchildren.'

Barry Gilbert

1942-51

County House. Died 28 May 2020.

Barry's daughter, Janie Arnold, writes: 'Vernon Barry Gilbert was born on 03 February 1932, and was brought up in Wootton, as the only child of Ivy and Charlie Gilbert.

He would cycle to Bedford Modern every day with his cousin Trevor Moore, and their friends, John Redman, and Arthur (Coot) Sanders, where he excelled at sports, especially in the triple jump, and earned his school colours.

During his time at school, he was sent to Stockholm to compete in the long jump, his best event, at an inter-school athletic competition. It was his first time abroad, and he returned with a medal.

Upon leaving in 1951, he joined The Royal Insurance Company, but was almost immediately called up for National Service. He was sent to the Royal Artillery base at Oswestry and was heavily involved in helping



with the disastrous flooding that was happening at the time. After the two years were up, he returned to The Royal to start his career.

Barry married Joy (née Tucker – Bedford High School) in 1955, after meeting her at Kempston East Methodist Youth Club. They settled in Oakley, and had a daughter, Jane.

He then moved to NEM, in Bromham Road, Bedford, as an inspector, going out each day to visit his clients. It was a job he loved, getting to know his clients, many of whom became good friends.

In 1971, he was promoted to Branch Manager of NEM in Cambridge, and the family moved to Meldreth, Hertfordshire, settling easily into village life.

Sadly, Joy died in 1976, just as Barry had been promoted to Branch Manager back in Bedford.

In 1983, Barry married Barbara Sears (née Bean – Bedford High School). They bought a house in Clapham and had a very happy marriage.

In his late 50s, NEM closed in Bedford, and everyone was made redundant. Barry had retained all his clients, with whom he'd shared many happy hours, so decided to set up as an Insurance Broker, and worked for himself until he retired.

He was an active member of Kempston Rotary Club, until a few years ago.

In his last few years, Barry suffered from one or two maladies, but he always picked himself up, and carried on with life. He liked nothing more than when he was doing a crossword, playing cards, watching a Grand Prix, or his favourite comedy *Dad's Army*.

Sadly, a fall at home was not something he could brush off. He died peacefully in Bedford Hospital on 28 May 2020, with his daughter by his side, being gently reminded that he was loved by his wife and family, right up until the very end.

His warmth, friendliness, honesty, and strength of character touched many people, and he will be missed by one and all.'

David Berry

Staff 1964-2000

Died 22 July 2020.

Dave Berry taught at BMS from 1964 until his retirement in 2000 and during that time held many different positions including House Master, Head of Chemistry before becoming Head of Science, and Master in Charge of Rowing. Well known for his extensive collection of brightly coloured ties, Dave will also be remembered by many for his humour, his dedication to teaching and loyal support of BMS, and for inspiring both students and staff alike.

Current Assistant Head for Years 9-11, Neale Else, writes: 'I first met Dave when I started teaching Science at BMS in September



1993. Prior to that I had heard stories of this rather formidable Yorkshireman and his billing did not disappoint.

Like many of the younger staff I was somewhat intimidated by Dave, an incredibly bright man who had the capacity to debate most subjects. In those early days I'm not sure Dave was terribly impressed by me or the other two youngsters who joined the Science department with me. Why would he be? Dave was an outstanding scientist and could teach Chemistry and Physics to A Level as well as preparing the brightest and best for Oxbridge entry. In his 34 years at BMS he had managed to do this whilst at various stages also being in charge of Rowing, the marines section of the CCF, university entry and at one stage he and wife Margaret ran a boarding house.

After Malcolm James retired, David took over as Head of Chemistry and Science. He transformed the department and laid the groundwork for the success that the Science faculty continues to enjoy. Dave's vision and exemplary leadership encouraged staff to develop themselves and helped raise the profile of Science in the School. This included the introduction of modular exams for A Level before they became common to all subjects. This was just one example where Dave's knowledge of the examination and qualifications structure helped him to make a decision for the good of BMS students.

It was clear that Dave's students and tutees respected and admired him. They could see he wanted the best for them but they also knew where they stood, David did not suffer fools easily. He encouraged some of the less motivated students by allowing them to have a tea break part way through his lessons. In these breaks they would learn a lot about life from Dave in the Aladdin's cave that was S15, a room which had numerous geometric shapes suspended from the ceiling.

Dave forged relationships through his sense of humour, one which filtered through the department and David got involved in many practical jokes with colleagues.

After Dave retired from BMS he was persuaded to teach at Sandy Upper School, teaching A Level Chemistry, Physics and Maths. He formed a bond with some of the students there and developed new ways of teaching. He really enjoyed his time working at Sandy and the students appreciated his demonstrations and love of practical work. He returned to BMS in 2012 at the age of 71 to cover a maternity period for us. It was great to hear the (moderated) Berry tones echoing down the Chemistry corridor once more.

Outside of school, David collected and read books on many subjects. Indeed he had an entire garage devoted to their storage. He was also a talented artist and was always present at the School's A Level Art exhibitions, admiring the work of the students. Dave also never saw a DIY project or motor maintenance as anything other than a challenge. He would buy cars and do as much of the maintenance work on them that he could.

Since his retirement from BMS, Dave also continued to sing with the various iterations of the school choir and was also convinced by yours truly to stand for election as a governor of the School and trustee of the Harpur Trust. In everything Dave did, he took pride and would never want to let anyone down.

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What a career and to think of the countless students including the many scientists, doctors and dentists who have benefitted from David's wisdom, guidance and pastoral care. The number of young people who have developed in the world of rowing, the number of lives which have been shaped by Dave's encouragement. You only have to look at the tributes paid by OBMs, former staff and British Rowing to see how this man was held in such high regard.

We have a lost a true BMS legend. An outstanding scientist, examiner, teacher and intellect. A genuinely kind man who wanted the best for all those staff and students he worked with. A man who more than went the extra mile to help the students in his care and the staff he encouraged and developed. The memories we have of Dave will live on, as will his legacy at BMS. I think that I probably speak for those other young upstarts who joined BMS in the 1990s, when I say what a privilege it was to work with Dave and that we are truly grateful for all he has done to help us.'

John Mackay Staff 1995-2015

Died 16 August 2020.

John Mackay supported the Combined Cadet Force from 1995 to 2015. On 06 March 2017, John received the honour of Her Majesty Lord Lieutenant's Certificate of Merit in recognition of his work.

Combined Cadet Force and Outdoor Education Coordinator Major Alex Smith provided an excerpt from John's Certificate of Merit as a testament to his character and life:

'Mr Mackay has been the Shooting Master at Bedford Modern School supporting the CCF during the period 1995 to 2015. Prior to this he served with Beds and Herts ACF for 20 years. He has been a keen ambassador for the sport of target rifle shooting and has shot

at various levels, including service and national representation. Much of his time with School has been spent as an unpaid volunteer. John is passionate about the sport, and has been a coach of notable success over the years. He is remarkable, only stopping his own shooting in 2014. He has spent hours, in all weathers, on the range giving generations of young people the benefit of his experience. Humble and blessed with great patience, John has freely given his time and knowledge to ensure that the sport is well represented within school and the CCF, and more importantly giving young people the opportunity to take part, should they wish. Many would have hung up their shooting gloves much earlier.'



Gerald John Ashdown Woodger 1951-60

West House. Died 17 August 2020.



John's brother, Jim, writes: 'John followed in the footsteps of our father, Cedric Woodger, in attending BMS. Apart from achieving very satisfactory A Level grades he was active in school sports, particularly representing the school in water polo. He was a keen member of the School Scout Group and achieved the honour of being one of the earliest to be awarded the Explorer Belt, an international scouting recognition of enterprise and achievement.

He left school to attend the Royal Veterinary College London to follow his long held desire to become a veterinary surgeon. On leaving college he spent time in general practice, firstly around Bury St Edmunds then in Honiton, Devon. During this time he became interested in the health management of chickens which led him to specialise in hygiene control measures and disinfection regimes. This new aspect of his career eventually found him working as an advisor to Antec International, a leading farm hygiene company, moving firstly to Holland and then Thailand.

Whilst in Phuket a change of career path saw him investing in the ex-pat social life, opening a bar and restaurant which he ran for several years.'

John Daniels

1955-60

South House. Died 06 September 2020.

John's daughter, Carol Pullen, writes: 'John was born in Bedford to parents Ronald and Phyllis. He attended Bedford Modern School from 1955 to 1960 after earning a scholarship.

Recently discovered school reports state that John was a model pupil who always worked hard. Always a keen sportsman, John played in the school hockey team whilst at Bedford Modern, in the position of goal. Throughout his life John also played football, cricket and squash, and he was also a very enthusiastic golfer.

On leaving school, John trained as an accountant. He worked extremely hard and became accounts director of Booth Concrete in St Neots with whom he worked for many years. Prior to retirement, John was a senior accountant for the Bell Language School in Cambridge.

John spent 45 years of his life with his beloved wife Lynne. He also had two daughters from his first marriage. John and Lynne spent their time together travelling far and wide, enjoying trips to the theatre and entertaining their many friends. They also enjoyed regular trips to London to watch John's cherished Tottenham Hotspur. He was a dedicated Rotarian for the last 30 years of his life, spending a year as president, raising money for various charities and organising various events for the local community.

He passed away at home with wife Lynne and youngest daughter Carol by his side, on 06 September 2020 after a short, bravely fought illness.'

Robin Chambers

1945-50

West House. Died 24 September 2020.

Robin's son, Robert, writes: 'Robin Michael Chambers, 86, of Chelmsford MA, and recently Milford, passed away on Thursday 24 September 2020. Born in Turvey, England, he was the son of the late Mollie Eileen (Gregory) Chambers and Howard Wilson Chambers. He was the husband of the late Lorraine (Bartaby) Chambers.

Robin was a world traveller, having travelled to all continents, with the exception of Antarctica. He was a paratrooper in the British Army and was stationed in Egypt. He enjoyed a lifelong love of the game of rugby. First playing, then coaching followed by refereeing. When he could no longer keep up with the players, he evaluated referees. He was an avid gardener and an animal lover.

He worked for many years at Texas Instruments, in Bedford, then in Dallas Texas. He worked for two other semiconductor companies after Texas Instruments and retired in Massachusetts.

Robin is survived by two children, Robert Chambers of Stratford, CT and Alison Corin and her husband, Jeffrey of Holliston. He also leaves behind his grandchildren, Josh Corin, Jillian and Shawn Chambers, and his beloved dog, Aggie. He is predeceased by his brother, Jack Chambers.'



John Foulkes

Staff 1972-2001

Died 28 September 2020.



David Jenkins (1979-2018) writes: 'It was February 1979 and I was nearly through my PGCE course and looking for a job. I had sent out about 70 application letters and I had received an invitation from BMS to come for an interview. When I arrived, I realised I had no chance because this was clearly a posh school. So, I relaxed to enjoy the interview practice and at the end of the day was enormously surprised when John offered me the job. I had done degrees in Plant Science and Crop Physiology. I knew lots about plants and farming but not a lot about most of the rest of Biology. This was in the days before people fussed over newly qualified teachers. You were expected to roll up your sleeves and get on with it. In John Foulkes I had however gained an excellent mentor. He had a really good grasp of the whole of the field and was a wise and compassionate guide to a young man in his first teaching job. He offered lots of great advice. For instance, he told me to always go in hard on a new class as you can always relax the pressure afterwards, but it is difficult to do it the other way round!

Obituaries

John was a senior examiner for the exam boards and fully understood what they wanted and was more than happy to give his expertise so that by the end of my first year at BMS I never for a moment felt that I wasn't quite up to the task of teaching Biology.

John was also a fantastic leader of Biology field trips and introduced me to the North Norfolk coast about which I knew nothing. His understanding of the history, geology and ecology of that coast was absolutely second to none and I grew to love the place encouraged by John. I still have a painting of the windmill at Cley on my wall. In those days we would go away for three or four days on a field trip and used the Sheringham Youth Hostel as a base as it had a fantastic field study centre. I warmly remember October evenings sitting in the Field Study Centre with the boys (BMS wasn't mixed in those days) while John went through what we had found and I have to say that quite a lot of what we did was of a higher standard than we had at university. I had never really come across contingency tables for instance and then suddenly we were using them with 17 and 18 year olds. I am sure those boys went off to university far better prepared than I had been a few years before. One lad wrote in and said that he was employed as an ecologist and every time he went out into the field to lay out a quadrat he used to think back to the field trip.

One piece of advice John gave me, which I ignored, was not to join the CCF. I joined the RN section. After a few years John too decided to join but, he chose the RAF section. The RN used to offer officer training courses to officers from all sections and as an experienced senior dinghy sailing instructor, I used to run the OSAIL course at HM Naval Base Portland. One summer John came along to be instructed in dinghy sailing. One of the things you need to master is what to do if your crew falls out of the boat and John and I went through the procedure a few times using a dummy. Finally, in the middle of Portland Harbour I asked him, "Do you think you've got it now?", "Yes" he said. So, I jumped out of the boat. He rescued me perfectly, first time.

When I met John he was married to Barbara and they had two children, Mike and Laura. I was a newlywed and had just bought my first house. So, new job, new wife, new house, new town. John and Barbara welcomed us and helped us find our feet, Laura became our babysitter in due course and Mike became a great friend. I thank John and Barbara for that friendship and for trusting me to take their son on a sailing expedition around Iceland.

When it was my turn to leave BMS, Alex Tate offered the long serving leavers the chance to have a couple of people to join us for a lunch in the Brownridge Room. Picking John as my first guest was not a difficult choice. It was a delight to show him and Barbara around the School and especially the new Science Block. John was a great influence on my life and helped shape the teacher I became. I owe him a huge debt.'

Imam Mir Irshad Ali

Staff 1995-2015



Died 07 October 2020.

Imam Ali's son, Talib Ali (1985-92), writes: 'Imam Mir Irshad Ali led a life dedicated to the service of God and the communities in which he lived. Through his work in schools, hospitals, prisons and elsewhere he touched the lives of countless people.

Imam Ali was born in Hyderabad, India in 1940. After completing his Master's degree in Commerce from Osmania University, he travelled to Liverpool in 1963 to pursue further studies and qualify as an accountant.

As a student he took an active role in the United Nations Students Association and

Students Islamic Society, becoming President of both. He also founded a weekend school to help local Muslim children learn about their faith in English and established a Quran study group at the YMCA.

This pattern of service to the local community and interfaith dialogue was to be repeated in subsequent moves to Swansea, Norwich and then finally to Bedford, which would become his home for more than 40 years.

My father started a children's Sunday school in our dining room soon after we moved to Bedford, but such was the demand for religious instruction in English we soon needed more space, and he began to use a room at St Mary's Church on Church Lane. Today, the Al Mizan School (as it is now known) is based at the University of Bedfordshire and caters to more than 100 children.

In his fifties, with failing eyesight prematurely ending his accounting career, my father threw himself into his community work. Over the next 25 years he became the Muslim Chaplain at Bedford Hospital, Bedford Prison and Yarlwood Detention Centre. He organised and led Friday prayers for many years at the Bedford English Study Centre, Bedford Modern School and Bedford School.

Imam Ali combined intellect and articulacy with passion and charm. He cared about the well-being of everyone he met, and he had the rare gift of being able to connect with the old and young alike. He was just as at home explaining Islam to Muslims as to people of other faiths or no faith and had a wonderful way with words: "Have no fear, the Imam is here!" was one of his favourite catchphrases, and one which immediately endeared him to everyone he met.

He is survived by his wife, Hajra, who was his rock and constant companion over the last 52 years, and by three sons and nine grandchildren, all of whom will miss him dearly.'

Roger Wall

Staff 1983-2004

Died 16 October 2020.

Roger's wife, Sue, and son, Chris (1985-86), write: 'Roger William Wall was born on 31 January 1944 in Cambridge, where he spent his first few years (apart from a few months in Leeds towards the end of World War II, while his father was serving in the Army Pay Corps). In summer 1947, his family moved to Cornwall, his father having taken up a teaching post (Languages and Classics) at Falmouth Grammar School. During his school years, Roger excelled at athletics and rugby and sang in the local church choir. He was a Sea Scout and spent much of his leisure time crewing for a friend who had an Enterprise dinghy across the water in Restronguet.

After leaving school, Roger began a teacher training course at the College of St Mark and St John in Chelsea, specialising in French and PE for primary-aged children. Besides a six-month course in Versailles, he spent some time in Touraine, during which he achieved a Diplôme d'Etudes Françaises. Roger spent a year in France as an Assistant Anglais. Having suffered head injuries playing rugby in France, doctors forbade him to continue active participation. Roger met Sue in 1963, while digging a deer pond in Ashridge Forest as members of the London Training Colleges Scout and Guide Federation. They married in March 1967.

Following the successful completion of his teacher training course, Roger began his career in a junior school in Duston, Northampton. With the goal of an eventual return to Cornwall, Roger took a post teaching French and PE at Launceston College, a state co-educational comprehensive school with a boarding section. There, he acted as an Assistant Scouter. He had hoped to find a post in a primary school, but none was available, so Roger and Sue moved to work in the school on the Channel Island of Alderney, where Roger taught the lower juniors (aged six to nine).

Unfortunately, owing to the early 1970s house price boom, they could no longer afford to buy an island property, so had to terminate their posts with the States of Guernsey, returning to England to find both work and a home. There followed some years teaching in Biggleswade (a first school) and Sandy (junior and middle schools) before Roger was delighted to be offered a post teaching general subjects, French and PE at BMS (mostly at the junior level).

What was Roger like as a teacher? As one child was overheard to say (through an open staffroom window), "I like Mr Wall - but he is strict!". A parent's description is of a true gentleman, encouraging and good fun. One story he often told was the morning when the then Assistant Head of Music, John Mower, started the Junior School assembly hymn in a minor key, having noted general malaise in the staffroom, resulting in much stifled amusement amongst the Junior School staff and great confusion from the boys.

Within days of retiring at 60, as his contract required, Roger and Sue set off on a 60-day world tour, visiting South Africa, Western Australia, the Northern Territory, Queensland, New Zealand, Fiji, and Vancouver Island. Sue and Roger had two children, Chris (Old Leightonian 1980-85, and OBM - County House 1985/6) and Adrian (Old Roffensian), who was a cathedral chorister in Rochester and has since been a member of Newcastle and Peterborough Cathedral choirs.'



Obituaries

Simon Farrant-Parker 1964-68

County House. Died 30 October 2020.



David Price (1962-68) writes: 'My friend Simon Farrant-Parker lost his long battle with cancer on 30 October 2020. Simon joined the 3rd form at BMS in September 1964 after his family moved to Willington. At school he was popular and made many friends. He enjoyed school life. He played rugby and rowed both of which he enjoyed and neither of which, he would have agreed, he excelled in. Whilst still at school he already showed a keen interest in cars, a passion which never left him. He owned an old Austin 7 and a couple of Ford specials which he used to race round the paddock at Grange Farm.

On leaving school he started his career in agriculture, working on two local farms before going on to agricultural college. On leaving college he worked mainly in the animal feed business. He moved around quite a lot. He lived and worked in the Bedford area, Fulbourn, Watton, The Sudan, Darlington, Hexham, Hereford (twice), Finedon and finally Spaldwick. Until his final job he mainly managed animal feed mills. His final post saw him travelling around Europe and the Far East, advising international feed suppliers on feed production processes. Simon did take a

break from his career when he bought a kit car company and spent a couple of years producing from scratch and selling a range of fibre glass kit cars.

He always got great pleasure from his small collection of classic cars particularly his Austin Healy 3000 which he restored himself.

In spite of the difficulties he faced in recent years, Simon never lost his optimistic outlook and was still looking forward to attending car shows when they re start after COVID-19 restrictions are lifted.

Simon leaves his widow Yvonne to whom he was devoted and who was a great source of strength to him.'

John Sessions 1963-64

West House. Died 02 November 2020.

Known as John Marshall at BMS.

Article published in *The Times*, 03 November 2020 reads: 'John Gibb Marshall was born in Largs, on the Clyde coast of Ayrshire, in 1953, the son of John Marshall, a Protestant gas engineer, and his Catholic wife, Esmé (née Richardson), who worked in a bookshop and had a reverence for books that she passed to her son.

He had a twin sister, Maggie, who became a lawyer in Canada, and an older brother, Bill, who joined the navy when John and Maggie were four.

Their father's work took the family to the home counties when John was three and he attended Bedford Modern, an "idyllic public school". The scripture teacher, an ebullient ex-fighter pilot, encouraged him to improvise Bible stories. Later he was bullied at St Albans Grammar School, but nevertheless acquired a taste for Shakespeare after studying *The Tempest* for A Level. He then read English

literature at University College of North Wales, in Bangor, where he appeared in comedy shows with titles such as *Look Back in Bangor* and *Marshall Arts*.

Taking himself to Canada he started a PhD on John Cowper Powys, the British philosopher, at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario. "I was there for four years, but didn't stay and didn't complete it," he said, confessing that "I was doing plays and one-man shows at the same time." He later described his dissertation as "200 pages of rubbish."

Back in Britain in the late 1970s he was offered a place at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art. There he met Kenneth Branagh and later appeared in Branagh's Shakespearean films *Henry V* (1989) and *In the Bleak Midwinter* (1995) while also finding his way on to the comedy circuit. "My plan was to do two careers at once - to be a comedian and to be an actor," he explained. The name John Sessions came about because there was another John Marshall in Equity.

This affable brainbox, whose talent for mimicry and improvisation made him a fixture on panel shows such as *Have I Got News For You* and *QI*, admitted that his love of history made him a "bit punchable", adding: "I'm able to think quickly with facts." The actor Timothy Spall once said that Sessions "could come across as a bit of a clever dick", something that Sessions blamed on not having been to Oxbridge. "I can't even belong to the club of comedians who went to Cambridge," moaned the entertainer, who almost completed a PhD.

Sessions enjoyed an eclectic career, ranging from one-man routines to stagings of Chekhov.

John Sessions, actor, was born on 11 January 1953. He died from a heart attack on 02 November 2020, aged 67.'

Pamela Gilbert

Died 06 January 2021.

Pamela Gilbert was a friend of the School and a generous donor to the BMS Bursary Fund in memory of her husband, Gerald Gilbert (1939-46).

Pamela's son, Phil Gilbert, writes: 'It is with great sadness that I have to inform you of the death of my mother. In spite of all precautions in her care home, she had contracted the Coronavirus and while we thought she was recovering, she just passed away peacefully in her chair after breakfast.'

As you know, we were all very proud of my father's achievements and my mother was really, really pleased to make her gift to BMS. I know that doing this while she was alive and able to receive your news on its use was a very good decision for her. We talked a lot on Facetime and your news made her very happy. I am certain that she is updating Gerald on absolutely all the details now that they are together again!

John Hale (Chopper)

Staff 1970-85

Died 18 January 2021.

John's son, Eddie Hale, writes: 'John Hale, former BMS teacher and boarding house master for Culver and School House passed away peacefully on 18 January 2021.'

The last decade or so for John may have been impacted by dementia, but everyone will remember a modest gentleman who touched so many lives and greatly influenced scores of people, reflected in the many wonderful messages being received since his passing by the family.



John was born in January 1941 in the Welsh mining town of Abertillery. Having left school, John attended Welbeck College before studying at Shrivenham where he gained a BSc in Civil Engineering. He trained at Sandhurst and received a commission into the Royal Engineers, reaching the rank of Captain.

Whilst in the Army, John met Anne Glover and they married in 1965, with their early life together being spent in Cyprus. Katherine was born in 1967 in Cyprus, and Edward soon followed in 1969, by then John and Anne had returned to Army Headquarters in Aldershot, before John decided on a change of career to retrain as a teacher.

The move to Bedford in the early 1970s coincided with the arrival of Andrew in April 1972 as John settled into a long and successful teaching career at Bedford Modern School. However, teaching was not enough for John and Anne, and John soon became Boarding House Master at Culver House.

A recent message from a Bedford Modern teaching colleague, Rob Haworth (1974-90), reflects the esteem in which John was held at the school:

'John was affectionately known as Chopper amongst the staff and many of the boys. For me he was a friend and of huge support when I first joined the staff in 1974. Both he

and Anne welcomed me into their home. John was the heart and soul of the Common Room and did so much for the esprit de corps of BMS Staff. His promotion to Deputy Head at Stamford School was much deserved but he was sorely missed and left a gap that no one could fill.'

From Bedford Modern, in 1985 John applied successfully for a promotion to Second Master at Stamford School and a few years later he became Headmaster. John and Anne immersed themselves into life in Stamford, which included John becoming the Founder President of Stamford Rotary Club Burghley, and Burghley Park Golf Club, where John would become a respected and popular member culminating in becoming Captain of the Golf Club. John was also a big supporter and committee member of the Friends of Stamford Hospital.

Anne was bestowed with a MBE in 2010 with John by her side, which was a significant milestone in both their lives.

For his latter years, John was supported by many friends and loved ones, with his kind-hearted brother-in-law Roger Millard moving from Portsmouth to Stamford in 2015 after Anne's passing to live with John, showing again the affection in which John was held.'

Lawrence Dennis Smith

1949-57

County House. Died 07 February 2021.

Lawrence's son, Andrew Smith, writes: 'Lawrence was born 08 March 1939 to parents Catherine and Bertrum. He was the youngest of six brothers. In age order: Jack, Dick, Bill, Michael and Robin.'

Lawrence was brought up in Stotfold, Bedfordshire. He went to Stotfold Primary School and from there Bedford Modern School. He was a member of the village church choir.

Obituaries

During WWII both his father and eldest brother Jack were away in the war. Catherine, his mum, was left to bring up the five remaining brothers.

His father survived the war but suffered PTSD and passed away in 1951 (same day as King George VI) when Lawrence was only 12. Jack tragically was killed during action.

As a teenager Lawrence worked for a market gardener (probably where the love of vegetable gardening came from) and also the local Stotfold mill, heaving sacks of wheat.

On leaving school, Lawrence had to undergo a year's practical work before being allowed to start his university course at Wye College. He worked for Levington Research Station – a fertiliser research institute in Suffolk.

While at Wye College studying for an Honours Degree in Agriculture, he met Mavis who was two years younger than him. From Wye College, Lawrence went onto Oxford University to take a Bachelor of Literature, but he wasn't awarded the degree because what he wrote about at the time was 'too new'. It is of course regarded as mainstream economics nowadays.



He remained at Oxford University for a further three years as he was offered the role of Departmental Demonstrator. During this time he visited Tanzania, Nigeria and Iran with the Plunkett Foundation – 'We help communities to take control of their challenges and overcome them together', and hence his love of Africa was born.

In 1963 he married Mavis and they set up home in Headington, Oxford. Andrew was born in 1965 and they then moved to Woodstock where Helen was born in 1966.

In 1966 Lawrence accepted a post at Glasgow University lecturing in Political Economics and Agriculture as it had better promotion opportunities and the department practised in pure economics rather than just agricultural economics. The family moved to live in Bearsden. In 1968 Lawrence was seconded to the University of Nairobi for three years to head up a UK team of economists to work with an American team on priority government projects (on the back of Kenya's independence). The family moved out to be with him, during which time Sara was born (1970).

On returning to Glasgow the family moved to their family home 'Craigspark' where the children went to the local primary and then secondary schools. Lawrence's career progressed at Glasgow University where, in 1972, he was promoted to Senior Lecturer, in 1977 he was promoted to Reader and in 1990 he was awarded his Professorship.

During all this time Lawrence took groups of agricultural students to tour European farms – often setting off in minibuses. He also set up a Diploma course at the University which allowed foreign students to come over for a year. And during vacations a lot of time was spent doing consultancy work in a number of countries – Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Malawi, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Nepal, China and Egypt. He also held a directorship at the Scottish Agriculture College – which covered the colleges of Western Scotland (Auchencruive), Eastern Scotland (Edinburgh) and Northern Scotland

(Aberdeen). And this is the reason for Lawrence being a keen supporter of Mackie's ice cream!

In 1998 Lawrence took early retirement from Glasgow University and moved to Stowupland with Mavis. However he wasn't quite ready for full retirement and was commissioned by the Oxford Policy Management company to carry out further consultancy on behalf of the Government's Department of International Development (now called Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office) in various countries in Africa, Armenia and Egypt.

In July 2008 he had a heart valve replacement and in November 2013 he underwent a second heart valve replacement.

Although retired, at this time he volunteered his time to church. He was asked by Bishop Nigel to co-chair the Parish Share Review Panel. He travelled all over Suffolk, visiting Beneficiaries, talking to treasurers, trying to explain the need to pay the Parish Share (the amount of money that each Church has to pay which covers the cost of the vicar).'

**John
Chapman**
1945-52

County House. Died 11 February 2021.

John's daughters Lizzi, Alyson and Penny write: 'John was a scholarship boy at Bedford Modern School 1945 – 1952, riding the bus in from Newport Pagnell. Upon leaving school he was articled to a group of Chartered Accountants working in Bedford, Stony Stratford, Leighton Buzzard and Newport Pagnell from 1952 to 1957. He was a chorister at the Church of St Peter and St Paul, Newport Pagnell, and played rugby for Olney. During his teenage years he worked on a local farm during the summer and was an active member of the local Young Farmers Club. Military Service took him from



Aldershot to Aden where he met Jeanette Thrasher, the Head Teacher of the Service Children's Infant School in Aden. They were married in August 1960 and had three daughters. John worked as an accountant in energy companies during his career which allowed him and the family to live in the Middle East, in Europe and different parts of the UK, finally settling in Marlow, Bucks.

After his retirement in 1995 John was a strong supporter of various causes, and volunteered for years in leadership roles for many different charities and organisations including Chiltern Air Ambulance (now Thames Valley Air Ambulance), Great Marlow School (Governor), Marlow Regatta (President), Marlow Spring Regatta (President), Marlow Town Regatta and Marlow Rowing Club, the Thames Regional Rowing Council, various Masonic Lodges, Marlow Chamber of Trade (President), Marlow Age Concern (President), the Chiltern Prostate Cancer Group (founding member), Marlow Rotary Club, Rotary District 1090 (District Governor) and All Saints Parish

Church, Marlow (Treasurer). John played the piano or organ for a few organisations and enjoyed raising his and other voices in song. He was well known as the voice who recited the Kohima during the Marlow RBL Remembrance Day ceremonies and took his role as President of the Marlow Royal British Legion very seriously. He was a yearly RBL Poppy Appeal can shaker where his cheery face was a familiar sight outside Waitrose.

John enjoyed his continued connection with the School and other Old Boys, and was a regular supporter of the rowers at Henley Royal Regatta. His last visit to the School was to attend a Headmaster's Lunch in early 2020 shortly after being awarded an MBE for services to the community in his beloved Marlow.'

Sir Stanley Odell

1940-46

County House. Died 21 March 2021.

Sir Stanley's daughter, Carol Parry, writes: 'Stanley John Odell was born at Top Farm, Campton and joined Bedford Modern School in 1940. He left BMS in 1946 to work for the family farming enterprise which had a wholesale business supplying vegetables to retail outlets in Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and North London. The wholesale business was sold in the 1980s and the farm has since diversified to cereal crops and letting. He was always an immensely social person – people meant a lot to him – and, as a young man, he was Chairman of Biggleswade Young Farmers Club and a founding member and player at Biggleswade Rugby Club. He met his wife, Grace, through Young Farmers (they were on opposing teams in a speaking competition) and they married in 1952 and had four daughters.

He had a lifelong interest in politics beginning in the Young Conservatives. He subsequently became Constituency Chairman for Mid Bedfordshire and then Chairman of the Eastern Area Executive Committee. It was in this latter role that he and Grace attended the party conference in Brighton in 1984, staying at the Grand Hotel, and had a lucky escape when they were blown out of their bed by the IRA bomb. He was knighted for political and public service in 1986 and in October 1989



chaired a successful party conference at Blackpool. His interest in politics never waned and, following his retirement at a national level, he continued his involvement locally.

Obituaries

But politics and farming did not totally define the man. He was immensely involved in the well-being of the people of Bedfordshire and Luton. He was Chairman of the South Beds Community Health Care Trust and also the Bedfordshire and Luton Community Health Care Trust.

Subsequently he was Chairman of the Mary Seacole Home for the Homeless in Luton (now Mary Seacole Housing Association Ltd). He always wore his old coat when out with his collecting box for the homeless as he thought he could collect more that way. He also promoted the foundation of Luton University and was for many years a member of the University Court. He was awarded Honorary Fellowships from both Luton University and, following its amalgamation, the University of Bedfordshire.

The American air base of Chicksands bordered on his farm and he became Chairman of the local Anglo-American Community Relations Committee. This relationship with Chicksands continued when the Intelligence Corps moved in following the closure of the American base. He enjoyed his connections with the Intelligence Corps immensely, being awarded Honorary Membership and becoming Vice Patron of the Corps Museum. He always wore his Intelligence Corps tie with great pride. In addition, he was Patron of the Friends of Chicksands Priory which was for 350 years the home of the Osborn family.

He was never a great believer in holidays and certainly not in retiring. In more recent times he and Grace enjoyed attending the meetings of the English Speaking Union and, of course, he always enjoyed the OBM Club functions. He took a great interest in his ten grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren, all of whom adored him.'

Peter Cooper 1937-45

County House. Died 19 April 2021.

Peter's daughter, Anna Wheal, writes: 'Born in 1927, Peter Cooper was the eldest son of Frank, Headmaster of Sharnbrook School and Lily, a teacher and respected soprano. A musical family, this interest was encouraged further when he joined Bedford Modern School in 1937, followed two years later by his brother Michael. His main instrument was the piano (he reluctantly played flute in the school orchestra next to the Headmaster!), he took organ lessons at St Paul's Church, and was fortunate in attending concerts by the BBC Symphony Orchestra, relocated to Bedford during the war. He was a founder member of the BMS Dance Band which played on Saturday evenings for the school dance classes (instigated by the Headmaster to improve social skills). The band also played at the surrounding village halls to entertain the Land Girls.

In 1945 he won a scholarship to St John's College Cambridge where he read Music and Languages, and joined the Footlights, which honed his skills as an accompanist and arranger as well as sharpening his legendary sense of humour.

This was followed by National Service in 1948, teacher training and a year teaching English in Versailles, before being appointed Assistant Music Teacher at Maidstone Grammar School. From there he moved to Hitchin Boys Grammar School in 1955. As Head of Music he built a strong musical tradition, nurturing a particularly gifted group of students who later became professional musicians. During a trip to France, he contracted poliomyelitis and fought for over a year to regain his mobility which he did with immense determination and courage. In 1962 he met and married his first wife Margaret, with whom he had two children, James and Anna. He was Musical Director for the Hitchin Thespians, a post he enjoyed for seven years, conducting musicals including *Call Me Madam* and *Kiss Me Kate*.

In 1967 he left Hitchin to set up a music department at Mabel Fletcher Technical College in Liverpool. Liverpool was a vibrant musical city and he was fortunate to have committed staff, many of them professional instrumentalists, and students who regarded him with great affection and with whom he had an excellent rapport. He liked to reminisce about conducting a young timpanist called Simon Rattle who came in as a last-minute replacement, reminding him to "watch the beat"! During this time he also gained an MEd from the University of Manchester.

In 1978 Peter moved to Norfolk becoming Head of Arts and Sciences at City College in Norwich, retiring in 1987. In retirement he was much in demand as an accompanist, conductor, composer and arranger. His first marriage ended amicably in 1982 and Peter married again in 1989, to Margery Baker, a fellow musician, for whose adult and youth orchestras he produced many arrangements. He took up the French Horn and continued to make a positive contribution to Norfolk's music-making until a bad fall in 2010 gradually reduced his mobility. His intellect and wit never left him, and much-loved and respected, he died at home in April 2021.'



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For help finding your answers, contact us...

t: 01908 584925 w: www.boosst.financial

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We are extremely grateful to everyone who has pledged their support to the School over the years and would like to express our thanks to our donors for their generosity. Particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, every gift received made a tremendous difference to the lives of our students.

If you would like to know more or want to give back to BMS, please get in touch or return the donation form enclosed.

Write to:

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Thank you