



Old Girls' Guild

Updates, reminisces and farewells

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

I hope this edition of the OGG Update finds you all safe and well through these unprecedented times. The Stamfordian Spirit certainly shines through during these experiences and the offer of an extended arm of support remains so please do get in touch if there is anything you need assistance with.

I wanted to take this opportunity to send a warm congratulations to those pupils who have received their A Level and GCSE results. We all remember those times of anticipation in opening the results envelope, but this year has been particularly challenging and our SHS pupils have managed it commendably. We wish you all the best in your future endeavours and do keep in touch and update us on where you are and what you are doing as we would love to hear from you.

There are two articles in this update; one from Marigold Lamin (OS 56) who has so kindly shared some of her memories of her time as a pupil at the Schools (and we also look forward to reading about her memories as a teacher there too), and a short piece about Miss Halsey who sadly passed away in August.

You should have received a copy of the Stamford Magazine either electronically or via post. Please contact the [Alumni Relations and Development Office](#) if you would like a copy.

May Christ us Spede.
Jill Hamilton (OS 80)
Chair, SHS Old Girls' Guild

REMINISENCES

Marigold Lamin (nee Vipan) (OS 56)

I have been looking at the 2019- 2020 Old Girls Magazine and thought I would write about my time at SHS as now there are so many activities available to girls which were not possible when I was at school. I have had a thirty year association with SHS from 1946 to 1956 as a pupil and 1973 to 2003 as a member of the Junior School Staff. I have so many memories that I can share with you of how different the school was when I was a pupil there.

I was interviewed as a pupil aged 8 in 1946 by Miss Nichol who I did not see again as she retired. I went by train from Morcott to Stamford and I went into form 1A at Welland House. I spent two years in the form room on the first floor overlooking Water Street as I stayed in that form room the next year as Remove. I was sorry to miss Lower II on the second floor as they had a covered chute from the window overlooking the garden which the form practised going down in case of an emergency. I thought I should have enjoyed that.

We had all our lessons at Welland House but went to the senior school for lunch. While I was at Welland House I was in a version of 'The Frog and the Mouse' and I was the mouse. I did my own version of it when I was teaching there too. I did dancing lessons with Miss Anne and Miss Audrey while at the Junior School. There was the bitter smell all the time from the brewery next door but we got used to it as Mr and Mrs Bradshaw must have done as the caretakers who lived in Welland House. Mrs Laxton was Head of Welland House and Miss Gutteridge (later Mrs Locke) were both still at SHS Junior School when I returned as a teacher.

Our playground at Welland House was across the road on the riverbank. There was a concrete section where most of the pupils played and the shrubbery which was for Remove and Lower III. We did not play on the lawn to the south of Welland House with the beautiful beech tree on it. Miss Dix came down from the senior school to do french with Lower III and we had a PE mistress from there as well otherwise our form Mistress took us for everything. Miss Cooke was Head of Welland House when I was at School and she and I have the same Birthday. She loved poetry and we learned a lot by heart in Lower III. I remember learning some of the 'Forsaken Merman' which was not one of my favourite poems. Again, when I came to live in Stamford I visited her often after she retired and I kept in touch with her until she died.

At the age of eleven I got a Rutland Scholarship and went into the senior school where Miss Lomax was Head. My first form room at the senior school was a wooden hut where the Gymnasium is now. Mr Mitchell was caretaker when I first moved to Stamford in 1979. 1 Park Lane was pulled down to build the theatre and form rooms replacing wooden huts as well as Mr Mitchell's house. During my time at SHS I had the biology Lab as a form room and I was in the history room next to the art room. Downstairs I was in one of the form rooms along the corridor and lastly the sixth form room with Miss Richardson. I had Miss Gregory all the way up to A-

Level for geography as well as Miss Best in the sixth form who I corresponded with after she retired.

Miss Roughton was my English Mistress all the way through the School and she encouraged me to take part in the school plays. I was The Bishop of Beauvais in St Joan and in Lower VI I was Benedict in Much Ado. Jill Keery, later Jill Miller, was Beatrice and we were both in St David's House and we won several House plays. Joan Galea and I gave a cup for House plays when we left but I don't know if they were kept on after our time.

While doing two A Levels, English and Geography, I also went to Art and French classes and spent a lot of time in the library. I enjoyed looking at copies of Punch and two beautiful books about different people around the world.

I have just thought of something else which made an impression on me and that was when Benno Moiseiwitsch came to play the piano at the senior school. We were told we were not to move or cough while he was playing and I think he had to have another grand piano not the school one. I sat on the balcony and it used to creak but as far as I know all was well. I don't remember what he played but no doubt the school would have a record of it being sometime in the 50's. Do let me know what you think.

Miss Hoyle who taught French arranged for pupils to have a French pen friend and I had one. She was Annik Rigot who lived in Neuilly on the northern side of Paris. I went to stay with her when I was fifteen, she and I went on the metro all over Paris and to Versailles and to the Malmaison and to see Le Pere Goriot one evening. When Annik came to England we took her to Cambridge and to see a Shakespeare play at Stratford and we had lunch at Deene Hall where my mother had been governess to Phillipa Brudenel. We also saw a variety show in London.

While at school I had one trip abroad to Belgium and a day at the Natural History Museum in London but there were not the opportunities for pupils then as there are now. I always felt sorry for the boarders because if they were not musical or sporty there wasn't much for them to do at the weekends. Walking in Burghley Park was one of the few Sunday activities on offer.

Our lunches were not very exciting just after the war; fried corned beef, fish and stews with a chocolate or pink mould or steamed pudding to follow. Figs and custard was not my favourite pudding but after lunch I would rush off to Hockey practice. I was right back in the First eleven hockey team and also played it in the Hunts Junior team. I played tennis in the second six in the Summer.

(Photographs held in the SES Archives)



(SHS Hockey Team 1953-4)



(SHS Hockey Team 1955-6)



(SHS Tennis Team 1954)

One activity I did not look forward to was sitting at Miss Lomax's table for lunch once a year and having to make the conversation. It was also quite daunting to have to meet Miss Lomax and carry her books when she came to take us for Architecture in the Upper III. I was only asked to read at Assembly once as I did not learn to read out loud until I started to teach and stumbled over words while at School.

I left school to do teacher training at Bedford Training College in 1956 having got my English and Geography A Levels.

I haven't a memory for specifics but on the whole I enjoyed school and was surprised to find it much the same at Welland House when I went back there to teach in 1973.

Perhaps I shall write about teaching at SHS at a later date.

FAREWELLS

Miss Mary Pamela Halsey, always known as Miss Pam Halsey.



It is with sadness that we write to let you know that on 17 August 2020 Miss Halsey died at home in Stamford aged 95.

Miss Mary Pamela Halsey, always known as Pam to colleagues and friends, but respectfully to her pupils as Miss Halsey, was born in Bristol and educated at Bedford High School before going on to read Classics at Oxford. Miss Halsey obtained a teaching certificate at Bristol and spent some time at Bournemouth before she came to Stamford High School. Miss Halsey taught Classics full time at SHS from 1953-85, but did some part time after that.

“Miss Halsey has always had a scholarly approach to her work, and has been delighted when several of her pupils have followed in her footsteps. She imparted her love of Classics to many thousands of girls and has brought out the best in her pupils.” – SHS Magazine, 1985.

She never set foot out of this country but was always eager to hear of other people’s visits to sites of Classical interest and increase her knowledge.

Miss Halsey was a much loved member of staff at Stamford High School and there have been a number of memories shared on social media. Within the first five days there were 105 comments shared on the Old Stamfordian Facebook page alone.... the most ever received. A few memories we have included below:

“It is with a sense of nostalgia and sadness that I have to say Miss Halsey died aged 95 on 17 August. I shall leave you with these gems "you silly cuckoos", "ladies, ladies, desist" and my favourite "ladies a little decorum please".

“More haste, less speed, puellae. Vale, Magistra indeed. What a woman. A gem of a teacher”.

“She was proper Enid Blyton old school”.

“Awww that’s so sad ... didn’t realise she was so young when she taught us ... “make haste, make haste””.

“I’ll never forget her Dickensian brown shoes along with those tights with seams up the back, RIP lovely lady”.

“Oh my, I can so see those shoes and tights now, and hear the ‘click clock’ walking around the quad!”

“How sad, but how marvellous to be so fondly remembered by generations of SHS girls. I don't think I had her for Latin (Miss Midgley all the way) but I had two years of one-on-one Greek with Miss Halsey in a garret somewhere at the top of the school. I have a lot to thank them both for”.

“It's a tribute that we all remember her so well and so fondly. Such a lovely person”.

“I asked to be moved into Miss Halsey's class in the UV. She was so kind. I didn't want to disappoint her. Lovely lady. And great to be reminded of all those phrases”.

“She was strict but fair. She calmly took control when anyone was having personal and traumatic issues. Her compassionate nature surfaced only when needed and thus small gestures were appreciated more by the recipient.”

“I remember she was really sweet and kind to me when my mother died, She (rather uncharacteristically) gave me a big hug!”

“Precision in grammar was gently but firmly enforced. Her teaching led to girls being unaware that they were learning life skills, which enhanced problem solving and clarity of thought. Old-fashioned in dress and ways she may have been, but as can be seen, her values are respected and she is remembered for all the right reasons.”

“I hope she realised how much she enriched our lives, my generation will always be grateful as we can peruse graveyards, family mottos and the like with an element of authority.”

It has been wonderful to hear and read of the kind words shared about Miss Halsey, she was much loved and will be greatly missed.

Natalie Pretsell, Community Engagement Manager