

Moulsham Junior School Past Pupils' Newsletter

Autumn 2005

Vol 7 no 3

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ANOTHER PROFESSIONALLY PRINTED ISSUE THIS TIME, with yet more archive pictures, your own photos, and another interesting set of letters and articles. A big thank you to all our contributors. Do please keep sending your pictures, memories and news for future issues, and we look forward to seeing many of you again at next year's Open Afternoon (details below).

This is Les Kemp's final year as Head Teacher at Moulsham Juniors, so his reflections on this page about the beginning of the new school year have a special resonance. After some 11 years in the job, he will have a vast store of memories, and will himself have become part of the folklore for a generation of Moulsham pupils. More about this next time.

Happy reading, and our very best wishes to you all, Hilary Balm (Dye) and Kathleen Boot (Nash)

THEN AND NOW



Moulsham Junior School (above) as pictured for the Opening Ceremony of the Moulsham schools in 1938, and (below) as photographed by Peter Turrall at the 2005 Open Afternoon. Still very recognisable.



FROM THE HEAD TEACHER, MR L R KEMP

I went to my daughter's graduation ceremony in Canterbury Cathedral last year and an honorary degree was being given to Sir William Taylor who is in his mid seventies. He said the thing that he noticed most about ageing was that breakfast now seemed to come round every ten minutes. For me it's the Back to School signs in the shops that seem to appear increasingly early, even before we have broken up for the Summer holidays. I like the Autumn Term, and especially the anticipation that a new school year brings. New colleagues, the smell of paint, new exercise books standing in different coloured piles, the hall floors gleaming with a recent coat of polish, and that belief that the new school year is going to be even better than the last.

On the first day back for the children, my eye is always caught by the brand new pair of shoes without a single scuff mark that will be there with the first game of playground football. The first assembly, when you look at the back of the hall and you can't believe this group of children have reached Year 6 and their last year before transfer to secondary school. A Year 3 who can't remember the way back to their classroom after the first morning break but you meet later in the day confidently taking a message to a teacher at the far end of the school. The queue outside the medical room at lunch-time to get a plaster to cover the blister caused by new shoes.

Early in the term we hold a sponsored fitness event which I love. You see real bravery as children push themselves to complete an event before the time runs out. One event we have requires children to bounce tennis balls into a bucket. I stand and watch, and it is the best three minute intelligence test I know, because some children adjust where the ball bounces in relation to the buckets and others bounce it on the same spot every time and not one ball lands in a bucket.

The Macmillan Coffee Morning held at the end of September is one of the best supported activities of the year, with sufficient cakes for every child who wants to purchase a drink and cake, and plenty available to the parents, grandparents and friends who pop in for a coffee. This time, I loved walking into the hall and seeing a parent and grandparent of past pupils who had come back to contribute to this event and provide information about how the two girls are doing now.

We always used to play the game of 'Beetle' as a family entertainment on New Year's Eve, but now the only time I play is at the first event in the school year, organised by the Friends of Moulsham Junior School. It is an activity that depends entirely on the roll of the dice and so this gives no advantage to age or experience. This is a fun family evening, and one that my youngest daughter loves and still comes to. People keep mentioning that this will be the last time in my career that I will be doing a particular activity, and it was probably the last time I will be taking part in a Beetle Drive at Moulsham. But I do plan to resurrect the Kemp Beetle Drive next New Year's Eve and the whole family have been warned.

A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

The 2006 Open Afternoon for past Pupils of Moulsham Junior School will be held next year on SATURDAY 6TH MAY 2006, from 1 - 5pm as usual. We look forward to seeing you there if you are able to come.

OPEN AFTERNOON, 14TH MAY 2005



Many thanks to Pat Cox, 1942-46, for this photo of some of her school friends and their wives at the Open Afternoon: Geoff and Mrs Barnard, Doug and Mrs Barnard; Mrs Jean Taylor (Whittle), and her brother John Whittle. Some of the same people also appear sixty years earlier on the splendid 1945 Elm Road VE party photo (below), taken by Jean Taylor (Whittle)'s mother on her box Brownie camera. **Back row, left to right:** Alec Fucher, Phyllis Little, two Broadway sisters, John Whittle. **Front row:** Sheila Cox, Mollie, Douglas and Geoff Barnard, Paulette Little, John Barnard, Linda Broadway, Jean Little.



Below is an assortment of pictures taken by Peter Turrall, 1938. Some you may recognise are Derek Weston, 1942-46, Brian Emmett, 1938, manning the reception desk, John Spooner, 1938, Peter Charles Smith, 1938 and Colin Pitts, 1942-46, enjoying a cup of tea. Elsewhere, Hilary Balm (Dye) and Kathleen Boot (Nash) both 1951-55, Kathleen talking to the Porter sisters, Joan and Joyce, both first day pupils at Moulsham Junior Girls' School in 1938, Anne Holdsworth (Hammond), . . . And of course the famous school motto board - Work and be Happy.





SCHOOL DINNERS

In response to Mr Kemp's piece on school dinners in the Summer 2005 Newsletter, we had a number of recollections and comments, reproduced here. Below is a photo of the Rayner sisters, Lesley, Una and Susan, on the steps of the former canteen (next to the Infants' School) at the 50th Anniversary celebrations in 1988:



From **BRIAN EMMETT, 1938-45**, Moulsham Junior and Senior Schools:

"It is strange how the definition of some words changes over the years. Dinner to me was always a meal taken in the middle of the day. You had dinner money, dinner ladies and dinner menus. Now, if I mention dinner with regard to the midday meal in the hearing of my young grandchildren, I am politely corrected by them saying "No, Granddad, dinner is taken in the evening and lunch is the midday meal". I always thought lunch was something taken mid-morning!

I joined Moulsham Junior School on day one, class one, age seven in September 1938, from the old St. John's School. I had walked to my home in Goldlay Gardens for my dinner from St. John's, so I don't think there was any suggestion of my not doing the same from Moulsham. In fact I did this for one year. My route took me down Princes Road towards the Army and Navy. There were no buildings on either side of the road - just allotments on one side and fields on the other. The road had only been open for six years as part of the old Chelmsford by-pass and, although it was quite busy, the traffic was not going very fast. My journey continued along Lady Lane, down Manor Road, into the short section of Goldlay Road and then Goldlay Gardens. I would often tarry at the area of waste ground at the junction of Lady Lane and Princes Road, which was always boggy and had a pond in the middle where I would look for frogspawn, frogs and newts.. There is a house built on the site now and I wonder if the occupants realise that it was built over a pond? Can you imagine a seven year old child walking that route on their own now, with no school crossing patrol, bridge or traffic lights!

In September 1939 when the Second World War was declared, my mother went out to work and so my experience of having dinner at school began. At that time, there were no facilities for providing hot meals at Moulsham Juniors, so it was sandwiches, like it or lump it! If my recollection is correct, we had our dinner in the large room situated close to the girls' side of the school, which is now the computer room. As Bert Bearman said in the last issue, our mothers had very little to put into the sandwiches, especially towards the end of the week when the rations had been used up. Also, as the war progressed, food shortages really hit home. My mother was quite resourceful with regard to fillings and I would often have brawn (which was not rationed) when it was available. In the autumn, she would make sliced apple sandwiches, which were all right as long as you didn't look inside and see the apple turning brown! When Mr (Daddy) Gardiner was on Dinner Duty, we would say Grace and very often render a short hymn.

In 1942 when I moved up to Moulsham Seniors, wonder of wonders, there was a school kitchen and, the added advantage for me, my mother was an assistant cook! Of course, there is always a drawback and for me it was fish! This was served up two or three times a week. We had fish pie, fish cakes and fish pudding and the one thing I cannot stomach to this day is FISH. (except fish and chips!). The kitchen was in a converted classroom in the boys' side of the school and the senior girls had first sitting. We cheeky boys would ogle and catcall the girls as they queued up in the veranda waiting for the kitchen to open. When I was in my last year in the Seniors and really grown up (13/14 years old), my friend (Roger Pallimarts, where are you, Roger?) and I would cycle down at dinner time to the British Restaurant in Moulsham Street. This was situated opposite the old St. John's School in what was lately a part of the Peugeot car dealership. Here you could get a basic first course dinner and a small dessert for 9d (4.5p). Although we had what you could call simple and basic food through six years of war, I would dare to suggest that the children of that time were as fit and healthy as the children of today."

From **MAUREEN RIGNALL (BIDWELL), 1941-45**:

"I'm not qualified to say a lot but I remember asking my mother if I could try a school lunch, as I normally went home for my midday meal. So I did try just one. I remember being so shocked when the two black burnt (I think fishes) on a plate were put in front of me with some mashed potato which had a strange tinny flavour. I don't think I ate much of that, but probably did eat the small helping of sponge pudding with custard. Since my mother had always given me enjoyable well-cooked meals, I

never had another school meal. I decided home was best. I do remember junket and semolina - my mother made both, but she made the semolina more interesting by putting some jam or golden syrup in the centre."

From **DAVE STURGEON, 1958-62:**

"School meals? I remember being made by Mr Hodgson to eat chocolate sponge pudding and chocolate custard, which I hated, and 'reproduced' for him soon after! Spam fritters - ugh - but few other memories. Perhaps I went home most days?"

From **DAVID TURNER, 1971-75:**

"School dinners were really not that bad in the 1970s. I dined in the old canteens next to the Infants' School all of my four years. We had a range of traditional meals - from bangers, mash and beans to roast dinners and vegetables, with salads in the Summer months. The sweets were quite satisfactory - Black Cap Pudding was one of my favourites. I didn't dislike jelly, but I seem to remember it had a thicker skin on it than the custard! The school dinner was my main meal of the day. When I got home from school, it was teatime, which was usually sandwiches and cakes with some strawberries in the summer if we had been good. My father would have had his main meal in the works' canteen. I can remember some of the dinner ladies - Mrs Whitehead, Mrs Pattinson, Mrs Rainbird and Mrs Wilkinson. Also Mrs Kirkpatrick, the school secretary, who used to come round the classrooms on Monday mornings, selling the dinner tickets for the week."

YOUR LETTERS

From **PETER MOORE, 1938**, who has recently joined the mailing list and hopes to be at the 2006 Open Afternoon:

"My younger brother Colin Moore, who provided a photo of the 1946/47 Cup Winners, has introduced me to the Past Pupils' Newsletters. It was amazing to see a photograph of Misses Knight, Wood and Rankin, as I was taught by Miss Wood before leaving Widford Church School in 1938 for Moulsham Junior Boys' School. Like my brother Colin, I also played football for the Junior School, five years earlier! I was also pleased to see a photo of Mr Hudson. He was a great man, who had a bad deformity in one arm, but still managed to teach all types of sport - a very humble man."

I wonder if I am the only person from the Junior School who has received Maundy Money from the Queen? I received it in Canterbury Cathedral in 2002."

From **JOHN BAKER, 1938-39:**

"The Spring 2005 Newsletter included an item from Marcus Knight, in which he made reference to **Mary Tamkin**, who shared his violin lessons in the London Road home of Miss Wallinger. I was another member of that class, as was Sybil Bonvini. I well remember those Saturday mornings when I used to trudge over from my home in Avenue Road, carrying my violin, which seemed to weigh a ton, while my friends were going to the Regent to enjoy their Saturday morning film show. That same violin has been used by some of my grandchildren, who have now progressed from its three-quarter size to full sized versions. Thank you for your efforts to keep the Newsletter rolling off the press. Although September 1939, when my family evacuated from Chelmsford, seems (and is) a long time ago, I still remember it all very well."

From **MAUREEN RIGNALL (BIDWELL) 1941-45:**

"Thank you for the Summer 2005 newsletter. It was fascinating to see the teachers I remember from so long ago, especially Miss Rankin and Miss Knight. The first time I met Miss Rankin was when I was taken by my mother to register, I suppose, ready to start school in the junior department the next term. I was still in the Infants at Moulsham. I remember going in the main entrance through the

vestibule and into her study; probably the only time I ever went in that entrance until I came back as a past pupil. At school, we always went in and out of the side entrance where the air raid shelters were.

Miss Rankin appeared very kindly, which was nice, as I was nervous. It seemed such a serious alarming step in the learning process, as if I was being enrolled into boarding-school or university. Miss Rankin was always very pleasant, and had a lovely smile, unlike one or two of the other teachers who were very serious. When I first started school at the infants in approximately 1941, Miss Denn was headmistress. I don't remember her smiling either. I can only remember her white hair and children being threatened with the cane, so I was frightened to go too near to her office. I don't know if she did in fact ever wield a cane. We used to have to take mugs and were given milk near her office for which we had to hand over a half penny.

I remember Miss Godfrey very well. She stands out in my memory more than anyone else from my Infant School years. She always had a beaming smile in school and when she saw my mother and me out shopping. She usually seemed to wear tan shoes and had a tan handbag. She used to get us to sing 'Jesus bids us shine', and she would say little prayers while we stood with our hands together, just before being told we could go home in the afternoon.

Re Myra Sankey's letter, I enjoy hearing shops mentioned from my area, which was St. Johns Road and Moulsham Street. I have many memories of the shops. Myra speaks of Ryders, and I often went in there. I passed it regularly with my mother, and used to look in their windows at the toys and also the baby things, prams etc, they had in the other window. I once told Mrs Ryder (I assume that was the lady, since she was always there) that theirs was the best toy shop in the town. That was when I was grown up, of course, and looking for toys for my own children. Catts I did not know so well, although I remember what it was like inside. But even today, my husband and I laugh about how in those days ladies would say "I deal with Catts", which is where our neighbour at the time "dealt". My mother "dealt" at the Maypole in the High Street. You don't hear that expression these days.

Like Dave Sturgeon, I remember coming home with two or three gudgeons caught in Baddow Meads, thinking that they would survive all right in a bucket, and being upset the next morning when I discovered that they hadn't!

I very much enjoyed the open afternoon in May. There is always that intriguing feeling and anticipation that you never know who you may come across as a surprise from the past. This year I was surprised and delighted to meet John Williams again, with his wife Joan, having not seen him since the 1960s. We used to live opposite him in St. John's Road. Meeting Peter Woodhouse from Moulsham Drive was another surprise, since it was even longer ago when I last saw him. He enjoyed keeping me guessing who he was, by covering his name label, so you see it was great fun. Marlene Beckett (Snowball) and I usually expect to meet up, which is lovely as we live so far apart and it makes a good opportunity to meet.

Lastly, before leaving, my husband Michael and I had a chat with Mr Kemp who is always so pleasant and friendly. It was so admirable to see the polite respect which exists between him and his pupils when they come up to speak to him. It was a most enjoyable visit again this year. My thanks to everyone who assists with the occasion."

From **SANDRA THOMAS (ALSO NEE THOMAS), 1949-53:**

"Congratulations to all those involved on the really interesting Newsletters. I look forward to receiving them and scan them from cover to cover. Once again I missed the Past Pupils' open day this year, but I really enjoyed it when I came in 2002 and will make an effort to come again soon. I was sad to hear that 'Miss Godfrey', as I always thought of her, had died. She was an absolutely brilliant

and charismatic early year teacher. As an only child who had rarely left her mother's side, I found going to school very daunting, but she reassured me and made it all fun.

Recently, I went to the Old Girls' Reunion at Chelmsford County High School, and met four past pupils of Moulsham who were five years older than me. They were all very keen to share reminiscences and would like to receive the Newsletter". [note: Sandra kindly passed on the address of one of these, Una Osmond (Morella), and we have added her to the distribution list]

From **DAVID TURNER, 1971-75:**

"I would like to say how much I enjoyed the Past Pupil's Open Afternoon. Although I did not meet up with any of my former class mates, many memories came back when I walked around the school. When I visited my former class rooms, I tried to remember whereabouts I had sat and who had sat where. I can remember well the old fashioned revolving blackboards and butler sinks with wooden draining boards that some class rooms had, and of course, the traditional type desks with opening lids and inkwells, which were still in place in most class rooms when I left in the mid 1970s. I attended the school between 1971-1975, then moved on to Moulsham Seniors. I lived in Goldlay Road in Old Moulsham at that time and walked to school in all weathers via the Army and Navy, Van Diemens Road and Princes Road.

During my time, Moulsham Juniors was a mixed school. The former Boys' School was known as the Lower School and the Girls' School was known as the Upper School. My teachers were:- Mrs Cassels 1.4, Mrs Gough 2.4, Mrs Wilson 3.4, and Mrs Allen 4.3. Other teachers I remember well were Mrs Donovan, Mr Picken, Mrs Taylor, Mr McGinley (who ran the school library I think), and Mr Firth (who was very keen on sports, especially football). Mr Newton was responsible for getting a climbing frame installed in the playground, (which probably would not pass today's safety standards!) and Mr Peachey used to play the piano in school assembly. Mr Sturgeon was the Headmaster and Mrs Taylor was Deputy Head, responsible for the Prefects (4th year pupils).

I read in the Newsletter that there is a shortage of 1970s photographs. Unfortunately I cannot help with that, but I have many memories, including a few that I am sure many Past Pupils of my age group would remember. One was the time in December 1973 when both of the old solid fuel boilers packed up within a week. Most pupils were given work to take home to do, as the only classrooms that had any heating were the row of pre-fabs which stood at the bottom of the playground, behind the air-raid shelters. The canteens next to the Infants' School were also used as classrooms at this time. Most pupils had a day at school and a day at home until the new gas(?) boilers were fitted. Another time was the Autumn of 1971, when we had bomb scares - this was a common occurrence. We all had to congregate on the School playing field and once were there all morning, when snow began to fall and fall! We were frozen and were sent home early afternoon, not to return until the following morning."

From **DOUG FAWCETT, 1938:**

"As with the two previous reunions, yet again I met up with more old friends and school pals that I had lost touch with for many, many years and having made contact, those friendships have been re-kindled. We all look forward to seeing each other, not only at the reunion, but with some people every time I return to Chelmsford and this makes my visits all the more pleasing.

I realised whilst talking to one of the older members present that, as the years go by, there will inevitably be fewer and fewer founder members attending. He said that there were not many of his class present, as he joined the school in 1938, but in the final year of the juniors when the school first opened. Although there will always be younger members year upon year, it is most important that those memories are collated now, for it is all part of the history of the school. I found this out by not taking more note of what my father once told me, and am now unfortunately unable to go back and ask.

I, too, was one of the founder members of the school and started in the Infants' on the day it opened. Previously I had just one term at St John's School at the top of Moulsham Street and the memory of that term remains firmly fixed in my mind. Every time I see a Dickens' film relating to school, this is just as I remember St John's School, with the classrooms divided only by huge curtains. It was almost impossible not to hear what was being taught in the next two sections and I always thought that if you were bright enough, you could have had three lessons in one!

My association with Moulsham School began as it was being built. I lived in Van Dieman's Lane and my father worked on Moulsham Lodge farm, from which the land was purchased. It was a huge farm and, from over the fence at the bottom of my garden, as far as the eye could see, there were fields upon fields that stretched as far as Galleywood, with not a house in sight, apart from the farmhouse of the owner, R H Currie. I watched as, brick by brick, the new school developed. It appeared to be most splendid and I looked forward to the day when the doors would be open for the very first time. All new pupils visited the school before the official opening and, as a small boy, my eyes nearly popped out of my head to see everything so brand spanking new! Desks, chairs, cupboards and my first sight of the green roll round chalk board - that was something of a revolution. The contrast between the toilets at the other school and this were enormous and the memories of my first days still remain.

As I stood in the junior playground on the day of the reunion, I remember looking over the open fields which had once contained a large herd of cows and some magnificent shire horses - an essential part of the farm in those days of petrol shortages. Wallace Crescent and Fraser Close were the first roads to be built and it was to be some time before the development of Moulsham Lodge Estate. This was quickly followed by the Tile Kiln and then Galleywood Estates, which were also farms owned by R H Currie. I often remark that, because of my father's association with these farms, I may have roamed and played in every garden, front and back, before the houses were built! The School, however, remains basically the same as the first time I set eyes on it. Of course, there have been a few additions, but, over all, it is still as I remember it all those years ago, as a small boy.

One thing that did sadden me on this visit to Chelmsford was to hear of the discussions relating to Oaklands Park and development. There cannot be anyone at Moulsham School who is not familiar with this lovely little park and fine house. We older Chelmsfordians remember well the destruction of the Corn Exchange and Tindal Street, not forgetting the building of Parkway, which cut the centre of town in half, taking with it a large part of our Central Park and several historic buildings." (Editor's note: Doug may be pleased to hear of the latest reports in the Essex Chronicle, suggesting that the Museum may well now remain in Oaklands Park after all, and be extended).

TRACKING DOWN THE BROWNIES

It all began when Judy Pettitt (Everard), 1951-55, (seen left in about 1952) sent us a photo (Next page) from her days as a Brownie, adding:

"This 'very old' photo of our Brownie days recently came to light when I was going through my mother's keepsakes (sadly she died on 16th August two years ago) and I would be grateful if some of you could search back into your long-term memories! First of all I'm not sure where it was taken - certainly not at the Brownie Hall in Vicarage Road (unless it was at the back). I also need help with some of the names. I can see Brenda Everett, Juliet Lindars and Carol Standen (maiden names of course). I cannot remember the names of the two girls sitting and the one standing on the right in the light shaded coat. I don't actually think I'm in the photo at all!"





As Brenda Haley (Everett) is on our email list, we asked her to have a look at the picture and see if she could help. Brenda wrote back: "It was taken at a house just across the street and a little way up from St John's Vicarage Hall. They used to hold the Brownies in the Hall. I believe it was taken at the house of one of the main helpers for the Brownies. I am pretty sure Philippa Waring was part of it as well. I remember her sister Elizabeth was one of the Guides who also helped out. We had put together a gift basket and we took it to the Nursing Home that was private and next door to the Chelmsford and Essex Hospital. It may have been for a special person, I do not remember, but it was probably to do with doing a good deed for someone and going towards a badge."

The next stage on the trail was to copy the picture to Elizabeth Poole (Waring), another of our past pupils, 1944-48. Elizabeth was able to add yet more detail: "I think I was a Pack Leader when the photo was taken outside Brown Owl's house in Vicarage Road. I remember the gift 'basket' which I am almost sure was wrapped in paper which was basket-like and was lilac, black, silver and gold, which I believe was the colours of something we were celebrating at that time. I have no recollection who was the recipient of the basket. I recognise the faces of some of the Brownies but can only put a name to Carol Standen and the Brownie on the right in a lighter coat, who I think was Wendy Kimber, who lived nearby. The Brown Owl was Miss Pat Purdie, later to become Mrs Sturgeon when she married the Head of Moulsham Junior School. I think most of the Brownies went on to Guides where I later became Lieutenant. My sister Philippa (not in the photo), was also a Guide, not a good idea from my point of view! (there is 7 years difference in our ages - I'm the big sister!). I later became Captain of the 2nd Mildmay Guides until about 1978 when I started up Rangers and to cut a long story short, I've held many appointments in the Guide Movement. On reaching retirement, I have settled for Warrants and Registrations Secretary for Chelmsford North Division, which just keeps me in touch."

We wonder if other past 'Moulshamites' can add to the 'story so far' or have their own memories of Brownie days in Moulsham or perhaps Widford? If so, we would love to hear from you.

MOULSHAM JUNIOR GIRLS 1951-55: MORE NAMES AND FACES

In the Spring 2005 Newsletter, we mentioned that those of us from 1951-55 who were at the Open Afternoon in May had tried to recall the names of others in the two classes of our (very large) year. We have now expanded that list substantially, thanks especially to Hilary Balm (Dye) and Elizabeth Clarke. We were sad to note that two members of our year, Janet Bidwell and Vivien Biglin, are already deceased.

We are currently in touch with the following (maiden names): Jennifer Bohannon, Anne Bowerman, Angela Brown, Kathleen Brown, Janet Bullock, Elizabeth Clarke, Pat Davis, Hilary Dye, Judith Everard,

Brenda Everett, Lesley Francis, Pamela Harper, Marea Jones, Kathleen Nash, Cynthia Pledger, Valerie Rudland, Carol Standen, Aileen Squires, Philippa Waring, Pauline Weavers and Marion Weston.

Other names of those at school with us from 1951-55 are: Pat Bartlett, Pat Bolger, Heather Cawley, Christine Combes, Edith Cotton, Ann Davies, Sylvia May Drinkwater, Dina Fallows, Sandra Flexman, Lucille Franklin, Elaine Gooday, Jennifer Giddings, Josephine Groom, Margaret Gunnell, Jennifer Hann, Susan Hayden, Dianne Jeffrey, Juliet Lindars, Joyce Moody, Janice Newcombe, Hazel Offord, Christine Pattinson, Janet Peach, Wendy Philp, Margaret Snelling, Jean Staples, Susan Stiles, Pauline Tarbun, Isobel Travis, Jill Valentine, Sheila West, Susan Witham.



Above from left to right: Pat Davis, Marion Easton, Hilary Dye

GRAHAM KING: PHOTOS FROM THE 1950s



Moulsham Junior Boys with Mr Petchey and Mr Picken, about 1955 (Essex Chronicle, 1985)

In response to Bob Wiffen's item on Mr Petchey's 1956 retirement pageant in the Summer 2005 Newsletter, Graham King, 1954-58, searched through his papers and found two press cuttings from the Essex Chronicle, dated 1985 and 1988, containing these photos of Moulsham Junior School classes in approximately 1955. One at least of the photos was sent to the Chronicle by Joe Oliver, whose son David was at Moulsham Junior Boys' School in the mid-50s. Many thanks, Graham, for these additions to the archive. We think we recognise some of the faces, but would love to hear from anyone who was present or is able to come up with names or dates.



Moulsham Junior Boys, again with Mr Petchey and Mr Picken, 1955 (Essex Chronicle 1988)

Graham writes: "It was a joy to read Myra Sankey's recollections of 'Old Chelmsford' - what a shame that all this history has been wiped away for the sake of progress! I still manage to see a number of former classmates from time to time, around and about Chelmsford, either while carrying out my site inspections as a Chelmsford Borough Council Building Control Officer or my involvement in local football. I always look forward to local or general elections, because as a Presiding Officer for the Council, usually at the Lawn Lane Community Centre, there are a number of voters who attend my station whom I remember from my 'good old days' at Moulsham! One former teacher, Mrs Donovan, always attend to vote, and we have a chance for a quick chat, together with her husband Ray, who was an Assistant Borough Engineer at Chelmsford Borough Council when Building Control was part of the Engineer and Surveyors Department."

INFANTS SCHOOL STAFF 1959 (from a panorama photo sent in by Mrs Parker, former Infants' School teacher)



Teachers from left to right: Mrs Parker, Mrs Rodd, Mrs Thompson, Miss Roberts (Headmistress), Mrs Herries, nee Godfrey (deputy Head), Mrs Palmer, Mrs Sparrow (School Secretary)

1959: MRS DONOVAN AND 2ND YEAR SCOTTISH DANCING TEAM



Names so far: Back row, left to right: John Bereznicki, Paul Godfrey, (9th) Alan Dann, (11th) Adrian Batsford, and towards end: Tim Wright, John Boyle (possibly somewhere in the row are Philip ? and ?Colin Baxter)

Middle row: Dave Sturgeon, David Stiles, John Howe, Alan Franklin, John Killock, (no names yet for others)

Front row: ? , ? , Andrew Shepherd, Stephen ? , Michael Lake? (no further names yet)

In our Summer issue, we printed this photo with the title Class 2A in 1959 and asked if anyone could identify any names. Barry Proctor, who was at the school in 1959 in Class 2B, emailed to say that several of the faces were familiar from his Moulsham Senior School days, as they were then in the same class as him. Dave Sturgeon was able to add a few further names, with apologies to all those whose names he has forgotten. He adds that the photograph was of Mrs Donovan's Scottish Dancing team, hence the kilts. We will display the picture at the next Open Afternoon with a format to add more names if you can.



And our next memory-teaser is a request for any names you can put to this lovely clear picture of Class 3A, also in 1959, which some of you may have seen earlier this year in the Essex Chronicle. Answers on a postcard, (or more probably these days by email or letter) will all be most welcome.

RICHARD GEER, 1963-67: A STORMY REUNION IN FLORIDA

I have been receiving the Moulsham newsletters for just over a year now and through it I have been able to make contact with a very 'old' dear friend. Julie Kilgore (nee De'Ath) and I were at Moulsham Juniors from 1964 - 1967 and used to play all the time after school and at weekends on bikes and roller skates along Loftin Way and Gloucester Avenue. Since I left Moulsham in 1967 we lost contact and haven't heard from each other since. We started to email again some months back and immediately seemed to pick up where we left off!

Julie now lives in Northern Florida, and we talked of one day wouldn't it be nice to meet up again.... Well, the day came. I was due to go and see friends in Atlanta and so decided to combine the trip to go and see Julie too. The trip to Atlanta fell through, so in the end it was just a trip to Florida. The night before I was due to travel, Julie called. "We have a Hurricane (Dennis) on its way, due to hit us over the weekend. Are you still coming?" "Of course" I said, "that sounds like fun!". I couldn't have been more wrong! As I was boarding the aircraft at Gatwick (July 7th) I was just catching the news of the terrible bombings in London. Talk about out of the frying pan into the fire! I arrived later that day in Pensacola where Julie was waiting for me. We hadn't seen each other for 38 years! We'd grown up quite a bit since those days but talked like we'd never missed a beat.

To be honest, it was a strange experience, as from the moment I landed, the talk was all about the hurricane and whether I would be able to fly out in a few days time (the airport was due to be closed!). The next day, many people from the surrounding area started to evacuate, and I helped Julie's husband, Biff and her son, Nick, boarding up the house and taking in anything that could move. It was very scary - and thinking that seeing out a Hurricane would be fun, was far from my thoughts. We talked for ages, and went through so many memories of our childhood and exchanged pictures. Unbeknown to me, I have had a large panoramic picture of us both from Moulsham Infants 1961 on my wall at home when we were 5 and 4 years old! Saturday night we went for a drive along the beautiful Florida Panhandle beaches and went along a causeway linking Destin to Fort Walton Beach. Less than 24 hours later that causeway was completely washed away by Hurricane Dennis. The next day the Hurricane was due to hit and so I had to make the decision and leave early, driving 350 miles up to Atlanta to avoid the problems (Pensacola airport was closed). In the end, although there were very strong winds and heavy rains, there was little damage in the area, although some buildings were destroyed and the beach dropped 10ft! Never again will I imagine that seeing out a Hurricane would be fun (Since then the terrible Hurricane Katrina has proved this point to the extreme....)

Julie still has 2 brothers and 2 sisters living in and around the Chelmsford area and hopes to come over and visit them next year. I am sure we will get together and go visit the places we played as kids together. Probably also a trip to Moulsham.

A stormy meeting in Florida indeed, but a rekindled friendship and we have vowed to continue to stay in touch this time and not leave it another 38 years! One thing that Julie and I have spoken about since is that we didn't take a single photograph of us together! Maybe next time!

BOB WILLIS AND FRIENDS IN 1962/3

Thanks to Bob Willis for this picture of Miss Tasker's class (2B) in school year 1962-63, and to John Huscroft for supplying additional names.



Back row (left to right): Miss Tasker, Peter Wyles, David Wallis, Robert Willis, Derek Young, Robert Pink, Martin Allen, Garry Thorpe, David Cowell. **Third row:** ? , Paul Martin, Phil Carr, Paul Munro, ? , Cecil Parks, Martin Flynn?, John Keyes, Robin Bryan. **Second row:** Howard Green, Lee Robinson, David Morse, ? , David Allen?, Keith Parkhurst, Michael Tyler, John Huscroft, Paul Campen? **Front row:** Michael Candler, Paul Hagger, ? Philips, Steve Pates, ? , Leslie Milbanks, Stephen Phipps.

Bob Willis has four particular memories of Junior School: Maypole dancing, cigarette cards, racing cars and mindless PT exercises! Maypole dancing he considered distinctly uncool, with "all that coloured ribbon, and people crashing into each other, despite the best attempts of the teacher". Cigarette cards, on the other hand, were much more fun, especially "playing card games like tops and knockdowns. If you don't know, tops is flicking cards against a wall. If one of your cards lands on top of another you win all the cards. Knockdowns involve knocking a row of cards down that are stacked against a wall. The person that knocks the last card down wins all the cards. This was a real problem when playing in windy conditions, or when the whistle was blown for the end of playtime. It was a mad scramble to get as many cards as you could.

Car racing was fun and competitive even when you were young. The playground was on a slope and racing cars down the slope was a real event. I wonder how many of those Dinky and Corgi cars are doing the rounds in the boot fairs? Even as kids we figured out the bigger wheels and longer wheel bases were good. The lower and wider the car the better. I remember one child cutting off the top of the car so he could get his fingers in the body to flick it further.

The final memory was standing in rows waving your arms around when you could have been doing something more useful. Like running around with 20 other people in a huddle trying to kick a football and not get kicked. Yes, I say 20, as the poor goal keepers had to stay at each end of the pitch and were very rarely involved."

John Huscroft recalls that Miss Tasker, the teacher of class 2B, subsequently married and moved to Yorkshire. He writes: "I remember we had a school trip to Ingatestone Hall, and another to London Zoo and the Planetarium - some parents came along to help supervise. Robin Bryan (in the photo), took part in a pageant, written by Mr Hodgson, something about 'Sir Eglemore, that valiant Knight!', and Mrs Edwards, a school governor, was in attendance.

I moved to Chelmsford from Bermondsey in February 1959. Joining the Infants' School, my teachers were Miss Rodd, a kindly lady, Mrs Thompson, Miss McKillick and Mrs Palmer. The Headmistress was Miss Roberts. My first teacher at Moulsham Juniors was Miss Field, in class 1b. I also recall Mr McGinley, who had a talent for making the lessons interesting. I never did get the hang of those steel pens, with ink brought round by 'monitors' - I much prefer an Osmiroid, these days!

I still have an exercise book, wherein Mrs Palmer has written "stop talking and work harder"! Nevertheless, I remember her with affection. I have enclosed some autographs of the teachers [note: we will display these at next year's Open Afternoon] - I'm tempted to add 'handwriting needs attention!'

BOB WIFFEN, 1953-57: MUSICAL MEMORIES OF THE EARLY SIXTIES



Bob Wiffen, 1953-57, was a keen drummer in three bands, The Phantoms, Dave Chancellor and the Exchequers (photo above), and Ray Ford and the Statesmen in the early 1960s. He writes:

"The Phantoms were born during a lunch break at King Edward VI Grammar School when Peter Macdonald was playing an organ in a corridor, Peter Keeble started singing and I started on my first drum kit comprising a pair of brushes and a metal sandwich box. Mike (Nobby) Clarke joined as bass player making his own guitar. This was in 1961. Our first gig was at a party at the Catholic Hall in Melbourne and we played regularly at various youth clubs. When I started work at Crompton Parkinson, I met Rich Peeling a talented guitar player and with Nobby Clarke, joined him in a group from Billericay which we called Dave Chancellor and the Exchequers. We played at the Railway Club in Central Park regularly and at the Fall Out Inn in Billericay (a Civil Defence Shelter /coffee bar). We auditioned for the residency at the Basildon Locarno Ballroom but were beaten by a band called The Dave Clarke Five!

The Statesmen were a big band in the area and played often at the Corn Exchange in support of national bands including the Who. I particularly remember playing in support of Rufus Thomas when 'Walking the Dog' was a big hit. The band members gradually got married and when Mick Gore became a father we decided to call it a day. Playing two or three nights a week and practising new songs on other evenings, our whole teenage years were in bands and it was a wonderful time."

Bob has recently made contact with all three other members of The Phantoms, through the Friends Reunited website, and hopes to meet up with members of his other bands in due course. We will display more of Bob's 1960s band photos at the 2006 Open Afternoon.

MOULSHAM SENIOR GIRLS' SCHOOL, 1961

Shirley Wiffen (Adcock) was at Moulsham Junior Girls' School from 1952-26, and went on to Moulsham Senior Girls' School. These photos were taken on the day she completed her Senior School days, in July 1961. Several of the other girls pictured had also been at the Junior School with her.



Captions to individual pictures:

FRONT ENTRANCE TO SENIOR SCHOOL

GYMNASIUM

SHIRLEY ADCOCK

SEVEN FRIENDS Back row, left to right: Eunice Gooding, Lesley Rayner, Jill Scammel, Pauline Weavers, Delia Howes. Front: (seated): Milka Zjelchovic, Lesley Francis

SENIOR BOYS From left: David Heseltine (Head Boy), Tony Beech, Roger ?, and ?

MISS SELBY

MRS SPICER (second left) with Delia Hawes, Lynda Davey, and Lesley Rayner

THE 'AUSSIE CUP' RETURNS HOME



In the Summer 2003 Newsletter, Peter (Charlie) Smith, 1938 Moulsham pupil, told how he came to present the Chelmsford Sunday Football League with a cup which had engraved on it a map of Australia. The cup had originally been won in 1933 by the Duke Street branch of the Chelmsford Star Cooperative Society, as a prize for the best displays in Australian Produce Week. It remained at the shop until Charlie, employed in the store room, came across it lying on the top of a cupboard in 1962. At this time, Sunday football became popular, and as a keen supporter, Charlie persuaded the Co-op management to allow the Australian Cup to be used as the trophy for the new Sunday League. It continued in use until as a local football trophy until the 2003-4 season, when it was replaced. The League Chairman then sought out the original donor to return it. A chance meeting outside Kings Café in Moulsham Street resulted in the 'Aussie Cup' now having pride of place in Charlie's living room. These pictures show the cup itself, and Chairman Maurice McNally handing it over to Charlie this summer.

1981/82 MRS DONOVAN'S 4TH YEAR CLASS

(Picture from school archive)



Back Row (left to right): Robert Bolton, Catherine Daintree, Andrea Aitken, Anita Edwards, Sarah Gipson, Jenny Cocks, Georgina Clarke, Declan Brown

Third Row: Mrs Donovan (teacher), Nicola Butler, Martin D'Arcy, Gareth Chandler, Paul Chambers, Stephen Clark, Neill Clark, Marcus Bishop, Christopher Dean, Magdeline Bevans

Second Row: Victoria Crossley, Jenny Brown, Rachel Edney, Susan Char, Kirstie Charlton, Coleen Camblin, Alison Teahan, Joanne Andrews, Abby Gable

Front Row: Mark Dallimore, Tony Groves, Lee ? , Billy Bishop, Steven ? , Duncan Blackmore

NEWS IN BRIEF

On 17th June this year, KES GRAY, 1968-72, gave two wonderful talks to current pupils in years 3 and 5 (1st and 3rd years in 'old money') about his time at Moulsham Juniors. Many of the children were already familiar with the Daisy series of books written by Kes, including "Eat Your Peas" and "Really Really". There were gasps of amazement as he demonstrated how he used to flick bubble gum cards in the playground, and he made several of these cards fly the length of the hall. Kes was captain of the football team in 1971-72, and gave a wonderful mock football report of the time Moulsham were beaten 4-0 by Witham Templars in the cup final. Kes says it was a very enjoyable visit for him too, and he will return! His latest book, 'Huffaluks, Muggots and Thermitts', in the Nelly the Monster-Sitter series, was published in July 2005 by Hodder Children's Books, and has been very well reviewed.

We were delighted to hear from Jodie, the wife of VICTOR (then VIKTOR) POLLAK, who attended Moulsham Junior Boys' School in 1939, and was amazed and pleased to come across the Newsletters and old school photos online. They currently live in Charlotte, North Carolina, USA. Jodie tells us that Victor does not think he appears in Mr. Gardiner's class photo since he likely started school there after it was made. Thanks to the Newsletters, he found a reference to his classmate BRIAN JUDD, and would also love to contact JOHN CHRISTIE, if anyone has any contact information about him. Victor is working on a letter to tell us a little more about him and his experience at Moulsham. As he has motor neurone disease, he uses an eye-driven computer (see <http://www.eyeresponse.com>) called ERICA, and, since he's not been using it very long, it takes a while for him to generate even a short email. We look forward very much to hearing from him.

Many thanks to SHEILA WRENN (McPHERSON), who appeared with her sister Gillian on the 1948 panorama photograph and has identified an impressive number of names of school mates on the photo, to add to those we already have. Sheila's granddaughter, Mrs Michelle Booroff, not herself a past pupil, kindly brought the names along to the school. Michelle's son Jayden, Sheila's great-grandson, is currently a pupil in year 4 at Moulsham Junior School!

Many thanks also to DIANE LAWRENCE (WOOLLETT), 1946-50, for lending us her very clear photos of theatrical productions and sword dancing at Moulsham Senior Girls' School in and around 1953. We have taken copies for display at the next Open Afternoon.

SUSAN JARVIS, 1964-68, enjoyed her visit to the school on the Open Afternoon in May, but was disappointed to see no photos from 'her era'. She will see if her parents happen to have kept anything, though they are not great hoarders! We are certainly short of pictures from both the 60s and the 70s, and would be very glad to hear from any of you who may have photos they could lend us.

GEOFF BARNARD, 1945-50, writes: "I was very pleased to see in the latest Newsletter that ROGER BELL has called in at the school on a visit to Chelmsford. When I tried to get the 1949-50 winning football cup team together last year, Roger was one of the four players that we could not find.. Roger moved to Chelmsford from Preston, and lived in Vicarage Road. Mr Bell owned a car, one of the few in those days, and when Preston North End came south to play Tottenham Hotspurs, Roger's Dad took him and a friend of his choosing to the match, as a birthday treat, I believe. I was lucky enough to be the one picked, and have been a Spurs fan ever since. Hopefully Roger may be able to attend next year's reunion, where he would meet up with myself, PAT DURRANT, ROGER DENNIS, BUNNY DOWSETT and ALLAN SMITH, who are all regulars at the yearly event."

JOY BOME (SPARROW), 1947-51, is still busy organising performances by the popular Caprice Wind Band in support of local charities. The next few concerts are: Saturday 3rd December, Hospice Nowell at Chelmsford Cathedral, 7.15pm (tickets from Hospice shops or 01245 358717); Saturday 10th

December, Candlelit Supper, The Boswells School, Springfield, 7.30pm, (tickets 01245 358717): and Sunday March 12th 2006, Children's Concert at 3pm. at The Boswells School, Springfield (tickets 01245 358717).

HELP! We have four small black and white snapshots, which have become separated from the envelope telling us who they came from. One shows four teenage girls in uniform, and on the back: 'Cambridge, after Evensong outside the Chapel 1957'. Another shows 7 girls, and has written on the back 'Outside Janet's chalet: Margaret, Pam, Pat, Shirley, Pim, Jean, Judy'. The third has three girls sitting on the steps, possibly of the same chalet, and the fourth shows a large group of girls behind an adult woman and someone in a long dark coat lying on some grass. Can the owner or owners please contact us urgently so we can put captions to the pictures and return the originals. Thank you.

ALL ABOARD THE RIVER LADY II



In our Summer 2005 Newsletter, ALISON BONAFIN asked if anyone knew the name of the ferry shown in this 1960 picture, which first appeared on page 7 of the Autumn 2004 issue. It shows staff and pupils from Moulsham Junior Girls' School on a school trip involving a river crossing from Harwich to Felixstowe. HILARY BALM (DYE) has made some enquiries on the subject, and reports that the ferry is believed to be River Lady II, a former motor torpedo boat purchased from the navy in 1946 and converted into a pleasure cruiser. She was used on the Rivers Stour and Orwell between Ipswich, Felixstowe and Harwich. During the 1960s, River Lady II was sold and replaced by Torbay Prince.

ARTICLES, PHOTOS AND LETTERS

... for the next issue can be sent as usual to Kathleen Boot, 1A Vicarage Road, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 9PG, or by email to kathleen.boot@tiscali.co.uk
. **** PLEASE NOTE NEW EMAIL ADDRESS****

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