

Past Pupils' Newsletter

Spring 2004

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Don't forget the Open Afternoon on 15th May

The Past Pupils' Newsletter is now in its fifth year (already!), and the Open Afternoon on Saturday 15th May 2004 will be the fifth consecutive annual reunion for past pupils at the school. Do come along and celebrate with us if you can, and bring any of your friends from Moulsham who haven't yet been to one of our reunions. You will be sure of a warm welcome, an interesting afternoon meeting old friends, splendid refreshments, displays of the many photos we have accumulated of Moulsham over the years, and lively entertainments by present pupils of the school. This year, for the first time, you will also be able to see inside the impressively refurbished Caretaker's House, now used by Moulsham Juniors for meeting rooms and office space. Kick-off time is 1pm, as usual, continuing until 5pm. Any offers of help in setting up displays on the afternoon of Friday 14th May, or manning the reception desk or washing up on the day, will be very gratefully received.

Our distribution list for the Newsletter continues to expand, and posting a copy on the Past Pupils' page on the school website, www.moulshamjuniorschool.org.uk, has attracted correspondence from many parts of the world. In this issue, we hear from former pupils **David Reade (Tricker)** in Bangkok, and **Roy Dale** in New Zealand, as well as more local ex-Moulshamites. Among our newest readers is **Dave Sturgeon**, son of a former Headmaster, the only person so far recalling the 1959 school trip to Somerset, featured in the Autumn 2003 Newsletter. Thank you all for sending in your news and memories, and we look forward to hearing from still more of you in the not-too-distant future.

You may notice that we have fewer photographs than usual in this Newsletter. This is because we received a bumper crop of written articles this time, but only a couple of pictures. If you happen to have any photos we can use in the Summer issue, do please bring them along to the Open Afternoon, or post or email them to Kathleen Boot, 1A Vicarage Road, Chelmsford, CM2 9PG or kathleen.boot@virgin.net. As an experiment, we plan to have the Summer issue printed professionally on glossier paper, in a similar format to the school's Annual Report. This will provide for really sharp reproduction of pictures, and we hope to have plenty to include. We also plan to reprint some of the earliest group photos from our first couple of years, which some of you may not have had a chance to see before.

Some of our new readers have asked if there is a subscription payable for the Past Pupils' Newsletter. There is not, partly because it would involve too much staff time for the school to keep a separate account and send out formal receipts. If you wish to make a contribution, however, the Head Teacher will gladly receive donations to the school fund in place of a subscription, and I know he is grateful to the many past pupils who have already done so. If you do wish to contribute, we suggest about £3 a year. You can either hand this in at the reception desk on the Open Afternoon in May, or send direct to the Head Teacher, Mr L R Kemp, at Moulsham Junior School, Princes Road, Chelmsford CM2 9DG (cheques payable to Moulsham Junior School).

If for any reason you cannot make the Open Afternoon on 15th May, why not come along to the School Fete on Saturday 26th June, where we plan to have a Past Pupils' table again this year.

Best wishes to you all from Hilary Balm (Dye) and myself.

Kathleen Boot (Nash)
Moulsham Junior Girls' School, 1951-55

Notes from the Head Teacher, Mr Les Kemp

Over the last term three of my daughters have had interviews for new teaching jobs. I have played my part by touring around the neighbourhood of their prospective schools and talking through possible interview questions. I have also played the role of a class of six year olds while my daughter Rosie taught me all about the story Not Now Bernard in preparation for an interview.

As a head teacher I have known times when an advert attracted over one hundred replies and times when I have danced around my office because I had one phone call. My daughter Anna recently applied for a job in Bristol which she did not get, but I was delighted she got an interview from the one hundred and fifty seven applicants. These sorts of numbers were unbelievable to my friend in an inner city school with the majority of his staff on short-term contracts or daily employment.

When I started teaching, interviews were a half hour meeting with the head and a school manager, as our present governors were then called, usually followed by a long wait by all the candidates, often in a draughty corridor or as unwelcome guests in the staff room. After the panel had deliberated for what seemed hours, the head's office door would open and the successful candidate would be invited back to confirm they would accept the offered job before all the unsuccessful candidates were dismissed.

My worst interview experience was in a school just outside Bath when I was being interviewed for the deputy headship. Many of the questions were about the teaching of French and my experience in leading residential visits to France. I could tell my answers were not well received as I said that I had absolutely no experience in either area, and my performance from that moment went from bad to totally embarrassing. I later shared my poor performance with the other candidates and learnt that the school had forgotten to include details of these essential requirements in their advert in the educational press or the material sent to out of area candidates.

Many of our staff move on to promotion and we are filling a larger than usual number of posts for September. We have recently advertised these posts in the Times Educational Supplement and Job Scene, which is the Essex Education vacancy list. How many enquiries we will get is an unknown, as is the number of short-listed candidates who will take other jobs prior to the interview. If you see me with a broad smile on the last day of term you know we have filled all the vacancies.

Our interview process will consist of observed work with a group of children, a series of focused interviews with a pair of governors, an in-tray exercise and an extended interview with all the interview panel present. My friends who are not teachers are always amazed that the whole process takes place on one day and we don't see the successful candidate over two or three occasions. I point out that the governors who take part in the process are volunteers and have to obtain the time away from their own employment, sometimes having to use annual leave.

In a recent national survey of governors, when asked to rank in order of importance the jobs they do, the appointment of staff and particularly the head teacher was overwhelmingly rated most highly. I would be very interested to learn from teachers who have worked at this school any memories of their interview that could be included in future newsletters. My own memory of my interview here was that I left after lunch to run sports day at my own school and then changed back into my suit to return to Moulsham for my formal interview.

Victor Barker, 1942-46: the wartime 'school run' and other memories

I was a pupil in the Juniors from 1942-46 and have been receiving the Newsletter for several years. It is a real joy to read.

When I started to think about writing this article, I became aware of the extent to which various aspects of the last World War entered my thoughts. At first I was rather surprised, because I was fortunate enough not to suffer any personal tragedy or horror resulting from the war. It simply formed the background to our daily lives, and was the cause of so many of the things that we found interesting as schoolboys. By 1942, when I moved from Infants to Juniors, I suspect that daylight bombing raids had considerably diminished, because my recollections of chanting "times tables" etc. in the air raid shelters relate to the Infants. Incidentally, I wonder whether our generation gained an advantage in mental arithmetic through those enforced sessions in the shelters? When I see the struggles of some shop assistants now, I do wonder.

I was particularly thrilled to see the letter from Keith Baker in the Autumn 2003 issue. When we were at school I lived in Moulsham Street and Keith lived just around the corner in Queen Street. We used to walk/run to school together, usually via Oaklands Park, where numerous adventures took place. I remember very clearly one day early, in the war, when the park was "invaded" by the RAF, who had come to install a barrage balloon on the big field behind the Museum. That was all right, and fun to watch, but they also commandeered the pavilion where we sometimes played.

There were a few school buses, mainly to bring children from the more central area, because in those days the school was very much on the edge of the town, with Farmer Currie's fields on the eastern and southern boundaries. However, although we lived about a mile away, Keith Baker and I much preferred to walk or run to school, rather than use the bus. We even went home for dinner, as we called it then: perhaps that accounts for the need to run! We had to cross Moulsham Street and Princes Road, without any adult assistance. There was a white board in Princes Road with the legend "CHILDREN CROSSING", and one of our teachers pointed out to us that this did not mean "CHILDREN'S CROSSING", i.e. we had no right of way! However, apart from the school buses and the occasional military convoy, there was hardly any traffic. Once in a while we had a special treat in the form of a steam driven brewer's dray (from Ind Coope's at Romford?) chuffing along the road. I hasten to add it was the novelty of the steam aspect that constituted the treat, rather than the nature of the cargo!

At school we seemed to be forever collecting things for the war effort, including books for the troops. My wife Pam (nee Wisbey) remembers collecting rose hips for the production of rose hip syrup. Can anyone remember: did we buy National Savings Stamps at school? I can remember sticking them into a book which, when full was used to buy a Certificate, probably at the Post Office. It seems possible, as Mr Petchey was awarded his OBE for services to the National Savings Movement. There were all sorts of odd things we were asked to do, such as killing and collecting white butterflies, because their caterpillars damage cabbages; watching out for Colorado Beetles (did anyone ever find one?); not touching those interesting-looking anti-personnel things which enemy aircraft might drop, and so on and on. Did we still have to carry gas masks in the Juniors?

It is unfair really to pick out specific teachers for mention, because there really were no duds. (A tribute perhaps to Mr Petchey's leadership.) However, certain memories do stand out: Mrs Skipsey's remarkable power of persuasion (my family had to suffer raw cabbage, and potatoes boiled in their jackets for some time "because Mrs Skipsey says they are better for us"); Mr Hodgson's skill at teaching us how to make models from card; Mr Gardiner.... well, he deserves a whole article to himself! When we left his class we collected and gave him a dynamo-set for his bicycle as a mark of appreciation for all he had done. Mr Petchey himself, of course, was a truly remarkable man. He served

in the First World War, and told us of some of his experiences. He was an amazing storyteller, giving us a valuable taste of such classics as *A Christmas Carol*, *Oliver Twist*, and *Nicholas Nickleby*, all told entirely from memory and with terrific (sometimes almost terrifying!) emphasis and persuasion. He ruled the School with great firmness, but was always fair. If one was stupid enough to play up in class and to be sent by the class teacher to "go and stand under the board", when Mr Petchey duly arrived from his office he would say "Now what have you been up to?", so that you became your own prosecutor. However, a few minutes later, and with a sore leg, admittedly, all was forgotten.

I would say that we were privileged to attend Moulsham Juniors, as is demonstrated by the articles that appear in each issue of the Past Pupils' Newsletter.

Alan John Roxby, 1938: wartime in Lynmouth Avenue

In the Autumn 2003 Newsletter, we included notes made by past pupil Alan John Roxby for a talk he gave to first-year pupils at Moulsham Junior School in 1993. Sadly, Mr Roxby died in 1996, but we are pleased to have in the school archive some vivid childhood recollections of his wartime experience. This article is based on the notes he left, and Hilary's painstaking transcripts of several sheets of his detailed manuscript jottings.

' Living in Lynmouth Avenue, this is the thing I remember most about the war: being in a table shelter with Mum, Dad and two girls from the Land Army one day when the bombs dropped. The windows came out, the door flew off into the garden, and parts of the ceiling came down. All you could do was lie in the shelter (Dad would not let me go out), and watch the anti-aircraft gunfire, searchlights and flashing from exploding bombs. When it got a little quieter, I went with Dad to look round the rest of the house, by the light of the searchlights outside. Most of the windows were missing at the back, but only one at the front.

BUT WHERE WAS THE CANARY? The stand was still there, but his cage was nowhere to be seen! Eventually we found him, safe in his flattened cage, wedged behind the piano, and had to cut him free. Some of the bedroom ceilings were down in part or whole and in the morning we found that the shelter had moved 12" (30cm) from the wall. (Later on, a Morrison Shelter was offered, and Dad accepted one.)

I had left Moulsham Juniors by this time, and was at the 'Tech' (Technical High School). But on this day, I thought it would be better for me to stay and help at home, and anyway, all the damaged houses, being tall, light and thin, would be ideal for getting into small places - much more interesting than school! But Dad had different ideas, and off I went. But I was soon home again - the school was damaged too. In the short time I had been away, people had been round to check the buildings and see what repairs were most urgently needed to make them watertight. Every house at the Lady Lane end of our street had had their toilet broken. They had been removed and all stood outside on the paths for replacement.

Generally speaking, the first year of the war had been fairly quiet, with few raids, but then things began to get very noisy. I quite regularly watched 'dog fights' in the distance, but one afternoon, I was going home a little late when the siren sounded. I began to walk more quickly, and it was not long before a plane arrived - it sounded like a 'Gerry'. Then another different-sounding plane appeared (both too close for comfort) and one started to shoot at the other. I tore home - it was much too close! Walking to school the following morning, I found a number of bright spent cartridges very near to where I had been walking the day before.'

Afternoon tea with the class of 1947

On the afternoon of Saturday 8th November 2003, Jennifer Bailey (Rayner) met with some 23 of her former Moulsham classmates, at the Book Leaf Café in Springfield Road, Chelmsford. This combined café and second-hand bookshop, handily placed just opposite Tesco's town-centre store, was a new venue for the regular reunions of this group, and proved very successful. Hilary and Kathleen were very pleased to join the "gang" for their afternoon tea and coffee, not forgetting the tempting assortment of homemade cakes. In between mouthfuls, we took the opportunity to jot down a few recollections from some of those present.

Diana Clarke (Wright) was at Moulsham Junior Girls' School for just 18 months, having previously attended 'St George's School', a small mixed private school on the corner of St John's and Mildmay Roads (now a private house). From Moulsham Juniors, she passed the 'scholarship' exam and went on to the 'Tech', as the Technical High School was known, along with her friend Glenys Dye (Hilary's late sister). Since those days, Diana has kept in touch with the **Rayner sisters**, who lived in St John's Road, and with **Joan Orrin**. Diana started work in the Licensing Department of Essex County Council, and became a Civil Servant when this work, and the staff involved in it, transferred to DVLA. She asked for a move to Colchester, where she still lives. After various Civil Service jobs in Colchester, Ipswich and Chelmsford, Diana retired in 1999, looking forward, as she thought, to a good rest. It was not to be, however - within 2 weeks she found herself back at work, this time with the Post Office. At the reunion, she suddenly asked Kathleen "Who do you know in Colchester, then?" It transpired that one day when Diana was on duty, a lady had come into the local Post Office in Colchester where she works, to post a parcel to a Kathleen Boot in Chelmsford. It was in fact a birthday present from the only contact Kathleen has in Colchester - her cousin Adele! Small world!

Violet Lodge (Woodcock) has not lost the distinctive giggle for which she was well-known at Moulsham Junior Girls' School. She lived in Upper Bridge Road at that time, as did her friend **Sheila Woods**. Violet's father played football for Chelmsford, and was also a keen cricket fan. On leaving Moulsham Senior School, Violet worked in a solicitor's office for twenty-eight shillings and sixpence a week (approximately £1.42p), of which she gave her mother £1. But she never mastered shorthand, so she was pleased to move on to the 'lapping department' at Hoffman's, examining ball-bearings and rollers instead. She later worked at Marconi's and EEV, saving hard to get married, and has lived in the Chelmsford area most of her life.

Joan Tredgett (Ponsford) has this photo of a US airman from Wethersfield, Frank Kennedy, complete with Jeep, who came to Moulsham School to help distribute dried milk and cocoa provided by the Americans for British children. The pupils brought tins to school to fill up and take home. Perhaps others of you remember this happening? Joan has fond memories of Crompton's children's parties, and later of dances at Rainsford and Moulsham Senior Schools. She is very interested in lace-making, as is **Jennifer Bailey (Rayner)** - it appears to be a popular craft in Essex, with groups and classes available at Moulsham Mill and elsewhere.

(More from Joan in News in Brief, page 20)



Margaret Linge (Stock) was at Moulsham Juniors a year ahead of others at the reunion, but went on to the Seniors with them because she stayed an extra year in the Juniors. This was because the school leaving age was being raised to 15, and some reorganisation of classes was needed. So Margaret is one of a privileged few who spent 5 years in the Juniors! Margaret's elder brother was at the Junior Boys' School, but only for a short time.

Joan Atkins greatly appreciates the annual Open Afternoons at the school, where she has met many former Moulshamites she hadn't seen for years. As a child, Joan lived in George Street, which runs parallel to Moulsham Street and New London, between the two. She gave a vivid account of the first ever Bonfire Night she remembers, 5th November 1945. There had of course been no bonfire celebrations during the war years, but in 1945, a big bonfire was lit on 'the dump' - a piece of rough ground in George Street where the children often played. There were squibs, Catherine wheels, sparklers and a guy. It was just a simple gathering of Mums, Dads and their children, but Joan had seen nothing like it before in her life, and it always sticks in her memory. Later in her childhood, she very much enjoyed the activities available for teenagers at the wonderful Rainsford Youth Centre. There was table tennis, a gym club, dancing lessons, coach trips to London shows, and much more besides - Joan commented that the children didn't realise at the time how excellent it was. Since Joan can remember and describe her childhood so much better than we can report it second-hand, we asked her if she would jot down some of her memories of the Moulsham Street area for the Newsletter. She kindly agreed, and the following article is the result. In writing it, Joan says the problem was not so much what to include but what to leave out!

Joan Atkins, 1943-47: Memories of wartime Moulsham Street

I lived in the heart of the Moulsham Street area during the time I attended Moulsham Junior Girls' School, from 1943-47. Reflecting on those days, I realise that it was an area of Chelmsford complete in itself. The little shops that bordered both sides of the street, between Stone Bridge and St John's Church (there was no Parkway cutting across Moulsham Street then) offered customers every possible service and product they could want, so there was no real need to venture over the Stone Bridge into the main High Street. Moulsham was a two-way street, used extensively by all kinds of vehicles, buses included. The buses to Moulsham School stopped at the Regent cinema, the Kings Arms pub (now CM2) and again at St John's Church before turning off into St John's Road.

Most of the shops in Moulsham Street were small family businesses. Despite severe rationing of goods during the Second World War and for some considerable time afterwards, they all somehow seemed to survive. I recall very few empty premises. It was necessary at that time to register with one supplier for food rations, and as a consequence customers and shop personnel came to know each other well. The long daily queues for goods in short supply also served to break down barriers of reserve, as the waiting customers would chat to each other to while away the boredom. Many a close friendship was forged from wartime queuing!

There was a wealth of choice available in Moulsham Street: grocery shops, family butchers, bakers, fishmongers, drapers, greengrocers, hardware stores, clothing shops, and chemists. There were even bicycle stores, jewellers, shoe repairers and hairdressers, both male and female (no 'unisex salons' in those days). There were also several cafes, including a war-time 'British Restaurant' opposite St John's Church.

Perhaps I could mention some of the more unusual premises in more detail. Mrs Rippon had a thriving little newsagent/tobacconist shop opposite New Writtle Street corner, and I recall buying comics and

Enid Blyton's "Sunny Stories" there. Adjacent to the main shop, however, was another window where Mrs Rippon displayed biblical statuettes, rosaries, crucifixes etc - it seemed a strange combination! Another newsagent/confectioner at the corner of Hall Street - Bucks - had a small lending library at the rear of the shop.

Opposite the former Salvation Army Citadel was an Amusement Arcade full of penny slot machines. I was forbidden to venture in there to spend my pocket money. A little further along was Migliorini's, who made ice cream. I believe Migliorini's twopenny (2d) cornets and threepenny (3d) wafers were the first ice cream available in Chelmsford after the war.

Ryders had a fairly large shop which sold babies' wear, prams and a range of toys - as good a selection as anywhere in wartime Chelmsford, when such items were in short supply. Ryders also operated a "doll's hospital". Eventually, the store had to be demolished, along with the Windmill public house, Ralph Catt's grocery store and several other shops, to make way for Parkway.

Two fair-sized department stores, Denny's and Rankins, offered a good selection of clothing, haberdashery and household linens. Rankin's was popular for its range of ladies' hats.

The Co-op, or Chelmsford Star Co-operative Society, to give it its full name, was very different from the present-day Quadrant Stores on the same site. Only goods made by or for the CWS (Co-operative Wholesale Society) were sold in the original store - even shoes, which I seem to remember went under the brand-name of 'Wheatsheaf'. The Co-op provided a very full service, including furniture, hardware, clothing and household goods, as well as coal and milk. The grocery department, at the rear of the main shop, was accessed from Barrack Square. This was popularly known as 'The Stores' by local people, and, again, I believe all products were the Co-op's own brand. I used to be fascinated by the overhead mechanism, which sent cash containers zooming across from each sales point to the main cash desk and then back again with the customer's change.

Four cinemas existed in Chelmsford during and after World War II, three of which, the Odeon, Regent and Select, were in the Moulsham area. All were well patronised, especially on Saturday evenings, when it was commonplace to see long queues of people waiting hopefully for a commissionaire to come out calling "two seats now available in the two-and-nines" or whatever the appropriate price, when seats became vacant. It was quite usual to go in to the cinema at any point during the film, see the rest of the programme through, and then catch up with the beginning of the film you missed. Hence the origin of the saying "this is where we came in".

The Regent Cinema offered something extra, though. The Manager, Bill Matthews, was very enterprising. Apart from being 'Uncle Bill' to his junior customers at the Saturday morning picture sessions, he organised variety concerts, talent contests and 'give-away' shows similar I suppose to 'Take Your Pick' or 'Have a Go', popular programmes on the 'wireless' at the time. These live shows used to be staged in between the film sessions, usually, I believe, on Friday evenings. Bill Matthews provided much needed light entertainment for the people of Chelmsford during days of great uncertainty and austerity.

Yes, I have many fond memories of Moulsham Street. The construction of Parkway severed it from the town centre, resulting in loss of trade and closure of many of the old businesses. However, in recent years, Moulsham Street appears to have risen again from the ashes, with a number of new and different style businesses. I wish this most historic and interesting part of Chelmsford well for the future.

A letter from Maureen Rignell (Bidwell), 1943-47

A letter from the Cotswolds, to thank you for the Autumn 2003 Past Pupils' Newsletter, read as always with great interest. We live up high, overlooking a valley which looked very pretty last week covered in snow, and we enjoy looking at the sheep, horses and assorted wildlife from our dining room.

The letters from past pupils are so enjoyable to read, especially the ones that recall the war years, of which the old boys seemed to have such good and clear memories. I was fascinated with Jennifer Bailey (Rayner's) photo in the last newsletter, showing the air raid shelters which I remember being taken into to sit on the slatted forms. I'm sure I would find it claustrophobic if I were to go into one now. I was certainly there in 1946, but I do not know if I could have been in her picture, although several of the names mentioned do ring a bell. I think I usually had the job of holding the person up who was doing a handstand - I wasn't too good at being upside down. We sang songs in the air-raid shelters and I think I remember doing one all about the alphabet. I have forgotten the words now, and would appreciate any one whose memory is better than mine filling in the missing information.

I also remember the senior school cookery aprons and caps, which we had to make before we could take cookery or domestic science lessons in our second year. We had to embroider our initials on the pocket and cap in the colour of our school house - mine was yellow for Windsor.

Remembering the Corn Exchange, I was in a choral concert held there, being a member of the St Cecilia choir of Chelmsford. We performed the Bartered Bride and we also had soloists from Covent Garden.

I could identify with a lot from Brenda Haley (Everett's) letter, as I had two years with Mrs Taylor, except she was Miss Norris when she was my teacher. I didn't like having lessons at the tables instead of the proper desks which the other classrooms had, but Miss Norris was so nice and that was adequate compensation. The most serious thing that I got into trouble with was talking, and the way in which we were punished was to be given so many laps of the veranda to walk round at playtime. I remember Miss Norris telling me with a smile that I could stop since she thought that I had done enough. I wonder when that particular punishment was discontinued since I have no doubt there would now be some EC regulation against the human rights that would prohibit it nowadays!

School dinners were also mentioned and since I only lived in St Johns Road I always went home for dinner. But I think I must have wanted to see what it was like to have dinner at school, so one day I tried one. I remember feeling quite shocked when two small black fish were put in front of me with mashed potato, which had a strange metallic flavour, doubtless due to the containers in which it arrived, since in those days there was no school kitchen. Needless to say after trying the one meal I went back to my mother's good cooking for the rest of my school years.

My husband and I both worked at Marconi's New Street. I was in the tracing office and he was an apprentice, in Building 46 where we met. Later I went to the County Hall, in the architects' department, and was taken to schools needing further accommodation. I even took tea with the odd headmistress or two in their rooms.

My husband went to the research labs at Great Baddow, and we lived off Beehive Lane. However, he then moved to Marconi Microelectronics at Witham and as a result we moved to Great Totham. This path closely follows that of Norman Haley as described in the last newsletter. As with other GEC industries, however, the closure of the factory was almost inevitable. We finally left for Gloucestershire in 1972 where, in the company of two other ex-Marconi colleagues, my husband founded a small electronics company. We lived in Dursley for approximately 16 years, moving to

Horsley some 17 years ago, where he finally retired about three years ago. Both places are quite close to Gloucester, Cheltenham, Bath and Stroud.

We return regularly to Essex to see my mother who is now in a care home at Witham. We have a son and daughter, both married, and they also each have a son and a daughter. Our daughter lives near Cheltenham and our son lives nearby in Stroud. Both were born in St. John's Hospital Chelmsford.

Having mentioned items sparking of my own memories I now wish to bring up something which often comes to mind, which I wonder if anyone else remembers. I'm not sure whether I was in a Miss Wright's class or Miss Skilton's but we were all given parcels from America and I cannot remember the contents apart from a handkerchief made from a strange strong material unlike any of our cotton hankies of the time. Miss Rankin suggested we should all write and thank the principal of the school from whence they came, and I received a letter from a girl living in Rhode Island called Jacqueline Bidwell, the same surname as myself. We were pen pals for a few years, and I often wonder about her. I would like to know if anyone else remembers these parcels

David Reade (David Tricker, 1947-51): a message from the 'City of Angels'

My sister sent me some cuttings from the Past Pupils' Newsletters of Moulsham Junior School. I am David Tricker (Infants 1945-47 and Junior Boys' School 1947-51), but in 1968 I changed my handicap of a name by Deed Poll to another family cognomen, Reade - so I am David Reade to all today. Many of the boys' and girls' names in these cuttings are familiar to me, but first a little history. After attending the Infants and Juniors, I went on to study at KEGS, then left Chelmsford in 1961 to live in London and also Bath for many years. Because of many winter holidays in the Far East, I chose to retire to Bangkok in 1998. I must be the only Moulsham alumnus living in the City of Angels, which I chose for its excellent tropical climate, ripe, tumultuous diversity and wonderful Thai culture.

I read of the sad death of Dan Biglin, whose name I remember well. I was pleased to learn all the words of the two verses of the School Song. The name Bunnies Dowsett is familiar to me, but I don't know the exact reason. I knew Ann and Jennifer Double, the aptly named twins, before they married, and used to see them at St John's Church Hall for dances. I lived in St John's Road, near to Ewan and Susan Rayner and Jill Gozzett. My great-nephew, Nathan, currently attends what we used to call the Seniors [now 'Moulsham High'].

At the Infants' School, my teachers were Miss Parker (who became Mrs McReady), Miss Feltham and Miss Cook. At the Junior School, my teachers were Mrs Moses, Mr V Hodgson (what did the V stand for?) [Editors: the answer is Viv], Mr Metcalfe and Mr Hymas. Also I recall Messrs Gardiner, Burtt and Picken, who taught the Remove in the school hall. Mrs French taught Class One. Mr Petchey was the Headmaster. Years later, Allan Metcalfe, who was a music teacher and an authority on the double bass, became a good friend of mine. He died of a heart attack aged 50 in 1972. There was also a Polish teacher called Mr Skraba. I presume all the above have now demised.

I enjoyed Martyn Edwards' feature and its resonant evocation of times past. I remember him quite well, although we were not close friends. I used to possess a photograph similar to the one reproduced in the article, also taken in 1951, in which I appeared. This was given to me by Mr W C C Turner, a kindly bachelor who lived with his sister in Galleywood Road and sponsored various school prizes under his name. I can attest to some of the names on Martyn's photograph, all of whom I knew. 'Bradley' is Raymond Bradley, a friend of mine at KEGS; 'Moseley' is Stewart Mosley; Julian Mayson (note correct spelling) a friend of mine from St John's Avenue; Michael Dutton, who went on to Colchester Royal

Grammar School; and Peter Coombes, who excelled academically and whose father was a policeman. I have here in my drawer the elongated school roll photograph taken in 1948.

We used to walk from St John's Road, I and the other boys, along what was known locally as the Cinder Path, which began at the intersection of Moulsham Drive and St John's Road and wound its sinuous way to Princes Road. A quicker walk to reach school was to trespass on the allotment holders' plots, which presented a more direct route. But if one spotted Mr Petchey, cycling past red in the face with exertion, it was necessary to hide under the cabbages, otherwise there would be a stinging smack on the back of the leg. Allotment holders disliked the violation of their plots with consequent juvenile damage, and complained frequently to the school.

Oh, those innocent days! Children could walk safely for miles across Currie's fields before they were levelled for a housing estate, but I was always wary of the sinister, humming pylons which stood, and I believe still stand, in those once sylvan fields.

Crossing the arterial road was a paramount danger in those days, but there was a 'Stop! Children Crossing' woman in uniform, and we were strictly forbidden to traverse at any other point. Many times I have driven past the schools before the opening of the new A12, and sometimes just for old times' sake - and the scene always looked much the same.

My time at Moulsham is remembered with affection. I think it was a good school, not educationally innovative, solid, heavily authoritarian and paternalistic - but dripping with goodwill, firm morality and the strong desire to inculcate knowledge into its pupils. I should be pleased to hear from old friends. My email address is davidreade@yahoo.com

News from New Zealand: Roy Frederic Dale, 1955-59

I'm a former pupil of Moulsham Junior Boys' School (1955-1959) and, having just discovered the school website, thought you might like a few words...

I didn't go on the Somerset trip in 1959, but do remember a school trip to London in a coach (probably June '59). We visited the Cutty Sark at Greenwich, the London Zoo, and Epping Forest - in that order. I also recall projects in that last year under Mr Picken that involved visits to Chelmsford waterworks and gasworks - the gasworks was the most impressive, with its bakingly hot retort-house where a small army of stokers fed coal into massive furnaces. Not the same with natural gas.

We lived in Vicarage Road, later moving to the Westlands Estate and a daily school bus ride by a special Eastern National service. My sister, Hilary, was at Moulsham Junior Girls School from 1957-1961. I recall her talking about Mrs Alty and Miss Pettet.

Living in New Zealand now, Moulsham seems another planet away. However, many memories are as sharp as ever. My teachers were Mrs Moses (1A); Mr Lyons, he of the goatee beard (2A); "Daddy" Gardiner (3A) and Mr Picken (4A). Mr Petchey was headmaster until 1957, then Mr Sturgeon. Other teachers I remember were Mrs French (1B - entrance from the girls' quadrangle); Mr Hodgson (spiky haircut, pipe) - 4B; Miss Martin who took over from Mrs Moses about 1957; Mr King who took over from Mr Hodgson. Mr James (Welshman) took PT and sport 1955-1957? - not my favourite subject at that time! ...and, yes, I remember Mr Giddy - altho' I never took violin lessons. Pupils I remember are: Paul Overett, John Rowland, Stephen Jeffers, Stephen Palmer (who also moved with me to Chelmsford grammar school); Earl Tumilty, John Day. No doubt a class roll would spark off many more memories.

In 1955, air raid shelters were pretty prominent around all three Moulsham schools. Two were knocked down in the boys' school in autumn '57 to make space for two new brick classrooms built in a similar style to the 1938 original buildings. I can date them by "Daddy" Gardiner's remark that we were to stay clear because the shelters were going to be knocked down with a steam-roller. Some of us took him literally and anticipated the day keenly. Construction took about 6 months, through to the following spring - a great source of wonderment for small schoolboys. Mr Gardiner coached me for the dreaded 11 plus in which I scored a reasonable pass to King Edward VI Grammar school. I owe a debt of gratitude to both Moulsham JBS and the Grammar School, who saw the potential in me and gave me the confidence to succeed - it wasn't always that obvious!

Many other memories - a pageant in the summer of my last year. Music by Eric Coates and me prancing about like a stick insect in swimming trunks, illustrating I know not what. Producing programmes for sports day on the Gestetner rotary colour copier (strong smell of meths) in the head's office. School library day supervised by Mr Sturgeon in the assembly hall. Mr Picken's pieces of chalk, well-aimed at those boys talking out of turn. School dinners (nutritious but not always designed for the fussy eater) in the cream-painted canteen on the secondary school side of the infants' school. Violet-coloured Manchester tart with mock cream stands out in my memory. Mrs Monk (non-teacher) supervised us in the playground during dinner time. Fields on the other side of the playground chain link fence (the land was farmed by Curries, I believe). In the autumn we used to watch the baler at work looking like a mechanical praying-mantis in a child's eyes..

I left the grammar school with 8 'O' Levels and 2 'A' Level GCEs. Might sound impressive but insufficient then to secure a University place. With an interest in geography and some sense of adventure, and a little trepidation, I joined the Ordnance Survey as a trainee surveyor in Southampton. I left OS in 1973, having ended up in Scotland seventeen postings later - the start of a gypsy-like travelling trait. In 1971 I had joined the Territorial Army, a Royal Engineers Field Survey Squadron in Ewell, Surrey. I undertook two exercises in Germany and the remapping of Guernsey in this time before leaving them to travel to New Zealand and a new job as a surveyor for the Ministry of Works setting out hydro-electric power structures in the central South Island. I married Sue, a Kiwi, in 1976, and moved to Wellington, the capital, taking up a position as surveyor in Head Office. The main task was to make deformation surveys of hydro-electric dams to detect any unexpected movement. Busy as ever I joined the New Zealand Territorial Army in 1974, once again an engineer squadron. This time camps were in more exotic locations - such as Fiji, the volcanic plateau of NZ's central North Island, and the Chatham Islands some 200 miles to the East of New Zealand. Lots of flying now both in civilian and military jobs - if only those Moulsham JBS teachers could have seen what happened to that timid child!

In 1986 the Ministry of Works here posted me to London for a year to study for my final professional examinations for the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors at the North East London Polytechnic (now University of East London). This late developer eventually did get to University! With the privatisation of much work previously performed by the government, I left the former Ministry of Works (now a Malaysian owned engineering consultancy company) in 1998 and started a fledgling survey company of my own serving the hydro-electric industry. I've presented papers at survey conferences in Hong Kong and Brighton. To provide a more regular income I have just completed a four year contract with EDS (the US IT giant) the contractor here for a huge land title and cadastral survey automation project.

...and recreation?. Sue and I are keen travellers (as are most Kiwis). I hold UK and NZ passports which is most useful sometimes. We have travelled around India, China, as well as a great deal of mainland Europe including Eastern Europe and the Balkans (before I left the UK, France and Germany were the limits of my horizons). We have a lovely house with grand views of city, harbour and mountains beyond.

Mr Giddy - memories from Martin Dobson, 1956-60

Many thanks for the Autumn 2003 Newsletter, it always gives me a warm feeling reading it late evening with a glass of wine or three!

In the last Newsletter you asked if anybody had recollections of Mr Giddy, who was a visiting violin teacher at Moulsham. I remember him well and took violin lessons from him along with about five other boys (or there may have been girls too) around 1958/59. Lessons took place in the hall after school and I remember that when Mr Giddy was particularly pleased with a students progress, he (or she) was awarded a 'milk gum' (rather like a wine gum only white, shaped like a milk bottle and vanilla flavoured), I have to say, that this didn't happen very often, so make of that what you will!.. I think some of us had more fun using our violin cases as toboggans along Princes Road when it had snowed!... Poor Mr Giddy. I do recall though, a lesson in which Mr Giddy played his violin to us, (just for a minute or two) and I felt touched by the beauty and sadness in his playing.

The violin wasn't the instrument for me as it turned out, but I did go on to become a professional saxophonist/woodwind player on the London scene for over 30 years. As I think about it, I'm quite certain that hearing Mr Giddy play all those years ago, (along with many other experiences of course) had its effect on me.

Violin lessons, 1956

This photo shows Tony Brown, 1952-56, playing the violin with a friend at Moulsham Junior Boys' School in 1956:



Interested in historical detective work?

We are looking for a volunteer to search through local school and Council records, plus any discussion in the press, in order to piece together the events leading up to the opening of Moulsham Schools in 1938. This would include the closure of St John's and Widford Schools. If you are interested, Hilary or Kathleen would be delighted to hear from you.

From the Summer 1957 Junior Boys' School magazine

In January 1957, Mr Tom Sturgeon took up his post as the new headmaster of Moulsham Junior Boys' School. In the Summer 1957 School Magazine, he describes some of the main events in school year 1956/57, which some of you will no doubt remember.

(From Mr Sturgeon's foreword) 'It started with the retirement [in July 1956] of that wonderful headmaster Mr Petchey, who had been Head of the School since its opening. He was followed [for the Autumn Term 1956] by an acting headmaster, Mr Hymas, who for years had been known and loved as the deputy headmaster. Mr Hymas then received a well-earned headship, and I know I express the feelings of the School when I say: "Well done, Mr Hymas. We wish you every success and happiness". However, to the school, the success of Mr Hymas was a great loss, especially as he left so soon after Mr Petchey.' As a newcomer, Mr Sturgeon was struck by 'the wonderful atmosphere of the School. Teachers and boys all seemed to have absorbed that fine School motto: "Work and be Happy", and to be determined to live up to it. The resilience of the boys . . . had to be seen to be believed. The welcome I received from teachers and children was wonderful'.

(from 'Staff Notes') 'It is with great pleasure that I record the appointments of Mr Picken as deputy headmaster and Mr Hodgson as senior assistant. Both have been with the School for many years and have given good service to the school. I thank them for their past services, and congratulate them on their respective appointments.'

(School Notes and News) 'At the end of last Summer Term [1956], various functions were arranged in connection with the retirement of Mr Petchey. In the School Hall, Cllr Mrs J P Roberts unveiled a photograph of Mr Petchey, and Mr W C C Turner unveiled the new 'Headmasters' board. A pageant, "Festival of Moulsham", devised and produced by Mr Picken and written by Mr Hodgson, was presented on the School lawn before a large audience, which included representatives of the Education Committee, the School Managers, parents and friends of the School. This was followed by the presentations of testimonials to Mr Petchey.

The annual Harvest Thanksgiving service took place on October 4th, when the Revd R T Howard addressed the School. On October 8th, seventy-five boys went to the Chelmsford Schools' Harvest service at the Cathedral.

Just before Christmas, presentations were made to Mr Hymas and Mr Lambert on the occasion of their leaving the staff. Mrs Hymas presented the School with a magnificent School Flag - all her own work and something of which we can be really proud.

The Christmas concert took place on December 14th, when the varied programme of plays was augmented by violin, recorder and choral selections.

On February 27th, the Children's Theatre Company visited us, presenting a most enjoyable performance of two plays in the School Hall.

Members of the School Choir, the violin and recorder groups again took part in the Essex Music Festival in May. On May 27th the Grammar School Orchestra paid its annual and most enjoyable visit to the school.

Parties of fourth year boys visited Ingatestone Hall on May 28th and 29th - again a most instructive and enjoyable experience.'

Dave Sturgeon, 1958-62

Dave Sturgeon was a pupil at Moulsham Infants' and the Junior Boys' School, where his father was also the Headmaster. From Moulsham, Dave went on to the Technical High School, and it was from a recent 'Tech' Newsletter that Hilary discovered the Moulsham connection. In response to a letter from Hilary, Dave has sent us a long email of amazingly detailed recollections, some compiled in consultation with his former schoolmate **Barry Reed**, whom he was in touch with recently for the first time in years. We shall include some of these in our next newsletter. In this issue we start with his comments on the article and photos in the Autumn 2003 Newsletter about the 1959 school trip to St Audries, Somerset:

"How strange that you sent me a newsletter with the article about the Somerset trip, or was that deliberate, as there is a picture of my mum there. Are the other photos of the trip available via the web or email? [Note: yes, by email] I'd be fascinated to see them. Mr Bill King - a tyrant with the slipper and red hair as well - organized it for 4th year pupils and Dad, of course, and Mum went too together with me. I was only 8, but Dad insisted that I did all of the preparation work, mentioned in the article, and the daily diaries just the same as everyone else! 10 hours on the coach: how did the teachers keep us amused? The various trips were all organized to a strict timetable, although there was free time on the beach or in the games room as well. Maybe I am one of the little ones in the background of the first picture you published? Difficult to tell. I remember finding a silver Scout's woggle on the beach and then losing it again very soon. I was distraught. Postcards had to be written and sent home; pocket money was carefully banked and issued each day. We also travelled to the source of a local river and then tracked it down to the coast. Somehow, I have memories of Fred Brown (?) the coach driver, doing the walk with us. Vague memories of the other trips come to mind, such as the paper mill where they made real paper from trees: those were the days!

Two other trips, in 1965 and 1966 to France and France/Belgium - organized by Dad (?) - were when I was about 14, but I was allowed to go with the Moulsham party. Mrs Donovan's son, Andrew, of the same age, came too. The second trip was supposed to fly from Southend but when we arrived we were sent back home because snow had stopped all flights. We successfully went the second day. What a nightmare of organization for Dad: there were no mobile phones in those days! Both trips were successful and very educational, of course: Paris, Eiffel Tower, Arc de Triomphe, Versailles, Dunkirk and the war cemeteries, the Atomium etc. A very poor photograph near the Eiffel Tower confirms my memory that school caps and ties were de rigueur!

Other memories, somewhat disjointed, I'm afraid: Robin House - mine, I was Minutes Secretary at one point! - and Kingfisher(?) and ??; making paper lanterns at Christmas time; metal boxes of dry ice from Walls with the ice cream for the Christmas party; the annual pageant on the grass quad, having queued in the playground for our turn and then dancing or marching in; the big circular basins in the cloakroom with the metal bar on the floor to operate them; boxes of straws for the bottles of milk at breaktime; cigarette card games or racing Dinky cars in the playground; carving blocks of salt - about the size of a small loaf of bread - in to shapes for art; potato printing and even lino cut printing - how dangerous was that? Inkwells and being ink monitor; out of bounds air raid shelters which I wasn't brave enough to go in even in the holidays when there with Dad; Mr Collins (?) the caretaker; school dinners in those horrible huts up the drive; spam fritters; Mr Hodgson making me sit until I had eaten all of my chocolate pudding and chocolate sauce, and both of us regretting it soon after; the plasticine, sick and floor polish smell; the tiny stockroom next to Dad's office; Mrs Hollingbury, the school secretary and medical inspections in her room; the only bit of maths which I remember, apart from reciting the tables: 'Turn the divisor upside down and multiply', recited parrot fashion until we knew it.

Richard Geer, 1961-67

When visiting my parents recently, my mother shared with me the Moulsham Past Pupils' Newsletter which I read with interest. She is Eileen Geer (nee Steel), who was at Moulsham during the 30s. I was there between 1961 and 67 before moving on to Gt Baddow Comprehensive. I would really appreciate if I could be added to your distribution list.

One story that I have from a few weeks back is that I was on a sponsored cycle ride from London to Paris in aid of the Royal British Legion. On the third night, the day before the last push for Paris, I was sitting in a bar (as one does) in Abbeyville talking to one of the other cyclists...
The conversation went . .

me - where are you from?

him - Exeter. You?

me - Chelmsford...

him - I know Chelmsford. In fact I was born in St John's Hospital.

me - When?

him - 1956

me - so was I - where did you go to school?

him - Moulsham . . . RICHARD??

me - SIMON!!!!???

It was **Simon Hewell** who I was very good friends with up to the age of 11 when he moved to Exeter. I still have photographs of us in the Football team from 1964,5, and 6!! Here is a picture of us on the way to Paris the next day!! I shall dig out some more pictures and send them to you.



Tree planting in 1977

In the Autumn 2003 Newsletter, the Head Teacher, Mr Les Kemp, mentioned plans to plant four more trees in front of the school and around the turning circle. In response, he was both pleased and amused to hear from **Mrs Cathy Bendall**, past pupil 1973-77 and mother of a present pupil at the school, with her story of a previous tree-planting:

'In 1977, my last year at Moulsham Junior School, I remember Mr Sturgeon, the headmaster, holding a tree planting ceremony to commemorate the Queen's Silver Jubilee. I remember a young sapling being planted, and a placard, which read something like this: 'This tree was planted to commemorate the Queen's Silver Jubilee - June 1977'. Over the following weekend, the placard was stolen, to be found in our front garden, placed against the giant oak tree (about 200 years old and very well established!!). It caused great humour in our road, though I'm not sure if Mr Sturgeon saw the funny side - he certainly did not show it when I had to return the placard to school! As this tree planting has stuck in my mind for twenty-six years, I would love my daughter to have the same lasting memories, hopefully to pass on to her children, when she walks them to Moulsham Junior School in twenty-odd years' time.'

Interested by this account, Hilary looked up the record of the planting in the school Log Book, and found that there were in fact three trees planted for the 1977 Silver Jubilee. It seems from Mr Sturgeon's notes for 11 March 1977 that the first headmaster, Mr S Petchey, came along to plant three trees to commemorate the Silver Jubilee - a silver birch behind the North Wing Hall, a crab apple behind the South Wing Hall, and a magnolia bush in front of rooms 14/18. We think we have identified both the silver birch and the crab apple tree, but the magnolia seems not to have survived. Since writing this, we have learnt from Mr Kemp that a tree sponsored by Mrs Bendall has recently been planted on the front lawn, coincidentally not far from the 1977 Jubilee crab apple.

A mystery photograph

Does anyone recognise this photograph? It was found recently in the school office, unfortunately with no indication of its source. On the back is a date, 9 November 1945, but no name or other identification. The school staff wonder if the photo may be of a past pupil or member of staff from the 1940s. If you have any information about the picture, could you please get in touch with Kathleen Boot, who would be delighted to reunite the original photograph with its rightful owner.



More from the class of 1981

Many thanks to Lisa Hibbert (Dorking) and Sue Davis (Hawkes), who wrote in with additional names of pupils on the 1981 photo we included in the Autumn 2003 Newsletter, and confirmed that the teacher was Mrs Franklin. The complete list has now been added to the website version of the Newsletter, and will be on display at the Open Afternoon with a larger colour photo of the group.

In late November 2003, Hilary and Kathleen spent a lively and entertaining morning with two members of the class shown on the 1981 picture: Sarah Haynes (Gipson) and Rachel Edney. Between them, Sarah and Rachel were able to let us have two further photos, from their second year (1980, teacher Mrs Gough) and fourth year (1982, teacher Mrs Donovan), and one of a parallel third year class, all of which will also be on display on 15th May. At the time when Sarah and Rachel were at the Junior School, they had both individual and class photos every year.

The two girls very much enjoyed their time at Moulsham Juniors. They recalled that the school had an "old-fashioned" feel by today's standards. The Head Teacher, Mr Sturgeon, was strict, though not frightening, and the uniform had to be just so: dark blue skirts and cardigans for the girls in winter, and pale blue and white striped dresses in summer. It was not until later that the uniform reverted to the original grey and maroon colours.

In February 1981, Sarah was one of seven Moulsham pupils who attended a 90th birthday celebration tea for the former Headmaster, Mr Petchey, at Cooksmill Green Congregational Church, where he was preaching. Sadly, Mr Petchey died the following year, in February 1982, just before his 91st birthday. Mr Sturgeon himself retired in April 1982, handing over to Mrs King after more than 25 years as Head Teacher. It was Mrs King who introduced the present system of four Houses, Earth, Air, Fire and Water, replacing five Houses named for royal palaces: Balmoral (purple), Buckingham (blue), Windsor (green), Caernarvon (red) and Sandringham (yellow). In Sarah and Rachel's day, the five Houses competed in various sports events, and held regular House Meetings in the canteen. Sarah played netball for Caernarvon House.

During the time Sarah and Rachel were at Moulsham Junior School, separate assemblies were held for the Lower and Upper Schools, in the two school halls - first and second year classes in one hall, third and fourth years in the other. Pupils were not allowed to walk behind the two central classrooms, one of which, now the computer suite, was Mrs Donovan's classroom. There was also a large demountable classroom with at least 2 classes in it at the bottom of the school playground. The present kitchen, opposite the School's front entrance, was the medical room (as it had been in the fifties), and Sarah remembers queuing up there for injections.

Activities which stand out in the two girls' memories include country dancing and dance competitions, a project on family history, in which pupils interviewed their parents and older relatives to build up a picture of life in earlier days, and a lot of singing. Rachel and Sarah were both in the choir, and recall singing in the Cathedral, the Civic Theatre, and local hospitals (especially carol concerts). It had become the tradition in alternate years for Moulsham Junior pupils to take part in a performance of 'Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream-coat' at the Civic Theatre. The production was by NewPalm (the resident company) and half the school choir took part in alternate performances for two and a half weeks. Sarah and Rachel had been looking forward to this, but when their turn came, in 1981, they were disappointed to find that 'Pedro the Fisherman' had taken over from Joseph on that occasion. They enjoyed it, nevertheless, as it was exciting to be involved in such an ambitious project, performing to the general public. They also remember with pleasure a visit by the lower school in December 1978 to a performance of 'Peter Pan' at Baddow School. This was produced by the

popular Young Generation players, a group which is still going strong, with the help of another past pupil of Moulsham Juniors, **Peter Smith (1938)**.

School trips were another memorable feature of school life. In their first year, 1979, Rachel and Sarah's class went on an excursion to Colchester Castle. Spines shivered as the lights were switched off in the dungeon! Their second-year visit, in June 1980, was to Mole Hall, Thaxted, and in the third year they had a "brilliant" time dressing up in period costume at Kentwell Hall, Long Melford. In their fourth year, May 1982, they stayed overnight in a Youth Hostel in Canterbury, giving them more time to explore the historic city and make brass rubbings in the Cathedral. Rachel's Dad accompanied this group as one of the parent helpers, as did another classmate, Lesley Johnston's Mum. A great time was had by all.

Sarah and Rachel are still in touch with several of their former schoolmates from Moulsham Infants, Juniors and Seniors, including **Catherine Daintree**, **Abigail Weeks** and **Dawn Waldney** They are amazed how many ex-Moulsham pupils still live locally, some with children of their own now attending the school. Names they particularly recall from 1979-82 include **Tony Groves**, who lived in Upper Bridge Road and went on to Hylands School; **Emma Balaam** and **Nerissa Payne**, who went on to the Girls' High School; **Jenny Cocks**, who was Head Girl at Moulsham Seniors, and **Jenny Smith**, who went to Boswells School. **Amanda Gower** emigrated to Australia in (they think) the third year, and they believe that David Orme has died. Sarah's brother, **Steven Gipson**, was at Moulsham Juniors from 1982-86, and now has a son at the school. Sarah herself has her hands full these days looking after two young children: Alice (nearly 2) and Chloe in the first year of the Infants' School.

Rachel is currently engaged in local authority work. While she was at Moulsham, she was a keen Brownie in the 3rd Mildmay pack in Vicarage Road, where her Mum was in charge. Rachel is carrying on the tradition, as Unit Helper at 1st Mildmay Brownies. Most of the girls there also attend Moulsham Juniors. Both Rachel and Sarah notice that children today still like the old games best, and appreciate the old playground games which are being reintroduced once again.

We look forward to seeing Rachel and Sarah, and hopefully several of their former friends from Moulsham at the Open Afternoon on 15th May.

Obituary, Roger Stevenson, 1944-48, Moulsham Junior Boys' School

We are very sorry to hear of the death of Roger Stevenson, aged 66, on Wednesday 25th February, 2004. His school friend Geoff Barnard tells us that Roger, who in recent years lived in Poole, Dorset, had fought a brave five-year battle against cancer. Roger spent all his schooldays at Moulsham, from Infants' through to Senior Boys' School. He always looked forward to the Past Pupils' Newsletter, and last May managed to attend the Open Afternoon at the school, which he enjoyed very much. We know that his many friends from his schooldays will be sad to hear of his passing, and we extend our sympathy to them.

News in brief

Kes Gray, 1968-72, has had twelve childrens books published now and there are more on the way. He reports that "the Daisy books are growing apace. The fourth will be published in March and a special one pound token book is being produced for World Book Day (March 4th). I'm writing a 9 story fiction series for Hodder (8-11yrs) and a bullying text for secondary schools, so I'm beginning to spread my wings . I'm even going to be the support act for Jacqueline Wilson at a festival in Leeds in November! Gulp. That'll keep me worrying for the rest of this year.

Keep up the good work with the newsletter. I so wish there were more photographs and contributions from the 1960s. Without question, my time at Moulsham Juniors was the happiest of my life. I can remember every detail as though it were yesterday.

By the way, do you reckon the Head would let me buy the 'Work and Be Happy' board for my home? It's such a shame to think of it being tucked away in a cupboard. I can still sing the song and I've got the perfect space for it. Maybe he'd swap it for a life supply of books! Or a conker? Or a toffee? Or a Batman card..? "

Joan Tredgett (Ponsford), 1943-47 (see also the article on page 6) was pleased and surprised to hear from **Maurice Woods**, a classmate of her late husband '**Tug**' (**Brian**) **Tredgett**. Like Tug, Maurice was a former pupil of Moulsham Senior Boys' School. Seeing Joan's surname in a recent Newsletter, he wondered if she might be the wife of his classmate, and so it proved to be. Both Tug and Maurice had lived in Springfield and attended Trinity Road Juniors before going on to Moulsham Seniors. The school bus service from Springfield to Moulsham was run by Primrose Coaches, which some of you may remember. Joan was delighted to have a photo (part of a Senior Boys' panorama) from Maurice, showing himself and Tug with others who may be known to some of our readers: **Copsey, Ken Clark, John Gill, Woollett, Brian Drew** and **Peter Nice**. We plan to have a copy on display at the Open Afternoon. Joan recalls that she and her husband Tug both went to the Methodist Sunday School, but it was later that she first really met him, over a Coca-Cola in the renowned Chivers Café in Broomfield Road. Joan herself attended Moulsham Infants, Junior and Senior Girls' Schools. She especially remembers Miss Godfrey (now Mrs Herries) in the Infants' School, and Mr ('Daddy') Gardiner, one of the Junior Boys' staff, who helped run the night school at Moulsham Seniors and organised the popular Friday night dances there. At night school, Joan learnt shorthand/typing, and on leaving school went to work first for the AA in London Road (now the Radio Essex building), and then at Hoffmans. She has lived in Chelmsford for most of her life, and always enjoys bumping into former schoolmates throughout the town and surrounding area.

Tesco Computer Vouchers

Yes, it's that time of year again! If you shop at Tesco, and are not already collecting the computer vouchers for any other school, could you please save them for Moulsham Junior School? They can be delivered to the school or sent in by post, whichever suits you best. Many thanks.

Data Protection Legislation

Please note that for the purpose of compiling the Past Pupils' mailing list, and for no other purpose whatsoever, your name and address is being held as a computer record. If for any reason you object to this, would you please inform us immediately in writing. Unless we hear from you, your consent is assumed.