

Past Pupils' Newsletter

Spring 2009

Vol 11 no 1

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Your Newsletter ten years on

After the memorable 70th birthday celebrations for Moulsham Junior School last year, another anniversary already - it is ten years ago this year that your Past Pupils' Newsletter first appeared! Back in 1999, the then Head Teacher, Les Kemp, asked 1951-55 past pupils Hilary Balm (Dye) and Kathleen Boot (Nash) if we would like to help start a newsletter to keep in touch with past pupils. 'Perhaps you could just keep the list of addresses, and deliver the newsletters to some of the local people', he suggested. Some hope! Right from the start, the sheer enthusiasm of the readers, sending in recollections, news and pictures, drew us into a much closer involvement, and, over the decade, we have very much enjoyed editing the newsletters, and meeting so many of you at the annual reunions. The next such Open Afternoon will be on **Saturday 16th May**, from 1-4pm at the school. Do come along if you can, to revisit former classrooms, have tea and cakes with old friends, and enjoy our ever-expanding collection of photographs and memorabilia. It will be a good opportunity to see the most recent improvements to the school buildings and playground, while recognising that the school retains all the life and character you may remember from your own time here.

From 130 initial contacts back in 1999, including those who left their addresses when attending the 60th anniversary open day, we now have well over 750 Newsletter readers in UK and many other parts of the world, and probably many more we don't know about. With past and current issues now available on the past pupils' page of the school website, more and more past pupils are getting back in touch, and many have expressed their pleasure at catching up with old classmates and school friends. If you are reading this on the website, do please consider emailing us your own memories, news, and pictures to add to the growing archive of Moulsham Junior School history. The contact email address is kathleen.boot@tiscali.co.uk, or you can write to Mrs Kathleen Boot, 1A Vicarage Road, Chelmsford, CM2 9PG. We look forward very much to hearing from you.

This Spring 2009 Newsletter has something of a musical flavour, with recollections by the present music teacher, Mr Gerald Hindes, of his 20 years at Moulsham Juniors so far; an article on the Essex Music Festival in the 1950s; and the words of the 1970s and 1990s school songs. Coincidentally, several of the other items mention violin lessons and other musical interests. We are also pleased to hear more from the 1960s and 1970s this time, with memories from Barrie Stevens, Martin Robb, and 1970s photos and magazines from former teacher Mrs Carol Leverett. Thank you to all our contributors, from whichever decade, for sharing your stories and pictures.

Once again, we would be grateful for help with the Open Afternoon arrangements. If you are able to come along to the school at 1.30pm on Friday 15th May to help set up the photo display, at 10.30am on Saturday 16th to set up chairs and tables for refreshments, or if you are willing to bake some cakes, or take a turn serving teas or welcoming visitors in the afternoon, do please get in touch with Hilary or Kathleen as soon as possible.

And finally, thank you to all those who distribute Newsletters in their neighbourhoods, which is a great help. If you receive your Newsletter by post and would be willing to read it on the school website instead, please email me, and we will add your name to those we notify when each new issue is available on the website. Please let me know if you change your address or email address. You can also email Gerry Etherington (Butterworth) at gerry.etherington@tiscali.co.uk if you change your postal address or would like us to add the names and addresses of any new contacts to our mailing list, as Gerry kindly keeps the lists and labels up to date.

We hope you enjoy reading this latest Newsletter, and we look forward to seeing many of you again or for the first time at the reunion on May 16th. Very best wishes from Hilary Balm (Dye) and myself,

Kathleen Boot (Nash), 1951-55

From Head Teacher, Mrs Linda Hughes

Welcome to the second edition of the Past Pupils Newsletter in Moulsham's 70th Birthday Year. You won't be surprised to hear that life at Moulsham has been as hectic as ever! It started the week after the thoroughly enjoyable evening for past pupils and staff with a phone call from Ofsted on the Tuesday to say they were coming to inspect the school on the following 7th and 8th October! Having had a thoroughly enjoyable but exhausting week celebrating the school's birthday, everyone rallied and set to show the Inspectors the school in its very best light. I am extremely pleased and proud to report that the inspection went well with the inspectors confirming our view that Moulsham Junior School is a good school. However, as I have said on more than one occasion a school is more than just a building: it's made up of all the people within it and I would like to thank the children and all of the staff for their continued hard work in making Moulsham a successful, happy and vibrant place to learn.

Walking along the corridor outside North Wing Hall one day I stopped to read one of the old newspaper cuttings that had been displayed and I was amazed to learn that the school had been inspected in 1954 on 7th October. Quite a coincidence and the inspection then went equally as well.

Throughout our inspection the inspectors were amazed to see children struggling to school with bags and bags of plastic bottles. We had entered a competition to win a weather station and design for a garden where the winning school was the one that collected the most plastic bottles to recycle. I'm pleased to report that we collected a staggering 1362 sacks of bottles and won.

Our weather station is in use and work begins in March on creating an 'edible garden' where we will grow a range of fruit and vegetables which we hope to be able to eat ourselves. The wildlife area has also taken shape: we have had a couple of 'groundforce days' where children and parents gave up a Saturday to work together to clear the area and lay the foundations for an area which is attractive to wildlife and allows us to learn about them safely. If you come to the Past Pupils Afternoon in May then hopefully you will be able to see the progress we have made.

If you have any spare time, particularly during the lunchtime period or after school, and would be interested in showing your gardening expertise with children do give me a ring at the school as we are keen to develop a gardening club and would welcome all the help we can get. I look forward to seeing many of you at our event on 16th May.

Tokens and donations

The Moulsham Junior School staff are currently collecting 'Books for Schools' tokens from the Times and Sunday Times newspapers, and would be very grateful for any you may be able to add to their haul. If so, do please send or bring them to the school (Princes Road, Chelmsford, CM2 9DG).

We notice that Tesco's 2009 'Computers for Schools' scheme has just started, too, so if you are able to save those tokens for Moulsham Juniors, they too would be gratefully received, as would tokens from any future Sainsbury's promotion for school equipment.

Thank you to all those who kindly made donations towards the production costs of the Past Pupils' Newsletter in 2008. As before, there will be a collection box available at the Open Afternoon on Saturday 16th May for those who wish to contribute. If you are not able to come to the reunion but would still like to make a donation, would you please send your cheque, payable to 'Moulsham Junior School', to: Moulsham Junior School, Finance Office, Princes Road, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 9DG, mentioning that you are a past pupil of the school. We generally suggest about £3 - £5 a year, to help cover printing, postage and stationery costs.

Mr Gerald Hindes: Memories of 20 years of teaching at Moulsham Junior School

I arrived at Moulsham in September 1988, appointed by Mrs King, then Headteacher, to lead music throughout the school. The year I arrived we celebrated fifty years of Moulsham. One feature of these celebrations was a concert involving the whole school, constructed from music of the previous fifty years. There were performances of a range of pieces, and I remember being particularly proud of the effort of my class: two gifted identical twins, the Paynes, played the piano, for "Doh, Re, Mi" whilst the rest of the class added a range of percussive accompaniments which developed as the song's verses went on, building to a fine climax. I stood at the front conducting, and the standard the class achieved was, I felt, impressive.

The school has changed a lot in its construction in the last few years: 6 new classrooms, a demountable classroom, sealed corridor units, false ceilings throughout the old classrooms, the removal of cloakrooms and their replacement with a kitchen area, storage space and a new classroom. Paradoxically, although we now have classrooms that are generally open to the corridor, we have the children working far more rarely on their own in the corridors than we did when they were more open to the elements, and vision of what they are doing was less clear.

The first school residential visit I went on was to the campsite at Mersea. At the start of the 90s we went tenting there twice. It was an inexpensive week for parents but had drawbacks: the first time I went it was so hot a member of staff had to make regular journeys into a nearby town for sun cream, as we just did not have enough. A year later at the same place, there was almost non-stop rain, and after a few days of tenting, the conditions became a nightmare!

On one occasion at Mersea we took the children for a walk on the muddy shore at night when the tide was out. The children received grave warnings about straying from the leaders as there were clearly dangers of getting stuck in the mud, and the tide had to be monitored carefully. Everyone behaved impeccably. A couple of nights later we were encouraged by the children to go walking there again. A few yards from the shore one child's boot got stuck, and all the adults gathered around to help ease the child out of their uncomfortable situation. When the child had been released, the adults turned and were horrified to see that the other children, now confident from having been on the mud before, were spread out far and wide, and the adults then realised that none of them had brought a whistle. Fortunately the group was eventually reunited safely.

The Isle of Wight has been a favourite venue for residential visits; I think I have been about eight times. We have stayed on the front in a hotel at Sandown, and stayed with a lady in a residence who told us stories of how she walked round the local town with a young lion from the local zoo. One year we stayed in Ventnor and went for a walk along the beach after the evening meal. All of a sudden, a couple of children exploring rock pools were convinced they had found part of a dead body in one of the pools. Their panic rapidly spread to the rest of the group, and although the adults were quite clear that the shape concerning them was nothing but a wet rock formation, it was well over twenty four hours before some of the more impressionable members of the group calmed down, and were convinced no-one's remains were lying on the shore.

I feel the undoubted greatest strength of the school during the time I have been here, has been the quality of the staff. Those working at Moulsham seem to develop an immediate sense of being part of a team, and to care for all of their pupils to a degree beyond what might be reasonably expected. The range of teaching expertise has been amazing: I particularly remember a fascinating explanation of what a rabbit had eaten through the dissection of some droppings discovered on a walk. I have seen fantastic feats of art work achieved with children and amazing assemblies which had been written, costumed and produced by a teacher as part of the everyday curriculum. Then there have been special

talents staff have deployed, such as teaching Russian to a group of children who were then able to speak to the school in that language. And of course the productions of the last few years have been varied but consistently polished, ranging from Gilbert and Sullivan's Pinafore and Pirates to "Bugsy Malone", and taking in two very different versions of "Joseph and his Technicolor Dreamcoat" along the way. It has been a pleasure to see some who gained early experience in Moulsham productions go on to higher achievements, notably Alex Hassell, who after playing the Mad Hatter in the year 6 production of "Alice" has moved on to play Hamlet, and appear in television's "Torchwood" and "Bonkers."

Moulsham Juniors at the Essex Music Festival, 1949-61

Those of us at Moulsham Junior Girls' School in the 1950s will remember our music teacher Miss Skilton training us very thoroughly in set piece songs for the annual singing competition held in the old Corn Exchange on Tindal Square as part of the Essex Music Festival. Hilary has recently been trawling through the first school log book, and found the following references to our remarkable successes (and occasional disappointments) in the competition with other Essex schools between 1949 and 1961. Do let us know if you recall any details of these occasions.

May 9th 1949 'Miss Skilton in charge of 31 children. They gained 2 x 1st places, 1 x 2nd and 1x 3rd. Sight reading obtained 40/50 marks and tied with Upminster. Moulsham was judged the best all round choir and keep the cup for 6 months.'

May 8th 1950 '32 children conducted by Miss Skilton. In all classes they gained 1st place and were 3rd in sight reading. Being 9 marks ahead of other competitors, they hold the cup for the best all round choir for 1 year.' **June 14th 1950** 'Today we had a gramophone record made of the songs that the choir sang at the Essex Music Festival. We hope to sell some of these to the children.' [Does anyone have a copy, we wonder?]

No entry in the log book for the **1951** competition (Miss Pettet was off sick for a month), but on **June 20th 1951** 'The school choir, conducted by Miss Skilton, took part in the Festival Concert, "The schools make music". We had tea in the Technical College before the performance. The girls wore blue dresses and many people remarked on their bright faces and excellent singing.'

May 12th 1952 'Today the choir attended the Essex Music festival at the Corn Exchange. In the absence of Miss Skilton, Mrs Rowland (a friend of Miss Pettet) acted as conductor. The choir was placed 1st in every class and won the cup for the best all round choir and the cup for sight reading.'

March 28th 1953 'Miss Skilton took a choir of 33 girls to Wembley to sing in the London and Home Counties Championship Competition. We were placed 5th out of 8 choirs.' **May 4th 1953** Miss Skilton took the choir to compete in the Essex Music Festival. We again won the cup for the best choir of the day, with 4 x 1st certificates. The marks were Folksong 91, Descant 91, 2 part song 85, Unison 84. We were 2nd in the sight reading class with 5/10.'

May 17th 1954 'Today was Children's Day at the Music Festival held at the Shire Hall. Miss Skilton conducted our choir and we were top in every section gaining 4 1st class certificates and the cup for the best choir in our section.'

May 9th 1955 'Miss Skilton (with Miss Pettet) took the choir to the Corn Exchange for the Essex Music Festival. The girls won first place in all sections and thus the cup for the best choir. They gained 1st place with Chingford in sight reading and share this cup.' Hilary and Kathleen were in the choir this year and seem to remember singing 'Nymphs and Shepherds' as one of the set pieces.

May 7th 1956 'The girls were 1st in three classes and 2nd in two, winning the cup for sight reading, folk song and best all round choir.' **June 20th 1956** 'Miss Pettet and Miss Skilton took a choir of 36 girls to the Corn Exchange to take part in the Non-Competitive Music Festival. The violin girls also played. In the afternoon a united rehearsal was held and at 7pm the concert was given to a packed audience. Six of the staff attended.'

May 13th 1957 'We gained 1sts in the Unison, Folk Song and Two Part Song and 3rd in sight reading. We gained the cup for the Folk Song and the best all round choir.'

May 12th 1958 A severe blow to our pride! 'In the Mid-Essex Music Festival, the Senior Choir gained one 1st certificate and was 3rd in the sight reading class. We have lost the cups for the 1st time in 8 years.' Oh dear! On **June 11th 1958**, however, 'a choir from class VI sang in the Non-Competitive Music Festival, and the violin class, under Mr Giddy, also took part'.

May 5th 1959 'We gained the cup for sight reading and 1 x 2nd and 1 x 3rd.'

May 17th 1960 'We came 4th out of 10 in every class.'

May 9th 1961 'Miss Pettet and Miss Skilton took Class VIII to the Essex Music Festival. We gained the sight reading cup and were 1st in the Folk Song. We obtained 3rd certificates for the Canon and Song with Descant.'

Characteristically, the Junior Girls' School's log book contains very little detail about the festival or the choir competition. So it was interesting to spot, in the Summer 1954 Junior Boys' School magazine, the following report on the **1954** event:

'The Thirty-sixth Annual Essex Musical Festival was held in Chelmsford from Saturday, May 15th to Saturday, May 29th. It opened with a public concert in the Corn Exchange and closed with a massed orchestral rehearsal in the Grammar School.

As last year the School was represented by the choir on Monday, May 17th, at the Corn Exchange and by members of the recorder group on Friday, May 28th, at the Grammar School.

Last year there were only three choirs competing in our division. This year, however, six choirs entered, although one choir was unable to take part at the last moment. The other choirs were Moulsham Primary Girls, Chingford Chase Lane, Chingford New Road and Hornchurch Park Lane. Each choir sang four songs: "The Sweet Primroses", "The Girl I Left Behind Me" - with descant - "The Cherry Trees" - a two-part song - and "Boot, Saddle, to Horse and Away". The adjudicator was Mr. John Clements.

Our average mark for singing last year was just over 80; this year we raised it to well over 83. Equally satisfactory was the fact that we raised our sight-reading mark from the lowly 4 out of ten to the more respectable 7 out of 10. The choir was very proud to display five certificates to the rest of the School on Tuesday morning. So far we have not earned a 1st class certificate, but we were very close in the last song. All the boys pulled their weight and they sang together very well as a choir.

On Friday evening, May 28th, nine boys braved the thundery weather and played their recorders at the Grammar School. There were five entries from the School, three in the under 11 class and two in the open class. In the under 11 class, Moulsham was the only school represented and D. Barnes, C. Raven and N. Roche played very well to obtain 87 marks, the highest mark awarded all the evening. The other boys in that class also played well and tied for second place.

In the open class we were competing against far older boys from secondary schools; our boys, however, were by no means outclassed and P. Gunnell and T. Davies gained 82, the fifth highest out of twelve entries. C. Raven is also to be congratulated on helping S. Driscoll and G. Thompson, two old boys of the School, to come second in the open class.'

David Tarbun, 1942-46: Music and monitors at Moulsham

We are very pleased to hear from new contact David Tarbun, who was a pupil at Moulsham Junior Boys' School from 1942-46. The memories David records here will eventually form part of a book he is compiling, and he hopes they will be of interest to other readers and perhaps provoke other recollections which they can contribute to future newsletters. David writes:

'Many thanks for my first newsletter, well produced and a good read. It brought back memories and also names and photos of people I have not seen for many years. I look forward to next reunion in May.

I remember my time at Moulsham Junior Boys' School, which I attended from about 1942 until 1946. That was when I first "got into music". We had a piano at home and my brothers and sisters played, but I had never had any formal lessons. It was at Moulsham Juniors that I started lessons, with a brand new violin, which I am sure my parents could ill afford. I did not progress greatly. The sounds of my practice greatly offended the family pet dog, and the rest of the family were not enthusiastic either, so I gave up. But string instruments of the violin family, and in particular the cello, still attract my attention.

I was quite a shy boy, and this caused me great problems after school dinner one day. During the meal, some pepper was spilt, and being a tidy person, I cleaned it up with my handkerchief. Now, I was not aware that pepper can be quite an aggravating substance if used unwisely. During afternoon lessons I had cause to wipe my nose, and must have got my handkerchief near my eye. Pretty soon my eye started watering and getting painful. I wiped my eyes with my hankie again, only to feel even more pain. My eyes were smarting and tears were streaming down my face. I was in some distress, but did not have the nerve to put up my hand and tell the teacher. The wonders of nature eventually took over and my tears washed the pepper from my eyes so I could see clearly again. It took some time, and I was really scared, but I told no-one!

In those days written work was always done in ink. We could not afford fountain pens, and ball point pens had not been invented. Our pens were school issue holders with renewable steel nibs. Our ink was not supplied in liquid form, but as dry powder. Goody goody David was made an "ink monitor"! This meant collecting a key from someone in authority and disappearing into a large walk-in cupboard situated off to the left of the school entrance. Inside were all manner of stationery items, including drums of black ink powder. It was our job to measure out the powder into large, discoloured jugs, add water and stir well until all the powder had dissolved. Quite a sought-after job, because it got you into parts of the school that others did not see, but it was messy and it was not difficult to spot the "ink monitor" around the school!

Another sought-after "perk" I was selected for was that of "milk monitor". In those days each child at school was given one third of a pint of fresh milk each morning at "playtime". The milk was delivered to the school in glass bottles housed in heavy, steel wired milk crates, which then had to be delivered to the classrooms ready for playtime. Milk monitors had to leave lessons early, to do the delivering. One of the main requirements was a length of strong rope.

First, we had to assemble next to the delivered milk at the school entrance, consult the information sheets on class numbers and count out the correct number of bottles for each class. This is where the length of rope came into play. After threading the rope through the frame of the milk crate, the whole lot were dragged, at great speed, around the smooth concrete quadrangle to the appropriate classroom door. Speed was of the essence, because we did not have loads of time. This also became

our licence to make as much din as possible! How the lessons continued I don't know, but we worked hard and had a whale of a time.

After break, the empty bottles, sitting back in the crates outside the classrooms, had to be transferred back to the central point for collection by the milkman the next day. That was us, back on duty. Can you imagine what metal crates filled with empty bottles, sliding at speed around the quadrangle, sounded like? There were places where the quadrangle had steps for different levels, and because the bottles were empty, we could let the whole crate fly through the air until it landed. It's a wonder any work was achieved at all and, with my ink and milk duties, amazing that I learned anything at all!

I must have been pretty bright and well thought of, however, because when we had a teacher crisis, due to sickness, I got roped in again. I was in the top class of the Juniors by this time and a 'flu epidemic hit the teaching staff, there were not enough teachers to go round. Nowadays they would probably have closed the school or got in some supply teachers, but in those days some of us older children were given the task of looking after rooms of younger pupils. A group of about three of us became 'teachers' for each class, carrying out monitoring duties for youngsters doing their work. It made us feel quite important for a day or two!

Dudley Courtman, 1942-46: A tribute to Mr W C C Turner

I would like to add to the tributes paid to Mr. W. C.C. Turner, one of the school's benefactors in the 1940's. I think that I read in a past newsletter that the oak display boards that he donated to record the names of scholarship boys, and the board for sportsmanship, are still on the walls of the hall. These show how much he believed in the importance of encouraging youngsters to work hard and get on in the world.

Mr Turner worked at Crompton Parkinson's in Chelmsford and had travelled all over the world: something which was quite an undertaking in those days. I'm not sure what the area of his expertise was at Crompton's, but it was apparent that he was a specialist of some kind. One can only assume that being a bachelor with no commitments he wanted to use his money for the public benefit and there was no better way than to invest it in the younger generation. He was obviously in his prime during the 1940's during the War years. I left Moulsham Boys in 1946 and I assume that he was a leading figure in the life of the school long after that.

We boys were always pleased to see him. After being introduced by Mr Petchey, the head teacher, Mr Turner would take to the stage and proceed to tell us about his travels. We were very interested in his stories although our knowledge of geography at that time was rather sketchy. The subject of one of his talks stayed with me for ever: his love of the British landscape. Having visited so many foreign parts himself he spoke with much conviction about the great variety of this country's scenery and how it was so conveniently contained within a small space - there was no need to travel miles abroad when you had such a treasure house on your own doorstep. He urged us to explore our own country before venturing further afield and defied us to find anywhere more magnificent.

Each of his talks would be concluded with a song - he loved the sound of young voices. Mr Petchey used to exhort us to lift the roof off and to give the school song everything we had got. Once the music master, Mr Gardiner, had finished the introductory bars, the sound was deafening. Even at that age I realised that we were overdoing it a bit - it wasn't so much singing as shouting at the top of our voices. It may be that it was this that persuaded Mr Turner that he would like us to learn another song: "*Jerusalem*" was suggested. Our subsequent performances of this well known patriotic hymn were much more measured and tuneful. No doubt he had chosen it because, not only did it celebrate the beauty of

the English landscape, but it also contained exotic images of heroic battles: "chariots of fire", spears, swords, "bows of burning gold" and "arrows of desire" - all calculated to appeal to us young barbarians. Perhaps it's significant that I can still remember every word of *Jerusalem* but not one from the school song!

Mr Turner appreciated the importance of broadening our horizons and often he would lead mini expeditions from the school to the London museums and on country walks. These visits made quite an impression on young boys, most of whom had been virtually nowhere, especially as he was such a keen and knowledgeable guide. I was lucky enough to be invited on one such visit to Danbury and Little Baddow - the details of the trip are still as vivid for me now as they were then.

We bussed from Chelmsford to the *Griffin* public house on Danbury Hill and headed off across Lingwood Common. He must have been on familiar ground because he confidently chose a mile long route along the many paths which criss-crossed the common through the head high bracken. We stopped once or twice to pick up litter which we then hid in the undergrowth - a novel experience for us. On reaching Riffhams Lane we turned right, walked a short distance up a steep hill before turning left into Blakes Wood. Here we were shown a tree that was being strangled by ivy and how somebody had tried to cut it away - a wasted effort, he said, as it would still continue to grow. We set off again down an overgrown path. One of our party decided that a stick was needed to defend himself from the wild animals because he felt sure that he was going to meet one in this dense wood: so he broke off a branch from a tree. "WCC" went ballistic and passionately held forth at great length about the need to care for nature and not to destroy living things. He was a little scary, after all that's what small boys did - and worse. We wended our way through the woods with our revered guide as far as the vicarage where there was an English strawberry tea waiting to greet us, courtesy, no doubt, of "WCC". We explored the beautiful and extensive grounds of the vicarage - they all were in those days - until we were called together for a detailed explanation of the workings of a large sundial. Then, fortified and rested, we proceeded through the Little Baddow village to the Heather Hills, a favourite local beauty spot where we enjoyed running up and rolling down the hills of heather and short grass - they were a wonder to us. At the top of one of the hills "WCC" showed us a large hole surrounded by trees: he told us about the battles fought in the area against the Danes, hence the name Danbury, and that the hole was probably a burial pit for the dead. Wow! How to fire a boy's imagination!

WCC Turner was a kindly, cultured and generous friend of Moulsham Junior Boys who added a valuable dimension to all our lives. In later years on my 21st birthday I was deeply touched to receive a congratulatory card from him saying how he was sure that I would do well in life. As encouraging as ever! In later years I led groups of youngsters along the same route that he had chosen and I would like to think that I had been as inspirational a leader with them as he had been with us.

Notes on the photographs

1. We printed an interesting article from Carolyn Gibbs (Butterworth), 1956-60, in the Autumn 2008 Newsletter, but did not have space to include this picture which she had sent with it. The faces Carolyn recalls are:

Front row Left to right: ? ? Jill Oakley, ? Lynette Steggles, ? Lynda, ? ? Doreen Woolley, me, ?

2nd row Left to right: Christine Thompson, Davina, ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? Janet Lindars

3rd Row Left to right: ? ? ? Ava Ungless, ? ? ? Celia Deakin, ? ? ? **4th Row** ?

If any of you can add further names, we will update the list in a future newsletter.

Carolyn writes: "The photograph here is a photo of Mrs Alty's class with Miss Pettet on right. I have indicated those names I recall, which is not very many. I was a good friend of Doreen Woolley, now



1. (above) Mrs Alty's 1960 class, with Headmistress Miss Pettet. Photo from Carolyn Gibbs (Butterworth)



2. (left) Barrie Stevens and classmates at Moulsham Junior Boys' 21st birthday pageant, 1959

3-5, (below left) John Escott's photos of the school trip to Belgium in 1966. From left, the aircraft at Ostend; (below) the Atomium in Brussels; (below,, centre) Moulsham pupils with Headmaster Mr Sturgeon outside their hotel in Ostend.



6. (below, right) 1956-60 pupil Jan Robinson (Wright) on her Harley Davidson bike in 2008





7. (left) Moulsham wartime staff, approx 1939/40

8. (below, left) Mrs Leverett's 2nd year class in 1974

9. (below, right) 1974 dancing display (photo by Mrs Leverett)

10. (bottom of page) Mr Davis' 4th year class in 1980-81 - photo from Andrew Crowe



[continued from page 9]

Bradford, and still exchange Christmas cards with her. She lives in Springfield. Christine Thompson was also a close friend but I have lost touch with her. I also remember playing with Ava Ungless and I think Celia Deakin. Ava lived in Navigation Road and I used to go to play with her sometimes. The Lindars family lived across the road from us and we played in one another's' gardens regularly. I can only remember a few names although the faces all look remarkably familiar!"

2. **Barrie Stevens**, 1959-61, who has written us some further memories on page 14, saw this photo in an album at the 70th anniversary reunion, and recognised himself and others from his class (the War Group') leading into the quadrangle to take part in the 21st birthday pageant organised in 1959 by teacher Harold Picken. The member of staff at the back of the queue is Mrs Lewis; immediately in front of her Paul Tozer, a temporary pupil from Liverpool living with relatives in Chelmsford; next to him is Barrie himself; and third from the left at the front is Tucker. In a recollection we printed in the Spring 2001 Newsletter, Barrie wrote: 'I can even now recall the ripple which ran through the assembled parents seated on the upper veranda when my performing group, clutching tin hats, gas masks and schoolbooks, emerged from the playground to the recorded sound of air raid sirens and marched off to the shelters! Looking back now, I realise that for parents with children at Moulsham in 1959, the war had been a mere 15 years before, and must have seemed like "yesterday". Some helmets and gas masks had been found in the school stores where they kept plimsolls and shorts!'

Barrie has also sent us some names from the picture printed in the Summer 2008 Newsletter, of 'The Jackdaw of Rheims', a play performed at the same pageant. He identified Paul Styles on the far left of the picture, possibly David Game (of Hillside Grove) second from the right, and , standing just to the right of the 'jackdaw', Osborne, David Hurd (who went up to the Seniors) and Paul Franklin. Barrie thinks the jackdaw was possibly played by ?David Martin.

3 - 5. Photos taken by **John Escott**, 1962-66, of a 1966 school trip to Belgium. In those days there was an airline service from Southend to Ostend, using the small car-ferry aircraft shown here at Ostend airport. The two photos in front of the hotel show various Moulsham lads who went on the visit, though it is difficult to identify individuals with any certainty.

Pupils who went on the Belgian visit were required to complete a Project beforehand, researching aspects of the geography, history, currency, and travel arrangements. Each completed task was to be handed to Headmaster Mr Sturgeon on a specified Monday. John has kept his project book, which includes calculations of the time a coach would take from Chelmsford, travelling at an average of 25mph, to Dover via London (4hrs 9 mins), Dover via Dartford (3hrs 11mins, toll 6/- or 30p in those days) and Southend Airport (less than one hour).

Over the course of what should have been a whole week, starting on 14th April 1966, the group was based in a hotel in Ostend, making day trips and shorter excursions to Bruges, Brussels, Middleburg in Holland, and along the Belgian coast to Dunkirk in France. In practice, the holiday was shortened by one day, as **Dave Sturgeon**, one of the Headmaster's children, reported in the Spring 2004 Newsletter: "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 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! "

6. This picture shows Jan Hammond Robinson (Wright) on her motorbike in 2008. Jan's recollections are on page 14.

7. This is the earliest picture we have of the staff from all five Moulsham Schools (Infants, Junior Boys, Junior Girls, Senior Boys, Senior Girls). It was probably taken in 1939 or 1940, certainly before the three Junior School masters Messrs Burt, Hymas and Picken were called up for armed service in autumn 1940. The names we think we can identify are as follows: [PTO]

Front row, left to right, Head Teachers: Mr Petchey (Junior Boys), Miss Denn (Infants), Mr Hutchinson (Senior Boys), Miss Brown (Senior Girls), Miss Rankin (Junior Girls)

Second row from front: 1. Miss Knight, 2. ? , 3. Miss Simmonds, 4. Miss Mance, 5. ? , 6. Miss Cook, 7. ? , 8. Miss Barton.

Immediately behind the second row: 12 remaining women teachers, from left: 1. ? , 2. ? , 3. ? , 4. ? , 5. ? , 6. Mrs Shuring, 7. ? , 8. ? , 9. Miss Alden, 10. Miss Eyden, 11. ? , 12. ?

Back two rows: 15 men teachers, from left: 1. Mr Gardiner, 2. ? Mr Morgan, 3. Mr Hymas, 4. Mr Picken, 5. Mr Burt, 6. Mr Hudson, 7. ? , 8. ? , 9. ? , 10. ? 11. Mr Clarke, 12. Mr Smith, 13. Mr Bradley, 14. Mr Barnes, 15. ?

If you recognise any further names, do please let us know. From the Junior Girls, these might include Miss G F Skilton, Miss Sawday, Miss Wright, Miss Huff and Miss Firmin. We think we have identified all the Junior Boys' School masters. From the Infants' School, we might expect to see Miss Arnold, Miss Longhurst, Miss I K Skilton and Miss Wood in addition to Miss Cook and Miss Knight whom we recognise. We look forward to hearing from you if you can help.

8 and 9. These are two of a set of photos taken by teacher Mrs Carol Leverett, who was at Moulsham Juniors in the mid-1970s. We will have the complete set on display at the Open Afternoon in May. Mrs Leverett has also kindly given us the copies of the school magazines from that period, and we have included extracts on page 18.

10. This picture is of Mr Davis' fourth year class, 1980-1981, sent to us by Andrew Crowe. We printed Andrew's photo of his 3rd year class in the Autumn 2008 Newsletter. The names he remembers from this picture are:

Back Row: Darren Shin, Tony Martin, Rosemary Wade, Denise Whitaker, Karen Foster, Michelle Taylor, Clare Green, Tony Mallard, Christopher Moss

Third Row: Mr Davis, ? , Stewart Newton, Sarah Chambers, Michelle Bishop, Carol Rye, Judith Croxon, Janina Rich, Stephen Carter, Alistair Piper

Second Row: ? , Jane Ardener, ? , Jason Hansel, Andrew Huxon, Andrew Crowe, ? , Justine Barnes, Laura Garvey.

Front Row: Andrew Reeves, Philip Cherry, Stuart Marshall. John Barker

Do let us know if you can add any of the missing names.

A First World War story from Headmaster Mr Petchey

Many of you will remember Mr Stanley Petchey, the first Headmaster of Moulsham Junior Boys' School, who served from 1938 until 1956. In his foreword to the Summer 1952 school magazine, he tells the following personal story, brought to mind by the 'generous giving of willing service' by his teaching staff at Moulsham:

Let me tell you an incident that happened to me years and years ago in a French village during the First World War:

It was winter. Snow nearly a foot deep covered the ground and the cruel east wind, like an inhuman monster baring its wicked teeth, whistled and laughed as though enjoying the discomfiture it caused. I was standing in the meagre shelter a little shop door afforded, praying without much hope that the Army truck which was to carry me several miles along the road to my destination would soon appear. On the opposite side of the way was a small, dismal looking stone building which I decided was the village school. Events soon proved this was so. The door of the little house beside the school was suddenly opened, revealing a short buxom woman of about fifty. She beckoned me across the road and explained in very broken English that she had seen the plight I was in, at the same time inviting me to

wait in the entrance till my vehicle came along. She disappeared into the back of the house, returning after a few minutes, bearing on a plate a steaming hot apple pie. While I stood there devouring, yes, devouring is the word, this welcome dish, she informed me that she was the village Schoolmistress, and became so animated when she learned that I, too, followed the same profession, that I found it no easy task to follow her English-French diction. When I could get in a word I assured her that her kind deed would never be forgotten, but she in her wisdom informed me that she needed no thanks, the expression on my face, she said, was reward enough.

The truck duly appeared, but it took away with it a much wiser being than it would have done had there been no Schoolmistress and no apple pie.

May I remind you once more how fortunate you are to possess such a fine body of teachers who are always giving you of their very best in and out of School.

Jan Hammond Robinson (Wright), 1956-60

I was at Moulsham Girls School in the 1950's. My name was Janice Wright, and I lived at 41 Vicarage Road, Chelmsford, with my brother Timothy and parents Peggy and Brian Wright. I now live in Santa Fe, New Mexico, USA and my brother Tim lives in Harpenden, Herts.

I've just found the school website, and I read the pages of the newsletter with great interest. I think that is me in the gym picture of 1957 hanging on to the gym horse. I was in the class with Enid Brown.

My best friend was Francesca Richardson, also in my class. She lived in Finchley Avenue. We both had dogs, I had a cairn terrier and she had her aunt's black labrador. We were always up the park (Oaklands). I've lost touch with Francesca - if anyone knows of her whereabouts please let me know. Last I heard she was married and living in Italy

Teachers and things I remember: Miss Pettet, art classes, netball, athletics and standing on the school stage singing during assembly with my knees shaking. Running for the Mid Essex team, and the Roger Bannister record, which was a big deal to me as a kid. I remember trying to draw a bicycle race, running around the school field, watching one of the girls who was very good at running, and throwing the rounders ball. I also remember standing in the corner of the classroom or outside the classroom door. Yes, I do remember the brick houses we made on the road by the playground. We got coloured chalk and water and with a toothbrush mixed the chalk and then painted the top of the bricks. We also made a special entrance with the bricks and colour customized our house. I played violin in the school orchestra - Mr Giddy was the teacher.

If I had my school days at Moulsham again, I am sure they would be absolutely wonderful, but it was the 1950s. I was full of fear and terror of everything and everyone at school every day. I wore glasses, had curly hair and the kids called me 'frizzy haired four eyes' and would wait outside the school to beat me up. One day a gang of boys beat me up after school and I dropped my violin and the case broke. I was so upset and didn't want to tell my parents what had happened. The boys then threw me into a load of stinging nettles and kicked me. I was absolutely lost for most of my school days and it wasn't until I was in my 30's I began to find myself.

The maths teacher Mrs Alty, who died from cancer, was amazing. She invited me for tea at her house and dressed me up for the school nativity play as a black king, and helped me most lunch times with my maths. As an adult I learned I am number dyslexic. Of course in those days I was just shouted at because I couldn't do my numbers. Miss Cook was our English teacher and she made a comment one time that I had improved in my essays more than anyone in the class that year. (Sorry Miss Cook, my Dad wrote it!). I failed the 11+, had an interview at Rainsford Girls School, and left at 14yrs to go and work for Mr Glover at Marconi's in the BBC department.

Anyway my life turned out absolutely wonderfully, I have travelled and scuba dived the world. I had a private practice for healing in Dublin, Ireland or many years. I have ridden motorcycles and generally had a great time and enjoyed excellent health. I have since formed my professional career around my gift of healing and you can go to the website www.crystalzia.com or go to Jan Hammond Robinson to see what I am up to. I ride a Harley Davidson Fat Boy here in New Mexico, walk by the river with my dogs, work in my private practice at home and forget I am on my way to being 60 next year. I am married to James and have two children from my previous marriage, Kelly and Tim, and one grandchild, Indie Rose, who is one year old. They all live in the UK in the North of England.

So there you have it. I'm delighted to have found Moulsham Girls' School again. Hi to anyone who knew me as "Janice Wright had a fright in the middle of the night, saw a ghost eating toast halfway up the lamp post". We used to skip to this in the playground. All the best to everyone, and congratulations to all who started the Moulsham link. Anyone who remembers me is welcome to contact me on the wall at Facebook.com.

Barrie Stevens, 1959-61, at the 70th anniversary reunion

Going back to Moulsham Junior School, after forty nine years, seemed like stepping back into the day before yesterday. Were you like me and felt anew the disciplinary power and supreme control that teachers enjoyed in those days? It must have been absorbed into the fabric of the building.

Entering what used to be Harold Picken's classroom, and which is now the library, I stood exactly where his desk had been. Behind him once stood the shelves from which I ran the class archaeological museum using odd finds and rejects from the Chelmsford and Essex Museum where I was Curator of the Saturday morning "Junior Museum Club." This was instigated and run by Assistant Curator Mr John Woodward who went on to run the steam railway museum at Swindon. He was mad about steam!

Another MJS pupil, Barry Tew, was also a member of the Junior Museum Club although his interest was geology. Barry and I were in "Joe" Lyons' class in the lower quadrangle although I cannot recall if it was the first or second room from the left. Mick Robinson was another pupil in the same class and still lives in Moulsham Drive as did Barry Tew. Barry was even then in 1959-61 very keen on radio technology coming to school with home-made transistor radios and qualifying at a very young age as a "Radio Ham". He went on to work with Marconi's and I think PYE in Cambridge but that was the destiny of many Chelmsford boys to whom Marconi's, Hoffman's and EEV were the equivalent of coalmines and shipyards to the communities of the North.

"Crafts" was a lesson in those days and in "Joe" Lyon's class we made puppets by moulding papier-mache on to plasticine heads. Mothers made the glove part of the puppet. My puppet was entirely weird! It was a sort of a dog in a MacGregor tartan! Maybe I was avant-garde because similar creations later appeared on "Dr. Who"! The Rupert Annual of the day contained a story wherein Rupert made a paper-snapper out of origami-like foldings in order to catch some insect or other escaped from the home of the Mad Professor/Inventor. Remember? Brock Badger, Edward Trunk the elephant, Pug and Algy Pig? Such paper folding produced a shark-like device that opened and shut its mouth but it was really an extension of those folding triangular shaped paper hats we used to make from newspaper. I made one from paper torn from my exercise book, went up to "Joe" Lyons at his desk and pecked his nose with it. He was not pleased and I got two sets of lines one of which was for damaging school property to wit one exercise book.

Whatever! "Joe" Lyons gave me a fair school report for the Half Year Ending 31st January 1960 and I have it before me as I write: "Barrie has worked hard and made good progress." Did we really only do

the "Three R's"? I scored Reading 94: Written English 64: Mental Arithmetic 66: (Now impossible!): Written Arithmetic 85: Writing 50: Spelling 86.

Moulsham Junior Boys also put on plays or pantomimes at Christmas and I recall "Joe" Lyons dressed in a long brown coat painting what then seemed to me to be huge scenery in the form of a "flat" covering the entire back of the stage. Or was it painted on the wall itself? I think not but where did they get such an object from?" He painted an enormous ""Old Woman Who Lived in a Shoe" in colour in the manner of Rolf Harris using a tin, brushes and the same ""Dryad" school issue powder paint as we used in class. And me, I was impressed! However, I cannot recall the production! I think the ""flat" may even have had a door cut into it which indicates a very ambitious production for the school at that time. Does anyone recall the Mums making costumes?

School assemblies were of a religious nature in those days and each class had to provide a daily reader of scripture on a week by week basis. I was selected and trained by "Joe" Lyons and then just mumbled the text on the day much to his agony and the school hall soon began to get restless. The Headmaster Tom Sturgeon then called everyone to order during my reading. My public delivery has not improved although I am OK in a radio studio doing live broadcasts into a microphone.

Did anyone see those vaulting horses and benches in the hall? I swear that those are the same items of gymnastic and PE equipment we had in the late 1950s and which had probably been in the school since brand new in 1938. I expect the tops have been re-covered with new suede but to me they looked just as they did in 1959 when the hall and the grassy area of the quadrangle were both used for PT.

Back to the class-room of the late Harold Picken. He used to tell us that, "When I was your age I had stomach muscles like those radiators over there!" Well, I do not know what happened to Mr. Picken's stomach muscles over time but could swear that the room has the self-same radiators. And do you know what? I could almost believe that they have not been painted since my day, as to me they seem to bear the same scratches and carvings as in 1960-61!

Finally, the personal influence of MJS Headmaster the late Tom Sturgeon did not end upon the occasion of my leaving his care in 1961. Twenty six years later in 1987, I sat with him for advice in his then capacity as a voluntary worker with Chelmsford Citizens' Advice Bureau. As one might expect. I remembered him in vivid detail but he had no recollection of me.

Old school magazines; can you help, please?

Over the past 10 years, thanks to Newsletter readers, we have built a useful collection of Moulsham school magazines, starting with the very first issue of the Junior Boys' School magazine, which was on sale at the school's first Open Day in July 1939. There are a number of gaps in our collection, though, and if any of you have copies of the missing issues, we would be very pleased to hear from you.

The Junior Girls' School did not, as far as we know, produce any school magazines. The Boys' School issues we would like to track down and copy for the archive include: 1940, December 1945 and possibly more than one issue in each of 1946 and 1947 (our July 1947 copy calls itself Vol. III no.3.) We know that there were no magazines between 1941 and December 1945 due to wartime restrictions. We already have Summer issues for each year from 1948 - 1957, but nothing thereafter until 1963, for which we have both a Summer and an Autumn issue. Then we have another gap from 1964 to 1970.

From 1971, the first of the combined Moulsham Junior School magazines, entitled Mumbo Jumbo Sapient (see page 18), we think there were two or three issues a year. We have copies from Summer and Autumn 1971, Spring '73, Summer '74 and unspecified terms in 1978 and '79. Do please get in touch if you have any of the missing issues, or know of any magazines in the 1980s or later.

Martin Robb, 1963-67

I've just discovered the Moulsham Junior School website, and the 'past pupils' newsletter. I have very fond memories of my time at Moulsham Juniors - I was in the same class as Richard Geer, who seems to be one of your regular correspondents, and I'm in the photo of the school orchestra, 1966, that featured in the Autumn 2007 newsletter. It was wonderful to browse through the newsletters and see photos of my old teachers - including Mrs Donovan, Mr Hodgson and Mr Picken - they all look rather younger than I remember! It was also good to see the 1950s photo of teachers in the infants - my first ever teacher was Mrs Palmer, and many of my friends were in Mrs Rodd's class. It was sad to read that both of them died of cancer.

I moved up to Moulsham Junior Boys' School from the Infants' in 1963. I remember my first day, standing in a huddle in the foyer outside Mr Sturgeon's office - 'Snudge' seemed quite intimidating after the kindly female teachers in the infants! I started off in Miss Larkin's class (she later became Mrs. Bartlett). She was a young teacher who had been working in Canada and one of our projects was to help plant a maple tree on the lawn outside our corner classroom (facing the drive) - I wonder if it's still there? In the second year I was in Mr Hodgson's class, and remember him walking into the classroom on Monday mornings and announcing 'Back page, number 1!' to signal the start of our weekly mental arithmetic test. He was also rumoured to have written the school song - 'Work and be happy' - which I can still recite by heart. In the third year, Mrs. Donovan was my teacher, and I have fond memories of her reading 'The Hobbit' to us. Finally, I was in '4A' - taught by Mr. Picken - where the seating was arranged according to our most recent test results, with the 'top table' along the back and the bottom group nearest the teacher's desk. I never made it above Table 2, - but I was one of 6 that year who passed the 11 plus and went on to KEGS.

Other memories? Daily assemblies in the hall, strictly according to the Church of England service book - 'Wednesday's second service', Mr. Sturgeon would announce, with the choir ranged behind him and the orchestra (mostly recorders) below. (I rose to be vice orchestra leader - just as I was a vice table leader for school dinners - I always seemed to come second at things!). The house flags hung on the pole by the stage, with ours - the sorry brown flag of Wrens - rarely beating those of Kingfisher, Robins or Yellowhammers (very Harry Potter!). Then there was country dancing - which, in an all boys' school, meant half of us having to dress as girls for the annual summer pageant. And the playground, where we played 'chipper chopper', trespassed into the air raid shelters, and looked longingly over the fence to the forbidden land of the girls' school.

After KEGS, I studied at Cambridge and Manchester universities, then worked for some years in adult and community education before joining the Open University, where I'm currently a senior lecturer. I'm married with two teenage children of my own, and live in Hitchin, Hertfordshire. Both of my younger brothers also attended Moulsham Junior Boys' School, and I'll pass on your website address to them.

On a slightly different topic: do you know if anyone connected with the school has explored the history of the school site? I did some research some time ago on the history of Moulsham...and began to wonder if the school had been built on the site of the old Moulsham Hall, which was demolished in the 1800s, but which had been quite a grand house, visited in its time by royalty, etc. Do you know if anyone has any photos of the site before the school was built, - or of the school before the estate was built? [Editor's note: we have already been in touch with one or two past pupils about this request, but would be very interested to hear from anyone else who may have information about the site of Moulsham Hall]

Mumbo Jumbo Sapient, 1970s: school trip to France in 1971

Very many thanks to former Moulsham Junior teacher Mrs Carol Leverett, who we were pleased to meet at our two reunions last year, for letting us have her copies of the school magazine from the early 1970s. These provide another useful source of information about school life, as well as entertaining pieces of written work by the pupils at that time. The title of the magazine, Mumbo Jumbo Sapient, using the school's initials MJS, is reported as being devised by top year pupil and Buckingham House Captain Stuart Ager. It is loosely translated as 'wise rubbish'. The magazines are undated, but there seem to have been two issues each year, at Christmas and in the summer.

In the summer 1971 edition of Mumbo Jumbo Sapient, we were delighted to find a report by the same Stuart Ager on the Fourth Year's [year 6's] school trip to France in April 1971, which was pictured in our Autumn 2008 Newsletter. The following extracts from Stuart's report describe some of the highlights of the trip:

'On Friday 2nd April we set off for France. We left at 0930hrs. We travelled by coach, train and hovercraft via Charing Cross, Dover, Calais, Boulogne and Paris. We arrived at Le Montcel [the boarding school in Jouy where they were staying] at 2130hrs, where a meal was awaiting our arrival.

On Saturday afternoon we went to Versailles, which is really quite a boring town. We went there by train, and came back at 5.20pm. After dinner we played until bedtime.

On Sunday morning we walked round the village. In the afternoon we had a coach tour of Paris. On this tour we saw the Pantheon, Eiffel Tower, Notre Dame, and Montmartre. At the top of the hill was a beautiful church and from here you could see the whole of Paris.

On Monday we went to Paris by train. We went for a trip on the Seine, and had lunch on the boat. When we got off the boat, we walked to the Eiffel Tower, and a party went up in the lift. It was very interesting.

Tuesday morning was free, but in the afternoon we went to Versailles Palace, which has 2,000 rooms. The Palace was built by Louis XIV. Some of the rooms were the Gallery of Mirrors, Room of Peace, Room of War, the rooms of Mars, Apollo and Mercury. The best room was the King's Bedroom, which looked over his stables and Versailles. We then went out into the huge gardens and were allowed half an hour to look round.

Wednesday morning was also free, and in the afternoon the party went to Paris to see a park called the Jardin d'Acclimation. To get to the park we travelled on a small train. This was an enjoyable afternoon.

On Thursday we went to Fontainebleau by coach. This was a very long journey. On the way we stopped in a famous village where Robert Louis Stevenson wrote some of his books. Later we stopped in a forest and had lunch. After this we were allowed to walk round the volcanic rocks which are scattered in the huge forest.

In the Palace at Fontainebleau were many different rooms, all very interesting. In these rooms were many interesting pieces of furniture, and in one room 3,000 volumes of books were kept. Then we went outside to the pond which contains large carp.

On Friday we went to Paris. We arrived at Montparnasse at ten past eleven. We walked to a French restaurant where we had lunch, and after lunch we bought our presents. We then walked on to the Louvre, where we saw many marvellous paintings, the Mona Lisa among them.

On Saturday we left for home. The crossing on the hovercraft was very unpleasant as it was very rough. We were all pleased when we landed at Dover and even more pleased to see our coach waiting for us at Charing Cross.

I would like to thank Mr and Mrs Sturgeon, Mrs Donovan and Miss Bolden for coming with us on such an enjoyable visit.'

School songs from the 1970s and today

Over the years, many of you have told us you remember singing the original Moulsham Junior Boys' School song, written in 1942 by teacher Mr V Hodgson to a tune by music master Mr W W Gardiner. Its memorable refrain runs:

'Moulsham for ever, and Moulsham again
Resound 'till the rafters ring',

We printed the words in full in the first ever Newsletter, Autumn 1999, and again last year in the Summer 2008 issue.

Pupils from a more recent era may recall the 1972 school song, which has words and music by teacher Mr R A Peachey. This was written soon after the Boys' and Girls' Schools amalgamated to form the present day Moulsham Junior School. The instruction at the top of the music urges pupils to sing "with enthusiasm"! The words are:

"Now let us join our voices in a cheerful song
About the Moulsham School to which we all belong:
The buildings and the playing fields, the gardens and the lawns,
The roses with their glowing petals and their thorns;
The halls in which we meet to sing our hymns and pray,
The rooms in which we occupy ourselves each day;
The river that runs past us - not the Chelmer in full flood,
But the traffic flowing fast along the A12 road.

All this is but the setting for our work and play;
The efforts that we all should make from day to day
To study in the classroom or to play a zestful game -
To work and to be happy is our constant aim.
We think of all the children who have gone before us here
And built a fine tradition for us year by year.
We'll follow their example, and make this our foremost rule:
To be a credit to our Moulsham Junior School."

'The Chelmer in full flood' has been an impressive spectacle again this February, as local readers will know. But Princes Road is no longer 'the A12 road'. It can get very busy, especially at 'school run' times, but most of the heavy traffic now flows fast instead on the new A12 by-pass, some miles out of the town centre. In 1972, we notice that 'to work and to be happy is our constant aim', and was presumably still the school's motto. In recent years, 'Work and be happy' was replaced by the motto 'Each Working For All', where the initial letters corresponded to the names of the four Houses: Earth, Water, Fire and Air. The very latest motto, following in very much the same spirit as the earlier versions, is: 'Sharing, supporting, striving, succeeding'.

Thank you to Jacqui Tyler in the school office, who has now given us the words of the very latest school song, 'We are the children of Moulsham School'. It has a very strong rhythm and distinctively modern style, and we are sure it too is sung 'with enthusiasm'. Jacqui recalls that it has been in use for quite some time, but doesn't know who wrote the words or music. If anyone can fill us in on this, we would be interested to hear from you.

MOULSHAM SCHOOL SONG

Give it 1, give it 2, give it 1-2-3.
Give it 1, give it 2, give it 1-2-3.
... (repeat)

We are the children of Moulsham School,
We take a pride in the things that we do,
Learning together and having fun,
Who's for a good day - every-one.

Give it 1, give it 2, give it 1-2-3.
Give it 1, give it 2, give it 1-2-3.

*Give it all you got, 'cos you've really got a lot,
Give it heart give it mind give it soul don't stop,
Give it all you got, 'cos you've really got a lot,
Give it heart give it mind give it soul don't stop,*

We are the children of Moulsham School,
.... (etc)

*Everyone is special everybody has gifts,
So we're gonna work together,
And we're gonna learn to give,
Everyone is special everybody has gifts,
So we're gonna work together,
And we're gonna learn to give.*

Give it 1, give it 2, give it 1-2-3.
Give it 1, give it 2, give it 1-2-3.

Give it all you got, ... (etc)

Everyone is special everybody has gifts, ... (etc)

Give it 1, give it 2, give it 1-2-3.
Give it 1, give it 2, give it 1-2-3.

We are the children of Moulsham School,
We take a pride in the things that we do,
Learning together and having fun,
Who's for a good day - HANDS UP.

News in brief

From 1938 pupil **Joan Wade (Lamb)**: 'I feel I must write to thank you and your colleagues for organising such an enjoyable evening on 26th September. Although it was disappointing that none of my particular group were present it was, nevertheless, worth making the long journey and to see the many changes that have taken place and to look at the archive photos, which brought back so many memories. I feel pleased that I was able to be included in the 70th anniversary celebrations, having been 'in at the beginning'.

Gus Gowers, 1941-45, was also at the special reunion on 26th September, and writes: 'It was good to enjoy the company of so many fellow Moulsham scholars and to talk over some of our exploits from the war years'

Jim Whybrow, 1944-48, has written to us as follows: I would just like to say how much I enjoyed the 70th Anniversary Reunion. A few days before the Reunion, I had a big surprise - **Melvyn Rawlingson** phoned me, down here in Devon, direct from Australia! We had a good long chat. We neither of us knew what we had in common at that time, but we were good friends at school. I used to go to his house in Moulsham Drive on my way home from school. His mother used to feed me home-made cake - perhaps that was the attraction! Also, in the post, Melvyn sent me one of his CDs. Move over, Rolf Harris! After that, to meet him at and his wife Gai at the Reunion was really enjoyable. He seems to have made a good life in 'Skippy Land'. It was also nice to see **Ivy and Christine Jolly** again. The Jolly family were our neighbours in Baker Street during the Second World War period. They showed me some photographs of our houses in Baker Street, which were demolished after the war. They brought back some interesting memories. It was good to see other faces I hadn't seen for a very long time. Perhaps we can hold another Reunion for 100 years? Why not - I'll only be 99!

Good to have news from **Janet Crafer**, 1940s, who writes: 'My husband & I emigrated to New Zealand in December 2007. After it became evident that neither of our two daughters would be returning "home" we decided to try to move to New Zealand to be nearer to them. Our eldest daughter Sue, (physiotherapist/professional sailor) lives with her Aussie husband, Andrew, in Sydney & Angie lives in Auckland with her partner Bruce. Angie now has her own Transportation Specialists business. We decided to move to Auckland as the weather is better for my husband's heart problems. It was a huge upheaval to pack up a house after 40 years and to sell the house at the start of the "credit crunch" but we finally made it with the help of our daughter Angie & Bruce & lots of friends & arrived here on the 11th December 2007. It took us 3 months to find a house that we both liked, although it is much larger than we had planned to have, but it is in a very nice area of Auckland called the North Shore City part of the East Coast Bays. We wanted a sea view as we had had a sea view in Leigh -on-Sea. Here we have a magnificent view of the Hauraki Gulf (Pacific Ocean). We can & do spend many hours watching the shipping in & out of Auckland & all the sailing & the ever changing colour & moods of the sea.'

We are settling well into New Zealand life, both playing outdoor Bowls, & Bridge at a very friendly club & I am playing tennis & walking. There are so many lovely walks on the beautiful beaches & in the bush close to us. Although we are missing our friends back in the UK, our greatest joy is being able to see our daughter Angie & Bruce at least once a week. It is not so easy to see Sue & Andrew but we have been over to Sydney twice already & they came for our house warming party in April!!

We were very sorry to hear from **Sue Kemp (Hayden)**, 1951-55 that she was unable to attend the September reunion because of an extremely painful back condition. She is waiting for major back surgery, but hopes to see us again this year. Our very best wishes to Sue for a speedy recovery.

Christine Rogers (Gentry), 1952-56, would love to trace her former schoolmate Lorraine Matt, and asks if anyone has any news of her: 'She lived for a while in Baddow Road, with a Mr and Mrs Bruce, Mrs. Billings, and Iris Fountain. She came from Dr. Barnardo's, and we were great friends while she was there. I would love to know what became of her.' Do let us know if you can help. Christine kindly scanned in for us some school pictures which **Jean Strong (Everett)**, 1953-57, brought to the September reunion, which we will have on display at the Open Afternoon - many thanks for that.

Mrs **Betty Bilic**, who often comes to our reunions, writes that the Past Pupils' Newsletters are 'so interesting to read. I was in the senior school, and often recognise many of the past pupils. It is so nice to keep in touch'.

Past pupil and children's author **Kes Gray**, 1968-72, emailed us to say : "Hello everyone, I'm writing to let you know that my latest picture book, Nuddy Ned is now published and available to buy (2000 copies only) from my website www.fizzbombbooks.co.uk If you could pass the word on to parents and teachers alike, I would be grateful. I will of course sign all copies on request. Happy New Year to you all. Keep your clothes on. (It's far too cold to copy Ned at moment!)

Another recent contact from the 1970s is **Michael Ellis**, 1978-9, who writes: "It is a real joy to go through the Moulsham website and it does give me a tear of nostalgia looking back over my childhood. I attended Moulsham Infant School for 2 years approx, 1976-1978, and then on to Moulsham Juniors for one year before my family moved north to Yorkshire. It's hard to believe its now 30 years. My teachers at the Infant School were Mrs Rodd and Mrs Dixon, with the head mistress Mrs Sturgeon. I then moved on to the Junior School where my teacher was a Mr Farmer. The head master was Mr Sturgeon -- not the type of guy you wanted to get on the wrong side of, as I found out on a couple of occasions ! I only wish my mum had kept the class photos so I could forward them onto you. Anyway I look forward to the next instalment of the newsletter. Best wishes for 2009"

Obituaries

We were sorry to hear from Christine Pudney (Jolly) that her friend **Joyce Porter**, one of the first day pupils from 1938, died in December 2008. Christine and her two sisters attended the funeral, as they had known Joyce since the two families lived in Widford many years ago. Both Joyce and her sister Mrs Joan Keyes, another 1938 pupil, have attended our reunions for past pupils in recent years. We send our sincere condolences to Joyce's family and friends.

Thank you to Peter Charles Smith for letting us know that his school friend **Arthur Cornell**, who features on a class photo from 1938/9, died in mid-January 2009. Arthur shared with Peter a keen interest in football, which they played together as children, and was known to be a 'walking encyclopaedia' of the game. Peter tells us that Arthur also very much enjoyed reading the past pupils' newsletters with all the news of his Moulsham classmates.

School website

Copies of this and earlier issues of the newsletter, containing memories and photos from many other former members of Moulsham Junior School, are on the past pupils' page of the school website: www.moulsham-jun.essex.sch.uk/index.htm Well worth a look.

We have very few paper copies of the earliest Newsletters, but can send copies by email from the first issue in Autumn 1999. You will probably need broadband to receive these, as those with photographs are rather bulky. Requests to kathleen.boot@tiscali.co.uk

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.

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