

Past Pupils' Newsletter

Summer 2005

Vol 7 no 2

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SUMMER SUNS ARE GLOWING

Welcome to the Summer 2005 Newsletter. First, our congratulations to Mr Kemp and his staff for the glowing Ofsted report. The school inspectors praised both the leadership and the teaching, and concluded that Moulsham Junior School "is a **good** school that is very well regarded by the pupils, the parents and the local community. Pupils behave very well and have very positive attitudes to learning. The teaching is good overall and much is very good. Standards in year 6 are average and pupils of all capabilities achieve well. The school develops pupils' personal qualities very well by raising their self-confidence and valuing them as individuals." Moulsham Junior School is the largest junior school in Essex, and the school is understandably delighted with the report. For past pupils, it is truly pleasing that the traditionally high standards of the school remain so visible, and that its character is still very recognisable from 'our' days.

Open Afternoon

Once again we had a record attendance and a splendid afternoon at the reunion for past pupils on Saturday 14th May. A short report is on pages 12 and 13. Thank you to everyone who helped make the occasion so enjoyable, including Cathy Bendall and her PTA team for serving the teas; the present pupils who turned out to provide the dancing displays; the noble band of volunteers helping set up and dismantle the photo collection; Brian Emmett on the reception desk; Pat Rushbrook (Davis) for bringing her impressive collection of memorabilia, and all of you who travelled from far and wide to join in the fun. A special thank you to Head Teacher Les Kemp for making these annual reunions possible, and for all the encouragement and enthusiasm for the termly Newsletters.

This Newsletter

As an experiment this time, we have included one sheet of photos on glossy paper (pages 8 and 9), to provide sharper definition and detail. Our thanks to all of you who sent in letters, articles, news and photos. We are especially pleased to have two photos from Peter Turrall, reproduced on page 8, of Miss Rankin, the first Headmistress of Moulsham Junior Girls' School, together with Miss Wood and Miss Knight, who were among the first teachers at Moulsham Infants. Our next issue, the Autumn Newsletter, will once again be an all-glossy professionally printed edition, similar to last autumn's 5th anniversary issue. So do please search your attics, albums and shoe-boxes for any new pictures we can include. Written contributions are of course also very welcome, as always. All can be sent to Kathleen Boot at 1A Vicarage Road, Chelmsford, CM2 9PG, or emailed to kathleen.boot@virgin.net

Subscriptions

Several people have asked me recently whether there is a fixed subscription for the Past Pupils' Newsletter. The answer is no - the bureaucracy involved in collecting, acknowledging and keeping accounts of subscriptions would be too time-consuming for the office staff (or indeed ourselves if we took it on). So the newsletters are sent out free of charge, and we leave it to the generosity of any individual recipients who care to make a donation to help cover production costs and postage. Many of you very kindly made such donations at the Open Afternoon. If others of you wish to send a contribution, we generally suggest about £3 per year, cheques payable to Moulsham Junior School, please, and sent to the Head Teacher, Mr L R Kemp at Moulsham Junior School, Princes Road, Chelmsford, Essex CM2 9DG. Thank you.

Very best wishes to you all from Hilary Balm (Dye) and myself. Happy reading!

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

NOTES FROM THE HEAD TEACHER, MR LES KEMP

Jamie Oliver's recent television series about school meals has certainly brought to the fore this important topic. I am trying to be careful and not look back through rose tinted glasses, but the meals on offer when I started teaching seemed to be much superior to that usually on offer now. I spent my first term of teaching in digs in Colchester. My school lunch was my main, and sometimes my only meal. The ingredients were often locally sourced and seasonal. Local people would donate surplus produce and so we did have runner beans or cabbage frequently when they were in season but the taste was wonderful. Our cook used to arrive in school with baskets of apples from her own trees and pies and crumbles with wonderful custard were my favourite puddings. Much to the horror of all five of my own children, liver and bacon is a personal favourite and this did appear on the school menu about once a month but roasts, stews, cheese pie and cold meat salad also featured more frequently. Most children had a school lunch and, as a young teacher, I welcomed doing dinner duty twice a week because this entitled me to two free meals. The half hour duty at one of the two lunch sittings still gave me nearly an hour to collect a cup of tea then mark books or take the football team for an additional practise or prepare for an afternoon lesson.

I can't remember children bringing sandwiches, but many more children went home for lunch and then tried to slip back early to play football. In the summer, fold up dinner tables were brought outside and we ate in the playground. In the winter, the older you were the further away from the coke fire you were sat, in a prefabricated dining room that was finally condemned many years after it should have been. The children used to say that currants in the pudding were insects dropping from the ceiling.

I also taught for a short time at a school where meals were brought in from another school. These arrived at 11.30 am in thick metal drums and I have this memory of very fatty roast lamb and everything being tepid. These meals contrasted sharply with the wonderful meals served at the school in Witham where I was a Deputy Headteacher. Every teacher stayed to lunch. I was twenty-seven at the time, and the school cook was several years younger than me. She came from a family of school cooks and she was outstanding. I remember the kitchen being decorated with Elton John posters, someone who I had never heard of. Christmas lunch saw a meal for children and adults that represented a feeling of good cheer. Her Christmas pudding, made to her granny's recipe, was talked about weeks after.

Most of our children now bring sandwiches, and only one of our children, for religious reasons, goes home every day. We need to look over the Channel to France, Spain and Italy to see what we should be doing about school meals. Our partner schools in Anzio and Annonay both serve a three course lunch consisting of a soup or pasta starter, a main course of cold meat and salad, and fruit to finish. All children not going home have a school lunch. Jamie Oliver did a wonderful job in demonstrating the poor food being served to children in our schools. I hope the next time school meals are a front page story it is because schools have to extend the lunch hour to accommodate the large numbers of children wanting to have a three course school lunch.

SCHOOL DINNERS AT MOULSHAM JUNIORS

Perhaps Mr Kemp's thoughts above on school dinners remind you of lunches in the canteen over the road next to the Infants' School? Were you a child of the mince, junket and semolina days? Or were menus more adventurous in your time at school? Do write and tell us your experience of school dinners, and your favourite and least favourite meals.

BERT BEARMAN, 1938-41: MOULSHAM SENIOR SCHOOL

I have vivid memories of the opening of the Moulsham Schools in 1938. My brother **Bob Bearman** and I attended Trinity Road school; he is 13 months younger than me. Pre summer 1938, our parents received a letter from the school telling them that, after the summer holiday, I was to attend Moulsham Senior School. We then requested that, as my brother and I were to be parted, could he attend Moulsham Juniors? The request was granted. The question then arose "How do we get there?", as we lived at Brook End, in Springfield. The answer from the Council was "You walk!".

Springfield School Seniors were also notified that they were to attend Moulsham Senior School. Some of the pupils lived in the wilds of Springfield and in the White Hart area - they were also told to walk to school.irate parents collectively protested that, as there was no transport, we were not going to Moulsham School. We went on STRIKE! It was a long summer that year - it lasted 16 weeks. Eventually it was resolved and we were all given season tickets to travel on the service buses. The route to school involved a long walk to a bus stop near the White Hart, Springfield, a bus to Chelmsford High Street, then another bus to Finchley Avenue from where we walked to school. Many times we were late, as the buses were full. Going home was the same in reverse. I remember one family given bikes by the Council, so that they could ride to Springfield and then catch the bus.

Every day was an adventure. One morning, June 19th 1940, the traffic in Springfield Road was impeded by the wreckage of a German bomber that had been shot down during the night. Debris was across the road and still smouldering with the main part of wreckage in the Bishop's garden. My memories on arriving at the school on the first day were the newness of it; everything was brand new, it smelt new, some of the teachers were new to me. The Headmaster of the Juniors was Mr Petchey, previously he was teaching the top class at Trinity Road School.

My grandchildren have asked me "What were your school dinners like?" The answer is "We didn't have any". We used to sit on the hot water pipes in the cloakroom, eating our sandwiches with very little in them during the war. They were wrapped in paper, not the luxury of polythene, as it had not been invented. Our drink was cold water from the fountain in the playground.

I left school at the age of 14 on a Friday in April 1941 and on the next Monday started work at Marconi's. I was there for 49 years, retiring early, at the age of 63. My brother, **Bob**, emigrated to Australia over 40 years ago and lives near Sydney. My sister, **Joy**, who is 14 years younger than me, also attended Trinity Road School and then went on to Moulsham Senior School. She married a U.S. serviceman and now lives in North Carolina. When she attended Moulsham Seniors, she travelled from Brook End in a taxi provided by the Council. It seems that walking to the bus was too far!

My son Derek and daughter Jane were both at Moulsham in the 1960s, from the Infants' School right through to the Seniors.

A MESSAGE TO COMPUTER BUFFS

Just a reminder that current and recent copies of the Moulsham Junior School Past Pupils' Newsletter can be read on, and/or downloaded from, the school website: moulshamjuniorschool.org.uk
We are also glad to receive letters and articles by email wherever possible, addressed to kathleen.boot@virgin.net This helps cut down time spent typing up from manuscript. Photographs can be sent by email too, if you are able to reduce them to jpeg format with a reasonably small number of bytes. If you don't like computers, don't worry - we love getting letters by post too.

MARCUS KNIGHT, 1938; THE FIRST MOULSHAM BOYS' SCHOOL MAGAZINE

Many thanks to Marcus Knight, who has sent us his copy of the first ever Boys' School Magazine for the archive. Marcus writes: "I well remember Mr Hymas printing this, using a typed wax stencil and a hand driven Gestetner duplicator. The ink had a wonderful aroma, and the duplicator gave him lots of problems! I have also found my autograph book, which has the signatures of R G Hymas, A S Burt, W G Gardiner, M J Picken, G B R Hudson, G L French and of course S W Petchey, who wrote:

"In essentials, unity.

In non-essentials, liberty.

In all things, charity.

Emerson. "

As it happens, this first edition of the magazine contains a composition by Bert Bearman's brother Robert (mentioned on page 4 above) on his pets. Pets feature regularly in the various editions of the school magazines we have collected from several decades. Robert's well observed descriptions will no doubt ring a bell with many readers - I wonder if canaries are still as popular today?

My Pets, by Robert Bearman

"I have a dog at home whose name is Betty. She always comes to the gate to meet me coming home from school. She always does the tricks I tell her to do. She sits on her hind legs for her food. If someone knocks at the door she barks but does not bite them. She is very faithful. If I tell her to get close to my heels she does it instantly. She is a cross between a Spaniel and a Beagle..

"I also have a cat, and a very nice cat it is. Its name is Cinders because when it was a kitten it used to get under the fireplace and play with the cinders. The cat and dog are very friendly because they sleep on the mat together. They are not very friendly when they eat off the same dish. The cat loves to get up on my shoulder at night-time. Whenever I go up the garden and Betty is behind me, then the cat follows the dog and me.

"I have also got a canary named Tim. When the sun is shining I hang the cage outside on the wall. About Spring-time my brother and I build a big cage so that Tim can build its nest and lay its eggs. About every two days I clean the cage out. One night we let the canary out of the cage and it settled on the cat's back and went to sleep."

MRS PARKER REMEMBERS INFANTS TEACHER MRS MARGOT HERRIES (NEE GODFREY)

Our Spring Newsletter contained an obituary of much-loved Moulsham Infants' teacher Mrs Margot Herries (Miss Godfrey). In response, one of her colleagues, Mrs Brenda Parker has written as follows:

"My family moved to Chelmsford in August 1957. In 1959, I taught in Moulsham Infants' School for two terms in the classroom next to Mrs Herries, who was then Deputy Head. My younger daughter Christine, aged 6, was in Mrs Herries' class during the Summer Term and really benefited from her expert care and tuition. At that time, the whole school had a panoramic photograph taken, which I enclose with the names of the teachers.

"Open day was during the Summer term and Mrs Herries' display of her children's craft work was very eye catching.

"We are sorry to learn of her death in January this year, but are sure she will be remembered with affection by past pupils and staff."

Thank you to Mrs Parker for her letter. We will print part of the 1959 panoramic photo and the names of the staff in the Autumn Newsletter. If others of you have memories of Mrs Herries (Miss Godfrey) you would like to share, do please send them to us.

WIDFORD REMEMBERED: PETER TURRALL'S NEW BOOK

Those of you who lived in Widford, or remember it from your schooldays, will be interested to hear of Peter Turrall's latest compilation of recollections and photos. 'Widford Remembered' is based on interviews and transcripts of tapes, as well as Peter's own very detailed memories of the pre-Second World War days of the quiet village in which he lived. Among the other contributors are Moulsham past pupils Mary Larrett and Reg Baldwin.

Peter's book was written in response to a request by the Essex Record Office to record local histories for posterity. Along with the evocative descriptions, memories and information, there is a good collection of old photos, including the two reproduced on page 8 of this Newsletter, showing Miss Rankin, Miss Wood and Miss Knight, who until 1938 were teachers at the Widford Church of England School. As Peter records in the book:

"Situated behind the Church, in a single storey building, this was the place where all children from the village attended until it closed just before the start of the Second World War in 1938. . . . The school catered for pupils from the age of five up until fourteen, when they left to pursue their chosen careers. After 1938, teachers and pupils went to the newly opened Moulsham School on Princes Road, approximately half a mile from the village. [Widford] school had about 40 pupils in either Infants, Juniors or Senior classes. The Juniors were called "Intermediates". The basic elements of teaching were undertaken of sums, mental arithmetic and reading. More detailed subjects like Nature Study and Cooking were touched upon, but the school was limited in its ability to cover these subjects. It was a rude awakening for pupils after they left Widford to enter the very modern Moulsham Schools". Miss Rankin became Headmistress of the new Moulsham Junior Girls' School, serving from 1938 to 1949. Miss Wood and Miss Knight taught at Moulsham Infants. Peter recalls in his book that Miss Rankin continued to live in Widford until her death in the late 1960s, and is buried in Widford Churchyard.

Among the many Widford characters mentioned in Peter's book are organist and choirmaster William Walter Gardiner, nicknamed "Daddy", who taught for many years at the new Moulsham Junior Boys' School, and the wartime Special Constable PC Frank Larrett, father of past Moulsham pupils Mary, Ruth and Jean. Of PC Larrett, Peter recalls:

"Larry, as the boys called him, did not have a car, but rode around the village on his bicycle. . . . He was an important man, and a lot of people were pleased to see him, particularly with the possibility of paratroopers and spies being dropped in the area by German aeroplanes. The boys were not so pleased to see him on occasions, as he reprimanded them for antics like bird nesting, scrumping and tying string to door knockers. The latter was a favourite trick. String was tied to the knocker of one door and then trailed across the road to another door opposite.. As soon as one of the owners opened a door, the door opposite was knocked. It took some time before the owners realised nobody was there, especially on dark nights. Larry caught the boys doing this many times and gave them a real wiggling.

One day a gang of boys, including the author, decided to scrump apples and pears from the orchard of the Village squire. Three boys hopped over the fence and up the trees, whilst two of us kept watch at front and back. Larry had seen us in the front, and crept up behind before scaring us and telling us to clear off. Unfortunately he also got the boys who were up the trees and gave them a telling off. But he did not let on to the owners of the orchard.

Larry must have been a brave man because in the First World War he won the Military Medal, a very high honour for a soldier."

Chapter Five of Peter's book includes interesting anecdotes and descriptions of daily life from past pupil Reg Baldwin. The eldest of seven children, he was born in a cottage near the Sir Evelyn Wood pub in Widford on Christmas Day 1929. His mother Florence worked at Hylands House for fourteen years, in the days when Mrs Hanbury still lived there. His father was one of the first to be called up in the Second World War, and whilst on active service was taken prisoner of war. Among his own

childhood recollections, Reg recalls: "As a child I remember walking across the fields from Widford to Galleywood and ending up at the Horse and Groom public house. At the time we played cricket on the Common. On another occasion I caught rabbits near the White Bridge on London Road.

"Just before the Second World War, my father saw somebody from a car putting a sack into the River Wid. On investigation, my father realised something was moving in the sack. He got the sack out of the water and opened it to find a cat in there. He took the cat home and put it in the oven to dry. The story was printed in the national newspapers, and cat lovers from all over the world sent gifts, including a lot of tea, to our house."

Anyone who would like to order a copy of 'Widford Remembered' is invited to get in touch with Peter Turrall at 96 Patching Hall Lane, Chelmsford, CM1 4DB. Copies will be run off individually, for a charge of £5 each. Peter's earlier printed book, 'Chelmsford, a Stroll through Time', was on sale at the Open Afternoon. Some copies are still available from Peter at the special reduced price of £5, half of which goes to Moulsham Junior School funds to help with the production of the Past Pupils' Newsletter. Postage and packing £1 extra if required.

LIST OF PHOTOS ON PAGES 8 AND 9

Page 8:

1. Miss Rankin, Miss Wood and Miss Knight, teachers at Widford Church of England School before it closed in 1938. Miss Rankin went on to be Headmistress of Moulsham Junior Girls' School from 1938 to 1949. Miss Wood and Miss Knight transferred to the new Moulsham Infants' School, where Miss E.E. Denn was Head Teacher. Photo from Peter Turrall.
2. Another picture of Miss Rankin from Peter Turrall.
3. Class 2A 1959 with Mrs Donovan. If you can identify any of the names we would be delighted to hear from you.

Page 9:

4. Reprint of the photo of Pat Cox, her sister Sheila and a friend at the swings in Oaklands Park, taken on their way home from school one day in 1940.
5. Individual hand coloured photos of the Porter sisters, (a)Joan and (b)Joyce, who joined Moulsham Junior Girls' School when it opened in 1938. News from Joan and Joyce on page 12.
6. 1982 Mr Davis' class, 4.D.2. The names we know are as follows. Can anyone add more names for us please?

Back Row (left to right): Sarah Blayney, Beya Drane, Nigel Smith, David Grainger, ?Adrian Coy, Karen Boutal, Emma Balaam, Alex Whelan

Third Row: Mr Davis, Robin Bagchi, Simon Fagg, ? , Nerissa Payne, Kerry Smith, Lisa Dorking, Paul Gallagher, Jonathan Loose?

Second Row: Alison Low, Amanda Chilvers, Michaela Davis, ? , Barry Falltrick, James Russell, Fiona Spence, Helen McGee, Nicola Schiff

Front Row: ? , Andrew Foot, Gary Snowdon, Sabatino Ciambriello, Mark Neighbour, Stephen Bond, ?



1. 1938 Miss Rankin, Miss Wood, Miss Knight



2. 1938 Miss Rankin



3. 1959 Class 2A with Mrs Donovan



4. 1940 Sisters Sheila and Pat Cox with a friend at Oaklands Park



The Porter Sisters

5. 1939
a) Joan Porter (above)
b) Joyce Porter (right)



6. 1982 Mr Davis' class

MYRA SANKEY (SHINKWIN), 1945 - 49

I was born here in Chelmsford, and went to Moulsham Infants, Junior Girls' and Senior Girls' Schools from 1943 to January 1953, leaving school aged 15 $\frac{1}{4}$ years. When I went to be registered for the Infants' School, I met Miss Rankin, who made a comment about my Christian name being very uncommon. I felt very 'special'. By the time Miss Rankin retired, we had moved to Widford to live. Miss Rankin lived in Widford Road, and I called on her one day to give her some shamrock for St Patrick's Day - I believe she was delighted.

After Miss Rankin, Miss Pettet became Headmistress of the Junior Girls [from 1949]. One teacher I remember well is Miss Barton. I was in her class. Before the register was taken, she would insist that we show her our hankies and blow our noses before beginning! Years later I met her at Witham Clinic, where I worked - she had not changed a bit. In the Juniors I was a milk monitor with a girl called **Julie Shipman** (now Lodge, as far as I know). I wonder if anyone knows anything of her. Did she move to Ingatestone? She had a sister Wendy and a brother David, who I believe is now in New Zealand. Martin died in June 2001. They lived in Bruce Grove, off Wood Street while at school.

At Moulsham Seniors, Miss Howard was the Headmistress. Miss Stokes took us for drama - we were preparing to put on the play 'Little Women'. One Saturday morning, that March, my friends and I trudged along Princes Road in 4 inches of snow for a rehearsal. At the school, Miss Stokes gave us hot cocoa in the Staff Room! We all felt very privileged, as mainly you never got to see the inside of the Staff Room, should you go and knock on the door. On Sports Day, Miss Mundy would bring her St Bernard dog along, to the delight of all the pupils. I think the dog enjoyed all the attention. Julie Shipman and I used to serve the teachers with their lunches. The cook used to keep back the 'Mock Cream' tin for us to scrape up and eat what was left when we had finished our duties. Great!

Do other readers recall any of these Chelmsford shops, buildings and businesses? Ryder's toyshop at the end of Moulsham Street; Catts High-Class Grocers, which had to go when Parkway was developed; Williams just over the Stone Bridge which was super for bread and cakes - Mother sometimes took me to their restaurant for afternoon tea as a treat. Also just over the Stone Bridge was the High Street Methodist Church, which was demolished to make way for Caters supermarket (long since closed) in the very tall building with offices above. On the other side of the road was a small dress shop, and next to it Hunt's Builder's Yard.

At the Moulsham Street end of Baddow Road stood the Co-op meat and green-grocery department, and a very good sewing and knitting shop whose name escapes me. Later in life, I attended nearby Friars School for a St John's Ambulance First Aid Course, among others. This school was also demolished to make way for Parkway. Opposite was The Temperance Hotel, where I presume no drinks were served.

Almost opposite the Salvation Army Citadel on Moulsham Street was Migorlorini's ice cream parlour. Also on Moulsham Street was Pryor's sweets and tobacconist, where my Dad bought his supplies. We were only allowed sweets on Friday nights! Next door was a builder's merchant called Sankey's (no relation). At the junction of George Street and Anchor Street (now a car park) was Keene's Engineering. I believe they made spectacles. The St John's Road plant nursery supplied my Dad with the lettuce, tomatoes etc which he could not grow on his allotment near Moulsham School.

In the High Street, I remember Lipton's, MacFisheries, and the old J Sainsbury shop where you had to queue at separate counters for all your items. Opposite Bonds (now Debenham's) was a wool and clothes shop called Bellman's. On London Road was Banham the butcher's, Dr Whitley's practice near the Iron Bridge, Kearsley the dentist, and a super milk bar, Wainwrights, where they did all flavours of milk shakes. Allders on London Road has now gone - previously the Congregational Church stood on

that site. In the town centre, I remember the Corn Exchange, with dancing, concerts etc. At the open-air market, in Market Road, Mother would buy what she called 'day-old chicks' at Easter, to be fattened up for Christmas.

In those days Moulsham Street, London Road, and High Street were all very busy, with two-way traffic. There were a lot of buses. We had Hicks Buses and Primrose Coaches, as well as Eastern National, and also Grey Green Coaches (not Chelmsford-based). The Hicks bus point was situated in Park Road, opposite the Railway Station. Mother and I would use these buses to visit friends in Broomfield.

JIM WHYBROW, 1944-49: WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

I lived in Chelmsford and went to the Moulsham Schools, but have lived in North Devon for the past 25 years. My wife and I still have the occasional pilgrimage to Chelmsford, staying with our good friends, **Hill & Bett Dowsett**.

I spent my whole education at the Moulsham Schools and often wonder what happened to my friends from those days who I have not seen or heard of since then. **John Brett** was working in the Co-op bank in Chelmsford, and I opened my first bank account there; perhaps I thought I could get a cheap loan because I knew him! **Peter Livesey** had joined the navy and was at HMS Ganges training ship and **Dennis (Chalkey) White** was driving a milk float. **David Frost** was training to be a butcher, but on being called up for National Service, he served as a military policeman.

I remember when I was called up, I went to **Doug & Geoff Barnard's** Barber's shop, which I used regularly (where you picked up the local gossip while waiting for your haircut), to get a decent but short haircut before the army butchered it. But it was a waste of time! The drill corporal still didn't think it was short enough. I think the army barber did leave my eyebrows on!

The last I saw of **Geoff Woolnough** was at Crompton's Saturday night dance, looking very smart in his teddy boy drape suit with velvet collar! He was training to be a bricklayer - they must have been paid well! The rest of the lads I remember - **Melvyn Rawlingson, Malcolm Canham, Dennis Savill, Melvyn Davies, Trevor Giddings** and **Brian Byford** - I have no idea where they are. Perhaps they will all be there at the Open Afternoon on 14th May, as I will.

I retired last August 2004 when I was 65. I had only been unemployed for 10 days from the time I left school to start work at the Tindal Press, Union Yard, Tindal Street, retiring from managing a Printing Department for local government in North Devon. It just shows what a good grounding and education I had with my time at the Moulsham Schools.

PHOTOS FROM THE 1970s

We were very aware at the Open Afternoon of a shortage of pictures of any sort from the 1970s. It seems that in the 1940s and 50s, both panorama and individual school photos were taken. We have very few formal school pictures from the 1960s, just a small number of group photos, mostly taken by school benefactor Mr W C C Turner, recording especially the top year groups from the Junior Boys' School. In the 1980s, it seems that coloured class photos were introduced, and we have a good selection of these. While we should be pleased to borrow photos from any period to add to our growing archive, we would be particularly grateful for the loan of any you may have from the 1960s and especially the 1970s. Please get in touch with Kathleen Boot if you can help. Very many thanks.

OPEN AFTERNOON, 14TH MAY 2005

Another record attendance this year, with over 145 past pupils attending, many of them with other family members. Of the 38 new contacts we added to our ranks, several had come in response to an item and photo in the Essex Chronicle two weeks earlier, publicising the reunion. It was great to see all the regular familiar faces as well, and to meet in person some other past pupils who have been on our mailing list for a long time and came to the Open Afternoon for the first time this year. We continue to be impressed by the distances travelled by some past pupils determined to be here - from North and South Devon, Wales, Gloucestershire, Surrey and of course many parts of East Anglia. And all this despite Ipswich Town playing the first leg of the Football League promotion playoffs on the very date we had chosen with such care to avoid the Cup Final!

On this the 50th anniversary of Hilary and Kathleen leaving Moulsham Junior Girls' School, we were pleased to have a larger than usual contingent of those who were at school with us from 1951 - 55. There was much chatting and exchanging of recollections with **Marion Lodge (Weston)**, **Pamela Scott (Harper)**, **Pat Rushbrook (Davis)**, **Elsie Hills (Braid)**, **Elizabeth Clarke**, **Valerie Corby (Rudland)**, **Janet Brown (Bullock)** and **Judy Everard (Pettitt)**. Judith brought along a school photo from the early 1950s, which we will print in our next issue. We wondered what had become of some of the others from our year, in particular **Juliet Lindars**, **Sylvia May Drinkwater**, **Lucille Franklin** and **Heather Cawley**. We have also lost touch with **Marea Irving (Jones)**, not having her current address. If anyone has word of any of these, we would love to hear.

As ever, we were delighted at the strong representation from the 1938 'founder members' of the school. This year, the **Porter** sisters, **Joan (now Keyes) and Joyce**, brought along individual school portraits from 1939, reproduced on page 9 of this Newsletter. We had seen a number of these distinctive hand-coloured photos from pupils of the Junior Boys' School, but had no idea that the girls had similar pictures taken. Many thanks to Joan and Joyce, who were part of a family of ten children who lived in a 'two-up two-down' cottage on Wood Street in their childhood. Before the Moulsham schools opened, they walked back and forth four times a day to St John's School on Moulsham Street. In 1938, Joan was in the fourth year and Joyce in the third year at Moulsham Junior Girls' School. Cars were rarely seen, especially during the war years, so the Porter children and their friends were able to play skipping in Wood Street in their free time, with the rope extended right across the roadway! An amazing contrast with Wood Street today, where pedestrians take their lives in their hands crossing from Tesco's to the bus stop! Sadly, Joan told us that her schoolmate Rosemary Cowell (Gowers), her close friend since the age of 3, died on 30th April 2004.

Another past pupil from those very early days was **John Court**, who joined the Infants School when it opened, and moved up to Moulsham Junior Boys in 1940. John lived in Moulsham Drive, and remembered **Dennis King**, **Vernon Makin**, **the Wiffens**, **Derek Powell** and **Marcus Knight** from the same road. In the war years, when the younger male staff were on active service with the armed forces, John's teachers were Mrs Huxley in Standard I, Mrs Skipsey in Std II, Mr Hodgson in Std III and Mr Gardiner in Std IVA. He knew Mr Gardiner's two sons, **Ian** and **Nigel**, and in IVA was friendly with **Martin Bortwood**. He also recalled two sets of twins, the **Courtnays** and the **Smalls**. From the Juniors, John recalls running home to Moulsham Drive via a short-cut across ploughed land which is now the Grove Tennis Club. In 1945 a VE party was held on that same land. John's mother grew a lot of fruit in their garden during his childhood. Some she bottled (do you remember those Kilner jars?), and some she sold to the neighbours. In 1945, he went on to Moulsham Senior Boys' School in for two years, and then to St John's, a private school in Billericay.

Other 1938-ers who were able to be with us this year were **John Spooner**, who once again made the trip from Hampshire for the occasion; **Peter Charles Smith**, **Peter Turrall** (who took lots of photos, some of which we shall include in the Autumn Newsletter); **Brian Emmett**; **Brenda Halls (Eves)**;

Gordon and Vivienne Bennett; John Whittle; Wesley Holden; John Reed; Peter Eves; and Eric Woods. Apologies to anyone else whose name I may have inadvertently missed on the attendance list. There were also a lot of past pupils present from 1939 and the 1940s, as well as more recent decades.

It was a lovely surprise to meet **Colin Pitts**, 1942-46 at the reunion this year. Colin was originally introduced to the Newsletter by his classmate **Arthur Humphrey**, who was also at the Open Afternoon. He was at all three Moulsham Schools: Infants, Junior and Senior. As Manager of the Pavilion, Select and Maldon Embassy cinemas in later life, Colin has many interesting tales to tell, and is currently writing his recollections. We look forward very much to publishing an extract from them in the Newsletter when his work is completed.

Norman Kerridge, 1946, enjoyed seeing his grand-daughter, now herself a pupil at the school, take part in the dancing display. He was able to show her pictures of himself at school in the 1940s, which she claimed to recognise easily! We are grateful to Norman for his continuing help with scanning and upgrading new photographs for the school archive and the Newsletters - the Autumn glossy edition will be another marathon for him.

Good to see **Maureen Rignall (Bidwell)**, 1941, and her husband with us again, having set off from Gloucestershire at 6.15am and called in to see Maureen's mother in Witham before coming on to the reunion. Mrs Bidwell reached the age of 100 a short while ago - some of you may have seen her photo in the Essex Chronicle.

Gordon Thorp, 1941-45, has met up with a number of former Moulsham pupils recently, and will put us in touch with them. He presented apologies for the absence of **Pam Smith (Thorp)** this year, as she was attending a nurses' reunion at the Savoy on the same day - he thought she might have been tempted by the superior food! What a suggestion!

We had a lively and enjoyable chat with three members of the Snelgrove family - **Betty Clapham (Snelgrove)**, at Moulsham from 1938; **Leslie Snelgrove**, 1945; and **Helen McBride (Snelgrove)**, 1950-54, who was also at the Infants' and Senior Schools.

Mrs Alison Bonafin, who has a daughter at Moulsham Juniors, but is not herself a past pupil, was specially interested in the 1960 photo of Moulsham Junior Girls' School staff and pupils on a ferry from Harwich. Mrs Bonafin's grandfather captained the Harwich - Felixstowe ferry for many years, so she was interested to identify the boat in the picture. She thinks it could have been the 'Epping' or the 'Hainault', but probably not the 'Brightlingsea'. If anyone recalls any details of that excursion, we would love to hear from them. In the school log book, the entry for 1st July 1960 reads: "Today was our school outing. We went by coach to Ipswich, and spent two hours in Christchurch Park. From there we went by boat to Felixstowe. We left Felixstowe at 5pm and arrived home at 7pm, after a very happy day." Does that spark any memories?

Finally, thank you to all those who were unable to attend the Open Afternoon (some of them mentioned in the News in Brief on page 18), and who sent their best wishes for the occasion. We hope they will be able to join us at the next reunion. We especially enjoyed the letter from **Ken Rainbird**, 1953 - 57, whose name also appears in the Standard III list for 1956 (page 15). It read:

'Dear Mrs Boot,

Kenneth was unable to attend the school reunion on May 14 as he had a stomick ache,

From my Mum.'

Now where have we seen letters like that before? On this occasion, we assume the excuse was genuine, and hope Ken has now recovered fully from his 'stomick ache'.

MR PETCHEY'S FAREWELL PAGEANT, 1956

We are grateful to Bob Wiffen, 1953-56, for sending us his original printed copy of the programme for Junior Boys' School Headmaster Mr Petchey's retirement pageant on 19th July 1956. Here are some extracts from the programme:

"Nearly eighteen years ago - on August 29th, 1938 - Mr. Petchey, together with five assistant masters, welcomed two hundred and thirty four scholars to this Department. Today there are some three hundred and eighty boys on roll with a Staff of nine. In the intervening years almost seventeen hundred boys have passed through the School. Many of these boys have since travelled to the four corners of the world often to settle down in some far off country; others have attained leading positions both in the professions and industry, while many are still continuing very successfully their studies at British Universities and Colleges.

As we look back over the years of work and play, during war and peace, recalling both times of happiness and times of sadness, we like to think that under the leadership of Mr. Petchey we have done our part to live up to Arthur Mee's description of the schools in southern Chelmsford when he refers to them in his book " Essex" as being "an honour to the city". Whatever successes the school may have achieved have without doubt been due to the fact that day in and day out the boys are reminded of, and encouraged to look up to, the School Motto of **WORK AND BE HAPPY.** "

The farewell pageant was written by Mr V Hodgson, and devised and produced by Mr H Picken. The text is reproduced in full on the programme, and celebrates the varied academic, sporting, musical, social and cultural elements of school life. These short extracts give an example of the heroic tone of the pageant, and indeed an insight into the spirit of the age:

'... To classrooms we disperse
To cogitate upon 3 Rs - immerse
Our minds in arithmetic rules; essay
To write with neat and legible display;
The rudiments of England's gracious tongue
Acquire; to read of England's glories sung
In tomes of prose and verse. And on the field,
With youthful spirits high, we learn to wield
The bat and hold the stinging catch; control
With feet the ball and score the elusive goal;
We keep our bodies supple through the year
With exercises in the open air,

... And now, as this brief pageant nears its close,
We summarise what all this action shows:
We try to live our Motto every day.
Engender happiness at work and play;
And build a youthful character that's sound,
So that, wherever Moulsham boys are found
This Moulsham Spirit radiates. So then
May happy boys grow into happy men.'

Another special feature of the Pageant programme is a list of all members of the school in July 1956, starting with the staff: Mr S W Petchey, Mrs G L French, Mr W W Gardiner, Mr V Hodgson, Mr R G Hymas, Mr W James, Mr R R Lambert, Mr J Lyons, Mrs J R Moses and Mr H J Picken.

Many of the names on the school list will be familiar:

Standard IVa -- R Bacon, R Baker, T Bannister, R Barton, D Bates, A Beach, D Beckett, G Beechey, M Bell, J Blair, B Bowles, C Brooks, D A Brown, K Brown, R Brown, R Chandler, P Cobbold, D Collins, J Collyer, M Cook, M Cowell, R Cox, G Evans, D Everett, G Fairbrass, J Farrow, M Game, D Gardiner, C Gowers, K Green, K Haldane, G Halliday, R Hewett, B Ireland, K Jones, B Middleditch, A Mosley, J Overy, R Page, J Palmer, G Pascoe, K Pavitt, M Pearce, G Phillips, J Reading, D Ridgway, M Shipman, R Smith, M Southall, M Syoker, D Ward, A Willsher.

Standard IV -- R Arnold, J Beardsworth, T Beavis, R Bishop, D Bradford, G Brown, D Buckingham, M Chittenden, N Clarke, C Cook, R Cooper, D Cranston, R Dowsett, B Edwards, K Endersbee, A Forster, P Gash, F Gillam, A Green, T Hadley, N Jones, R Laborde, S Marriott, S McLoughlin, P Michaels, R Middleton, A Morella, D Muir, A Petts, R Porter, B Prior, M Ripton, B Robinson, G Robinson, M Rolfe, R Royce, M Ryan, C Saunders, D Saunders, G Saville, M Smee, A Smith, E Speakman, D Taylor, R Tite, N Wade, M Watson, A Webb, J Webb, R White, R Wiffen, J Woodward, R Yerbury.

Standard IIIa -- G Allen, M Beach, M Betts, T Biglin, M Broughton, P Clarke, J Clayton, R Cumbers, D Davies, G Deal, G Dunbar, D Eley, T Ellis, T Everett, M Eyre, A Flatt, M Flint, A Freeman, D Frost, J Green, R Hagger, I Hales, N Halliday, C Hawkins, R Hazell, J Ingall, S Land, B Lockwood, J Lucas, J Macaulay, K Martin, R Mayes, K Mitchell, K Myall, I Offord, P Parkhurst, R Payne, P Raven, P Retford, A Royle, G Sparrow, J Taylor, A Twitchett, C Tyler, G Wade, G Walkey, T Ward, J Waring, M Whipps, I Whitehead, D Windley, D Young.

Standard III -- F Allen, P Andrews, M Banham, M Banks, M Barrant, J Carter, M Casey, T Chignell, S Cottis, P Day, J Ellis, D Fairhead, S Hadley, B Hyde, P Leeds, J Levett, A Lonsdale, L Mann, K Marvin, J Norrington, R Parmenter, K Rainbird, T Reed, P Reeves, R Rhodes, D Skingley, R Smith, R Squires, R Stone, M Sutterby, P Watts, G Whatling, D White, I White, D Woolmore, T Young.

Standard IIa -- B Aldred, R Bennett, K Bradley, P Brewer, D Brooker, D Buckle, B Buckley, G Butcher, M Carter, D Clark, D Clough, V Cotton, G Deakin, M Edwards, R Endersby, M Ford, G French, M Gladley, T Greenwood, J Gutteridge, S Hayes, G King, D Lamb, B Lodge, T Millward, L Moreley, D Murray, R Murray, H Norman, G Oliver, J Parish, M Perry, K Perryman, S Potter, K Powell, G Reed, M Reynolds, K Sabine, R Sawyer, P Smith, B Southall, D Spencer, S Spencer, K Stapleton, G Swift, P Taylor, P Upton, P Vallance, A Watts, J Wool, D Wyatt.

Standard II -- A Banks, R Beavis, S Bewers, P Bloomfield, N Bone, M Brown, B Carr, P Childs, P Clift, D Cole, S Cowell, D Deal, R Eve, S Garrish, E Greatrex, K Grover, R Harrington, R Johnson, S Kilgour, R Levett, C Lodge, R Lummis, G McLatchie, J Miettinen, V Parish, D Polley, M Rolfe, J Rowland, M Saunders, M Scott, D Sheldrake, G Smith, J Smith, K Smith, R Smith, P Woodgate, C Woollard, G Woolley, R Young.

Standard Ia -- S Aldred, P Alexander, R Alty, G Arrel, J Baldry, J Bennett, R Berris, A Bruce, G Calver, J Crowe, R Dale, J Day, D Dunford, M Flynn, P Gaywood, S Grimwade, M Groom, D Hayes, I Hayward, R Howes, P Huff, S Jeffers, F Jones, P Jones, R Lang, I Lauder, R Lodge, T Meacock, R Mussell, P Overett, S Palmer, M Parish, J Peters, R Pipe, D Pollitt, R Poole, R Powell, J Pyke, N Ridgway, S Robinson, B Rolland, J Rowland, R Starksfield, A Suttle, E Toms, E Tumility, D Waine, M Wilson.

Standard I -- P Abrey, N Atkinson, D Barnard, A Barratt, K Bloxham, M Boon, R Carr, D Clark, P Clark, P Clarke, T Farrant, R Francis, P French, D Fuller, F Garley, D Gascoigne, M Hagon, M Heard, B Heathcote, J Hockney, N Humphryes, A Jackson, M Jeffery, S Jolly, R Kennedy, M Lovick, D Morley, F Morley, J Murphy, M Perry, N Pryor, G Redgwell, P Reeve, M Rickwood, A Rushton, P Selwood, C Slator, J Speakman, C Warner, S Watson, R Wensley, D White, M White, J Wilkinson, N Woodcraft, C Wright.

DAVE STURGEON, 1958-62: THE CHELMSFORD PROJECT

During his final year at Moulsham Junior Boys' School, Dave Sturgeon and his classmates in 4A worked on a written and illustrated project about Chelmsford. Dave has kept his handiwork, and kindly passed it on to us for the school archive. It provides a fascinating insight into the character of the town and events at the time.

Based on a series of structured worksheets, reports of class visits, press cuttings and photos, Dave's project gives his own individual 'pupil's eye-view' of the school and town in 1961/62. He notes that the staff that year were his father, Mr T W Sturgeon, Headmaster, Mrs Bome, 1A, Mrs Field, 1B, Mrs Donovan, 2A, Mrs French, 2B, Mr Lyons, 3A, Miss Martin, 3B, Mr Picken, 4A and Mr Hodgson, 4B. The School Managers were Alderman Mrs Roberts, Mr W Farthing, Alderman Mrs Davies, Mrs E Edwards, Revd Pattison and former teacher Mr R G B Hymas. Other well-known names at the Moulsham Junior Schools were Mr Collins, Mr Little and Mr Steele, the school caretakers; Mr Cole the groundsman; school secretary Mrs Hollingbery; and midday assistants Mrs N Smith and Mrs Whitehead.

Among the school activities listed (games such as football, rounders, cricket and swimming, musical groups including violin, recorders and hand bell ringing), Dave noted that the school library had 1200 books. You could borrow them for two weeks and had to write something about each book and pay a penny fine for every extra week you kept them. In a sample letter telling a fictional new pupil about the school, he points out that "the top class has privileges, such as outings to interesting places. We also have the privilege of being prefects." I wonder what that involved?

According to Dave's project, the population of Chelmsford in 1961 was approximately 45,000, with some 15,000 houses in the Borough. Many of the people worked in factories: Crompton Parkinson, with some 2,000 employees; Marconi Wireless Telegraph Co, with 4,500; English Electric Valve Co, 1,500; Hoffmann Manufacturing Company, 4,500; and Christy and Norris Ltd, 1000. It was a very different working pattern from 2005, when we understand the largest local employer is the supermarket Tesco. Among the shops where people worked in the early 1960s were Wenley's, Bolingbroke's and Bonds, all privately owned High Street department stores which have since disappeared.

Then, as now, some people worked at County Hall or the Borough Council. On Friday 16th March 1962, class 4A had an enjoyable visit to the Borough Council Chamber, where the Mayor's secretary, Mr Hay talked about the work of the various committees, and showed them the town Mace and coat of arms. Among the interesting press cuttings Dave collected for his project are some which record the opening of the new Civic Centre on Duke Street in May 1962. He also includes articles about the retiring Mayor, Mrs Jean Roberts, also a Moulsham parent and Chairman of the Managers, who was succeeded as Mayor in 1962 by another Moulsham Manager, Alderman Mrs Muriel Davies.

Another school visit in 1962 was to the Children's Library, also in Duke Street at that time. The Children's Librarian, Miss Stone, explained the work and organisation of the Borough Library, overseen by the Town Council's Library Committee, and run by Chief Librarian Mr Read (was his name really spelt like that? - it sounds a good name for a librarian!). Many of you will remember the bright and cheerful Children's Department at the front of the building, contrasting with the silent, gloomy reaches of the Adult Library to which one graduated at about age 13. Apparently Miss Stone explained to 4A that "there are three reasons why books are needed. The first reason is because people want to communicate; the second is because people want to record things, and the last is because people want some pleasure and enjoyment". Not so sure about that "last"!

Chelmsford Cathedral was the venue for a further 4A trip to the town centre. Mr Picken and Mrs Donovan accompanied the class, which was split into two groups and shown round by the Provost and Canon Burrow. Dave made special mention in his report of "the tower with the carving representing

machinery and such things, . . . the 6 feet long weather-cock in the shape of a dragon . . . and the modern statue of St Peter holding a key in one hand". [Before he died, Mr Picken told us that he particularly remembered these visits to the Cathedral, and enjoyed pointing out to the boys that St Peter was holding a large modern Yale key]. Dave took his own photos of the statue and tower for his project.

The camera was pressed into use again on the tour of Chelmsford Gasworks on 23rd May 1962, when Dave took 5 more pictures for his project. He records that 21 of the class cycled to the Gasworks, and the rest walked. "We started by seeing a heap of bituminous coal. This would be turned into coke. Then we went past the boiler house doors. After that we went in the lift to the top floor. Here we saw a conveyor belt that took the coal on to a great heap that would eventually go into the retort. . . . We then went down the steps and saw some holes in the metal floor. One of these was opened as we went by. Great flames came out and then were extinguished as a great bucket was opened at the bottom and coal was let out." Having had the coal production system explained, and various by-products shown to them, Dave reports that "we were shown the gas-holders and, after a very enjoyable afternoon, we made our way home."

The remainder of the project is devoted mainly to intricate diagrams of the production of gas and electricity, a description of the water purification process at Sandford Mill, and an impressive set of drawings of the current road signs on small white panels with a red triangle above. Dave ends with some pages on Chelmsford wildlife, noting for example that gudgeon, stickleback, minnow and perch could all be caught at Baddow Meads, and pike and roach in the River Wid. Lizards, snails, slugs and toads, on the other hand, could be found at Chelmsford Refuse Tip (I imagine the research for this item might have been a trifle mucky!). Bees, wasps, grasshoppers, hornets and crickets were closer to hand, in "my garden", while ants on "my front doorstep" and moths in "my wardrobe" were maybe a bit too close for comfort.

We are very grateful to Dave for sharing his Chelmsford Project with us, and hope it may spark off memories for other past pupils. We will include one of his photographs in the next issue.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Mr Kemp was very pleased to have a letter from **Anne Holdsworth (Hammond)**, 1943, thanking him for a most pleasant afternoon at the past pupils' reunion, with the excellent dancing and refreshments too. Anne wrote: "The new school bell was ringing when I arrived, and I enjoyed hearing its pleasant tone. There was no bell in my school years, although the bell turret was in place. This may have been because of war years, when bells were only to be rung in cases of invasion, which thankfully never happened. In those days the school was isolated, being surrounded by fields, which I think were all owned by Curries farm. I mostly walked or cycled to school from the Moulsham area of town. Thank you for that lovely afternoon when once again I was able to chat with my former fellow pupils, and wander round the school which I remember so well."

Pauline Wilson (Gandy), 1947-51, was sorry she couldn't attend this year's reunion, but continues to enjoy the termly Newsletter. Reading of people she knew years ago brings back happy memories.

During Holy Week, **Hilary Balm (Dye)** took part in an impromptu performance of Handel's Messiah at the Salvation Army Citadel in Chelmsford. There she was pleased to meet Moulsham past pupils **Hilary Heath (Simmons)** and **Enid Watson (Brown)**. We are now in touch with Enid's husband **Stephen**, her sister **Kathleen Kerslake (Brown)** and their brother **Ken**. Hilary Heath was unable to attend the Open Afternoon, as she was visiting her brother, **David Simmons**, in Canada.

Brian Judd, 1938, was glad to receive 'the latest superb Newsletter'. He writes: 'I noticed Kes Gray's remark on the improper use of the word "nice". I clearly remember Mr Gardiner telling us not to use it in the 1940's, so I suppose his antipathy to the word seeped into the general consciousness of the school!'

Bob Wiffen, 1953-56, who sent the 1956 Pageant programme on page 14, also has pictures and memories of the 1960s music groups he was in. We will print some of these in the Autumn Newsletter.

New on our mailing list is **Susan Simpson (Holden)**, who was at Moulsham Junior Girls' School in the late 50s, and went on to the Seniors until 1961, when she transferred to the new Hylands School. Susan lived in Writtle Road. Her husband and two brothers are also ex-Moulsham pupils.

Brothers **Barry and Roy Prockter** were interested to see the photo of the 1959 third year class in the Essex Chronicle in April. Barry was in the year below, and Roy in the year above. We were delighted to meet Barry at the Open Afternoon.

Howard Norman, 1953-58, also contacted us after seeing the mention of past pupils in the Essex Chronicle. He lived in Writtle Road when at Moulsham Junior Boys' School, and went on to Broomfield Secondary Modern School from the Juniors. He enjoyed both schools immensely, and recalls Mr Hodgson, Mrs Moses, Mr Picken and Mr Gardiner on the staff. Mr Gardiner was also his choir master at Widford Church. Howard still visits family in the Chelmsford area, and we hope to see him at a future Open Afternoon.

A few days after the Open Afternoon, Mr Kemp had a pleasant surprise visit from **Roger Bell**, 1948-51, a Turner prize-winner who is now a High Court Judge. Being in Chelmsford on business for a few weeks, Roger was walking around his childhood 'stomping ground', and decided to call in at Moulsham Juniors. We are delighted to add him to our Newsletter distribution list, as well as his sister **Chris**, who joined Moulsham Infants in 1952, and went to the Junior Girls' School from 1953-58.

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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