



## KIDDERMINSTER HIGH SCHOOL O.G.A. NEWSLETTER 2021

### Future Events

**2021 A.G.M. and Lunch:** Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2021. St George's Annexe DY10 2ES.

**2022 A.G.M. and Lunch:** Saturday October 1<sup>st</sup> 2022. Venue to be advised.

### O.G.A. Contact Information

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**Privacy Statement** In the past you have given us your contact details so that we can send you information about the Old Girls. These details are held on a password protected spreadsheet on a private computer. We hope that you will continue to allow us to contact you about the O.G.A. Your details will never be used for any other purpose and will not be given or sold to third parties.

If you no longer wish to receive communications from the Old Girls', please contact Anne Budworth.

## **From the Editor**

I wouldn't normally write a lengthy introduction to the newsletter, and this year is no exception. However, I wanted to record my thanks for the record number of contributions I have had for inclusion this year.

Also, I wanted to pose the following question on behalf of the committee:

“How viable is the O.G.A. in it's current form if we are unable to increase the amount of support we get from it's members?”

**As another year as Chair of the O.G.A. draws to a close, Rosemarie Morgan has sent the following contribution .**

### **GRATIAS HODIE AGIMUS**

My contribution to the newsletter invariably ends with those words, as a tribute to K.H.S., and the fellowship that the school, and the O.G.A. has given to each of us. However, I felt that this year is was right to begin with those words as in spite of everything the last year has visited upon us, I still feel there is much to be thankful for.

It has certainly not been an easy year for any of us, with continued lockdowns and ever changing restrictions on our lives. Many of us have lost loved ones over the last year, and had to deal with the restrictions on numbers attending funerals – a difficult situation at an already difficult time. Several long standing members of the O.G.A. have passed away this year, tributes to whom appear later in this newsletter, and I am acutely aware that we were not able to have the O.G.A. representation that we would have liked to have had at their funerals. We can, however, still give thanks for all their lives, for what they meant to us, and hold fast to those precious memories of times spent together.

We have all been very thankful of our wonderful N.H.S. throughout this pandemic. Never did I dream as I stood in the street this time last year clapping my thanks for the N.H.S. and all key workers that I would need their services quite so personally. In September 2020, I slipped down the bottom two steps of my stairs. The result was quite dramatic for such a little fall – paramedics, an ambulance ride to Redditch, broken and dislocated wrist, and shattered bones in

my knee and leg. I spent two weeks in hospital, 8 weeks in plaster and 10 in a full leg brace, and am still receiving physio ! Quite an achievement!

It is difficult to express in words the thanks I owe to so many people – every single member of medical staff I have met, my neighbours and friends, including all the O.G.A. members who have kept my spirits up with phone calls and visits, and especially my ever loving husband, Godwin ! I am so thankful that I have more or less full use of my wrist, and am able to walk, albeit with the aid of a stick at times. My thanks to you all is beyond words.

The roll out of the vaccination programme has been yet another cause for thanks. It is indeed a tremendous achievement in terms of research and testing, and then the logistics of getting the vaccines into our arms. As I write this, we are awaiting news of what restrictions, if any, will be eased on the 19<sup>th</sup> July, but it has definitely been a joy to reconnect with family and friends over the last weeks, reminding us all of the importance of those connections.

During the last few months, the O.G.A. have had legacies from the estates of both Miss Bedford and Sheila Garlick. Following discussions at meetings about how to celebrate the lives of both ladies, the committee are considering planting a commemorative tree in a local park. More news on this will appear in the 2022 newsletter.

Finally, let us give thanks for each other, and that which connects us all. We celebrate another year of the O.G.A., and look forward to meeting together before too long.

**Gratias Hodie Agimus indeed!**

### **A.G.M. and Lunch 2020**

Due to the pandemic, the 2020 A.G.M. was held by post instead of a physical meeting. Rosemarie sent out the following statement on behalf of the committee.

No objections were received by October 3<sup>rd</sup>, so the points raised were considered to be agreed at the A.G.M.

## **To all members of K.H.S. Old Girls' Association,**

The sole aim of our Association is

“To promote friendship/fellowship between all former members of Kidderminster High School, so that the spirit of the school continues.”

A major way of doing this has always been our Annual General Meeting and Lunch, and normally at this time of year we would be looking forward to meeting together.

However, as we all know, these are far from normal times. Your committee has deliberated very carefully about this year's event, and, with heavy hearts, we have come to the conclusion that the right thing to do is to postpone the Lunch until we feel it is safe to hold it.

The constitution does, however, require us to hold an Annual General meeting in the first half of the Autumn Term. As this is not possible in a physical sense, it is proposed that, due to these extraordinary circumstances, we conduct a 'postal' A.G.M.

### **The business of the meeting is as follows:-**

The Chairman, Vice Chairman and Treasurer would have been elected at the meeting. They are all willing to stand for another term, and have been duly proposed and seconded by members of the committee. All committee members are willing to continue.

If you would like to join our Committee, please do get in touch – there are two vacancies at present.

Accounts for the Flower Fund, and main accounts should be available on the website by the end of August 2020.

Future events – next year's AGM and lunch will be on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2021 (venue to be decided); a lunch will be organised in Spring 2021, and this will also include a celebration of the life of Miss Bedford. *Obviously these events are subject to change.*

If you have any comments or queries concerning any of the above points, please get in touch with myself, or any Committee member. If there are no objections by the 3<sup>rd</sup> October, all points will be considered as having been agreed at the A.G.M.

I would like to record my thanks to the committee for all their hard work on behalf of the Association. It remains a privilege to serve as your Chairman.

We know this is far from ideal, and do hope we are all able to meet in person before too long.

Rosemarie Morgan, Chairman

(email : [ramorgan@btinternet.com](mailto:ramorgan@btinternet.com): )

### **A.G.M. and Lunch 2021**

The 2021 A.G.M. and lunch will be held on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> October.

In these current, rather difficult times, the committee have decided to make the A.G.M. a rather low key event. We are unsure what the restrictions will entail by October and unsure how many members will feel anxious about venturing out.

With this in mind, we have booked St George's Annexe for an A.G.M. and sandwich lunch rather than book our usual style of venue that supplies lunch. As we do not know how confident members will feel about meeting together, estimating numbers to book a catered meal is impossible. The cost will be a nominal £10 to cover room hire and sandwiches.

The accounts for the O.G.A. will be available at the meeting and will be uploaded to the website in due course.

We would hope to have a selection of materials from the archive available for people to see.

We are very aware that Covid restrictions may change at short notice but would like to assure members that any money sent for A.G.M. bookings will be refunded

should the meeting have to be cancelled. Please send a separate cheque for your A.G.M. booking in case refunds have to be sent.

The occasion will be fully risk assessed and as COVID compliant as possible.

Please see booking form at the end of this newsletter.

### **Treasurer's Report for KHSOGA Annual Meeting 2021**

The accounts were not audited last year due to Covid 19 but will be audited in August 2021

#### **Income**

Subscriptions are being received but a few paid by standing order or fast payment have still not been increased from £2 to £5 by members paying annually. Please sort it out if this applies to you. The Flower Fund received donations of £244.00 during 20 and this amount will be transferred into the Flower Fund in year 2021/22 £500 was transferred from the Scottish Widows Account. Two legacies – Beryl Bedford and Sheila Garlick.

#### **Expenditure**

Income minus Expenditure has given us a surplus of £443.25 for 2020/21.

When regulations and Health and Safety rules allow us to organise an event for you – who knows when – please come along. Meeting up and chatting with friends you have known for a long time but may not have had much contact with is great. Friendship is very valuable. Paying subscriptions, giving to the Flower Fund and attending the events should put enough money into the bank account so that we Old Girls can enjoy being together.

Scottish Widows Account on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2021 had £2077.99 in it which included the massive interest payment of 26 pence!!! The interest rate for 2021 is still 0.01% and I have a letter from the bank to prove this. We will get fewer pennies in January next year because there is less money in the account. £500 was transferred to the current Flower Fund Account in December 2020 to increase the amount in the current account. £500 belonging to the Flower Fund still remains in the Scottish Widows Account.

## **In Memoriam**

**Sylvia Archer (née Hadwell)** died in 2019.

**Rosemary Boucher (née Fletcher)** died on June 28<sup>th</sup> 2021 at Westley Court Nursing Home. During her time at K.H.S., Rosemary was a keen sportswoman. She was captain of the hockey First XI. Mrs Gethin wrote the following comment on her playing in the 1967 magazine.

“It took Rosemary a little time to settle down to the responsibility of being Captain, particularly on the field, but after playing rather tentatively in the first few matches she got into her stride and set an example of really hard play in both attack and defence. Her ball control also improved greatly.”

She was also in the 1<sup>st</sup> VI tennis team, where her captain, Marion Powell wrote that she had tried hard and improved but needed to vary the pace of her game. Rosemary was also in the “formidable” squash team, championed by Mrs Gethin, where she was a great asset to the team.

**Anne Witts (née Brighton)** died 27<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Lifelong friends, Sue Smith and Pauline Pickersgill have sent the following contributions.

Firstly from Sue -

My dear friend Annie. We met in September 1957 in 111T, our form mistress was Miss Tregaskas.

With our surnames beginning with “B” we were early in the register. On the first day when we were asked for our father’s Christian names and Annie replied “James”, somebody hissed “Jimmy” and so she became Jimmy Anne for the rest of our school days and that was how my parents referred to her all their lives. Later in life she became Annie.

On that first day in the Bennett Building cloakroom a face appeared between the coats and that is how I met Pauline Pickersgill (née Lumb). Pauline and Annie has been friends at primary school. We made our way through school, Lower 4H, Upper 4B, Lower 5B and finally Upper 5B. Ending up with Miss Davies in what was referred to as “the broom cupboard”. The very small classroom opposite the Biology Lab.

After leaving school in 1962 we both worked for Brintons Ltd in Exchange Street in their fledgling computer department. We were paid monthly and the Saturday after pay day we would take a trip to Birmingham to spend our wages. Wallis and C&A being our favourite shops. Anne didn't stay long at Brintons as she moved to Summerfield Research station where her fiancé David worked.



Annie, Pauline and I stayed close friends, we all married, had children and had great fun taking our children for days out but mainly meeting in each other's houses.

Annie was very hospitable and loved giving parties. It was always open house at James Road. The Bonfire Night parties were legendary and eagerly awaited each year by excited children, accompanied by good food and alcohol.

Later on in life we repeated the experience with our grandchildren. The Black Country Museum springs to mind and the grandchildren hurtling down the Helter Skelter on coconut mats. On another occasion we went to the Safari Park where they got absolutely soaked on the water ride and had to stand in a huge drier in an attempt to dry off.

To celebrate our 60<sup>th</sup> birthdays Pauline, Annie and I took a trip to New York. We had a great time but unfortunately our feet where not up to the walking and one of us ended up with blisters on their feet which had to be bandaged daily.

Annie unfortunately lost her husband David in her early 50s which was a massive blow as they has been together since she was 16. Several years later she was



lucky enough to meet up with a Ken Ryder from King Charles 1 and they formed a very happy relationship which lasted until the end of her life.

Pauline added the following memories:

I can see Annie and myself hurtling down Station Hill on our bikes which were bought by our parents for passing the 11 plus. Over the cobbles we went satchel bouncing up and down on our backs ,we were in such a hurry to get home get changed and go for another adventure on our bikes, homework would have to wait till we got back. My best buddy Annie whom I was asked to look after as I had started primary school (Bennett street ) some 6 weeks earlier than her, she always referred to me as her oldest friend as my birthday was in March and hers was in May .That is how our 70 years friendship started, we never fell out and if we had got anything to say we said it, laughed and moved on.

She was very much a glass half full person, kind, generous, warm and had the most quirky sense of humour

Annie.....the sister I never had, missed, loved, and forever in my heart



**Halfpenny Green Air Show 1970s**



**With Annie and Pauline viewing the poppies at the Tower of London**

**Susan Benbow** died on 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2020

Remembered by Sally Steadman, Jennifer Stott and Jane Millward for her lovely singing voice and amazing art. Due to failing health, Susan spent the latter part of her life living in Bromyard with her son.

**Anne Carpenter (née Webb)** died on 15<sup>th</sup> August 2020

Jen Booth sent the following tribute: My only cousin, Anne Carpenter Webb, died on 15 August 2020 after a short illness. She was 74. She was at KHS 1957-1962. She had lived in Milton Keynes since the early 1980s. She had 2 sons. The youngest lives in Australia & she visited him several times over the years. Fortunately he was given permission to leave Australia & was able to be with her for the final few days of her life. She had 4 grandchildren & became a Great Grandmother in March, just before lockdown & before she became ill. She died peacefully in hospital with her family around her.

**Dorothy Bown** died on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Dorothy taught Biology at K.H.S, leaving shortly after the merger in 1977. She was 97, and had been resident in a nursing home for some time. She leaves a son and daughter, who attended King Charles and K.H.S. respectively. Dorothy was Rosemarie's first form teacher at K.H.S., and her daughter Janet, was also in her form.

**Elaine Hugh-Jones** died 29<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Elaine taught music at K.H.S. from 1955 until 1963 before moving to Malvern Girls' College where she taught until 1983. In addition to teaching she was also a composer of vocal and choral music and wrote accompaniments to many stars featured on Pebble Mill. Her full obituary was published in the Malvern Gazette dated 16<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

Thank you to the Old Girl who forwarded this for inclusion in this newsletter.

**Sheila Garlick** died on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2020 aged 86.

Rosemarie Moore, a contemporary of Sheila's sent the following tribute.

It was with sadness that we heard that Sheila had died in September 2020. Sheila's funeral was held in St George's Church, Kidderminster on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2020.

Sheila had joined Kidderminster High School from Lea St School in 1945 where she achieved good results in all her academic work, especially the sciences. Leaving school in 1952, she trained to be a nurse at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham where she gained her S.R.N. From there she did her midwifery training in Birmingham and London before returning to Kidderminster to work on the District. Sheila had a fund of interesting stories as a midwife, one being infested with fleas after attending a confinement. Sheila also attained the position of Sister Tutor and I understand positions in other aspects of nursing.

After her retirement she worked voluntarily at the Q.E. and was renowned for her cake making, which was much appreciated by the medical staff in the department where she worked. Sheila was a very keen swimmer and would swim for a mile, at least twice a week at the Q.E. swimming pool.

Sheila also travelled widely and visited many countries around the world.

Sheila was a lifelong member of St George's Church and also attended St Peter's Church in Harborne. For many years she was an invaluable member of the O.G.A. committee and will be greatly missed.

**Shiela Hodges ( Jacobs)** died 13<sup>th</sup> January 2021 at The Wharf Nursing Home.

Amanda Hipkiss (also an Old Girl) sent the following tribute to Shiela.

### **KHS pupil and maths teacher**

Shiela was very touched by Old Girls comments when we told the Facebook group that she was 90. The family were very touched by comments from Old Girls after she died.

Some students remembered her teaching, saying how much they loved being in her class, even when they hated maths. Others remembered how helpful she was to those who struggled, her enthusiasm and approachability. Her innovative methods were also remembered – ‘her insistence that we use both hands to address a problem’ was a common comment too. And Juliette Pember, the celebrant at her funeral and another Old Girl, began the service with the words: ‘the only lady in the world who could have persuaded me to be the back end of a cow in the house entertainment one year!’ The family well remember seeing Shiela, all 5 foot 3 of her, strolling around the school grounds with her great friend Marion Baker, who was well over 6 feet tall. We also have fond memories of when she ran the school guide company and the fish and chip suppers we had afterwards because she claimed to be too tired to cook that night. She was an innovative cook, barbecuing food long before it became fashionable and enthusiastically reusing leftovers. Family events also often featured Shiela, Auntie Nettie and the three girls singing the school song with more enthusiasm than tunefulness. It was a sadness that we were unable to sing it at her funeral but pleased to be able to play a recorded version and we hope those Old Girls watching could join in.

Shiela’s other enthusiasms were her family and the theatre, in that order. She married Frank Hodges in 1952 and they had three daughters, Amanda (KHS 1966-1973), Elizabeth (KHS 1968-1973) and Caroline (KHS 1971-1977 and King Charles 1 1977-1978). After retirement she enjoyed visiting Amanda in Cornwall and Elizabeth in Portugal. She loved belonging to groups. She joined the Women’s Gas Federation, serving on the national committee before it was disbanded with privatisation. She belonged to the WI and often gave talks about the Nonentities to other groups. She joined the Trefoil Guild.

She was an enthusiastic member of the Nonentities, acting in and directing many plays for more than seventy years. She was the production manager and publicity manager at different times as well, which would be no surprise to Old Girls who knew how good she was at organising and at persuading people to try things they thought they wouldn't like!

Shiela really valued the connections that being an Old Girl gave her. It was a matter of great pride that she had attended the High School from the age of 6 until she left for University in London at the age of 17, and that she had been Head Girl. She enjoyed the fact that all three of her daughters, Amanda, Elizabeth and Caroline, attended the High School as well, and were all in Cynibert. And she was proud of being on the staff, teaching maths and statistics.

(Note from the Editor: Shiela (although I could only ever call her Mrs Hodges) gave me a "blue book" for my first piece of Maths. homework in 1967).

Amanda also sent scans of parts of magazines from the 1940s. In time they will all be available to see on our website but until then here are some words about the O.G.A. in 1940-41 as a taster.



## THE OLD GIRLS' ASSOCIATION.

*President* : MISS M. C. OLDFIELD.

*Secretary* : MRS. D. HANDLEY.

*Treasurer* : MRS. JOAN SPOONER.

## ANNUAL SUMMER MEETING, 1940.

The annual summer meeting was held on Wednesday, June 26th. Though the weather did not favour us, being rather cold and windy, we were able to carry out the programme unchanged.

After tea in the school dining hall, the rounders match took place, and the Old Girls' team, to their great joy, at last succeeded in beating the Staff.

The usual tennis tournament followed and about 30 members took part.

Miss Oldfield presented the prizes to Valerie Dugmore, Mary Gill and Miss Kearsley.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, JANUARY, 1941.

The annual general meeting was held at the High School on January 11th, 1941. This year the Old Girls' won the hockey match, 1—0 and the netball match 20—13. Miss Oldfield entertained a good gathering of members to tea in the school dining hall.

The President explained that this year's meeting was to be an informal gathering and that there would be no formal report. She conveyed to the members good wishes received from Miss Nicholson, and went on to say that in spite of the war, there had really been little change in the life of the school itself. She mentioned that one of the pleasant successes of the year had been the award of a State Scholarship to Monica Jones. The President said that though some members of the Association found little change in their way of life, many were starting completely different work and doing very different things. In this connection, she mentioned Doris Cozens, who had recently become a member of the W.A.A.F., and Louisa Dodsley, who had just sailed from Plymouth for work abroad as an Army nurse.

**Several weeks ago, over coffee and cake, Rosemarie and I decided to pose the question “What did you do during lockdown?” on the O.G.A. Facebook page.**

While it would be tricky to top Rosemarie's experiences mentioned earlier, we received several responses.

### **Sheila Bloomfield.**

I was inspired to become an Ambulance First responder by a number of events. First as a guide I always enjoyed taking my first aid emergency helper badges. Secondly as a teacher I always undertook the first aid role in school. Thirdly following my mother's example, she had worked on first aid posts in Sheffield during the blitz, but also remembering the speed with which help arrived for my father when I was in the 6th form, I was determined to help in the future.

That opportunity arose when I retired from teaching. An advert in our Dales paper for First responders to assist the ambulance service, caught my attention so I applied and trained. For three years the role has been comparatively straight forward. Knowing you are assisting our ambulance crews when stretched by going out & covering while they are on another job. Some calls can be life threatening, a child with a heart condition, diabetics, stroke and heart attack patients. As a team we help them all. Sometimes our role has been as an important comfort to an isolated or bereaved person, so the main paramedic crew can attend other cases. One lady called believing she was having a heart attack on arrival she was distressed, but more concerned with the cobweb she couldn't reach. On this occasion some gentle home care was all that was needed.

Then as we all know 18 months ago the pandemic struck. Our codes, clothing & methods of working changed over night. Suddenly we found ourselves doing extra training to deal with a wider range of cases & extra sanitisation, disinfecting of equipment etc. Self testing at least twice a week. The list at first seemed endless.

My first call out of the pandemic was a dear 92 year old who'd fallen & broken her pelvis. Despite my visor double masks, scrubs and apron. She managed to whisper “I like the material”, my scrubs were in a cheerful musically themed

material. ( I'm sure Miss Ellis would have approved) The first scrubs we were sent were black- not a colour to inspire confidence in your patients. So I made my own. The first few months of lockdown took some getting used to: the extra cleaning, outside patients home, then when we got home outside your own home etc. But now the triple cleaning/ sanitising regime has become second nature.

For all of us as first responders we have taken on a variety of roles within Yorkshire Ambulance service ranging from assisting on 111 service, patient transport, assisting at vaccination centres, delivering medical supplies, as well as attending emergencies when ambulance crew are attending other cases. All of which I've done. Our on call phones can go off anytime. My worst was 1am, but as the phone siren goes you are immediately throwing uniform over nightclothes , picking up your equipment, which is always ready & by the time you reach your destination you are awake training kicks in as you deal with whoever needs your assistance & especially remembering during the pandemic the extra stress & fear of relatives, which has to be dealt with calm reassurance. Returning home tired but glad you've been able to help.

Our team won special awards for the hours and tasks we undertook last year. Although stressful at times with some long and antisocial hours I'm glad to have been able to assist our NHS and ambulance crews in even a small part during the last 18 months. Though I will never enjoy training on zoom or just 1:1 in an austere room. I am looking forward to hopefully meeting the team properly soon. We all support each other and check we are each ok, especially after a difficult case.

## **Stella Gardner**

I decided to use some of the time spent indoors over the lockdown to research my family tree. What a great pleasure it's been to be able to contact family I didn't even know I had. The Gardners, I discovered, are to be found all over the UK and also abroad. My Grandfather on Dad's side (I adored him and was devastated when he died in 1977) was born a Scot but was brought to England to live with his eldest brother after being orphaned at the age of 6. This information was already available within the family. What I didn't know was that Grandad's Mum had died from TB in 1918 and a few months later his Dad had died in Salonica (Greece) and



is buried there in a Commonwealth war grave. There were 7 children in Grandads' family. Two of his older brothers had emigrated together to USA in 1956 and settled to bring up families there in New York. The impact of war and of economic pressures are evident throughout my family history. How wonderful it has been to trace our cousins in New York and New Orleans on Facebook , and to see my own dear Grandparents' names written on their family tree. It was also fascinating to see the changing role of women in history as exemplified within my own family. Our women were all workers of one kind or another - mainly at home supporting the menfolk with domestic work and child-rearing. As I was the first in the family to go to University I've always appreciated the opportunity that this has given me. Researching the family tree and thinking about the realities of women's lives in earlier times has renewed my gratitude for the life that I enjoy today (despite the lockdown) Having a career, independent income for travel and leisure time is a luxury that very few have enjoyed in history. Joining a genealogy website enabled DNA testing. This provides information about where my ancestors are most likely to have come from geographically. I was not surprised to learn that my DNA is Scottish (67% though!) but I was surprise to find Swedish ancestry within the mix.....Those Vikings have a lot to answer for. Finally I found the process helped me to think about previous generations and gave perhaps some explanation of why people were as they were in terms of personality and temperament. For example ,my grandmother was never able to show praise or encouragement. This was considered to 'spoil' the child in question. This I know was a generational trait but thinking about Grandma's particular experiences in life (born in 1914, the eldest girl in a very poor family of 10 children) I doubt that she had experienced any 'spoiling' herself as a child and would have been required to act as a mother to younger siblings before she had had the chance to grow up. I hope there are not going to be any more lockdowns, but I feel pleased to have used the time positively to help get me through the long afternoons sitting in the house these last 18 months.

**Linda Jones** picked up her crochet hook again and made blankets for her elderly neighbours and then found that they were looking after her when her husband took Covid home from work and then passed it on to the family. Linda adds that she has never felt so ill in all her life.

**Helen Oster** got chickens, four at first but this has now increased to sixteen. She has also replaced decorative shrubs with fruit trees and installed a hydroponic system for growing vegetables.

**Joy Crosher's** son's in laws have moved from Heybridge in Essex to Spennels following the disappointment of not being able to meet up over Christmas.

**Jen Booth** learnt how to zoom and has held several zoom calls with the 1967 starters. Anne Budworth, Helen Barlow, Sue Smith, Debbie Brown and Jill Bartlett who currently are unable to meet at their usual haunt of the Running Horse at Bewdley are hoping that they will, once again be able to meet soon.

**Helen Ayrton** (née Wehner) combined Lockdown 3 with retirement to sort through some boxes of her mother's stuff. Mother was Mary Wehner, also an Old Girl so Helen was not surprised to find a box labelled "Happy Days ay K.H.S." which included photos shared on the Facebook page.

Adding to the mix – I have spent a lot of time during lockdown knitting and crocheting. I have finished some projects started long ago (including one from the last century) and have used up some of my accumulated stash of yarn to make Hug in a Blanket Squares, hats for The Big Knit and Octos for Preemies amongst other things.

I have also spent a lot of time in the garden and am currently harvesting strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, currants, broad beans, peas and courgettes. I have even been more adventurous in the flower garden and for the first time have grown cosmos, snap dragons and night scented stock from seed in addition to my staples of sunflowers and sweet peas. The only downside is my continual battle with bindweed which creeps in under both neighbouring fences. If any one has any useful hints or tips for defeating bindweed, or indeed any uses for it, please let me know.

And then my spinning wheel is calling me....

(But that is another story).

## News of Old Girls

Chris Titley, known to several Old Girls as the volunteer organiser for the Kidderminster League of Friends Coffee Shop at Kidderminster Hospital has sent the following contribution:

Hello, my name is Christine (Balchin) and I was at KHS from 1960 - 1965.

Anne Budworth has asked me to write a few words about our years' reunions, so here goes.

We have been meeting up now for 12 years (bar the lockdown) and it started with an idea I had approaching my 60th birthday. I was chatting to another old girl who I worked with and said wouldn't it be lovely to catch up with all our friends from school now we are retiring. She agreed so I went home and switched on my computer and googled ways to find people. I logged on to Friends Reunited and found a page relating to the high school. I found many names there and was able to add to them with names I could remember. I think I had about 60 names altogether. From there on it was like Chinese whispers, I contacted as many as I could via FR and asked them to contact any friends that they had stayed in contact with. I had a wonderful response. I asked them all if they would like to get together for lunch to celebrate our 60th birthdays and if they would be happy to travel to Kidderminster. I was so pleased that so many said yes, so I made a booking at a local brasserie and it all took off from there. We had about 40 people turn up for the first lunch. It was strange seeing all the old familiar faces again but after minutes it seemed no different to 40 odd years ago. I think I can say we all thoroughly enjoyed it. It was so interesting finding out what everybody had been doing since we left school.

It was such a success that we all agreed that it would be good to do it again the following year and so our regular get togethers started. I found a hotel that suited us all better than the brasserie, parking, easy access for a couple with limited mobility and wonderful staff who looked after us. Not long after our second annual meal somebody suggested meeting up more regularly for a coffee morning so after consulting the hotel we agreed to meet up three times a year for coffee. Our first coffee morning is usually at Easter (hot cross buns), July and then Christmas time (mince pies).

Over the past twelve years we have had wonderful times, renewing our old friendships and they are even stronger now.

Unfortunately the pandemic has called a halt to our meetings for the moment, which is sad but understandable, but we are looking forward to things hopefully getting a bit easier and once life gets a little bit back to normal we will resume our get togethers.

If there are any old girls that we have not been able to contact who would like to join us then please get in touch. My email address is christinetitley@gmail.com.

(Note from the Editor: as a volunteer at the above mentioned Coffee Shop I am aware that Chris would welcome additional volunteers. The Coffee Shop is now due to reopen next year and for various reasons a number of volunteers have resigned and need replacing.)

### **O.G.A. Archive**

The items in the O.G.A. archive are still being sorted and catalogued. Items include school magazines, newsletters, school log books, committee minutes books, photographs, press cuttings and various items of school uniform. They will, eventually be donated to The Hive in Worcester.

### **Old Girls' in the Media**

**Jen Booth** (Brookes) was mentioned in the Keswick Reminder for her services to cake. Jen and her husband, Colin, regularly holiday in Keswick, always at the Glencoe Guesthouse. The proprietor is a keen supporter of Keswick Mountain Rescue and has produced a recipe book to sell to raise funds. Part of the publicity for the cookbook was a write up on the front page of the Keswick Reminder in September 2020. Jen was mentioned by name in the article when she suggested adding chocolate fudge icing to the whole orange cake recipe.

An interview on Radio Cumbria was also mentioned in passing ..... maybe Jen could update us on this.

**From the editor.** I still look for news of Old Girls but if anyone spots anything in the press or on television or radio about an Old Girl, I would be most grateful if they could let me know the details for our next newsletter, particularly as I am aware I do not know the name of every Old Girl.

## **Old Carolian Events**

Like the Old Girls', the Old Carolians' have also had to curtail events due to covid-19. However, they held their Annual Barbeque on 24<sup>th</sup> July. The event was held in the Rose Garden and attended by about 30 people including a contingent of Old Girls. Once again, we did very well in the raffle!

Their website <https://www.oldcarolians.org.uk/> will detail future events.

## **Found on Facebook**

**Zena Stoecki** posted a picture of her report book. This generated a flood of responses, mainly concerning keeping report books hidden from your children as their reports were better than ours.

**Diana Revitt**, aided by her grandson, posted a scan of the music score of the School Song, following a conversation with Barbara Parkington who found the score.

Any ex-pupil is welcome to join the Facebook Group

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/111380622234374>

## **O.G.A. Flower Fund**

During the year Rosemarie and Elisabeth have made many visits delivering flowers to local Old Girls and have sent cards and tokens to Old Girls out of the area. If you know of any Old Girl who would appreciate flowers please contact Elisabeth Robinson (01562 750891) or Rosemarie Moore (01562 67546). Rosemarie and Elisabeth are happy to travel within a 15 mile radius of Kidderminster to deliver

flowers or gifts but if you are in contact with any Old Girl needing flowers who lives further away, please consider contacting them with a view to buying flowers and then claiming the money back.

Both Elisabeth and Rosemarie have been the O.G.A. Flower Ladies for approximately 30 years but feel that now is the time to hand over the reins to someone else.

Elisabeth recalls that when she took over from Miss Badland, the Christmas visits totalled three. Although this has increased significantly, both Elisabeth and Rosemarie assure us that the task is not particularly arduous. Training for future Flower Ladies is available and a mileage allowance is payable. Access to a computer is not compulsory but would be useful.

I'm sure recipients of flowers or gifts will agree that we owe a huge debt of gratitude to these ladies over the years.

**O.G.A. COMMITTEE 2021 – 22**

Chairman	Rosemarie Morgan	(née Pitt)
Vice Chairman	Anne Budworth	(née Amies)
Treasurer	Margaret Bazley	(née Osborne)
Editor of Newsletter	Anne Budworth	(née Amies)
Website	Rosemarie Morgan	(née Pitt)
Minutes secretary	Rosemarie Moore	(née Brockway)
Flower Fund	Rosemarie Moore Elisabeth Robinson	(née Brockway)(née Wigglesworth)
Committee	Judy Neale Gloria Phillips	(née Beddoes) (née Galloway)

## K.H.S. O.G.A. Membership Renewal Form.

Annual Subscription (£5.00) £.....

Lifelong internet membership (£25.00). £.....

Correspondence is via email only, NOT post and it is the responsibility of members to provide any change of email address. Further details are on our website.

Flower fund donation £.....

Total £ .....

I enclose cheque for £..... Payable to K.H.S. O.G.A.

Name.....

Address.....

Post code..... Tel.....

Maiden Name.....

Years at K.H.S..... Date of Birth.....

I am willing/not willing to have notices of meetings and the newsletter sent to me by email.

My email address is.....

(Please email [budwortha@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:budwortha@blueyonder.co.uk) with any future changes to your email address or with any internet queries

Please complete and return this form to Anne Budworth, 108 Park Lane, Kidderminster, DY11 6TB.

# A.G.M. Booking form.

Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2021

## Programme of events

Venue: St George's Church Annexe, Birmingham Road, Kidderminster, DY10 2ES.

11:00	Tea and coffee
11:30	A.G.M.
12:15	Lunch
14:00	Good bye – see you next year

We are very aware that Covid restrictions may change at short notice but would like to assure members that any money sent for A.G.M. bookings will be refunded should the meeting have to be cancelled.

**Please send a separate cheque for your A.G.M. booking in case refunds have to be sent.**

In these uncertain times, the committee would rather hire a room and have a sandwich lunch. With this in mind, we have booked St George's Annexe for an A.G.M. and sandwich lunch rather than book our usual style of venue that supplies food. As we do not know how confident members will feel about meeting together, estimating numbers to book a catered meal is impossible. The cost will be a nominal £10 to cover room hire and sandwiches.

If you would like to attend, at a cost of £10 per person, please fill in the booking form below.

Name.....

Address.....

Post code.....

Tel.....

Maiden Name.....

Years at K.H.S.....

Date of Birth.....

Email address .....

I enclose cheque for £..... payable to K.H.S. O.G.A.

**Please send cheques to Anne Budworth, 108 Park Lane, Kidderminster, DY11 6TB**

**by 24<sup>th</sup> September 2021.**