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The Rhodes Debate

HEREFORD CATHEDRAL SCHOOL

OH MAGAZINE 2025

Welcome
to our 2025 magazine



Welcome to the 2025 OH magazine, and I hope life is treating you well.

Traditionally, this introduction looks back at the year just gone, but this time I'd like to focus on what lies ahead. After all, planning for the future is something we know we can do better, and change is already underway.

First things first: the magazine is here to stay. Whether you prefer a hard copy or digital edition, we'll make sure it reaches you. We've also set up a new communications group to look at how the magazine can work more closely with our other channels, making everything we do more dynamic, relevant, and connected.

Our new-style reunions, where several year groups gather on the same day, have proved a real success, and we'll be building on that momentum. Plans are also in hand for a new OH Summer Sports Day. The OH in London branch is preparing new events, and of course, our AGM and Christmas Lunch on Saturday 6th December remains a highlight of the calendar for many.

"Supporting the school continues to be central to our purpose."

Supporting the school continues to be central to our purpose. The OH Club's CIO Trust provides significant financial assistance, but equally important is the time and expertise many of you give by attending school events, workshops, and projects. At a time when alumni support is vital to private schools, every contribution counts.

Before signing off, a few thank yous: to those who come to events, share news, and keep OHs connected; to Helen and Lucy in the alumni office, who work tirelessly on your behalf; and to our committee, who have given so much this year. Some are stepping down, so we'll soon be calling on the next generation to step up.

And finally, I hope this next year is good for you and your families. If the OH Club can be of help, please get in touch.

Richard Binnersley
President, Old Herefordians' Club

Front cover photo © Mathilda Hodgkins-Byrne: Becky Wilde and Mathilda Hodgkins-Byrne celebrating their Olympic Bronze win at the Paris 2024 Olympics.

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Our highlights of 2025











MATHILDA HODGKINS-BYRNE

Olympian & Mother



We spoke to OH 2012 and Olympian Mathilda Hodgkins-Byrne to find out about the stunning success story that is her journey from Hereford Cathedral School to the 2024 Paris Olympics.

Based in Reading, Mathilda recently made time to visit HCS and talk with the senior rowers about leadership and her journey. But what advice would she give her own school-age self?

How did it feel, realising that you and your rowing partner Rebecca Wilde were in the running for a medal in Paris?

Given how the season had started with a 7th finish at the European championships and then qualifying 2nd at the Final Olympic Qualification Regatta, a medal so far had never seemed like it was on the cards. Going into the games verbally with our coach, we had agreed the A final was our aim but, after the speed order at our training centre, I admitted to Becky I was after a medal. However, it was after our semi-final when Becky and I agreed a medal was the target. In the race I knew we were in medal position with about 750m to go and knew it was a matter of not messing up our race plan to cross the line in bronze. I knew when we crossed the line we had won bronze and told Becky but it took her seeing the results board to believe me. Both of us were extremely relieved that our dreams of winning a medal had come true. We had gone into the games ranked 13th and last and ended it with a bronze medal.

What were the challenges of training camp with a one-year-old son?

I was incredibly lucky that my mother was able to take time off work and travel with Freddie and me to my three training camps in Portugal. Without this support, I can honestly say I would not have been able to travel, as I was not comfortable leaving Freddie for such long periods. Freddie was 16 months when I first started travelling so it was brilliant to see him joining in the team stretching before sessions and joining us for meals. Freddie also travelled with my partner and mother to Paris, so I was able to see him in my off time. This was absolutely brilliant as it enabled me to switch off from the stress of racing, gain some perspective and enjoy playing with my son.

FACTFILE

- >> Gold medallist Double Scull in 2016 World Rowing Championships U23 (Rotterdam)
- >> Bronze medallist Quadruple Scull 2017 World Rowing Championships U23 (Sarasota)
- >> Placed 7th Quadruple Scull 2020 Olympics Tokyo
- >> Bronze medalist Double Scull in 2024 Olympics Paris
- >> Read Chemistry at the University of Reading

> “I knew we were in medal position and knew it was a matter of not messing up our race plan to cross the line in Bronze.”

Your sister, Charlotte, is also a medal-winning rower – were you competitive growing up?

My sister was actually the one who started rowing, and I followed a few weeks after. I would always say growing up that I wasn’t competitive, but in hindsight, I think it’s just because everything to me was a competition, and if I realised I wouldn’t be good at a specific thing, I stopped. I was never sporty as such, neither of us were, but even now, she’s the person I look up to. If she can do it, I want to do it and vice versa.

What's life been like since Paris? (I heard an Olympian saying that when she was on the train home after Paris and no one recognised her it was kind of surreal). Is it hard to reacclimatise or does being a mum help?

Having been to Tokyo and experienced the loss of routine when I returned, I am aware how lucky I am to have a small person yelling for a snack, drink or entertainment. I'm lucky I've barely been recognised so it's been lovely to return to normal life and be Freddie's full-time mum. It's definitely been a case of 'you don't know what you're missing until you finally experience it'. I don't think I've ever appreciated the mundane as much before – well, minus Freddie's lack of ability to sleep in his own bed. It's also been brilliant to be able to catch up with friends I haven't been able to see in years. Really it's just been a massive period of catching up on all the aspects of life I've had to miss over the past few years.

What advice would you give to your school-age self?

Just do the revision or homework when you're given it. I spent more time finding reasons why I couldn't possibly find the time to study and then had to do a massive cram last minute and it cost me way more energy than if I'd just done it in the first place. I've realised sports are not the long-term life goals I want and I really miss the academic challenge my degree gave me. Mainly it's the challenge of problem-solving and researching I miss, and I would love to have the opportunity to go back to this.

Meeting the senior girls rowing team at HCS, did you recognise your younger self in them?

It was lovely to meet them. It's incredible to see how the boat club has changed. I noticed this a few years back when I saw them at Henley Royal Qualifiers. This is a massive achievement for the school. When I rowed at the school it was mainly the people who didn't want to do sport who rowed, me included. Now, however, I met a group of girls who were tenacious and wanted to own and improve their performances. I'm excited to see where this squad could go.

How was it returning to school – had you been back since 2012?

It was truly eye opening. Yes, it was the first time I'd been back since I left in 2012. When I left I had no idea quite how privileged I had been to go to HCS. I knew the art department was good but going back I was astounded at the standard. I know how lucky my sister and I were.



> "When I left I had no idea quite how privileged I had been to go to HCS. Going back I was astounded at the standard. I know how lucky my sister and I were."

Are there any teachers of whom you are particularly fond or have strong memories? Is there anyone you would like to say thank you to?

I ended up doing a chemistry degree and loved it, so I have Mrs Wall to thank for that, as she taught me through GCSEs and my AS.

You have said you are still in touch with your friendship group from school – what importance does that hold for you?

It's a community I'm so lucky to have. I've known these girls for over half my life. We aren't able to meet up as frequently as we'd like due to work commitments but when we do it's like we see each other all the time.

You are still only 30 – what ambitions do you still have, given you have achieved Olympian status in your sport?

I'd enjoy problem-solving and would love to be able to use my analytical skills on a daily basis. Otherwise, I just want to enjoy spending time with Freddie as I know how quickly he'll grow up.

Mathilda Hodgkins-Byrne (OH 2012)

Photos: *Mathilda taking part in the Paris 2024 Olympics.*



















Super Reunions!

LEAVERS OF 1990, 1991, 1995, 2000, 2005, 2010, 2015 & 2020

Thirty-five years is an awfully long time! A lot can happen that dampens or smudges the memory of time and driving to Hereford last May I wondered what or who, if any, I would remember.

I needn't have worried, they all came flooding back. The most trivial (and sometimes mortifying) of stories, together with so many extremely happy memories, all served in a cocktail of laughter and smiles.

The weather certainly did its bit, and we were so grateful to the Headmaster, Michael Gray, Helen Pearson and the alumni/admission team for the time and effort they put in to welcome us all back with such warmth and generosity.

The school has certainly moved on tremendously in the intervening years and it was wonderful to see its energy and enthusiasm as well as the success of our 'descendants'. Its vision for the future is exactly what today's children need: a strong sense of curiosity, independence, adaptability and a sense of the change they can make in the world: all very exciting and proud to be part of in a very, very small way.

The tour of the school was a spine-tingling trip down memory lane: the sixth form studies, the new extended library, sports hall and Number 1 have all changed considerably but still did not dampen some vivid memories of Ege Parker, Dickie Dunn, John Priday, Mr Lancaster, Mrs Miles (the girls probably still looked over their shoulder as they walked past the old geography rooms, checking the length of their skirts!) and the team of teachers who left such an impression on us all.

It was a long time to wait to catch up again... but so worth it. I hope we are able to do it again soon.

Giles Delaney (OH 1991)















What a delight it was to return to school for the reunion. We had previously had a lovely 20-year reunion, but as leavers of 1991, our thirty-year reunion would have been during COVID times, so this was our 34-year reunion.

I met Fitz and Henry at the gates on Castle Street on a sunny spring day in May and it felt no different despite being 34 years since we have seen each other!

It was such fun to see everyone, with something sparkly to drink while having a catch-up on the beautiful Number 1 lawn. Although there was some sadness too, with the loss of some of the lovely mums and dads many of us have fond memories of.

After drinks it was time for a tour of the school, which was hilarious! Poor Hayley, trying to organise her old school chums was like herding cats! We were like excited kids running around reminiscing. I can't do justice to everyone's memories but here are a few: Mel reminding us about playing cricket in the Lower Sixth form common room; Ian telling us he and Jimmy used to leave the old squash court window open on a Friday, go into town and come back and sleep on the floor! Rob suggesting to Mr Ferris we could go to the May Fair and then write about the atmosphere and experience (he was probably pleased to have a rest and did remind us in next English class, and we did have to write up about it).

I love the new Ege Parker Suite and history of the school; Mr Parker was my form teacher in 1N (and I did study history at uni). Rob looked at the cane on display and told us he and Ben were unfairly blamed and caned, although I did remind him that he and Ben were often very naughty! I loved whizzing around and seeing our old 6.2 study (ours was called the Goldfish Bowl) and our old classrooms.

There were a few other stories best not shared in the public domain and which we had a good chuckle about – Suki's being one of them.

It was lovely to see Marnie Wooderson, who was a lovely and inspiring English teacher, and hearing how she said she could always tell marking an essay when it came from the heart.

A wonderful afternoon was followed by a wonderful evening with the lovely Hayley and Jim hosting us all for a BBQ. A few more school chums to add to the mix. Fabulous to see Pak Wai, Rachel H, Ben M, Mark T ('Titch' when we were kids) and Bethan, who had me in stitches reminding me about an incident involving lots of boarders sneaking out, Hayley's mum being an alibi and a house party when my parents were away!

To quote Fitz (who had come all the way from the Isle of Wight), "thirty odd years just melted away."

Thanks to HCS and the Old Herefordians for organising such a lovely reunion. I have such fond memories of school, and it's great to see HCS continue to flourish. I am also putting a request in for a 40-year reunion for the class of 91 please.

Lucy Renwick (OH 1991)

Super Reunions!

LEAVERS OF 1970, 1975, 1980 & 1985

The happy summer reunion for the 'class of 75' was certainly enhanced by the wonderful weather and the warm welcome extended by the Headmaster and OH staff.

Especial thanks to those of my contemporaries who had travelled many miles to join us – it was a delight to meet them all once again, even if we struggled initially to recognise one another!

Another highlight was the opportunity to tour the premises. How impressive are the new buildings and the refurbishments. With all the headwinds facing the sector, the outlook is challenging so it is certainly reassuring to see that HCS is being so well maintained and enhanced for current and future students.

Marion Hawkins (OH 1975)

























LEAVERS OF 1983

Looking at the dining hall, I found I could picture the trays of Manchester tart that were on the menu forty or more years ago.

It was a pleasure to be taken round familiar and unfamiliar school buildings by Helen Pearson on our 1983 leavers reunion. Much was the same, though perhaps with fresher paint, but much too, including the many science labs, had been brought right up to date.

It was a puzzle to recall the structure of the old Big School and Library but the modern versions are much more airy and light.

People matter most, and the greatest pleasure was to recognise and reconnect. Even Mr Dunne kindly stepped in for a chat. Somehow it was reassuring to be meeting up in the place we once knew each other, and, trekking along the echoey corridors and staircases of School House, to hear and see ourselves again as we were, banging a door, settling into surely ancient chairs, and even completing the odd bit of Latin or Biology homework.

Catherine Christie (OH 1983)



OLD HEREFORDIANS *in* LONDON

It was wonderful to attend the London lunch meet-up in June and to connect with so many OHs in such a lively setting. The afternoon was filled with great conversation and the sharing of stories from the past, which made the occasion all the more special.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Peter for his incredible efforts over the years in keeping the OHiL community thriving. His commitment and energy have been the backbone of these gatherings, and it was a real pleasure to reflect on the history he has helped to shape.

Looking ahead, our intention is to host two meet-ups each year, one in the summer and one in the winter, with a variety of events and formats to keep things fresh and engaging. We encourage OHs to reach out if they would like further information, and to keep an eye on the OH Facebook page for the upcoming announcement about the next gathering.

Charlie Skyrme (OH 2016)
Jessica Barker (OH 1997)
Co-ordinators of the OHiL









OHIL EVENT IN OCTOBER 2025

In the photo above: (1) **Patrick Broome** (West House) caught a train down to Town from Salop via Crewe and (2) **Griff Holliday** (also West House) travelled in from Ledbury. He was joined by (3) **Will Mason** (East House & former Society Rugby Referee) from Ealing. (4) **David Bland** (who is now 90) was also present along wiith his lady friend (5) **Shiela**.

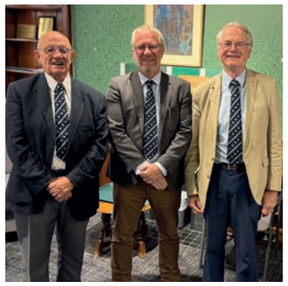
Ex-chorister (6) **Keith Rippin** was staying with his daughter in Edenbridge, Kent, hence took the train in to Victoria with ease. You might remember (7) a lad named **Paul Renney** (solicitor and another former Cathedral Chorister from the 1970s) who came across the river to join the group for lunch. That just leaves (8) **Tim Pringle** and (9) **Lenny Pound** plus (10) **Peter Fairman-Bourn**.



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OH NEWS

A Visit to Oxford



Simon Jones invited Howard Tomlinson and Clive Potter to visit him at Oxford University, where he has taken up the position of Bursar at St Peter's College.

Photo (left to right): Clive Potter (OH 1968; former governor, and trustee of the OH fund); Simon Jones (former bursar of HCS, and currently Bursar at St Peter's College, Oxford) and Howard Tomlinson (HM 1987–2005), in Simon's office. They wear the old HMs tie, which was devised by Howard and Tim Lowe, and shows the Dean's blazon (HCS crest) dividing the white and red roses, of Yorkshire and Lancashire respectively – Howard is a Yorkshireman and Tim a Lancastrian. So it was appropriate at the time when the two were Heads of HCS and HCJS respectively. A ladies' scarf was similarly devised. The tie and scarf were given – and occasionally are privately awarded (as with Sir Geoffrey Boycott recently) – generally to those who have served the school.



Randy turns 100

School was honoured to celebrate the 100th birthday of former Hereford Cathedral Junior School pupil, Randy Langford (OH 1936–43). Randy joined what was then known as Hereford Preparatory School in 1931, during the tenure of the formidable former Headmistress, Miss Gamlen. Reflecting fondly on his time, Randy spoke of how the school had prepared him well for adulthood, and expressed his gratitude for the lifelong friendships he made during those formative years. As a teenager during the Second World War, Randy volunteered as a fire watcher, keeping a vigilant eye on the skies above Herefordshire from the top of the Cathedral.

During his visit, Randy and his daughter Jessica enjoyed afternoon tea in Mrs Hoffmann's office. A highlight of the afternoon was when Reception children arrived to sing Happy Birthday to Randy and presented him with a beautiful handmade card. Happy 100th birthday, Randy! *Photo © Megan Butler*

DofE Gold Achievers

Gold Duke of Edinburgh celebration afternoon at Buckingham Palace on 9th May 2025. *Photos (clockwise from top left):* Beren Griffiths; Lily Connop; Olivia Tanton; William Whittal and Lily Connop.



Rowing

Will Morgan-Jones (OH 2023) was selected to row for the GB U23 team for the World Championships in Poland this spring, where he rowed in the Coxed Four alongside fellow OH Jack Cadwallader (OH 2021), who rowed in the double skulls.

Photo: Will Morgan-Jones and Jack Cadwallader rowing for GB in the Men's double in their GB kit!











OH Golf Day

We had a good day on 15th May 2025 at Burghill Valley Golf Club. The weather was good, the course in good condition and the clubhouse staff looked after us well.

I have provisionally booked Thursday 14th May 2026 for our 23rd meeting and I hope you are able to join me.

Thank you to those who played this year; to Neil Herbert and Rob Pye, who played for the first time; to Richard Binnersley, who greeted us in his guise as President of the OH Club; and to Nigel Fisher, who flew in from Canada especially to spend the day with us. Nigel met up with some of his team mates from his school days at this year's Golf Day, even though he doesn't play. See one of his old team photos above *(bottom right)* – do you still have yours?

Thanks to Helen Pearson and Lucy Debenham. Helen and Lucy work together, keeping in contact with OHs, so it was particularly good to meet Lucy. Helen took the photo and is, as always, a great supporter of the day.

Andrew Singer
Contact: andrewbsinger@icloud.com

Photo (bottom left, from left to right): top step Paul Morris (69); next step Clive Mugridge (64), Ray Harris (61); third step down Jeremy Clare (64), John Oldman (64), Neil Herbert (79)' next step Powell Price (65), Roger Morgan (70), Jack Beach (63) and Rob Pye (75). Behind front row Tim Dowse (65), Richard Blott (62) and Nigel Austin (65); front row Mike Blott (65), Richard Binnersley (89), Angus Craig (65), Andrew Singer (64) and Nigel Fisher (65). Missing from photo: Clive Potter (68).

Cricket

Three OHs were behind the funding for six-lane nets that have gone up at Wyeside this year. The school and the OH committee would like to thank Graham Lyke (OH 1969), his brother Michael (OH 1962; deceased) and John Chadd (OH 1951). Jacob Sergeant from MCC cut the ribbon ahead of the school's annual MCC fixture.

Another brilliant evening with OH cricket. OH batted first, with some entertaining batting! 50 not out for Harry Sockett (4 fours, 3 sixes). High 40s for Charlie Skyrme (2 fours, 5 sixes including 4 sixes in a row!) and Dom Larkin (6 fours and 1 six). OH posted a total of 207 from their 20 overs.

In reply, Fred Ralph smashed the first ball of the innings for a mammoth six over extra-cover, setting the tone early. Everyone chipped in from HCS 1XI, finishing on 173, giving the OH a win by 34 runs.

Huge thanks to Woolhope Cricket Club for hosting us and to all the players and supporters who made it special. Already looking forward to making it even bigger and better next year!

See page 35 to find about the Merlyn at HCS...

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OH GOLF DAY

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To express an interest please email:

andrewbsinger@icloud.com or
h.pearson@herefordcs.com

SCHOOL NEWS

The Opening of the Ege Parker Suite



It could not have been more fitting: the refurbishment of the ground floor of the most splendid Georgian house in Castle Street and the naming of the suite of rooms in Number One after Ege Parker, the first housemaster of the school's junior house, who was in loco parentis for boarding choristers and other boys for more than two decades.

Some OHs will remember the rooms either side of the entrance hall as the staff dining-room and the monitors' common room. Those of a certain age might even recollect the latter as the Headmaster's study. These rooms have been completely refurbished as a meeting room and an improved OH room. And on three walls of the hall itself, with its newly polished floorboards, an extraordinary timeline has been painted.

I say extraordinary because I have never seen anything quite like it in terms of its chronological length, illustrative material, and breadth of its coverage in any other school. For it depicts the history of HCS through the ages, from the time of Putta, Hereford's first known bishop in 676 AD, to 2022, the final plaque signifying the adoption of the school's new digital strategy. The timeline ends with a QR code and screen, giving the viewer – and prospective student – an opportunity to find out more about the nature of HCS today.

Although Ege may not have known much about QR codes, it is an impressively suitable tribute to a dedicated history teacher, whose taught courses ranged from the Anglo-Saxons to his beloved Disraeli.

As the donor board makes clear, the school is indebted to the many Old Herefordians and friends of the school who have made this commemoration possible. And as we gathered for the opening on OH day last December, Dr Gray, the present headmaster, reminded the assembled company of our heritage. The present living generation, he said, would represent only a tiny fraction of space on any future extension of the timeline. Nevertheless, as temporary custodians of a school that goes back (at least in terms of its song-school) nearly 1,350 years, we have a responsibility to ensure its prosperity for future generations. It is a responsibility that Ege took seriously. He would have approved of both the sentiment and its physical embodiment on the walls of the grand entrance hall to his old house.

Howard Tomlinson









Creative Space

CELEBRATING OH ARTISTIC ACHIEVEMENTS



The Michael Ramsay Chair

Congratulations to Reverend Professor Jonathan Arnold (OH 1988), who was announced as the Michael Ramsey Chair by the University of Kent and Canterbury Cathedral earlier this year. The position was created in memory of Michael Ramsey (1904–88), who was the 100th Archbishop of Canterbury (1961–74) and previously Regius Professor of Divinity at the University of Cambridge.

Jonathan was present at the opening of this year's Three Choirs Festival in Hereford on 26th July as the role, established in 1991, is a key point of contact between the University of Kent and Canterbury Cathedral and major arts projects.

Jonathan is a professional singer, working with ensembles such as The Sixteen, Gabrieli Consort and ORA, and an author whose publications include *Sacred Music in Secular Society* (2014); *Music and Faith* (2019) and *The Everyday God* (2024). His latest book, *The Sound of Change: How Music can Transform Individuals and Communities* is out now.



Art by Anna Ray

Having completed a degree in English, Anna Ray (OH 2017) is pursuing a career in art.

The main photo above shows Art by Anna Ray – the first four paintings from her 'Headshots' collection.

www.artbyannaray.com



Mood Music

Congratulations to Sebastian Field (OH 2000), who became Cabinet Member for the Environment at Gloucester City Council last May, when the Liberal Democrats took over the council.

Sebastian and his wife, Vicki, released a CD of classical duets and arias in 2023, titled *Moods*. They are also two of the eight singers on the new CD from The Proteus Ensemble, a disc of Elgar part songs called *There is Sweet Music*, which has had favourable reviews in *Gramophone* and *BBC Music* magazines.



Estella: A Novel

Lara Latcham's (OH 1984) first novel, *Estella*, tells the story of a woman who has struggled with mental health issues throughout her life, but has achieved a good level of stability through a number of strategies that have masked her problems from most of her circle of acquaintance. However, Estella is bored, lonely and miserable, even though her unexciting life means that she has a good job, a house and hasn't been hospitalised for over a decade. Then she meets famous young actor Oscar Pérez, who offers her a world of tempting opportunity. Will her mental health and security survive? Given the choice, would she want them to?

Estella experiences life intensely. She doesn't just feel her own vibrant and volatile emotions, but she also feels the moods and feelings of the people around her; sometimes she isn't sure if what she's feeling is her own experience or other people's. This makes life challenging and in order to deal with the constant onslaught of transferred emotions, Estella has formed effective strategies. One of which is calling on the strengths of former versions of herself. When she needs confidence, her thirty-year-old self, younger, slimmer and more attractive, takes charge with an assurance that today's Estella has lost. When she needs anger and outrage, her fourteen-year-old self comes forward with all the feisty defiance that the current Estella can only dream of. Estella holds within her seven magnificent versions of herself on which to call.

When Estella meets a distressed Oscar Pérez, she feels immediate compassion for him as she's aware of the emotional crisis that he's facing. After she helps him out of a difficult situation, he adopts her as a talisman and Estella is suddenly drawn into an exciting world that fulfils all her dreams. But at what cost?





In this fast-paced, moving and often amusing novel we journey with Estella from sterile stability through crisis and emotional turmoil to finding a way to heal and thrive. Finally, we witness the birth of Estella's eighth version and the start of the next stimulating phase of her life.

Estella (DBI Publishing) was published on 24th October 2025 and is available from bookshops and all major online platforms.

Lara Latcham is a lifelong lover of literature who grew up surrounded by books in her parents' shop (on Church Street in Hereford) and the local library. She has been writing stories and poetry since childhood and, after decades of experience living and working in the UK, Mexico, and China, she fulfils a lifelong ambition with this, her debut novel.

Photos (below): Lara's book launch at Dough, Hereford; with peers from HCS and reading from *Estella*.



LETTERS OLD HEREFORDIANS WRITE IN

Great Friend Memories

Dear Editor,

I received my *Old Herefordian Magazine* and, as usual, I was delighted to have this super production once more.

By complete coincidence, on this same day, my grandson, now in his first year of senior school with Gloucester Kings, came with his year rugby team to Wyeside to play HCS first year. This stirred great memories of 1948, when in the same year group I was introduced at HCS to RUGBY! Though we didn't play other schools at that level then.

This was really an introduction to a 'way of life', still very much with me today – though not able to don my boots any more, as an avid spectator and amateur 'critic', I still very much enjoy the game.

I thoroughly enjoyed the articles and information in the mag, but was saddened by some of the obituaries. Two good mates, David Beresford and David (DENB) Jones, have passed on.

As we both lived near Ross-on-Wye, David Beresford and I were near neighbours. I spent a number of great weekends staying with him on the small farm the family had at Deep Dene, an absolutely idyllic and lovely area of countryside. As well as his parents, I got to know David's brother Keith and, although the memory is now dim, I think there might have been a little sister.

DENB Jones, like me was an Anglophile, ethnically Welsh by parentage, but resident in England. Always in my class, David was quiet, almost to the extent of being shy, but he did not suffer fools gladly. He particularly came to life as we grew up and as a formidable debater! Quite apart from formal events, sometimes he took part in the addresses and debates that used to take place on the Acropolis, which once existed in the Old School playground (a large mound of earth with two large beech nut trees growing on it!). This much-revered place was also used for conker matches, many other events and, though strictly forbidden, the odd fist fight! We also enjoyed the beech nuts in the season – sweets were still rationed at that time!

Two good memories of a fine pair of mates.

I only vaguely knew Roger Brown and Tich Davis. Not enough for a new notice, but I also knew a little of Jan Daybell: he once lived at Harewood End (halfway between Ross and Hereford) and travelled with us


First Day at Hereford Cathedral School, Sept 1948

on the bus each day, for a time. He was a bright, personable character, I remember. But after a short time I lost track of him; I think he became a boarder.

Finally I read that dear Mike Moreton has left us. Son of Canon Moreton, he lived with his brother in the big house on Cathedral Close. The pair were best known for their exploits on the rugby field and in fine racing boats on the water. The School rugby team and its rowing crews were very successful at that time. Though we only overlapped for a year, Mike gave me my first lessons in bell ringing at St Nicholas Church. Something I found difficult; my teaching spell was, however, completed by F. Eric Roberts, a noted School academic of the time.

I met Mike again relatively recently at the London OH Lunches at the Doggett's. By this time Mike was well known as the pinnacle of bell ringing, ringing at the most prestigious religious and other locations and as part of the events taking place in those places. He had also, by this time, developed into a very accomplished teller of wicked tall tales! It was a pleasure always to meet and talk with him, and he will be missed.

As you can see, my *OH Mag* was instrumental in fostering a range of memories, most pleasurable and some 'contemplative'. Thank you again for the mag.

Derek Wintle (OH 1948–54)

Photo (above): At the bus stop with my dear, late mother, on my first day in 1948.

Photos (right): A copy of my first and only year picture, 1948/49; At the Eighth World Scout Jamboree, Niagara on the Lake, Toronto in 1955. Also in the shot is David Evans (OH), with one of our Canadian hosts. Patrick Broome, also an OH, was also at the Jamboree, though not on this picture. We were all representatives for Herefordshire/Worcestershire/Warwickshire.

Past Masters

I was sorry to hear of Mr 'Dotty' Morse's death because I had not been in contact with him for many years now, thinking that he had certainly already left us. He was a remarkable man and a deep influence on me as an adolescent back in the 1950s.

I was no star in his French lessons, but he was signals officer in the CCF and I quickly picked up his love for radio and electronics. Does anyone else remember the Weather net and 21 Alpha every midday – then the morse code repetitions towards the end of lunch break?

A lasting memory is the building of an automatic telephone exchange for the internal school lines. It was a considerable task to find the requisite relays and other components in Army Surplus stores, then cable them together. The skills I learnt at the task brought many burnt fingertips, but a lasting ability to solder neat joints that has served me in good stead many times for repairing (or building) laboratory equipment for my work. I can remember parts of the colour sequence for coding cables by numbers that he used: 'Blue, Orange, Green, Nut (brown) and Slate (black)', but I cannot remember the full sequence or the mnemonic we used to remember them by. Can anyone else remember that? He was always encouraging and helpful and treated his adolescent students as proper people. He always had new projects in mind and I'm sure that even 97 years would not have been enough to clear the backlog! Thank you, Sir.

Other masters that I remember from the time were the Biology teacher, Mr Rowlands, who gave me precious help in organising my interest in the biological sciences. In fact, due to his encouragement I found and read (without much understanding!), before going up to university, the brief letter signed by Watson and Crick in *Nature* – a journal available for consultation in the City library – describing the structure of DNA. I was a few years late, and in 1953 I could not have imagined the import, but in 1958 or 1959 'Jimmy' Rowlands did, and transmitted it to me.







Another deep impression was made by the brief presence of B.C.L. Kemp as Chemistry master. He died in a tragic accident only a couple of terms after coming to the school, but had written a splendid textbook on inorganic chemistry which I had read with interest. He let me help him in preparing the materials for practical lessons and in clearing out the 'horrors' (his term) in the storeroom, which had remained accumulating dust since before the Great War…

All these masters allowed me some access to the laboratories over the holidays, and I could use the microscopes and other equipment in the biology lab to examine local pond and ditch samples to try to catalogue the 'infusoria' present. My favourite beastie was an elegant rotifer of a pale pink colour; I think it was called *Philodena roseata*… I cannot even imagine the problems that this would cause today!

To the right as you came into the science building was a courtyard with two fives courts backing onto the unused gymnasium building. It was felt that gymnastics was not a sufficiently virile activity for boys… This gave rise to the memorable comment by our Physics master (whose name escapes me): "for your magnetometry measurements you may go into the forecourt – or even, if necessary, to the fives courts"… I still am not sure if that was a calculated pun or an accident.

Back in 1967, I received the authorisation to establish myself as a permanent resident in France, where I held posts as a research worker in several government agencies. When I sent a brief letter to Mr Morse to tell him the news, I got a succinct reply on a postcard in memory of my linguistic abilities in his lessons: "Pauvre France". I wish I had kept that postcard!

Dr Timothy Greenland (OH 1959)

Photo: Phil Stilliard, Dotty and Anne Moorse.



SOON after hearing a talk by Major John Blashford Snell, leader of the Zaire River expedition, boys of Hereford Cathedral School are off on a river expedition of their own.

And although their 100 mile trip down the Wye may not quite compare with Major Blashford Snell's voyage down

Chepstow, here they come ...

the rapids of the mighty Congo, they are hoping to raise money from their trip for the Save the Children Fund.

The ten boys, aged 17 and 18, finish their GCE "A" level exams this week, and on Sunday they will be setting off in five inflatable dinghies from Glasbury to paddle down river as far as Chepstow.

The expedition is being led by the school's head boy, Hugh Kent, and coming along to point out the differences between the Wye and the Zaire rivers will be another of the school's pupils, Michael Sandy, who lived for some time in Africa.

The members of the Wye River Expedition are spo fro hop tha

Boys will paddle for children's fund

Gates must go, residents told

Riding the Wye

A Summer of Dinghies, Sunburn, and Freedom

It was the long, hot summer of 1975. Fields shimmered, rivers dwindled, and a group of twelve HCS schoolboys – fresh from their A-levels and eager for one last adventure together – launched a flotilla of small rubber dinghies onto the River Wye.

Maybe someone decided that paddling, as in a canoe, as in actually seeing where you were going, would be 'wimping out' so we did it rowing, as in facing backwards and not seeing where you were going. It was important to remember to look when you went down the rapids, We went down the rapids like a flock of owls.

John Blashford-Snell, the great explorer, was an inspiration and, at that time, somewhere up the Congo. His name was mentioned frequently. If he could do it, so could we.

The journey – over a hundred miles from Glasbury in Wales to the mudflats of Chepstow – was ostensibly to raise money for charity, but really it was raising something rarer: the belief that, with a little nerve, you could dream up an expedition and simply set off.

"It was a brilliant trip, scorching hot," remembers Nick. "Recovering from nasty sunburn to my back and shoulders took a while, but it was all worth it."



A River Running Thin

The Wye, usually a swift companion, was running low that year. At Hay the water disappeared entirely under the bridge. "There was a severe drought in the summer of 1975," one recalls. "Very soon after we started the trip, we had to drag the boats... the river had completely dried up."

Oars clattered on stone, rubber squeaked, and bare shoulders blistered. But the hardships only added to the sense of daring. Cooling off meant plunging into the river at every chance, something several later admitted they might hesitate to do today, given pollution. In 1975, it was part of the adventure: water, sun, and freedom.

A Thorn in the Foot

Not every memory is carefree. Near Hereford, Mark Simon stepped on a blackthorn that pierced the sole of his shoe.

"The following morning it had started to become hot and inflamed," he remembers. "At Hereford A&E, Dr Hardy – father of my schoolmate John Hardy and brother of the actor Robert Hardy – sliced into the wound in an attempt to flush out the thorn tip. There was a tsunami of blood, but thankfully it worked!"

He emerged stitched, bandaged, and ordered not to walk. Instead, he hobbled back to the rowing club on crutches, trying – in vain – to keep his foot dry for the rest of the journey. "A considerable problem," he notes, "when being in very close proximity to the river."

> "Looking back, I think we all marvel at the freedom we were granted."

The Long Goodbye

The boats created ripples that gently creased the lazy water, lifting blossoms and the scents of meadowsweet, honeysuckle, and lime. We dipped our oars into Constable paintings, pulled through long, vaulted aisles and watched time itself settle behind us.

Rod's brother, Laurie, a year out from school and rowing at university, sprinted ahead towards the end of each day to ensure the pints were on hand when the rest of the group came in. We were young, but old enough to know the importance of rehydration. Campsites had been selected accordingly.

Mud, Tides, and Triumph

As the Wye broadened and drew towards the sea, the challenge shifted. Here we discovered the strange logic of tides: that you could row with all your might and still find yourself going backwards.

"We had to get a line to the shore and wait for a few hours," one remembers, "or end up going backwards very fast."

Finally, after days of sun, sweat, and laughter, we reached Chepstow. The last test was mud – deep, tidal, unrelenting. Dragging the dinghies up through it, we collapsed in exhaustion and triumph, caked in the river's final gift.



1975: A Simpler World

Beyond our small flotilla, Britain was alive with its own stories. Harold Wilson's government had just won the referendum to remain in the European Community. Inflation was running at over 20 per cent, but a pint of bitter still cost 20p and a gallon of petrol about 70p.

At Wimbledon, Arthur Ashe stunned the world by defeating Jimmy Connors. Bruce Springsteen had released *Born to Run*, its restless chords a soundtrack to youth. In the cinema, *Jaws* kept audiences away from the sea – though not, it seems, from rivers.

And on radios, Captain & Tennille's 'Love Will Keep Us Together' played on repeat – a reminder that, for many, 1975 was a year of sunshine and possibility.

Half a Century Later

Looking back, I think we all marvel less at our stamina than at the freedom we were granted.

"Would today's students be able to organise such an adventure," asks Mike, "or be allowed to do it with practically no supervision? I doubt it."

Risk assessments, insurance, liability – all the words absent from that golden summer. In their place stood trust, courage, friendship – and simply the river of life.

Fifty years on, the memories flow together: sunburned shoulders, laughter on the water, crutches propped against a dinghy, tides tugging us backwards, fine cold beer, perfumed air, and the long drift of a beautiful river in its summer skin.

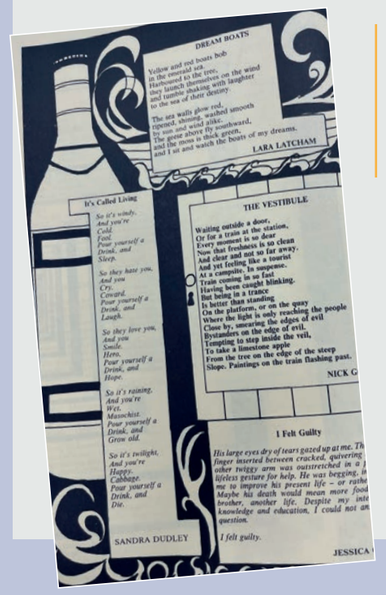
Laurie Jones (OH 1973)

OHs who were on the dinghies: Mark Simon; Nick Mayers; Rob Pye; Rod Jones and brother Laurie; Jon Carver; Neil Thorburn; Mike Lacey; Andrew Worthington; Mike Sandy; Richard Grobecker; and Hugh Kent.



Pills and Presidents by Laurence Middleton Jones is published this year: a humorous memoir which tells stories from his life as a locum pharmacist, video producer and tour guide. Published by RhosDirion Press, available from Amazon.

OH Literary Supplement


DREAM BOATS

Yellow and red boats bob
In the emerald sea
Harboured by the trees,
They launch themselves on the wind
And tumble shaking with laughter
To the sea of their destiny.

The sea wails grey cold,
Tipped, shining, washed smooth
By sun and wind alike.
No sun and wind fly overhead,
The great above is thick grey,
And the moon is thick grey,
And I sit and watch the boats of my dreams.

LARA LATCHAM

It's Called Living

So it's windy,
And you're
Cold.
Cool,
Pour yourself a
Drink, and
Sleep.

So they hate you,
And you
Cry.
Coward.
Pour yourself a
Drink, and
Laugh.

So they love you,
And you
Smile.
Hero.
Pour yourself a
Drink, and
Hope.

So it's raining.
And you're
Wet.
Masochist.
Pour yourself a
Drink, and
Grow old.

So it's twilight,
And you're
Happy.
Cabbage.
Pour yourself a
Drink, and
Die.

SANDRA DUDLEY

THE VESTIBULE

Waiting outside a door,
Or for a train at the station,
Every moment is so dear
Now that freshness is so clean
And clear and not so far away.
And yet feeling like a tourist
At a campsite. In suspense.
Train coming in so fast
Having been caught blinking.
But being in a trance
Is better than standing
On the platform, or on the quay
Where the light is only reaching the people
Close by, smearing the edges of evil
Bystanders on the edge of evil.
Tempting to step inside the veil,
To take a limestone apple
From the tree on the edge of the steep
Slope. Paintings on the train flashing past.

NICK G

I Felt Guilty

His large eyes dry of tears gazed up at me. Th
finger inserted between cracked, quivering
other twiggy arm was outstretched in a
lifeless gesture for help. He was begging, i
me to improve his present life – or rathe
Maybe his death would mean more food
brother, another life. Despite my inte
knowledge and education, I could not an
question.

I felt guilty.

JESSICA

Most OHs will be aware that for many years poetry appeared in the *Old Herefordian* and in 1977 it was joined by prose and placed in a supplement denoted by coloured paper and illustrations to enhance the works.

We have decided to revive the tradition of the literary supplement and in this inaugural year have chosen works from Old Herefordians' past submissions.

However, we are looking for contributions from OHs for next year's supplement. I'm sure that many of you still enjoy writing poetry or prose and we would love to have the opportunity to read it. Please submit your contributions to Lara Latcham by email: lara.latcham@gmail.com.

Untitled

SARAH HEALD (1976)

An awareness begins.
Teasing play of fingertips and subtle words
They manipulate
Until the dance begins.
And the dancers start quiet then whirl laughing
As the music flows through their limbs
And the rose reveals a little of her secret.
He leaves, with no warning,
No word, no sign
He departs from her.
Cruel in her lust she pursues
Twisting her heart in more agony,
As every time she dares to approach
The golden and the good
Become more lost.
Moments there sometimes are,
Moments of quiet,
Gentle as moths settling on dusky roses,
Or shy flowers trying to open to an autumn sun,
And hope flies too high.
The dance quickens, would reach perfection
Had not caution and fear prevented,
Prevented what should have been,
And she turns aside,
With tears of guilt for her selfishness,
With tears of regret for her cowardice.

Rehearsing Butterflies

ANDREW PRICE (1981)

In love and summer – kiss the dew for me,
At least in dreams which take away the sun:
Rehearsing butterflies;
And I wait.

On names which scream conformity in wood,
And biting railings blistered with the cold –
Pretending not to weep:
And I wait.

Asphyxia in priceless jewels of ice;
As night retreat behind the dunes of snow
The overture begins:
And I wait.

Commit your prayers and hope your crimes are heard,
As 'Thou shalt not…' continues yet in vain,
Despite the ebbing looks:
And I wait.

The curtain's up on sceneless doors all closed;
The faceless human porcelain, all smiles,
Is held in instinct's purse.

And I wait…

In fear of love, and winter's day retreat,
Where scripted dreams relive their 'rave reviews':
Rehearsing butterflies;
And I wait.

After the Service

BETH REES (1978)

Will women weep?
And old men cry?
Shall a heavy veil hang,
Clouding everyone's thoughts?
Will they offer their condolences
Then retire until next called out?
But no,
Sisters butter bread.
Do you think so and so will come?
Aunts sit in dreary hats,
Their thighs and bosoms sagging,
The crimplene smelling of damp and mothballs.
Sipping sherries.
Up against the parlour wall
Stand three figures
No-one knows who they are
Not relations or friends of the family.
"They look like 'rent a crowd'",
Says someone in his whisky.
"Shh! They might hear."
Uncles lean back and mop beaded brows,
Unbutton waistcoats,
Let paunches hang out to dry.
An elderly cousin,
Balances cheese and pickle on one knee
Pecks, the cheeps,
"We should be quiet and respectful.
Shh! It's what she would have wanted."
Children are capyured and introduced
To sallow faces with warts on eyelids
And cheeks like vellum.
Five sweaty sausages are thrust in theirs
And someone giggles gleefully
"You don't remember me?
When I last saw you, you were so high."
"Smile, John,"
Says an anxious father.
But everyone's smiling
Toasting the 'old girl'.
Funny though,
She was never as popular before.

Ode to an Overdose

HELEN MORRIS (1980)

I dream a dream of happiness,
So far from present state;
I wake to find the morning
With greed and spite and hate;
I recall the distance thought-spheres,
I cry for promised lands;
For joy and smiles and laughter,
I outstretch my ugly hands.

I will pay the price of life,
But contentment seems unreal;
For when I get to Paradise,
Amazement will I feel;
I never knew such peacefulness,
No bitter, racking tear;
I can see into my future,
And I know grief's end is near.

The Vestibule

NICK GOODE (1982)

Waiting outside a door,
Or for a train at the station,
Every moment is so dear
Now that freshness is so clean
And clear and not so far away.
And yet feeling like a tourist
At a campsite. In suspense.
Train coming in so fast
Having been caught blinking.
But being in a trance
Is better than standing
On the platform, or on the quay
Where the light is only reaching the people
Close by, smearing the edges of evil
Bystanders on the edge of evil.
Tempting to step inside the veil,
To take a limestone apple
From the tree on the edge of the steep
Slope. Paintings on the train flashing past.

Contrasting Sounds

SUZANNE WATSON (1977)

That lovely lady is on her
Honeysuckle march,
Awakening the bluebells
From an earthly slumber –
So sweet their thanks
In myriad trills of
Fresh-forged bells.
Hear them: like a rill of
Rainwater
Tumbling in mirth
Upon the fields.

The liquid fluttering
Of butterflies
Like frail-hearted
Old ladies
Palpitating
Midst the grasses.

But loudest
Now
The cry of man,
His hatred of the
Filth and dirt
That he has given
Life. These vile
Creations
Have no ending.
Born of us
They work toward eternity,
Cold metallic voices
Speaking of destruction.

Tomorrow
There will be no Spring.

Orpheus in the Classroom

ELIZABETH PORTER

The Italian boys on a one-way exchange
disturbed our summer term. We hadn't expected
blonde hair, blue eyes
blue as the jeans they wore to lessons.

Their white shirts dazzled
reflecting the sunlight;

we sulked and sweltered in uniform.

They were louche
they swaggered
they were way too happy
laughing in a corner of the grey school yard;

they blatantly smoked –

the teachers were speechless.

A year or so later, Sir pressed play
on a hissing cassette, told us to listen:

one of those boys, compliant after all,
his voice like honey falling from a spoon
brought our Latin text to life
reciting the lines we thought we knew:
the snake at her ankle, descent, pursuit
and heartless warning: don't look back …

(Who doesn't look back?)

He astonished us –
those chiding consonants
when he spoke her name
Eurydice
Eurydice
beseeching his lover not to forsake him.

As the disembodied voice unspooled, we understood
or so we thought
how love and song bring back the dead.
We didn't learn. We were too young.

UCCA Serial Number 395481

LARA LATCHAM (1984)

I'm on the verge of it all,
the world is waiting –
like a gloved, masked surgeon
on the point of opening up.
My life is beginning … QUOTE,
but I can't help reminiscing,
I think of all that's past.

There is a bright corridor,
so many appealing doors,
but the door of the room I've left …
is not quite shut yet.
I am torn between familiar realities,
and ways that still appear as dreams.

I've chosen a door
because I liked the name on it …
so, giving the others a longing look,
I prepare a smile and go through.
The lady behind her desk smiles too.
She is white and soft and looks kind,
but her eyes, behind glasses, shine.
"Is there anything we can do?"
I told her all about myself …
I said that Lawrence didn't understand women,
and she agreed that he couldn't have known.
I even told her about a soldier
who dug a trench too deep …
it went right through my heart.
We talked about ulcers, and I said that I wanted to write, but
it is acting that keeps me alive,

and she smiled, and she offered me chocolate biscuits,

but I told her that they hurt my ulcers.

She said that I had to learn Spanish,
and she recommended Elizabeth Bowen.

Her letter of reply said 'bbc xspan' …
which, translated, means hard work.
and I read till my eyes were aching,
and I wrote all that I could,
and now I'm lying on the table …
the post mortem is due any day.
If only I could remember
what I wrote and what I did say.

When the girl in the shop said
"Can I help you?"I asked to sit down and think for a while.
She looked at me as if I was crazy,
I just smiled and walked away.

And if the door does close before me …
the one I chose so thoughtfully?
I think that I shall cry …
What am I supposed to do?

I have search every page of my little blue book,
but UCCA doesn't cater for broken dreams.

Dry

TIFFANY MURRAY (1983)

She ambles amid her dreams,
reaches for her saviour.
It lies there, inanimate and incomplete.
She grasps that excuse for life.

Guilt dries over the swirling colours,
it is discarded, empty and unloved, now.
She is full of danger and remorse;
life looks better through those jaded eyes.

They found the dead piece of meat;
they cried for it, now.
If those tears had fallen before,
would she amble alone once more?

MATCHES OH WEDDINGS

Marriage celebrations

1 Naomi Barker (OH 2017) got married on 15th February 2025 to Hannah Mulcahy at Whirlowbrook Hall, Sheffield. She became Mrs Naomi Mulcahy. Maid of honour was Niamh Adams (OH 2017).

2 Xander Drury (OH 2011) married Rosie Peters in Milston, Wiltshire on 5th October 2024, a perfect autumnal day shared with friends, family and many OHs. Tom Bull (OH 2011) was Best Man, George Hanks (OH 2011), Alex Thorman (OH 2011) and Charlie Scotcher (OH 2012) were groomsmen, and Ruairi Bowen (OH 2009) performed a stunning solo during the wedding ceremony. Other OHs in attendance were Fred Lifely, Olly Butler, Fred Williams, Tom Knight and Oli Cross.

3 Polly Haydn Jones (OH 2010) married Vincent Livesey Vilanova on 28th June 2025. The marriage service took place in Hereford Cathedral, led by Revd James Pacey and with beautiful music from Hereford Cathedral School's Chamber Choir. This was followed by a reception at Polly's home, near Ledbury, where the couple danced the night away with friends and family.

Photo © Chris Allerton: Polly with OH friends Felicity Padgett, Felicity Chamberlain, Miranda Aplin, Emma Bellingham and Livvy Davies.

4 Caitlin Price (OH 2014) married Alex Piggott at Syrencot House, Wiltshire, in November 2024 surrounded by family and friends.

5 Anna Skyrme (OH 2017) married her long-term partner Jack Leighton on 7th June 2025. They married at Marden Church in Herefordshire, which Anna has attended her whole life. Academia Musica, a choir from Hereford Sixth Form College, which Anna had been a member of, sang beautiful hymns including 'I Was Glad' by H. Parry. This hymn was one of the first songs Anna sang at HCS with the Chapel choir. The reception took place at Lyde Arundel, where everyone celebrated with music from the wonderful Wildfire Band. OHs in attendance were Anna Ray, Hannah Hughes, Myfanwy Hywel and Ailsa Thomson (in picture 7). Myfanwy Hywel (known as 'Myf's Kitchen') baked the wedding cake and the brownies. The couple had a wonderful honeymoon in Galway and Dublin to celebrate the start of their marriage.

6 Charlotte Spreckley (OH 2016) got married to Tim Jones on 26th April 2025 at St Mary's Church Almeley, Hereford. The couple decided to combine their names and are now Mr and Mrs Spreckley-Jones.

7 Congratulations to **Penny-Anne Vaughan** (OH 2017) who got engaged to Samuel Davies in December 2024.













Recent births

8 Jonathan Hitchiner (OH 2013) and his partner Lizzie welcomed twins into the world on 17th September 2024. Named Henry and Noa, they are both very healthy and happy babies. They join older brother Leo. Jonathan is Whitfield Aspen School SRP Class Teacher.

9 Kate Dillon (neé Owens, OH 2011) and her husband James welcomed their second child, Mia Margaret Dillon, on 17th March 2025. She joins big brother George, who is delighted with her arrival!

10 Romily Hall (née Giddens, OH 2017) and husband Joshua welcomed their second daughter, Tegwen Ottoline Unity in October 2024. Tegwen joins her sister, Menai Lamorna Coroller, born in December 2022.

11 Charlotte Wardle (née Morris, OH 2004) and her husband David welcomed their beautiful daughter, Aurelia, in April 2024. Due to a mix-up in last year's magazine we are re-running her baby photo along with a recent photo.


8


11


10


9



AN EPIC MATCH

"This legend of a day is only possible thanks to the players and supporters."

This year's battle for the OH rugby cup truly came as an epic in three parts, to rival some of the classics. Allow me to paint you the picture of what has rapidly become the most hotly anticipated sporting clash since the Spartans had a little roll about with the Persians at the pass of Thermopylae.

As with any true epic, our story begins with a feast. Over 100 tickets were sold for the inaugural OH Sports Day spectators' lunch. OHs from all over the country descended on The Rusty Bridge Restaurant to break bread and share tall tales of their lives after schooling together, oh so many years ago. Over £800 was raised in the raffle for MND in honour of the rugby connection, with the speaker being OH Paul Thorburn, Welsh International Player and Guiness Record Holder.

The approach to the battlefield was a short walk over the racecourse, to the Greyhounds Rugby Club, which once again kindly hosted us. This was the setting for both the football and rugby matches of the day.

So the scene was set, and the spectators were pouring in. The normally-favourite Young OH side could be seen warming up like a well-oiled machine, showing training drills straight out of the All-Blacks playbook. The Old OH side were at times seen to break into a light trot while passing the ball between themselves, the way in which one man might toss another a bag of crisps at a bar.

With the near-professional league ref having been satisfied both sides understood the latest game laws, the teams were ready for kick off. Young OH kicked to Old OH, Old OH secured the ball and didn't lose possession until they had successfully crossed the line to be a dominant first on the score board, try perfectly scored by Jake Coates. It was clear from this first exchange of fire who the more dominant team would be.

Soon there came the inevitable knock on, leading to expertly executed demonstration of how quickly a Young OH scrum could switch into reverse gear, under the mighty load of the Old OH's pushing power. They quickly exacted their revenge when they realised the absolute absence of co-ordination in the line out from the Old OH. This was to be the story of the day, with the full-time stats showing not a single scrum won by the Young OH and not a single Old OH line out victory.

Open play was truly a spectacle to behold and a treat for all on the sidelines on this unusually mild and dry mid-October day. The Old OH able to dominate with their sheer physicality, sending Young OH bodies flying from rucks and breaking tackles for fun. The Young OHs, in turn, treated the baying crowd to some truly transcendent turns of pace, whipping the ball from side to side, running rings around some of the old dogs.

"The Young OH side could be seen warming up like a well-oiled machine."

With the first half complete, the Old OH were on top, heading into the second half as firm favourites. Tom Austwick gave the cheering crowd a perfect display of finesse, completing a full length of the pitch, dancing out of tackles to score under the posts, before drop kicking it over the sticks for the extra two points.

It was at this point that the tables were set to be turned. An unexpected injury forced the forward laden Young OH team to declare they had no further props and the scrums must go uncontested. (Certainly no hint of dastardly tactics here...) This scuppered a key advantage of the Old OH. A few quick tries and the scores were looking worryingly











even with the Old OH still marginally on top. It was at this point that the young guns gained their confidence and their secret weapon came in.

Much like the Persians on that beach in Greece, the Younger OH had their own traitor on their side in the form of the much older coach, Matt Milsom. He was able to lend the already pre-game favourites the benefit of his many years of playing experience. His play was rewarded in the second half when, in an unusual display of sportsmanship between comrades, one Young OH, having made the run up the wing, dodging tackles and outrunning pursuers, handed Milsom the ball to score the try, ensuring immortality for the coach in the school's record books. Cute.

A firm resurgence of play from the Old OH saw a criminally disallowed try from Ed Mence. Several gut-wrenching phases passed before the Old OH finally went back up on the board to take back the lead. With the minutes counting down, against all odds and playing into uncontested scrums the Old OH truly felt the victory coming. A savage turn of fate saw Sam Yeo sneak over the line to even the score in the dying seconds. This was sadly followed by a further two points coming from Young OH Ben Yeo to clinch the third victory in a row for the Young OH side, the score line fishing at an unconvincing 26–28.

The third part of our tale will have to remain lost to the annals of history, as the players and spectators headed away from the battlefield to share stories and refreshments. Commencing in the clubhouse of the Greyhounds once again, the annual OH Sports Day pub crawl was begun, seeing the hundreds of attendees let loose on the city of Hereford.

> "A firm resurgence of play from the Old OH saw a criminally disallowed try from Ed Mence."

This legend of a day is only possible thanks to the players and supporters. We were saddened at the news that both hockey and netball were unable to be played due to a lack of players, so please get in touch with the OH Committee if you are able and willing to play in any of the sports on this highlight day in the OH calendar. We will also soon be releasing tickets for next year's spectator lunch, so do drop us a line to keep you updated when the date is released!

Dave Smith (OH 2012)

Sports Day photos © Isla Hampson






















1-1 to HCS on penalties


FOOTBALL

























Paul Thorburn

GUEST SPEAKER











Paul Thorburn (OH 1981) was guest speaker at this year's OH Sports Day. Paul played for Neath RFC when he left school and went on to play for Welsh Rugby Union internationally.

Paul set the record for the longest field kick (70 yards), which he took in the 1986 Five Nations tournament against Scotland at Cardiff Arms Park (as was). We spoke to Paul about his recollections of HCS...

What memories stay with you from your days at HCS and in what way do you think HCS contributed to your successful career in rugby?

To say I was academically challenged would be an understatement – even though my mother was a primary school teacher. I never really liked reading, I was more interested in the extra-curricular activities – weekend trips, CCF, acting in school plays. These were my lifeline all the way through. I was never the top of any class academically, although I was always first choice in all things sporting wise.

I achieved five O-levels – I failed English and had to resit. I carried on into A-levels and was very much part of the Cathedral School – I played rugby, cricket, athletics for the county. I was a prefect. I did three sciences and struggled. I left with one E and went on to retake at sixth form college in Swansea, where my parents lived. I then studied at university in Swansea, where I did a foundation year to get onto a degree course in microbiology (the study of viruses and bacteria). This led to work in business development with Glaxo-Welcome.

Who on earth knows what they want to do when they are 16/17/18? I had academic older brothers – one became a dentist in the RAF. My middle brother, Andrew (Chink), had an equally starry rugby beginning, having studied A-levels at HCS, where he was captain of the school rugby team.

Who taught you to play rugby? Are there any teachers you stayed in touch with after leaving HCS?

Bob Talbot was in charge of rugby and Ege Parker led drama (he directed *Salad Days,* which I was in) so I stayed in touch with both of them. I had learned how to play rugby before school as Dad played for Cardiff Rugby Club youth team – so it's true to say sport has an awful lot to answer for in how our lives have taken shape within the Thorburn family.

Did you always imagine a career in sport?

The game wasn't professional in those days – even when playing internationally. 1995 is when the game became professional. When I was a player it was very much a hobby, which I wanted to do to the best level. Passion for rugby gave me career opportunities. I failed most exams but mind-blowing opportunities still came my way.

Do you have any regrets from those early years?

Education in general steers people through exams and learning – some who aren't geared up to it at the time it's happening and aren't able to absorb information at an early stage. I'm not sure why I stuck with academia but in the end, with resilience and endurance, I got my degree. Opportunities did arise through playing rugby – an opportunity to go and work in Japan (for Coby) and America – sport gave me those opportunities. On the back of rugby I had an offer to study land economy at Cambridge University, all driven by my rugby abilities. I didn't follow up on those offers mainly due to my family commitments – by this time I was married with young children – and maybe I regret those decisions sometimes. In 1987 I played for the LA Rams at Wembley and there was an opportunity to play professional American football, but it would have been all about the kicking and I thought I would get bored of that.

From Glaxo I went to work for the Welsh Development Agency – set up to attract investment into Wales – until 1996. I took the role of Tournament Director for the Rugby World Cup in 1999.

There have been some lucky twists and turns in the journey – what I say is, don't worry about what you do as long as you persevere. My love and passion of sport (everything) got me through. The thing the school gave me was opportunity to do these things.

Life is not all about getting As and A*s – you have to have other things that give you the tools to give you skills in life, like resilience. I really rate the importance of extra-curricular activities for individuals.

Photos: (top left) Paul Thorburn at Sports Day lunch with Charlie Skyrme (left) and Dave Smith (right). (Top right) Paul in his rugby playing heyday.



Common Room Shuffle

MOVERS AND SHAKERS

MR BEN ABBOTT

Teacher of Drama (2015–25)

Mr Abbott joined us in 2015, having previously led the English and Drama departments at John Kyrle High School. He was an inspiring, energetic and deeply respected Head of English for nine years, encouraging students with enthusiasm and a deep appreciation for literature in all its forms.

Although he briefly flirted with the idea of retiring last summer, when it became clear the School had a need for both A-Level Drama and Speech and Drama teaching, Mr Abbott was kind enough to step in. He has been an excellent member of the Drama Department this year, not least in his support of our productions of *Sister Act* and *The Light Burns Blue*, as well as continuing to musically direct his much-loved Acafellas.

We wish him every happiness as he writes some exciting new chapters in his life.

MISS STEPHANIE BESCOBY

Teacher of Art (2023–24)

Miss Bescoby joined the Art Department in the summer term of 2023 as maternity cover. Her dedicated and enthusiastic nature quickly made her a valued member of the team. She demonstrated great care for pupils and made significant contributions to the wider life of the school, earning her the respect and affection of the student body. Stephanie took part in the CCF field days and ran the Junior Art Club, showcasing her commitment beyond the classroom. Her versatility shone through as she also taught within the Design & Technology Department, showcasing her wide range of skills and adaptability.

MRS CATHERINE DAVIES

Teacher of Geography and Spanish (2022–25)

Mrs Davies joined the Geography and Spanish departments in 2022, bringing a wealth of experience as a teacher and leader in schools in the southeast and as a GCSE examiner. She also holds valuable experience of living and working abroad.

She quickly became known and respected for having high expectations of pupils, but also getting to know and caring about each one individually, and having a classroom which is always calm and purposeful, but full of curiosity and wonder. She has made an enormous contribution to the academic and pastoral life of the school, from her very popular weekly revision sessions, to field trips to Iceland and South Wales, and, this academic year, as Head of Year 10. She will be greatly missed, but we wish her the best of luck as her family relocates overseas, hoping very much that it is a case of *à bientôt* rather than goodbye.

MR SIMON GILBERT

Teacher of Maths (2022–25)

Mr Gilbert joined HCS in January 2022, moving to us from the Falkland Islands, where he was national roller hockey champion! He has taught Maths throughout the Senior School as well as helping with CCF and DofE. In Maths, he has organised the Maths Challenges, as well as delivering excellent taster day sessions for prospective pupils. He is a wizard on spreadsheets and a brilliant photographer. He will be missed as he leaves us to move to Sidcot School. We wish him and his family every success and happiness in the future.

MR JAMES HERRING

Teacher of English (2024–25)

Mr Herring joined the English Department in 2024 for six months as maternity cover after teaching in China. He was popular with students and enthusiastic about exploring English literature. Mr Herring also helped lead a number of trips for the boarding house students. We wish him all the best for the future.

Photo: Mr Abbott appeared on Mastermind in September, answering questions on his specialist subject, 'The History of Hereford Cathedral 1079–1900', and secured himself a place in the semi-final.

MISS HANNAH LARKIN (OH)

Assistant Teacher / Netball (2024–25)

Miss Larkin joined HCJS in 2003 as a four-year-old with a sense of humour beyond her years and an air of happiness that has never left. Fast forward 22 years and it is time for Hannah to fly the nest, taking with her all she has learnt, given and experienced, and to discover the joys Down Under. As a member of the Common Room, Hannah has been an outstanding role model, not just to pupils, but to colleagues alike. Her commitment to the School has been unwavering. We will sorely miss her contribution to school sport and beyond, and wish her the best of luck. It is certain Hannah will maintain the values of what it means to be Blue & Gold wherever she goes.

> "Although he briefly flirted with the idea of retiring last summer, when it became clear the School had a need, Mr Abbott was kind enough to step in."

MISS LUCY SMITH

Graduate Assistant (2024–25)

Miss Smith has been a tremendous academic asset to Wilmot House this year. She has generously dedicated her time to supporting the boarders across a wide range of subjects. We all wish her every success as she embarks on her next chapter at Cambridge University. We are confident that the skills she has developed during her time with us will serve her well in her future career as a teacher. Miss Smith will also be greatly missed on Friday afternoons, where she has played an active role in the Navy section of the CCF.

The Merlyn



It was a pleasure to have the inventor of the 'Merlyn' bowling machine, Henry Pryor, visit us. The machine was developed in 2005 and was first used by the England cricket team to practise ready for the spin of the late, great Shane Warne.

The machine is now living at HCS at the request of Henry and his son Mathew, as they would like it used to help develop the cricketing talent of the future. They came into school to see a batting session led by Head Cricket Coach Mr Monteith for the girls' and boys' captains, who, after presenting Henry with a HCS baggy cap, joined us for lunch.

IN HENRY'S OWN WORDS...

I, together with my son Mathew and son-in-law Rory, was invited to Hereford Cathedral School to witness the first XI players practising with the Merlyn bowling machine in the sports hall supervised by the games master, Andy Rogers. This was the standard two-wheeler, able to bowl, spin and every kind of straight delivery from Yorker and long-hop to full toss at a variety of different speeds with a consistency to ensure the batter can eliminate dangerous faults.

Inevitably, my memory took me back to 2005, when England captain Michael Vaughan came to practise with the original four-wheel Merlyn, installed in the National Cricket Centre at Loughborough University where John Abrahams and the manager, Rodney Marsh, had heard about Meryln from my son, Mathew, at that time a sports writer on *The Times.* The Merlyn bowling machine was seen to be particularly important because it could replicate the violent leg breaks delivered by Shane Warne.

Determined to boost the confidence of members of the England team when going out to face Shane Warne, Michael Vaughan asked that Merlyn be delivered to all the test grounds two or three days before the start of each five-day test, starting with Lords itself. This we readily agreed to do. The original Merlyn had four drive wheels wet on a cross of St Andrew pattern. It was a heavy machine balanced on a frame supported on four wheels; the front ones steerable.

I have never driven so many wheels towing such a heavy load, but the reward was beyond all measure when we saw the umpires consulting before the one at the bowler's end made the signal to indicate that it was all over. They had decided that there was insufficient time left for the remaining Australian batsmen to be able to make the runs needed and so after 18 years we had won back the Ashes.

Now the two-wheel version of Merlyn, which you have at Hereford, is being used in most cricket playing countries and it is hoped that another version will be produced soon which will truly be able to deliver any ball known to cricket. Maybe when it is ready the boys and girls of HCS will get a chance to use it.

Henry Pryor

THE RHODES' MEMORIAL DEBATE

Saturday 7th December 2024

After much anticipation in advance of OH Day, the weekend of 7th/8th December 2024 arrived with warnings of 90 mph winds and a red weather warning issued as Storm Darragh approached... Never have I watched the weather forecast so carefully!

Thankfully, despite the high winds and the rain, the Powell Theatre was filled with OHs, past colleagues and friends and members of the Rhodes family as we gathered to remember the joint contribution of Richard and Anne Rhodes to our school community. Theirs was a truly remarkable contribution of almost 60 years of teaching – and so very much more – to the HCS and HCJS communities.

Both Richard and Anne were great supporters of debating at HCS and, under Richard's guidance, HCS won the coveted 'Mace' competition twice – in 1972 and 1981. It was therefore entirely fitting that the motion before the House, *'This House is proud of its classical tradition'*, was the brainchild of a member of the 1981 team – Professor Michael Walling – who came to the rescue, after much head-scratching on my part failed to think of a suitable motion! Many thanks, Michael, for this inspired suggestion.

It is testament to Richard and Anne that four debaters gathered from different parts – Alex Outhwaite from Portugal, Michael Walling from London, Oli Henman from Bath and Jeremy Wilding from Hereford – to produce a tremendously entertaining debating showcase which Richard and Anne would have so thoroughly enjoyed.

After the main speeches, in which persuasive arguments were made on both sides, the floor debate allowed others to contribute, including Gary Withers (who partnered Michael Walling in the victorious 1981 team) and fellow Classics teacher Siobhan de Souza among many others. After summary speeches, a vote was held and the opposition narrowly – very narrowly! – carried the day.

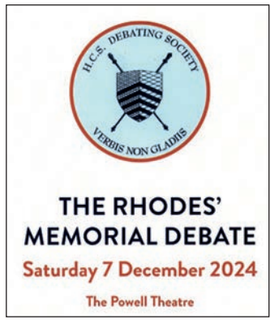
This brought to an end a thoroughly enjoyable, but at the same time very moving, afternoon, with so many fine tributes rightly being paid to Richard and Anne.

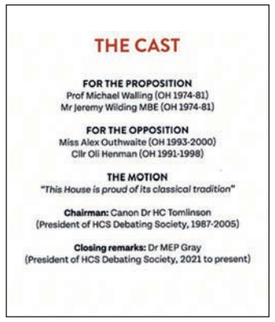


"Richard and Anne were great supporters of debating and, under Richard's guidance, HCS won the coveted 'Mace' competition twice "

It is a very considerable reflection of the number of people whose lives they touched that so many fought through such terrible weather to be present at the debate. My sincere thanks to all those who made this debate possible – to Dr Howard Tomlinson, who chaired with his usual panache, to the debaters who entertained everyone most wonderfully, and to all those behind the scenes who helped to organise the event. It is very clear that the very rich legacy left by Richard and Anne lives on.

Mark Jackson
Head of Economics and Business
Director of Debating at HCS







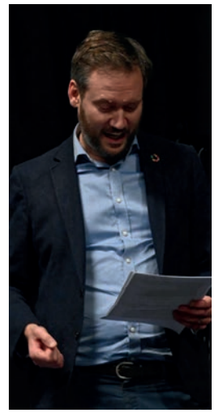




















OH ARMED FORCES REUNION





A successful and very enjoyable afternoon was held on Saturday 16th August 2025 in Tintern at The Anchor Inn, which is nestled by the River Wye and just a stone's throw from the old ruined Cistercian abbey.

The general feedback post the event was positive and that another gathering should be organised for 2026 and 2027, with gatherings after this provided on a biennial basis. With 2026's gathering in mind and in a bid to reach out to the many OHs who may have missed the initial clarion call for 2025's meeting, I am notifying everyone as early as possible so that a date can be fixed in diaries early giving those who managed to attend 2025's gathering to be able to spread the message yet further afield.

I did receive a number of apologies from serving OH's who were in fact currently deployed or about to be deployed, which was something that I initially expected when I first advertised this social gathering. However, I suspect there are a number of OHs who have perhaps lost contact with HCS or do not read/receive the *OH Magazine* for a variety of reasons.

Looking through HCS records I can ascertain that a career in the Armed Forces has been very popular for HCS pupils over the years. Certainly in my time at HCS as the SSI (1989–2010), over 180 pupils entered one of the Armed Forces.

Hopefully, with some early advertising and some lifting of the event's profile by those who attended in 2025, the attendance figures can be increased during 2026/27, before it then switches to a biennial gathering.

Any OHs currently serving or who have served in the Armed Forces, whether in a Regular or Reservist capacity, are welcome to join the merry band. To help me plan for 2026's event it would be useful at this stage for me to be able to gauge the likely numbers. Therefore, could those OHs interested in attending contact me (Mike Moffatt) by email on templarmjm@yahoo.co.uk before 1st March 2026, after which I will then in due course email out to everyone who has registered with me the detailed 'round robin' covering the event (date, time, location, etc).

I look forward to catching up with everyone once again 2026 and welcoming some new faces to Tintern.

Mike Moffatt

Photo: An assembly of OHs with Andrew Eames (former CO of the HCS CCF), Mike Moffatt (former SSI), Alex Campbell, Howard Tomlinson (HM, 1987–2005) and a stray dog. This first OH Armed Forces gathering took place at Tintern on 16th August 2025. The OHs represented 187 former pupils who entered the Forces during the 20 years of Mike Moffatt's service at HCS.



VJ DAY
The Supreme Sacrifice

Many of you would have watched on 15th August the screening of the Service of Remembrance at the Armed Forces Memorial at Alrewas in Staffordshire to mark the 80th Anniversary of VJ Day.

Among the 1,500 guests were 33 WW2 veterans, most now centenarians. The event paid tribute to those who fought and died during the War in the Far East and featured many moving first-hand testimonies from veterans themselves.

The Royal party arrived; His Majesty the King inspected the tri-service Guard of Honour; wreaths were laid, and the Royal party took their seats. The Guards Band then played the hymn 'O Valiant Hearts'. Immediately, my eyes welled up. This hymn of remembrance has a very close connection to the Cathedral School as it was specially composed and written as an everlasting tribute to one particular fallen Old Herefordian.

The words are by Sir John Arkwright (1872–1954) who was MP for Hereford, 1900–19. 'O Valiant Hearts' first emerged in a collection of poems he published in 1919, under the title 'The Supreme Sacrifice'.

The tune to which Arkwright's words are set was composed by the Reverend Dr Charles Harris (1865–1936), rector of Colwall, Herefordshire. It is believed Sir John first heard Harris' tune at a service in Bodenham Church and recognised its potential as a war hymn. The combination of Harris' tune and Arkwright's words was an immediate success – the hymn was included in the national service of interment for the Unknown Warrior in Westminster Abbey on 11th November 1920.

The composer's eldest son was Lt Charles Noel Harris (OH 1912–14) who was shot, aged 19, during the second attack on Gaza in April 1917. These days the hymn is rarely included in remembrance ceremonies and church services, perhaps because its words appear somewhat unfashionable, being patriotic rather than religious.

O Valiant Hearts, who to your glory came
Through dust of conflict and through battle-flame;
Tranquil you lie, your knightly virtue proved,
Your memory hallowed in the Land you loved.

Today, with the passing of VJ Day 80, we particularly remember all those from the school who made the supreme sacrifice while serving in the Far East during WW2, namely:

W.H. Davey (OH 1921–26)

E.J.R. Davies (OH 1927–34)

C.H. Griffiths (OH 1934–40)

J.H. Hincks (OH Junior 1918–20)

T.S. Hincks (OH 1918–22)

C.R. Averay Jones (OH 1931–31)

H.T.J. May (OH 1928–31)

D.B. Powell (OH 1932–36)

Martin Everett (OH 1956–59)

Photo: Charles Noel Harris (OH 1912–14)..

OBITUARIES

WE SAY FAREWELL...



ROBIN HAMMONDS
OH 1945–51

Robin was born on 30th January 1934, elder son of Geoffrey Hammonds OH, well known for taking team photographs at HCS. He died in December 2024 after a long illness, at the age of 90 in Canada where he had been living for over forty years.

At school he enjoyed all sporting activities, especially rowing, inherited from his father, who stroked the HCS 1924 Ist IV, and his grandfather, who was one of the founders of Hereford Rowing Club; for many years both had served as Captain and President. The highlight of his time as cox to the Ist IV was in 1949 when they won the prestigious Public Schools Challenge Cup at Marlow regatta, with Michael Moreton at stroke. Fifty years later, in 1999, Michael arranged a reunion for the crew, plus coach Mr Lush, at the Green Dragon.



After Robin left school he served an apprenticeship at Painter Brothers in Hereford, which deferred his call up for National Service. He joined the REME and was awarded a Short Service Commission. By this time he had married Ann Waddington, a former student at the Hereford Teachers Training College. Back in Hereford, he left Painter Brothers after helping to set up a satellite factory at Cinderford and went to work at Smart and Brown in Rotherwas, later to become Thorn EMI.

Robin was still keen on sports, playing football, cricket and golf, often accompanied by some of his five children. In 1978, after he was divorced, Thorn EMI offered him the job of setting up a lighting factory in New Zealand or Canada; he chose Canada and happily spent the rest of his life there with his partner of many years, Joan Neilson, still playing golf, restoring a vintage motor boat and teaching himself to play piano, well enough to join a Dixieland jazz band with numerous gigs, entertaining friends and family on his frequent return trips to the UK.

Robin leaves his partner Joan, five children, ten grandchildren, five great-grandchildren and brother Richard Hammonds.

Photos: Robin is pictured in the 1924 HCS crew photo in the archives as Stroke. He is seated in both photos to match the arrangement of the original group, which was, left to right: Michael Moreton (Capt. of Boats), CT Brooke (2), Mr HJ Lush (coach), BT Thom (bow), and JS Vaughan (stroke); with Robin – HJR Hammonds (cox) seated.

BILLY HOLLINGSWORTH
OH 2022



Billy was born to Kate and Jon Hollingsworth in April 2006. Kate gave birth early in the morning, just as Jon was boarding a plane to Iraq. He received the phone call to say you have another boy, to which he replied in his laid-back manner, "That's alright then." Jon returned later that week and met his newborn son.

Kate describes Billy as "pure love from the moment he was born." He was a chubby, happy baby with the sweetest temperament. As a family of four – big brother Jake, baby Billy, and their doting parents – they shared only seven precious months together before Jon was killed in action in the Iraq War, a month before Christmas.

The boys grew up in a loving, close-knit family in Hereford. Kate's parents and sisters were very much involved in Jake and Billy's lives – hands-on, supportive, and devoted.

Kate often marvelled at how much Billy was like his father. The very image of Jon, he even walked, talked, and laughed like him. A self-confessed mummy's boy, Billy once remarked, "What else was I going to be?"

Billy had an extraordinary memory as a youngster and a love of dinosaurs. By the age of six, he could name more than 30 species and delighted his family by reciting their long names – especially charming with the lisp he had as a child. A very young Billy met the Queen when the family received one of Jon's gallantry medals posthumously at a private investiture at Buckingham Palace. At 10 years old, Billy also met the now King when 'children of the fallen' were welcomed to an event at Highgrove.

After leaving school, Billy enrolled in a carpentry course, where he met his brotherhood of close friends. The woodworking didn't ignite much passion and he decided to train as a barber. He studied in Manchester – his favourite city and his grandmother's birthplace – before returning home to Hereford, where he quickly secured a job at Urban Barbers. His mentors, the business owners, were incredibly supportive and adored him as both a colleague and a friend. Billy was hugely popular – quietly witty, kind-hearted, and full of fun.

He dreamed of raising a large family of his own and hoped to live in Manchester. He loved music festivals, dancing, and being surrounded by friends. These dreams were tragically cut short when Billy died suddenly on 16th December 2024 in a collision, leaving his family heartbroken and bereft.



MAURICE JOHN JONES
OH 1953–60

Maurice started his education at the prep school in 1947, moving to HCS in1953, and remained connected to the school for his whole life. All his children attended HCS, as do his local grandchildren, and it was a proud moment when three generations were photographed outside the gates last year (see photo below).

During his school days, Maurice played for the first XV, but it was as an accomplished horseman, winning many rosettes, that he really excelled. His passion for all things equestrian led him to a successful period of breeding and showing ponies.

On leaving school Maurice entered into a dual business life. He initially worked at the established family business of Philip Morris & Son, a respected hardware shop in Widemarsh Street. After a few years he started to concentrate on the farming operations at Homelands, where he remained until he died on 13th April 2025.



Farming was in Maurice's blood – to him it was more important than just business. He was a stalwart of Hereford YFC and the YFC movement and became County Chairman. It was at a stock judging competition that he met his future wife, Bunty, and they were married in 1973. Thus began a wonderful marriage of over 50 years, with Bunty not only becoming his spouse but his strong business partner in all their future successes.

Maurice was a progressive farmer, always looking at new enterprises, and over the years pig farming, pedigree Charolais cattle and cider apple production were all successfully accomplished.

In 1976 Maurice had a catastrophic road accident whilst towing a horse box and was not expected to survive. It is a testament to his courage and determination that he did. The experience left him with lifelong medical problems, which makes his achievements at Philip Morris & Son all the more remarkable.

With Bunty's assistance he embarked on an expansion of the hardware and ironmongery shop, both in terms of range of products and shop frontage. Fitted kitchens, homewares and sporting clothing were added to goods on offer and new retail premises and warehousing acquired. In a visionary move and somewhat in front of the curve, the first goods were sold online in 2003. Today such sales not only outstrip those of the retail outlets but, with the help of his sons, have secured the long-term future of Phillip Morris & Son. Maurice's reputation as visionary retailer spread beyond the county. He was closely involved with the British Hardware Federation and was chairman of the Three Counties British Independent Retailers Association.

He will be much missed by Bunty, their three children, eight grandchildren and a wide circle of family, friends and the retail business world.



VICTOR FREDERICK JOHN JORDAN
OH 1949–56

Victor Jordan was born in Bournemouth on 9th November 1937. When he was three years old the family moved to Upper Deeside. When he became school age he attended Braemar Primary School, before moving in 1945 to HCS, where he was in the preparatory school until 1949 and the senior school from 1949 to 1956.

He went to Hereford Cathedral School as a boarder and was mildly traumatised at being packed off to England on his own at just 8 years old; but he excelled in music. On leaving school he studied at St John's College, Cambridge University.

Victor had a varied working life, which was spent in various parts of England. He taught for a while in Abbotsholme School in Uttoxeter and also worked for Hereford Council. He was trained as a lawyer and most of his working life was as a barrister in the Crown Prosecution Service. However, his family connection to Upper Deeside ran deep, and upon retirement he returned to his roots and settled in Ballater, where he became a member of St Kentigern Episcopal Church.

He had a fine bass voice and was a member of the Aberdeen Choral Society, the Upper Deeside Churches Choir, the St Thomas' Choir, and took part in the various Songs of Praise services held in Upper Deeside, most recently at Crathie Kirk, the church of the Royal family when they are resident in Balmoral.

Victor's great grandfather was Dr Alexander Profeit (1835–97), Queen Victoria's Commissioner, who ran her estate at Balmoral – and he was most proud of this connection.

Victor had one sister, Thelma, towards whom he was very loving and protective.

An outdoor person and a keen hillwalker, he had an optimistic, outgoing nature and was in good spirits right up to the end when he died peacefully in Aberdeen Royal Infirmary on 28th April aged 87 years.



EDWARD LANGFORD
OH 1978–83

Edward Langford attended the Cathedral Preparatory school followed by the Cathedral School in the 1970s and 1980s, and thoroughly enjoyed his time at school. Afterwards, Edward attended Bristol Polytechnic and went on to qualify as a solicitor in 1992.

Edward devoted his whole career to one business, formerly Meade King in Bristol, which later became part of Knights. Here he spent more than 25 years as a partner. He was recognised as a charming and professional member of the commercial property community in Bristol.

Edward will be sorely missed by all his friends and family. He was a devoted husband to Annie and father of their two children, William and Mary. The funeral took place in Bristol on 25th September, which was attended by members of the Old Herefordian community.



HUGH LLOYD-JONES
OH MID-1940S

Born in Cardiff, Wales, Hugh attended Hereford Cathedral School and then studied at Cardiff University before qualifying as a chartered surveyor. Shortly afterwards, he established an architectural practice in Cardiff city. In his capacity as a surveyor, he secured a consultancy role for Cardiff City Council and then formed Greenfield Road Building Company, which built numerous housing and commercial developments in Cardiff.

During that time Hugh purchased from his parents a country inn known as The Greendown, in St George super Ely, just outside Cardiff, which he ran together with a discotheque and restaurant for some years, alongside his building company and architectural practice. He won an award for the inn with the warmest welcome in Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and *Harpers and Queen* magazine voted his restaurant number one in the country. He had the honour of welcoming the then Prince Charles as a guest one evening.

At this time Hugh also learned to fly and enjoyed many trips to Guernsey, a lovely way to keep up his flying hours and which resulted in him and his wife Lynn moving to the island in 1979 with a view to an early retirement. However, it was not long before Hugh became engaged in post-retirement projects such as a seaside restaurant and eventually a role as a swimming and tennis teacher at Beau Sejour leisure centre.

Hugh loved sport and took up squash for the first time at the age of 46 when he moved to Guernsey. It was not long before he was challenging up the leagues at King's club. A notable occasion was when he played for Guernsey in Jersey in the match Hugh Lloyd-Jones of Guernsey versus Hugh Jones of Jersey, a man half his age, but Hugh secured the victory.

Having suffered a very nasty autoimmune disease in 2000/01, Hugh found that he needed to spend his days in a warmer climate and he and Lynn ended up moving to Cyprus, where Hugh had designed a home in the village of Peyia, with wonderful views of the sea and mountains.

In his last years, Hugh suffered from serious health issues. However, as Dylan Thomas said, Hugh did not go gentle into that good night, and he refused to surrender to these afflictions without a battle. Otherwise, he was mostly happy and contented, spending his last years at home in the knowledge that he was loved by all those around him. He passed away at the age of ninety.



CHRIS PLAYFORD
OH 1951–58

Chris was initially a very shy and reserved boy, but this gradually changed as he gained more confidence. He enjoyed PE, cross country runs, and athletics and in the sixth form he enjoyed rowing in clinkers and sculls. He became a monitor and was head of East House in his final year at school.

He joined the Combined Cadet Force (CCF) and rose to the rank of sergeant, playing the bugle in the band, and specialising in what was known as the signals section. The latter gave him good grounding in radio operation and electronics, which was to serve him well in his career. He learned Morse Code and regularly operated the '12 set' at lunchtime to take part in the inter-schools weather service. Chris attended the annual CCF camps held at places like Kinmel Park and Castlemartin. On several occasions he went on specialist courses in the school holidays.

He left school in 1958 and obtained a degree in Electrical Engineering from Manchester University. It was at Manchester that he became a practising Christian and often gave short sermons at evening prayer at his halls of residence. Later in life, he regularly preached in his own and other chapels in the Hay area.

Chris had a wanderlust nature, so when he left university he joined Seismograph Services, an oil prospecting company, operating and maintaining their electrical apparatus. This took him to Nigeria, Spain, Holland and the North Sea. After two seasons on the North Sea he decided to get a more settled job and in 1965 joined English Electric Computers at Kidsgrove in Staffordshire. He lived at Sandbach, where he met his wife-to-be Janet at nearby Wheelock Heath Baptist Church.

Although it changed names several times, and ended up as part of Fujitsu, Chris remained with the same company for 37 years, where he progressed to the position of senior software engineer.

In 1979 Chris transferred to the Bracknell branch, then in 1985 he decided to be 'home based', so he, Janet and their three children moved to the Hay-on-Wye area.

Chris was always keen on walking and travelling, and was a keen member of the Ramblers' Association. In 1999 Chris joined Ramblers Holidays and led walks for ten years in Switzerland, France, Italy, Spain, Iceland, Madeira, Corsica, and Peru.

Chris took early retirement in 2011 to enable him to spend more time in the hills of mid Wales. He is survived by his wife, Janet, three children and six grandchildren.



RAJIV PRABHAKARAN
OH 1984

Rajiv was taken away from us by fourth stage small cell lung cancer after being diagnosed in June 2021. Not many last beyond a year but he battled it for two and a half years. The initial shock and tears were horrid. The fight was undertaken initially with fear of the unknown, then with steadfast resilience. More often than not with a smile and a joke. As he would say, "you either cry or you laugh and I prefer to laugh". He was at peace with it towards the end as he knew that he had given his all. His one regret was that he would miss all the landmark events in his two daughters' lives. Whilst we, his family, supported him throughout by putting up a brave face in front of him, it was a struggle accepting that this was his fate. Much, much too young!

It is rare that siblings stay together all their lives but Rajiv and I somehow found ourselves in that situation. Growing up together in Penang, leaving Malaysia in our early teens to a foreign land to attend HCS, struggling with having too much fun and trying to get into university to study law, doing the Bar exams, working in our dad's law firm in Malaysia, working in the same law firm in Brunei, continuing to live close by and see each other almost every day, very simply explains the bond we formed. The day he passed on left me in a state of vacuous emptiness. No more smiles, no more suffering, no more mental anxiety, no more pain, just a sense of nothingness.

There are too many things to mention that will forever ensure his presence in our lives made a difference. I will relate one; after I got married and Santhi was pregnant with Uma, at our annual pay review with our dad, Rajiv simply said that he did not need a pay rise and told my dad that I was more in need of it for obvious reasons and instructed that his pay rise be given to me instead. This simple act of benevolence and generosity speaks volumes about who he was as a human being.

Over the 56 years of Rajiv's life, his "I can't be bothered", overly chilled attitude to everything life threw at him became his hallmark, which his family and friends will remember him for. Unfortunately that very same attitude to smoking led to his undoing. Whilst his last two and a half years were smoke-free, we said goodbye to him with a fag in his fingers and a full pack in his pocket. I'm sure that would bring a smile to him.



He is now with mum and dad, and I'm sure they are having a ball.

Roy Prabhakaran (OH 1985)

Agnes Mary Lawrence ('Aunty')



I start composing my tribute to a great servant of our school in the hotel previously known as the Castle Pool, a building that HCS considered acquiring in the early 1980s. More appropriately for now, the Castle House brings back vivid recent memories for me of conversations with my late departed friend Mary Lawrence. For over the past year and more, it is where Heather and I regularly met up with her on a Sunday morning after the cathedral Eucharist. During this period, we must have listened to tens of hours of her reminiscences.

Mary had an admirably sharp memory, retelling stories about HCS people and events, some of which had occurred long before I arrived as Headmaster. Such stories were always engaging, even if I was sometimes at a loss to know the names of staff and students from the earliest days of her remarkable forty-and-more year tenure at the school.

Mary was appointed by Tony Hollingworth, the school's first bursar, in the early 1970s, at an initial wage (she vouchsafed) of half-a-crown (2s 6d or, in modern money, 12½ p) an hour, a sum that today seems scarcely credible. From her earliest days, Mary worked as a housekeeper and matron in Number 1, where David Richards established a junior boarding house under Ege Parker's tutelage in September 1972.

It soon became the term-time home for boarding choristers. It was probably then that Mary Lawrence gained the affectionate sobriquet of 'Aunty Mary', an aunt who, despite insisting on the highest standards of dress and behaviour, before long became the favourite of generations of boys.

Following the conversion of Number 1 to day use, Mary transferred to the Old Deanery, where she held court as housekeeper and critical friend to the Common Room. While here, she also fulfilled a more formal pastoral role with the choristers, for which the dean and chapter instituted her into the Order of St Ethelbert in 2015. After her retirement, she remained a faithful member of the cathedral congregation.

I cannot compute either the multifarious tasks that Mary undertook during her long Hereford career or the hours that she spent in serving both school and cathedral during this time. But tiny indications of her service are provided by some random memories: Ernie, her husband, patiently waiting in the Close to take his wife home in the late evenings, after she had finished clearing up long after everyone else had left the scene following a school function; the time Mary spent in laundering the school and county rugby kit week-by-week in the autumn and winter months; her helping out at numerous OH reunions, where she was invariably welcomed by her former charges; and her tireless work during a Hereford Three Choirs.

Throughout her life, Mary held to the timeless values of commitment, community, and service. Over the generations – and not just in my time – HCS has been fortunate to have been served by staff who loved the place. None were more loyal than Mary Lawrence, who displayed an extraordinary affection for former pupils and their families over many generations that was, in my experience, unique. The school and cathedral foundations owe her an enormous debt. To Mark, Andrew, and Mary's wider family, we extend our gratitude for her devotion and express our heartfelt condolences on her passing.

Canon Dr Howard Tomlinson
Headmaster of HCS 1987–2005

Photo (below): Aunty with Raj Pranhakaran (see previous page) on the Cathedral Green.











Martin Nicholson Teacher at HCS until 1991

After leaving HCS in 1991, Martin's wanderlust knew no bounds and his love of travelling and adventure took him to many jobs in a variety of locations. Firstly maths teaching in Zimbabwe, later as a teacher of English as a foreign language in a university in South Korea, maths again in the Solomon Islands, living on an isolated island in basic accommodation as a headmaster of a Greek school, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and short spells in Peking and Malaysia.

Finally, he ended up in Thailand where, in 2005, he married a Thai lady, Prakaiphit. Blessings of his wedding were also held in Australia and Herefordshire – here a service at Kingsland church followed by a reception at Burton Court, filmed and broadcast by the BBC.

He became more settled in Thailand, as he had a house built for them, and in 2009 his daughter, Patti (Phatthira), was born. He still managed trips to visit his many friends in the UK, Australia and South Africa, and was planning a visit to England in 2025. Ill health intervened. He spent a short time in hospital with health problems and sadly passed away on 15th October 2024. He underwent heart surgery but didn't pull through.

Jim Dunn

I was a full-time boarder in School House and, for me, the weekends were always the highlight of the week. One of the frequent events was the canoe club, which Martin organised. Luckily for him, he never taught me maths, but when I heard about the canoe club I signed up. His irreverence in strapping canoes to his vintage Rolls-Royce was unforgettable. Many exciting weekends on the River Wye.

I heard about the annual ski trips and went on an aeroplane for the first time to Romania. We also went to Italy, Austria, and Switzerland. Young teenage boys and girls (mid-1970s) running around Europe! Good times.

My father and Martin became good friends, and he would visit my Dad in Spain.

When Martin eventually moved to Thailand, he invited me out to visit him every year. So finally, in 2017, I flew out from California to celebrate his 80th birthday. I ended up moving to Thailand in 2018. We drove down to see him again for his 85th in 2022.

We saw him for the last time in August 2024. We had been exploring the coastal villages along the Thai east coast and ended up in his hometown of Songkhla. We went out for lunch together and spent a few hours with him. I certainly would not have discovered Thailand if it were not for him. A lovely man who definitely had a big influence on my life.

Tony Tugwell (OH 1976), Chiang Mai

Photos: (top) Martin Nicholson in the Navy; Martin and co. ready for departure to Istanbul, with canoe on the roof; Martin's 85th birthday celebration at Sunset Café, Ko Yo – Martin the middle with Tony Tugwell (OH 1976) on the left and Richard Hartley (OH 1965) on the right.

Good News!

We love to celebrate the recent achievements of OHs. Please do share your results with the Alumni Office — we are always happy to trumpet your successes!



FLORA GLASS (OH 2020)

has been awarded a First in her degree (Russian & French), a Dean of Manchester University Award for Academic Achievement (because she was in the top 0.5% of all degrees awarded this year) and the prize for best French dissertation. Well done, Flora! (pictured, left).

MATTHEW PRICE (OH 1995)

was nominated for Costume Design at this year's 77th EMMY awards for his work on *Black Mirror*. His previous design credits include *Scoop* (2024), *Chloe* (2022), *Behind Her Eyes* (2021), and *The Nest* (2020). He also worked on the film of *The Salt Path* starring Gillian Anderson.

COL RUSSELL ATHERTON

(OH 1996) was awarded an MBE in this year's Honours list for his distinguished service in the military.

JOHN HARDY (OH 1975)

is a composer, and the nephew of Robert Hardy, lifelong friend of Richard Burton. It is therefore fitting that he wrote the score for the recent film detailing the actor's life, *Mr Burton*. The score was recorded by the BBC National Orchestra of Wales at the Wales Millennium Centre in December 2024 and the film was released in April 2025.

Diary Dates **2025–26**

6TH DECEMBER 2025

OH Day

Incorporating the AGM. See insert for details.

8TH MARCH 2026

Marches Centurion 7s

(Formerly Marches Sevens) at Wyeside.

SPRING 2026

Leavers of 1996, 2006, 2016 Reunion

Date to be confirmed. In Number 1 from 2pm. Follow OH Facebook page for further updates or contact h.pearson@herefordcs.com.

14TH MAY 2026

OH Golf Day 23rd Meeting

Provisional date. Burghill Valley Golf Club. See advert on page 14 for details.

2026

Forces Reunion

See page 38 for Mike Moffat's letter. Contact Mike at templarmjm@yahoo.co.uk.

2026

OHiL

There will be the usual spring and autumn gatherings at Doggett's in London. Follow the OH Facebook page for further information as it becomes available.

OH ENQUIRIES

If you require information about the OH Club, please contact Alumni Officer Helen Pearson at:

Development Office
Hereford Cathedral School
Old Deanery, Cathedral Close
Hereford HR1 2NG
development@herefordcs.com
01432 363 566

Please note that any personal opinions expressed in this publication are not the views of the Editor, the OH Club and Committee, or HCS.

OH Committee Personnel President **Richard Binnersley**, Vice President **Verity Coleman**, Secretary **Mark Ellis**, Treasurer **Gill Rivers**, OH Trust **Peter Williams**, Alumni Officer **Helen Pearson**, OH Editor **Julie North** oldherefordian@gmail.com

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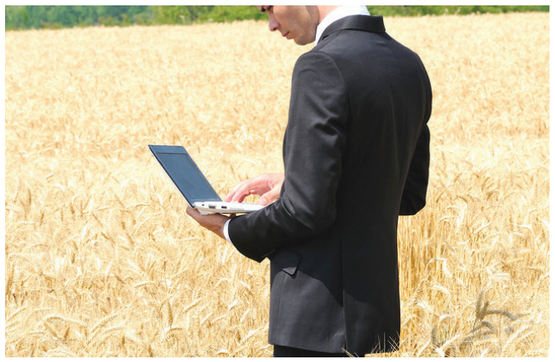
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