

THE MAGAZINE FOR OLD LEYSIANS AUTUMN 2024 | ISSUE 52

HERE COME THE GIRLS!

Celebrating 40 years of girls at The Leys

A CALL TO ACTION

President of the European Parliament Roberta Metsola inspires on Speech Day

SPOTLIGHTS

Justine Bell and Katie Curtis take centre stage



MESSAGE FROM THE Director of Development

Dear Old Leysians

A warm welcome to the Autumn 2024 edition of OL News, marking the 40th anniversary of girls joining The Leys as pupils. Over the past ten months, I've had the pleasure of meeting many wonderful members of the Leysian family, and I'm delighted to write to you again, as friends, to introduce this latest issue.

As I write, we are just beginning the Autumn term, following a summer that saw our best ever A level results, closely followed by outstanding

GCSE results. Speaking with some of the very happy parents when the results were announced, it is clear that the unwavering support from the School community plays a crucial role in the success of these hardworking pupils.

We recently bade farewell (for now) to one of our bursary pupils, Bohdan, who completed his A levels and has received further support as a Baret Scholar. Bohdan, who was on a 110% bursary, was able to leave Ukraine when the war began. His story, which you can read more about in an interview on pp.12-13, truly highlights the life-changing impact of investing in a child's future. Bohdan's positive influence on all of us at The Leys underscores the importance of the diversity that bursary places bring to our School community.

Over the past year, we've hosted numerous events, including a very special reunion in the Old Gym for some of our more senior Old Leysians. In August, we reached out

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to those who were at the School during or before its 75th anniversary, connecting with Old Leysians around the world, some of whom are up to 100 years old. It was a wonderful experience to speak with such a fascinating group and to meet some of them in person. You can read more about this on pp. 20-21, and see best friends from North B reunited after more than 70 years.

Next year promises to be extra special as we celebrate our 150th anniversary. We hope to see as many Old Leysians as possible at our events, from ages 18 to 100! Please check the back of this magazine for dates to mark in your diary, and keep an eye out for more information via email. We will also be producing a special celebratory magazine for the sesquicentenary, and I look forward to sharing more details with you soon.

Sarah

Sarah Proud, Director of Development

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OLUPDATES

Catching up with our alumni and celebrating their stories

ABI BAKER SMITH, DALE 2012-17

Congratulations to Abi on her position at F1 as Creative Designer. She will be working within the commercial operations team, supporting the acquisition and management of F1's commercial partners.



BEN BARTON, CR 2005-20 AND NICK ROMANS. EAST 1991-95

Congratulations to Ben on his ordination as a deacon on 30 June 2024 at Elv Cathedral, and to Nick who was also ordained this summer and is a curate at St Andrew's Church, Histon, alongside Ben. In addition, Ben is the chaplain for Cambridge United Football Club, supporting the foundation (charity arm of the club) and working closely with Ed Taylor, West 2003-08.

2012-17

and Archie

DARCY FENTON-STONE, DALE

"After finishing my studies at The Leys in 2017, I attended the University of St Andrews where I studied Arabic and International Relations. Despite being a small coastal town, there was a lot on offer and I joined the University Officers Training Corps (UOTC) before moving to Beirut for my studies. My brief time with the UOTC included a two-week training package at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. It was here that I decided a fulltime regular commission into the British Army was something I would like to pursue. So after

graduating, and a stint working at Control Risks, I embarked on the Regular Commissioning Course at Sandhurst. Although an increasingly diverse place, I still managed to find two Old Leysians in my Sandhurst intake: Max Wilson, West 2011–16, and Archie Douglas, North A 2014-19. We commissioned in April with myself and Max joining the Royal Lancers, an Armoured Cavalry Reconnaissance regiment, whilst Archie joined the Household Cavalry. Exciting times lay ahead for us as junior Armoured Troop Leaders, with long-awaited new vehicles and platforms coming into service at the end of the year."





JOE BROMLEY, BARRETT 2013-18

"Having left The Leys in 2018, I headed down to London to read English Literature at King's College. I had my first internship with Stella McCartney that Christmas and realised I really wanted to be studying at a fashion college - so quickly applied, and

Joe with Boy George

started at Central Saint Martins on their BA Fashion Journalism course the following year. It pushed me 10 times harder, and opened the doors to the industry in town. In my placement year, I started working on the fashion desk at Evening Standard and ES Magazine, which had been a dream of mine, and quickly settled in. I worked there full time while finishing my degree, and started as Junior Fashion Editor when I graduated in 2023. It is fast paced and massively fun: I have interviewed many incredible people, from Victoria Beckham to Gary Lineker, and am able to go out to New York and Paris for fashion week - which is jolly!"

From Joe's interview with Rita Ora in the Evenina Standard





ED GUNN, WEST 2014-19 AND DANIELLE CANNON-BROOKES, **GRANTA 2017–19**

Congratulations are also in order for Ed and Danielle, who got engaged earlier this year. We wish them a wonderful future together and look forward to seeing their wedding photos!

The happy couple

A CALL TO ACTION

The Headmaster was delighted to welcome current Leysian parent Roberta Metsola, President of the European Parliament, as our guest speaker at this year's Speech Day. President Metsola was enthusiastically welcomed by pupils, Common Room, parents and guests to deliver her inspirational, amusing and thought-provoking speech, which is summarised below.

The aim of the European Parliament is to make the lives of 450 million people across Europe a little better, fairer and safer. It is a place where 720 directly elected members, from 27 different Member States, each with different languages, traditions, religions, cultures, ideologies and interests, meet to discuss and pass legislation. Something that on paper should not work - and yet, it does.

The fight against climate change is one of the most challenging and the ambitions to make the European Union climate-neutral by 2050 has put Europe on track to become the first climate-neutral continent in the world, but we must ensure that this is not just about going green for green's sake. With the green transition there is investment in economies, creating new quality jobs, safeguarding our collective security and ensuring that it is on a firm foothold for future generations to inherit. That is what true sustainability is.

Social media has meant challenges in terms of mental health, hate speech and more that must be addressed. We cannot allow tools designed for the betterment of mankind to be abused. Social media must show our best side, but too often the worst finds its way onto feeds. You need to be ready to deal with it and equipped to separate fact from fiction. That is a truth I and many of your teachers did not have to deal with growing up - but it is one that we must now face together.

To quote from The West Wing, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful and committed people can change the world." At every turning point in history this has been



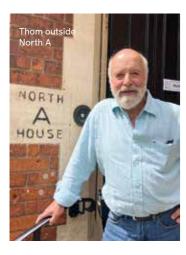
"This school helps shape hearts and minds. Your website says: 'The purpose of The Leys is to play our part in changing the world for the better.' Remember it. As soon-to-be alumni, this is not just your legacy, but your responsibility. As Leysians, it is your call to action."

proven correct. Every time the world was tilted on its axis, it was always because of a small group of motivated and determined people.

Despite the back-and-forth, politics is a force for good and it is still the best avenue for change. At its core, it is about strengthening our community, leaving no-one behind; realising that we are not safe until we are all safe – and that the weakest, the most marginalised in our societies are as much a part of our community as you and I.

If our world is not yet the place you want it to be – then, understand that it is as much your responsibility to change it as it is anyone else's. If you remember one thing from my talk today let it be this: do not give in to the temptation of easy cynicism. Find your cause and fight for it. Find your voice. Shout. Live up to your potential.

VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL



Thom Hope, North A 1962-66

Thom visited from the US with his wife in July. They were in the UK to attend the wedding of another Old Leysian. Thom said: "I have always regarded my four years at The Leys as a unique and maturing experience which, as an American living abroad, opened up all sorts of opportunities for me. I feel very fortunate to have been able to attend such a unique school situated in such a beautiful city." Thom added that he received many compliments from OLs at the wedding for donning his Leysian sports blazer - which he still fitted into after all these years!



James Taylor, North B 1955-59

James visited the School from his home in Perth, Australia for the first time since leaving in 1959. On his tour with Karen Sears, OLS Vice President, he enjoyed reminiscing about his time playing rugby and swimming in the school pool, which he said hasn't changed that much in 70 years.

Richard Machin, North A 1984-89

Richard visited in June with his family and was given a tour by Carole Milnes from the Development team. He had many fond memories of the School, including the fun antics that went on in North A, and remembers his housemaster, Austin Jessop, very well. As a farmer, Richard recognised the old tractor on the grounds and chatted with Malachy who was a groundsmen during Richard's time. He enjoyed seeing Great Hall and reminisced about working backstage in the old theatre.

Fond memories for Richard



NORT HOUS

Richard outside B House

Richard Jackson. North B 1963–68

Richard visited the School with his wife last November and was given a tour by Senior Development Officer Kerry Chapman. Richard said, "It was a joy to revisit and remember the happy years I spent there." Following their visit, the couple went into the city and enjoyed a punt on the River Cam, although "it was rather chilly!"





Chris Kelshall, North B 1963-67

Chris visited with his extended family in July, during a 3 week trip to the UK from Tobago. He enjoyed exploring the archive and seeing photos of his B House cricket and rugby teams from his schooldays, as well as team photos featuring brother Steven, North B 1964-68 and father Arnold, North B 1932-36, both Tri-Colours.



Hernandez

Efrain's daughter thought The Leys was like Hogwarts!

Laurence Higgins, CR 2012–18

Laurence visited with his young family during the summer holidays and was excited to show them where he used to work, especially School House where he was Assistant Housemaster. Laurence taught Divinity at The Leys and is now Director of Sixth Form at St Mary's School Ascot.



Laurence and his family outside School House



Anna Chung, Fen 1994–98

Anna visited on a gloriously sunny day in July and was given a tour of the school by Alumni Relations Coordinator Liz Walden. She was impressed by Great Hall, and enjoyed reminiscing about her time in Fen House.

Anna and her children outside Fen House

Efrain Romero

Eff worked at The Leys as a languages assistant in 2005-06, and says he gained a great deal from the experience and the positive impact it has had on his career. He visited in the summer while on holiday in the UK from Mexico with his mother, wife

and daughter, all of whom accompanied him for the tour. Eff was delighted to have returned to the School, and spoke with real affection of Ann Muston who, he said, was a huge support to him during his time here and whose influence has informed his own teaching ever since.

STAFF NEWS

As usual in recent years, there have been a number of staff changes this year. Those who have left for pastures new this summer are:

Staff Leavers and Arrivals Jos Herbert, CR 2020-24

(Geography and AHsM in North A) said "I've loved my time at The Leys, and it will forever hold a special place in my heart. I arrived in 2020 by myself and leave four years later with a wife and a dog! We're heading off to Stowe School where I will continue to teach Geography, coach Games and work in a boarding house. I'm very sad to be leaving but looking forward to a new adventure and being much closer to family."

Clare Battison, CR 2002-24 (Art and Ceramics teacher and former HsM in Dale House) is heading to Cardiff Met for a place on the Ceramics and Maker MA course.

Emily Shortland, CR 2018-24 (Religious Studies) is going to continue working on the RS PGCE at the Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge.

Katie Upton, CR 2021–24 (History and Politics) is excited to be going to Coleridge to be Head of Year 8 and continue teaching.

Other leavers this year are Emma Mayo, CR 2015-24 (Deputy Head and History), Andrew Muir, CR 2015-24 (International Support), Victoria Otterburn CR 2021–24 (Learning Support and AHsM in Fen House), Carla Rudd, CR 2022-24

(Director of Sport), and Maxine Wyatt, CR 2022-24 (Head of MFL and German).

Some members of the Common Room only stayed for one year, leaving this summer. They are Isabella Clark (English), Gareth Funk (Computer Science), Jonathan Green (Classics), Jemima Harney (English), Stephen Hancock, CR 2007–22 and summer term 2024 (English), Al Protacio (Physics), Nicole Tweed (Business Studies), and James Williams (Geography).

There were three leavers at the end of the Michaelmas term: Peter Hicks, CR 2020-23 (Head of Geography), Nicholas Robinson, CR 2013-23 (Head of Careers, CCF and HsM in Barker), and Ollie Layton, CR 2022-23 (Classics and Latin).

Very sadly Anna Godzisz, CR 2023 (Head of International Support) passed away suddenly on 18 December 2023.

Retirement

Alyson Macpherson, CR 1998-2024, or 'Miss Mac' to all the pupils who called Moulton their home for the start of their time at The Leys, was an amazing housemistress during her 27 years in post. Providing pastoral care for the youngest members of school requires a special understanding of their needs, and so many of her former pupils commented on their success

being attributed Miss Mac's guidance, discipline and overall care:

"Miss Mac meant so much to me, guiding me through boarding school and being there as a stable and reliable figure while I moved around in my home life due to being in a military family. She was always there with a firm hug, words of encouragement and her famous rocky road. I really appreciated being able to have that full circle moment as Moulton prefect in my final year, to work closely with her and see from the outside the invaluable impact she has on the year 7s and 8s, as well as having experienced it firsthand myself. Miss Mac will be hugely missed and I'm sure that the School will feel the lack of a fiery Scottish hero; she absolutely deserves her retirement even though we all know she won't be taking things easy!"

Charlotte Smith, Moulton/Dale 2011-18

Miss Mac with Moulton leavers, 2013

"Although it's been nearly eight years since I left Moulton, I have so many memories which have stuck in my head and I think that is testament to what an amazing family Miss Mac created. As I reflect on the lessons imparted to us, one particular piece of advice stands out: the importance of preparation. Thank you so much for everything – for never letting me walk to the train station alone, for appointing me Head of House which gave me my first taste of responsibility and achievement, and for introducing me to my love for physical fitness!"

Kate Wardley, Moulton/Bisseker/ Granta 2014-21

Miss Mac felt the time was right to pass on the responsibility of Moulton House to someone else and decided



Helen Williams

to retire at the end of the summer term, 2024. She has moved back to her beloved Scotland for some wellearned rest but she will, of course, still be out running in all weather.

Helen Williams, CR 2012-24, or 'Frau Williams' as she was called by the girls in Granta, retired this summer both from teaching German and as Housemistress. The girls greatly appreciated her support and care during their Sixth Form studies:

"I cannot thank you enough for all the continuous effort you put into making Granta house feel like home. I will never forget the way in which you cared for us all as if we were your own children, always ensuring the best for us no matter what. Even through the pandemic you went to



Ed and Carrie Durrant





Our new recruits!

great lengths to ensure we all stayed connected as a house and that was so important to all of us, so thank you. I wish you a very restful retirement, you deserve it."

Kate Wardley

New Staff

We welcomed the new members of the Common Room at their induction in August. Their hectic timetable for the day included learning about The Leys' values, our pupils, teaching and learning at The Leys, and a tour of the School.

Staff Celebrations

Congratulations to Ed Durrant, CR 2010-present and his wife Carrie, who celebrated their wedding on 6 July 2024.

REMINISCENCES

Paul Webster, East 1955-60 and Malcolm Thyne, 1955-61 reflect on their time at The Leys and celebrate dodging the Obituaries for another year.

e only reconnected after retirement when Malcolm went to live in North Yorkshire, where Paul often returns to visits relatives. We enjoy lunch together from time to time. Recently one of us noted that the only time we (alas!) see mention of our contemporaries in OL News is in the Obituaries section - so we decided to put pen to paper in celebration of having so far avoided this fate.

Despite being in different houses at The Leys, we were in the same forms and, because of the initial letters of our surnames, often sat next to each other. This also meant that we were usually the tail enders in interviews, oral examinations and the like. We both went into the educational world, Malcolm ending up as Headmaster of Fettes College in Edinburgh and Paul as a Professor at Imperial College London.

At our lunch we discussed what we got from The Leys. Foremost, of course, was the academic training which was necessary to enable each of us to start and to progress in our careers. There was a strong respect for academic endeavour at The Leys - not perhaps always seen in similar schools in those days. There were also some seriously bright pupils about, which provided a degree of intellectual edge in lessons, and which gave us



something to aim at. Times were becoming more enlightened and ill-treatment by prefects was being phased out, thank goodness. But we then asked each other what single attribute or activity we had picked up from the School which we had particularly appreciated, and which we had continued with as life progressed.

Although we enjoyed games, neither of us would be regarded at the time as outstandingly sporty. Neither of us had particular interests in music, drama or literary pursuits. However, Malcolm was a good enough rugby player to get a game or two for the first XV as a nippy wing forward. He continued with College rugby and then moved into coaching at the various schools where he worked. It was coaching that gave him great satisfaction over the years. With Paul, it was swimming. Alan Pattinson (East Housemaster) who ran the swimming teams at the time picked him out and encouraged him to have a go. He then got into water polo which he continued to play on and off until his 40's. After that it was Masters swimming and he continues to enter competitions to this day. He says that the older he gets, the more medals he wins. His statistician friends call that phenomenon 'survivorship bias'!

In truth, of course, we gained far more than we realised at the time. Some things went over our heads (Musical Appreciation, for example) only to be picked up later in life. Others sowed seeds (a respect for English Literature) which, post-retirement, drew us as science-based students into catching up by joining reading groups. Finally, we think enviously of today's Leysians who now have the much better balance of coeducational schooling!

Greetings to any of our contemporaries who may read this.

Paul and Malcolm putting the world to rights during one of their catch-ups

NEW ARRIVALS

It has been a productive year in terms of welcoming the very newest arrivals into our Leysian community!

Harriet Lee, Head of Swimming, gave birth to tiny Noa-Rose Pirie on 22 November last year, who was 9 weeks early and arrived weighing just 2 lbs 11 oz. 10 months on, Harriet has this encouraging update:



Smiley Noa-Rose at the seaside with mum Harriet

"Noa-Rose now weighs just shy of 11 lbs and is doing well. She's still needing regular physio and we're still on our own little journey with her, but she has made leaps and bounds. She's the happiest, most bubbly and smiley little girl with two adoring brothers."

On 4 March Maxine Hicks, Domestic Supervisor, celebrated the birth of baby number two, Elijah (Eli) Gasson, who weighed in at 7 lb 11 oz.





Jude Charles Elston, son of Ben and Amy, was born on 7 April, weighing 6 lb 12 oz. Ben, Head of PE and Sports Science, says that Jude is happy (at least most of the time!), and wriggles a lot. Amy is doing well.



Bonnie with proud big brother Oscar

Hannah Cox, Head of Netball, was delighted to let us know her little girl, Bonnie, arrived safely on 11 May. Hannah says: "She made a very swift entrance into the world - I arrived at the birthing centre only an hour before she came! She has settled in well at home and is soaking up all of the cuddles from her big brother Oscar!"

On 13 June, Physics Teacher Ali Annett gave birth to Marcus, 10 lb 8 oz. Mum and baby are both doing well.



OL Katherine Townsend, Moulton/ Bisseker 2006-11, gave birth to Annabelle on 17 June. Katherine says: "We are very grateful for a happy and healthy baby and have been loving getting to know her."



Our warmest congratulations to everyone.

Embracing Every Opportunity



Bohdan Mashurovskyi, School 2022-24

Bohdan arrived at The Leys two years ago from Ukraine, having secured a 110% bursary. He chatted with us about his life back home, his time at the School, the challenges he has overcome and what the opportunity to study here has given him.

TELL US A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOUR BACKGROUND.

I'm from Alexandria, a small town in central Ukraine, and I'm the third of seven children. Back home I was a scout leader, and later joined the youth parliament to represent the views of young people on the local council. I also joined the Ukrainian volunteer service, which allowed me to travel the country. Volunteering in Ukraine isn't as diverse or as widespread as it is in the UK, so our goals were ambitious – but with the full-scale Russian invasion we had to prioritise supporting our military services. As a group leader I was inundated with calls 24 hours a day, from people wanting to know how they could help.

WHAT WAS YOUR ROLE IN ALL OF THAT?

I organised and co-ordinated hundreds of volunteers, arranging places (usually houses of culture, similar to UK theatres) where people could help the war effort by making camouflage nets. It was a busy job but it gave me a feeling of satisfaction to know that I'd contributed.

HOW DID YOU FEEL WHEN YOU FOUND OUT YOU WERE COMING TO THE LEYS?

Finding out I'd been successful was a turning point in my life. I was delighted, because I knew it would allow me to grow in all areas of my life. I could improve my English and make friends from new countries and cultures.

HOW DID YOUR FAMILY REACT?

They were happy, but it was difficult for them to let me go because they didn't understand the significance of the scholarship. Alexandria is very provincial, and few of my relatives had been abroad before - especially to the West! Now they know more about it, they appreciate this is the best place for me to be at this point in my life.

HOW ARE YOUR FAMILY NOW?

They're OK. It's a small town, with no military targets. However, many residents have been lost in the war, and we commemorate them. Our mayor attends the funeral of every fallen soldier.

YOUR ENGLISH IS FANTASTIC NOW, BUT WHAT WAS IT LIKE COMING HERE WITH VERY LIMITED VOCABULARY?

I felt like a child, born again into a new world. I had to learn a new culture, a new language, and make new friends. I'd look at my peers and think they were more mature, clever and wise than me. As my English improved, and I learned how to communicate, I started to feel better.

HOW WOULD YOU SAY THE LEYS HAS CHANGED YOU - IF AT ALL?

I have become more mature; more knowledgeable. I've developed both hard and soft skills. I am better at communication and expressing my feelings, and my academic skills in my A level subjects have improved. I've made lots of friends from different countries, though I am still in touch with my friends in Ukraine.

IN TERMS OF OPPORTUNITIES, ARE THERE ANY IN PARTICULAR THAT SPRING TO MIND?

I loved volleyball in Ukraine but couldn't play it as often as I can here, so I've improved my skills and been able to join the school team, which I've really enjoyed and feel proud of. I tried to take singing lessons in Ukraine but that didn't work out – at The Leys this is an opportunity I've welcomed, and I now sing bass in the Chapel Choir. Academically, I always got the top grades in Ukraine but they didn't always align with my actual knowledge! When I came here I had to become a C student, and that humbled me. I was really excited when I started getting my first A's here.



IF YOU HADN'T COME HERE, WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU WOULD HAVE DONE INSTEAD?

Tough question! I would have stayed in Ukraine; been a regular Ukrainian student somewhere. I wasn't sure then what I wanted to do with my life, so I have no idea which course I would have taken.

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO A FAMILY THINKING ABOUT SENDING THEIR CHILD TO THE LEYS ON A BURSARY?

I would say take this opportunity. You will be able to live an amazing life, and contribute to the School just as the School adds to your growth. Mr Priestley said to me when I first arrived here, take every single opportunity – throw yourself into the school environment and live your life to the full.

WHAT IS YOUR NEXT STEP?

Next year I'm going to study Mechatronics at Anglia Ruskin University. I took Maths, Physics and Chemistry at A level, and STEM will be a logical continuation. For now I'd like to stay international, to widen my horizons more and explore the world, but eventually I'd like to go back to Ukraine and apply my experience and knowledge in my homeland, contributing to society.

YOUR TIME HERE IS COMING TO AN END SOON ... WHAT WILL YOU MISS THE MOST?

Mostly I'll miss the productive routine and my friends. The School is designed in such a way that I could release my full potential: good food; good sleep; exercise; a nice environment for sports and studying – and I really appreciate it all.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT BECOMING AN OLD LEYSIAN FOR LIFE?

I'm very happy to be a part of that community, and I hope that I will be able to contribute to it as well as benefit from it. I look forward to meeting amazing people who weren't here at the same time as I was.

Bohdan may get to meet many of these OLs sooner than he might have thought, having been given the opportunity to join the Baret Scholars Program since this interview. This global gap year, named after Jeanne Baret, the first woman to circumnavigate the globe, brings together 110 students from around the world to explore seven regions over 40 weeks. The programme includes structured morning sessions with expert speakers, independent exploration, personalised advising, and a range of fellowships. We wish Bohdan the very best as he embarks on this exciting new chapter, before continuing his studies.



A keen charity fundraiser both at home and in the UK, Bohdan and Alex Z., U6, ran a marathon for a charity supporting humanitarian initiatives in Ukraine

ASSYNT OLD LEYSIAN **REUNION 2024**

5-12 April at Inchnadamph Explorers Lodge, Sutherland – by Simon James, West 1969-74

e started arriving on Friday evening and by the Sunday most of us were present. In our school days we camped by Loch Assynt on the Ardvreck Castle peninsular and this continued until 1990, when leader Richard Armstrong, CR 1959-90, retired. Many pupils who joined the camps over the years returned as OLs to help lead expeditions. We were pleased to see Nigel Yarwood who also attended the very first camp in 1969; upon his return home he shared The Fortnightly report of that trip. Howard Papworth and I first went in our teenage years in 1973; who would have thought then that we'd still be going over 50 years later! It was during these early years that we appreciated the lure of Assynt. Unless you've been there it's difficult to understand the magic of the place.

Every four years since 2000 a reunion has been held, and these trips are now also open to family and friends to introduce this special area to the younger generations. This was my twelfth Leysian visit but nowadays we stay in the more luxurious Inchnadamph Explorers Lodge. Two hardy participants, Richard Pattison and Howard, chose to sleep under canvas beside the Lodge.

The underlying theme of this reunion would be 'Wind!' Every day was windy, sometimes reducing higher level walks, but with the wind came clear skies and resulting distant views. There was no snow this year and only one wet afternoon, which must be a record for our trips to Assynt.

Whilst we are all getting older and we can't do what we could in our younger days, we still like to return to this remote part of Scotland and reacquaint ourselves with the mountains we've climbed over the decades. This trip's highlight must be Ed Sadd's group reaching the main



Ardvreck Castle on the shore of Loch Assynt with

Quinag in the background

The summit of An Teallach. L-R: Marina Agiejew checking her photo just taken, with Emma Sadd, Christian Lesmes and James Long admiring the Pinnacles further along the ridge

summit of An Teallach (3485 feet), possibly the first Leysian conquest of this famous Munro for over 40 years. Other peaks reached were Glas Bheinn, Cul Beag, Ben Stack and Chris Bliss' solo climb of Conival. Lower level walks when gales were forecast included Sandwood Bay near Cape Wrath and to Eas a Chual Aluinn waterfall, the highest single drop waterfall in Britain. We also did coastal walks around the Stoer peninsular.

Red Deer were often spotted from the Lodge in the evenings and the birdwatchers counted 69 different birds seen during the week, including puffins and rock pipits. In the evenings we were treated to many slides from Richard Armstrong's collection, as he was sadly too unwell to join us.

All too soon the week was over, so we said our goodbyes promising to come back again. Thank you to all participants for a wonderful time. Also, thank you from all of us to Ed Sadd for the hard work in organising this trip. Long may these reunions continue.

race nspired POTLIGH

a very different cause close to her heart.

The past year was deeply influenced by the passing of my friend and hockey teammate, Grace O'Malley-Kumar. In her honour, a group of us from the University of Nottingham Hockey Club organised the inaugural Grace O'Malley-Kumar Cup, uniting loved ones to celebrate her life and legacy. Please follow @Graceomalleykumarcup on Instagram for updates on the event as we work hard to improve it and support the foundation set up in her memory.

Alongside this event I was working at Trinity school in London coaching sports ... even rugby! Luckily, the job gave me flexibility to pursue my hockey ambitions. I did a few weeks at The Leys too! Achieving my first senior cap last summer was a dream come true. A more recent highlight was competing in the Junior World Cup in Santiago, one of my most memorable hockey experiences. I'm now working hard on securing a spot in the senior squad after the Paris Olympics.

After a tough year following Grace's loss, I felt a desire to do something different. This led to a conversation with Old Leysian Hugh Anderson, School 2011-16, the Co-President of AYDA Foundation, an NGO which provides



Katie and Hugh with excited pupils and staff at the AYDA Foundation

Katie Curtis, Bisseker/Dale 2015-20, continues to achieve her dreams of becoming a top flight hockey player, whilst devoting much of her time to

free education, first aid and meals to vulnerable children in Saint-Louis, Senegal. Inspired by his dedication, OL Emma Davenport, Dale 2011-16 and I helped with fundraising over £10,000 to launch Project Lion - a large-scale renovation of the main local public school in the area - and we visited to see its impact first-hand. Seeing children without even basic amenities like toilets, yet radiating happiness, was eye-opening. I now grasp Hugh's passion for Senegal and his commitment to enhancing these children's lives:

"Facilitating access to education is the single most impactful and sustainable way a charity can empower young people to pull themselves and their families out of long-term poverty. We are committed and focused on supporting the comprehensive development of the youths in Senegal."



As a small charity, funding all desired projects has been challenging, yet crucial. Your donation via this link: https://www.justgiving.com/

crowdfunding/projectlion2024 and following @ aydafoundation will make a significant difference to the futures of these children. Thank you.



OL SPORT

Old Leysian Golfing Society

2024 has been a big year for the OLGS, with the Halford Hewitt Centenary. This included a rematch of the original game in 1924 between The Leys and Harrow, where Harrow were the victors.

Halford Hewitt 9-14 April On the Wednesday evening Centenary celebrations commenced with a champagne cocktail party at Royal Cinque Ports Golf Club. During the tournament all 64 school flags were in place outside the clubhouse and adjacent car park.



At the time of writing, the Old Leysian Cricket Club are still enjoying their season and are currently eighth in the Cambridgeshire & Huntingdonshire premier league, Onyx Division 1, with two games remaining. A full update will appear in the next issue of OL News.

David Page gave a very fitting

speech after lunch and Jamie

of The Halford Hewitt replied.

memento of the two teams.

Warman of Harrow and President

Richard Norris, who is preparing the

Centenary book, also joined us. Each

school was presented with a framed

In the match, we won 3 ½ to 1 ½. In

1924 Harrow won 4-1 so we have

improved over the hundred years!

S D Cooper & A R J Smethers;

& N K Dendy; R J Chapman &

New Members are very welcome

at nwashbourn@btinternet.com

G A Macalpine

The team: T L Williams & C A Holden:

T D Page & C E Newlove; A G T Petrie

On the Friday we played Malvern in our first round, Malvern proving worthy winners. Tom continued his successive wins of 18 matches, an amazing record. We were pleased to welcome Henry Blunt partnering Liam McKeown, now back from Australia.

Next, in the Princes Plate, we narrowly lost to Aldenham on the 18th green in the first round.

The team: A G T Petrie & D W McClean; T L Williams and C A Holden; S D Cooper & A R J Smethers; C C B Turner & R J Bentley; L J McKeown & H C Blunt

In the Halford Hewitt final, Eton beat Bedford. In the Princes Plate final, Forest beat Epsom.

Halford Hewitt Centenary match v Harrow, 29 May, St. George's Hill Golf Club

This was a rematch for the first Halford Hewitt in 1924. Club President Jeremy Lowe, who ran the Halford Hewitt for 22 years, arranged the highly successful day. The 2025 fixture list and OLGS updates are on the Old Leysian website,

and should contact Nigel Washbourn

along with details of our other OL sporting clubs and events.

https://tinyurl.com/582k46v5

James Albery

Former Senior Prefect James Albery, West 2009-14, not only qualified for the Paris Olympics and was selected for the Great Britain men's team he also scored the winning goal in their match against host nation France, securing their place in the quarter-finals. Although the team

didn't make it to the semi-finals, we couldn't be more proud of James: in the hockey world the Olympics are the pinnacle of competition, and it was wonderful to see him following in the footsteps of fellow OL Olympians Neil White, North A 1933-39/CR 1948-82 (London 1948) and Paul Svehlik, North B 1960-65 (Munich 1972).





TELL ME A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOUR BACKGROUND AND YOUR ARRIVAL AT THE LEYS.

I'm from Lancashire and studied Education at Homerton College, Cambridge. In 1996, I was appointed as Head of English as a Foreign Language at The Leys. Before that, I worked in state schools and with language students at EF and Studio Cambridge. I developed the role of Social Activities and Sports Organiser and became the first National Secretary of ARELS Social Organisers network (SONET).

HOW DID YOUR ROLE DEVELOP AT THE LEYS?

It was a new role and I got stuck in. Initially, all international pupils took the Cambridge First Certificate (FCE) Examination. We created vocabulary lists for each subject and met to discuss teaching strategies. I persuaded senior management to place internationals in English sets based on ability, not language level. The department's name changed to English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), reflecting the need for high-level English access.

WHAT WAS THE RESPONSE, AND HOW DID PUPILS FROM THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY BENEFIT?

Integration was easier with international pupils showcasing their cultures. The International Evening became International Week, with feeder schools visiting. I started a buddy scheme and induction programme. Several international pupils became Heads of House, Prefects, and Senior Prefects. Their exam results were excellent, with many achieving places at Oxbridge and Russell Group universities. One staff member noted that at least a grade was due to the ESOL Department.

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY ARE YOUR PROUDEST ACHIEVEMENTS FROM YOUR TIME AT THE LEYS?

Helping international pupils achieve their potential and bringing cultural awareness to others. Through my work with The Aoyama Gakuin High School and The Leys School Japanese Exchange, I inspired many to learn Japanese and for others to become TEFL qualified.

A JOURNEY OF DEDICATION AND PASSION

A Journey of Dedication and Passion

Ann Muston, CR 1996-2015

YOU ARE STILL IN CLOSE CONTACT WITH MANY **OLS; ANY STARS IN THE MAKING?**

I stay in contact with former pupils, parents, and colleagues. In Hong Kong, OL Eugenia Fan, Fen/North B 1997-01, organised a dinner with 24 attendees. I've attended several OL weddings and reunions. Many OLs have become influencers and musicians, like Getsunova and Vivian Kwok, Dale 1998-01 (pictured above with Ann), who manages RubberBand. There are many stars, and I'm proud of them all

HOW DID YOUR WORK AT THE LEYS INFORM THE WORK YOU DO NOW?

I continue supporting international pupils and families in a not-for-profit capacity. I mentor others supporting international students and provide employment to OLs. My current role includes supporting international students at various institutions, lecturing in British Culture, and doing voluntary work. I'm editing a novel by a Chinese student awarded a pre-college place at Juilliard.

I UNDERSTAND YOU RECENTLY RECEIVED A SPECIAL ACCOLADE ...?

I judge Art and Creative Writing Competitions for COBIS and Rotary. I was honoured as a 'Paul Harris Fellow' for promoting better understanding and friendly relations among peoples of the world. It was a huge surprise, and I am deeply humbled by it.

ANY FURTHER CAREER ASPIRATIONS FOR ANN MUSTON, OR DOES A QUIET RETIREMENT BECKON?

I am trying to slow down and spend time with my first grandchild, Jamie. I want to experience the milestones I missed with my children. I'm involved in local councils and healthcare groups. My aspirations are to spend time with family, travel, and meet former OLs. I love OL reunions and was thrilled when the London one coincided with my 65th birthday.

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LEAVERS' BALL 2024

On Friday 28 June, our Upper Sixth - now our most recent Old Leysians! - celebrated in style at their Leavers' Ball, held in the magnificent surroundings of the Imperial War Museum Duxford. It was a wonderful occasion which was thoroughly enjoyed by pupils, parents and staff. We wish our leavers all the very best for their futures beyond The Leys, and look forward to hearing their updates.





SPOTLIGHT

A Firm Foundation

Justine Bell, Granta 2000-02

This summer, Justine returned from Bangkok to visit The Leys. Her nostalgic tour of the site sparked reflections on her time here, and the ways in which this helped inform aspects of her journey since: her values as an educator; her confidence in embracing adventure; and her remarkable career path to date.

It was with great excitement that I visited The Leys this summer. Stepping onto the campus for the first time since I left 22 years ago, I felt as if nothing had changed and that everything had done so simultaneously ...

I finished my wonderful two years in the summer of 2002, excited to 'take on the world' with the confidence and open-mindedness that our school had helped to instill in me. I was ready for adventure, and I found it in a local school in the middle of nowhere in Ghana where I was a volunteer English teacher for a term, before travelling overland across to Kenya and then down to South Africa. The thought of doing so now fills me with awe for the brave (foolish?!) 18-year-old I was then, but it taught me a lot about myself, friendship, the goodness of people and the importance of contacting your mother once a week!

With my need for the exotic satisfied somewhat, I headed off to my next adventure: university. Studying English Literature and Performing Arts in the Community I came to understand that my core values mirrored those of The Leys, that all members of our communities are entitled to courtesy, tolerance, respect and decency, and that education is a key to enabling this to happen. So, after a year in Paris I went to work as an adult educator in the UK prison system, delivering adult literacy programmes to inmates to support them to have more opportunities on release. The stories



from this time make quite the telling, but the majority of them are full of wonder.

I eventually decided that I should probably gain some formal qualifications in education so I undertook a PGCE before working in an inner-city London school for several years. Again, life was never dull during this time thanks to both wonderful colleague-friends and wonderful, if a little energetic, pupils.

Having grown up abroad, after nearly a decade in London I felt the urge to move again and joined the international teaching circuit - first working in Malaysia, then Italy, and now in Thailand. I have been lucky enough not only to travel the world, but also to constantly learn about education. Now, as the Deputy Head of Brighton College Bangkok, I am excited to be back in a school which, despite being incredibly different on the surface, reminds me so much of The Leys in its holistic approach and its care for pupils as individuals, not just as scholars.

Walking around The Leys campus with my family on a lovely summer's day this July, I was able to reflect on my days at the School: how it felt like home; how I created friendships which enabled me to work out who I wanted to become; how I was supported by staff who cared about my present and my future. But mainly, how happy I had been and how who I am now is, in part, thanks to The Leys.

A VERY SPECIAL REUNION

ot long after I started at The Leys in November 2023, I spoke with a 92-year-old Old Leysian about the celebratory events we were having in 2025 for The Leys' sesquicentenary. It was during that phone call that they rather bluntly asked, "But will any of my old schoolmates even still be alive?" Of course, many of them are and that led me to think about doing something special for those OLs who otherwise may never have a special reunion of their own again.

We had a look through our records at those who were here during or before the 75th anniversary of The Leys in 1950, making the youngest 86 years old; we found 143 who fitted the bill and proceeded to enjoy some of the most interesting and lovely phone calls we have ever had the privilege of making.

As you can imagine, of those 143 OLs many were not in a position to be able to travel to the School. Despite this,



OLs and special guests, with members of the Development team



The Archive display



Diamond gents: Back row, L-R: Phil Parker, West 1973–78; Philip Warren, West 1950-54; Peter Williams, North B 1949-54; Bob Wormald, North A 1946-50; John Bennett, East 1948-53; Mark Wormald, North A 1975-78

Front row, L-R: Anthony George, School 1949-54; John Baker, West 1944-48; Hugh Harris, North B 1949-54: Colin Kinnear, East 1949-53 we had fantastic conversations about their lives and memories of The Leys; we even reconnected some old friends who had lost touch. The oldest gentleman I chatted with was 100 years old, just one of the four centenarians on the list.

On 17 August 2024 we were thrilled to hold a unique and very special Diamond Reunion event for those who wanted to visit the School, along with their closest family members - many of whom had never had the chance to visit this place they had heard so much about. Amongst those who attended were Brigadier Peter Williams and Hugh Harris, both North B 1949-54, best friends at school who hadn't seen one another in over 70 years. We were also joined by special guests John Harding and Revd Phil Parker, West 1973-78.

Alison, our Archivist, did a fantastic job of sourcing old photographs, mentions from The Fortnightly for everyone who attended, and other assorted treasures which we all enjoyed browsing in the Old Gym over lunch before a Chapel service, kindly led for us by Revd Phil. The congregation, though small, nevertheless raised the roof singing Jerusalem and the School hymn, Xaipete, and Brigadier Williams joined Revd Phil to talk about his experience of leadership, which was the theme of the service.

It was a genuine privilege for us to spend time with these Old Leysians, and we will be sharing stories and photographs from the reunion with those who so wanted to join us, but were unable. We thank them all for being a part of the day, whether in person or in spirit, and look forward to sharing and making more memories at our 150th Old Leysian reunion next year.

by Sarah Proud



Bob Wormald, North A 1946-50 and his son Mark, North A 1975-78







Catching up over lunch

OBITUARIES



To read the full versions of these obituaries, please visit the school website: https://tinyurl.com/385ywvsm. If you do not have access to the internet and would like a printed document, please contact the Development office on 01223 508545.

David Mansell Andrew, North B 1945-47 on 16 February 2024



Alan F Crawshaw, West 1944-49 on 31 July 2023



Brian Gunton, North A 1946-51 on 30 January 2023

John Horn OBE, Common Room 1957-70 on 15 May 2024

John Horn, former housemaster of East House, died at home in Melton Mowbray with his wife of nearly 64 years, Jane, by his side.

John met Jane when he was a Classics teacher at the School in September 1959, where she was the secretary to Headmaster Alan Barker. They married in July the following year.

When John became the housemaster for East House in 1962 it became their home until he left The Leys. By the time they moved on they had four children, Rachel, Matt, Barney and Dan, the three boys all being born in their school home.

John's highlights at the School included the week long holidays



John receiving his OBE

organised through Save the Children for boys from Tower Hamlets in 1967 and 1969. The boys in East House raised the money and helped with the catering and outings. John, supported by Jane, led the team and it was great fun, exhausting and a learning experience for all.

A talented rugby player, who played for Leicester Tigers in the 50s, John coached the under 15s before taking over the first XV when Neil White finished in the mid-60s.

He remained lifelong friends with fellow Leys masters Geoff Houghton, David Gardiner and Stan Whitehead and their families.

John was educated at Kingswood School in Bath before studying Greats at Exeter College, Oxford. After leaving The Leys he worked in the state school sector, first as head of a middle school and then as a headteacher at Aireborough Grammar School and Ossett School. At Aireborough he was responsible for the transition from a grammar school to a comprehensive.

From 1989-90 he was the President of the Secondary Heads' Association, now known as the Association of School and College Leaders. Upon retirement from teaching in 1994 he was awarded an OBE by Queen Elizabeth.

Words by Matt Horn, John's son



(Hubert) Derek Hosken, School 1943-47 on 4 January 2023

lan Kernon, North A 1949-54 on 5 May 2024

John Labrum, North B 1951-56 on 5 July 2024



John, who has died aged 86, was born in Leamington Spa and spent his working life there. Prior

to reading Law at Queens' College Cambridge he was commissioned into the Royal Artillery, serving in Malaya at the end of the Communist 'Emergency', and returning to England in 1958. He joined his late father's law firm Blythe Owen George in 1970, becoming Managing Partner of Blythe Liggins in 1991, following a merger, where he specialised in residential conveyancing and probate work.

John was always a keen sportsman, playing rugby, hockey, squash, tennis and latterly bowls, and also devoted much time to the support of others. He was Secretary, then President of the South Warwickshire branch of the NSPCC for 20 years, Captain and later President of Stratford Hockey Club for 12 years, Captain and later President of Warwick Boat Club, a keen Rotarian and golfer. He was a former governor of Myton School, and held three treasurerships.

He was married to Carolyn for 59 years, and they have three daughters, one of whom followed him into the law, and seven grandchildren.

Words by Carolyn Labrum



(Charles) Heber Martin, North B 1947-52 on 6 May 2024

David Omitowoju, North B 1978-83 on 7 January 2024

David Oluseye Omitowoju was born on 16 October 1965 in Ibadan. He grew up there at a time of huge political turbulence and conflict in post-Independence Nigeria. The youngest of five, he was determined not to be left behind when his older siblings came to the UK.

For David, coming to the UK was a huge moment of suddenly feeling safe in the world, and he had enormously positive feelings for his two schools, St Faith's and The Leys, because of that and because of the fun he had there.

David's big character, his love of sport, his sociability and his fascination with academic ideas (but not always diligent pursuit of them!) meant that the school environment suited him well, though he was aware that this wasn't the case for everyone: a moving moment after his death was being contacted by a

OBITUARIES



number of people he had befriended or kept an eye on at school.

After school, David ran his own business DJing and putting on bands in Cambridge. In 1991 he returned to education, doing a degree at the University of London, then a PGCE at Cambridge, fulfilling a dream of playing rugby and cricket for the University. He was an outstanding and charismatic teacher, beloved (and slightly feared) by all his pupils. The many warm wishes from former pupils were very heart-warming after his death.

We married in December 1993 in King's College Chapel, and we went on to have four wonderful children, Jonah, Adelaide, Carmen and Hector. David's family, friends and his rootedness in his much-loved Cambridge were incredibly important to him and helped him to fight the demons of his past: the political violence he had witnessed as a child, separation from his parents, the loss of his mother and two siblings tragically young. But it was never easy.

In his last decade, David resigned from his post as Director of Science and tutored Maths and Science, gaining another almost cult following of students who 'couldn't have done it without you, sir!' His health began to go downhill: he was never one to take the sensible path or to think about tomorrow when fun, sociability and good conversation could be had today. He died of a heart attack on 7 January 2024, and will be

verv much missed and verv dearly remembered for his big character, warmth and generosity.

Words by Rosanna Omitowoju

lan Philip, School 1951-56 on 30 June 2024

Richard Plant, Fen 1962-67 on 6 April 2024

Richard had very fond memories of his time at The Leys, where he was captain of the 1st XI cricket, Senior Prefect (head boy) and the school organist. He went on to Pembroke College Cambridge in 1967, where he read English. In 1970 he married Susan Woolf and worked in the sales department at Josiah Wedgewood. In 1971, he realised sales wasn't for him and he was appointed Head of English at Yarlet, becoming Headmaster in 1989 and retiring in 2009. Richard was a wonderful musician and sportsman. He played the organ at various churches; latterly mostly at Sandon Church. He also loved cricket and played for Swynnerton and the Gentlemen of Staffordshire.

Words by Lucy Plant



John Scarr, North B 1949-53 on 9 September 2024 (an obituary will follow in the next issue of OL News).

John Stephenson, North B 1949-54 on 13 May 2024

Graeme Stanley Whitaker, East 1952-56 on 20 May 2024





All events can be booked online at www.theleys.net/leys-community/events/

THURSDAY 14 NOVEMBER 2024

OLS London Drinks 18:30 - 20:30 One Moorgate Place, London EC2R 6EA

FRIDAY 29 NOVEMBER 2024

Festive celebration at Wesley's Chapel 18:30 Wesley's Chapel, 49 City Road, London EC1Y 1AU

SATURDAY 7 DECEMBER 2024

OLS Annual Dinner 19:00 Jesus College, Cambridge CB5 8BL

2025: our 150th anniversary year!

THURSDAY 23 JANUARY 2025

Return to Pitlochry: film premiere for **Old Leysians** Evening, Great Hall, The Leys School

SATURDAY 29 MARCH 2025

Tommy Dann Memorial Match Cambridge University Rugby Ground, Grange Road CB3 9BN; start time TBC

SUNDAY 27 APRIL 2025

OL Reunion - open to ALL Old Leysians The Leys School *Online booking will open on 7 January at 10:00 GMT on our Events page. Early booking is strongly advised.

THURSDAY 28 AUGUST 2025

Cambridge Drinks 18:30 - 20:30 Sports Pavilion, The Leys School

THURSDAY 6 NOVEMBER 2025

OLS London Drinks 18:30 - 20:30 One Moorgate Place, London EC2R 6EA

SATURDAY 6 DECEMBER 2025

OLS Annual Dinner Venue TBC



The Leys, Cambridge CB2 7AD www.theleys.net



The Old Leysian Benevolent Fund

The Fund exists to support Old Leysians and their dependents if they run into difficulties through accident, illness, redundancy, or other unforeseen hardships. Anyone experiencing such hardship, or who knows of someone who may qualify to receive help from the Fund, should contact:

The Secretary, Lucy Sales (Moulton/Dale 2000-07) Email: l.sales@hotmail.co.uk

Any request for help is always dealt with confidentially and with discretion. If you would like to help the Fund in its ongoing work, please contact the Secretary. Any donation would be a tremendous help.

OLS Committee 2024

Officers

- President John Rolfe, North B 1968-73
- Vice President Karen Sears (formerly Cox), Common Room 2009 - present
- President Elect Stephen Ludlow, North B 1980-85 (Wesley's Chapel and Leysian Mission)
- Past President Jo de Grey,
- Granta 1985-87
- Chairman Jo de Grey Treasurer - Katherine Townsend
- (née Eccleston), Moulton/Bisseker 2006-11
- Secretary Liz Walden

Committee Members

Andrew Cullen, North A 1998-03 (Singapore) Sagan Daniels, School 1998-2003 Mark Elliott, Fen 1977-82 (Real Tennis) James Houlder, School 1996-01 (OLCC)

Katya Kornilova, Fen 2005-09 Liam McKeown, West 2008-13 Tim Moore, East 1970-74 Andrew Pittams, North B 2000-05 Lucy Sales, Moulton/Dale 2000-07 Ashley Silverton, Fen 1973-78 (OLFC) Nigel Washbourn, West 1951-55 (OLGS) Max Wilson, West 2011-16

If you wish to receive the digital version of OL News, please email development@theleys.net to let us know.

OL News is produced twice a year. If you would like to contribute to a future edition, please email the editorial team at development@theleys.net. The deadline for submissions for the next issue is 31 January 2025.

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