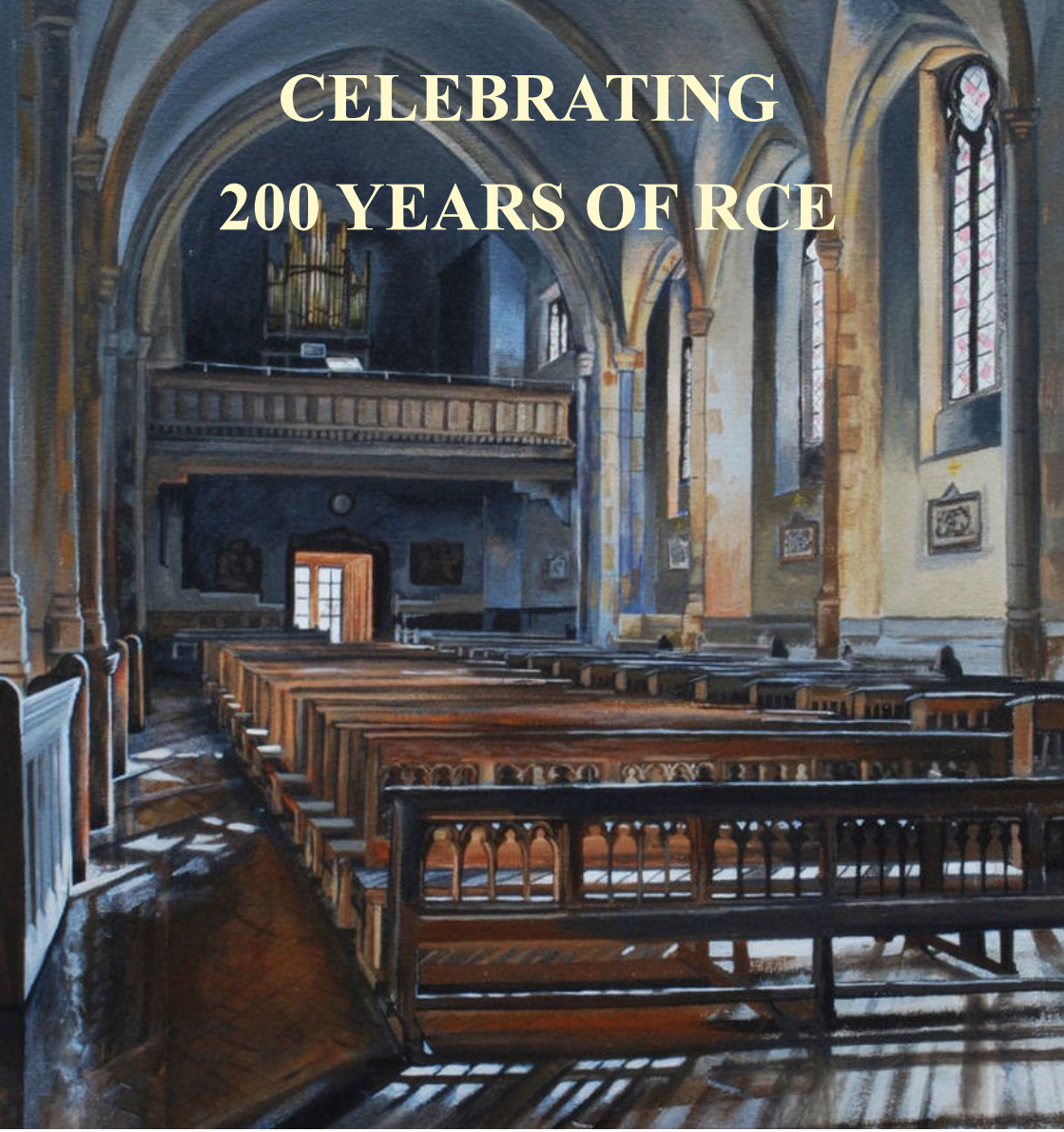

FARNBOROUGH HILL
OLD GIRLS' ASSOCIATION
NEWSLETTER 2016 - 2017

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Honorary Member: Ann Berry (*Tristram*)

Paintings of Farnborough Hill available as prints

by Rosemary Pocock (Byrne)

(example above and on the front and back cover)

email: rosepocockart@talktalk.net

President's Report

Welcome to the Farnborough Hill Old Girls Association 2017 Newsletter. We've had another busy year, and the 2016 September reunion was a great success. Our traditional tea was enhanced by 120 pieces of beautiful vintage china, kindly lent to FHOGA by Emma Hepburn (Hickman). Tea was particularly welcome following an historic hockey match on the new all-weather pitch, umpired by Ann Berry, and featuring Olympic gold medal-winning hockey star, Alex Danson. As always, it was great to see so many Old Girls relive their school memories and enjoy the beautiful surroundings on the Hill.

FHOGA Community Carols in December celebrated Sister Rennie's 90th birthday. Over 100 Old Girls, friends and family gathered to welcome in the festive season, and to help mark this special occasion.

This year, we launched the FHOGA 100 Club, to raise funds for the coveted Old Girls Scholarship for a girl entering the sixth form. If you haven't signed up yet, more details can be found on page 8. We're delighted to announce that this year's scholarship has been awarded to Tegan Williams. Congratulations Tegan, and good luck with your GCSEs!

Very sadly, we have this year had to say goodbye to some very long-standing members of FHOGA, and we send our condolences in particular to the families of Mary Rose Murphy and Liz Hales. We hope that many of you will have learned about Mary Rose and Liz via social media: we have an ever-growing FHOGA Facebook group, with a current membership of 1,482 Old Girls across the globe. If you haven't joined already, please do so to hear all the latest news and to reconnect with old friends.

Not everyone uses Facebook, however; and it is not always the most efficient way of communicating with individuals, or of putting individuals in touch with one another. We would urge you please, therefore, to make sure that we have your contact details and those of your friends: just send them to us at *FHOGA@farnborough-hill.org.uk.*

The experiences and skills of Old Girls are a valuable resource for girls at the school and we're aiming over the next couple of years, not only to strengthen networks amongst Old Girls but also to work with the School to improve access to those networks for current pupils, through careers advice and mentoring, for example. None of this can be achieved without up to date data, so please do make sure that we have yours.

The FHOGA Committee work hard throughout the year to bring you events and keep you up with current news. I would like to take this opportunity to thank each of them for the time and commitment given to FHOGA. We are actively seeking new committee members (and we're always keen to hear your ideas for events), so if there is any way in which you would like to be involved, please do let us know. Obviously, it is easiest if you live near the school; but with all of the means of communication available it is by no means critical.

Our next event is the annual reunion on 16th September at which we shall celebrate the bicentenary of the Religious Sisters of Christian Education: further details on the back cover. I hope to see you there.

Niamh Hills

Community News

We thoroughly enjoyed 'The Gathering' of the Anglo-Irish Province in Bushy Park House, Dublin, the week-end 8 - 11 April 2016. It was both a spiritual and a fun experience.

Our Congregation was founded in 1817 and the first Sisters took their vows in Echouffour on 21st November, so we are celebrating our bicentenary this year. We opened the year on Community Feast Day. The school put on a special assembly and Mrs Neil gave a comprehensive presentation of the history of the Congregation.

At the Mass later that morning we renewed our vows. Sr Anne Minguet, a member of the General Council came over from Paris to celebrate with us; we were also pleased to have Sr R O'Looney, and Sr Cara Nagle. On behalf of the Province, key rings were distributed to all of the girls and staff as a souvenir of our charism and our bicentenary.

Serve the Lord Joyfully and Wholeheartedly

Pope Francis launched the year 2016 as the year of Mercy. Many Cathedrals and churches all over the world were encouraged to set up "A Holy Door of Mercy".

We were all encouraged to make a pilgrimage. We went to Westminster Cathedral and also to St Tarcisius Church in Camberley. An arch of flowers stood at the entrance and the Works of Mercy were illustrated by flower arrangements round the Church, most beautifully arranged by the parishioners.

Sister Veronica Rennie celebrated her 90th Birthday at Farnborough Hill on 4 December at the Old Girls Carol Singing. There were so many Old Girls with past and present staff ; many had travelled long distances to be there. It was a wonderful occasion and one she will remember with great appreciation and gratitude.

The Association of Senior Religious held its Annual Conference in Bournemouth 3 - 6 April. It was the first time Sr Philomena McDonnell had missed it in 15 years because of her recent illness. Thankfully she is now well on the mend.

We get invitations from the School to attend their various activities, concerts and productions. We are constantly impressed by the high standard achieved in so many different areas, and the welcome we receive.

We enjoy our contact with friends and Old Girls and if you are in the vicinity of Orchard Rise, we would love to see you; you are always welcome. We look forward to seeing as many of you as can make it to the Old Girls' Reunion in September so that you can celebrate our bicentenary with us.

Sr. Josephine Shannon

The Religious of Christian Education (RCE) was started by Abbé Louis Lafosse, originally a Parish Priest in Normandy, France. He lived during the troubled times of the French Revolution and decided to educate post revolutionary children, especially girls. The 4 young teachers he trained decided they wanted to become Religious Sisters and so the Congregation of the Sisters of Christian Education was born in Echauffour on 21st November 1817. The Sisters now celebrate this day each year as their Community Feast Day.

The Anti-Clerical laws in France of the 1880s led the congregation to move outside France, first to Farnborough in 1889 and to the US in 1904, Ireland in 1953, Africa in 1958 and Peru in 1982. The Sisters maintained their core values in these schools fostering a happy environment, family spirit, academic excellence, encouraging leadership and retaining spiritual values of faith, truth, welcome and working with others.

Our own Community have worked tirelessly to make the school as it is today and continue to play an important role, helping on a day-to-day basis and as Governors and Trustees.

Here are words from the Sisters about their Vision, 'We encourage others with respect, hope and tenderness to discover their gifts, to trust their abilities and to develop their potential.'

Treasured Memories from our Sisters

Sister Mary Dawson

I was recently back in Farnborough and was lucky to catch a performance of Pride and Prejudice, which brought back so many happy memories. My years in Farnborough Hill were very happy ones and I was extremely fortunate to have the great support of my Community and such wonderful members of staff - both teaching and non-teaching. There was never a dull moment and, certainly, April 1st was never dull!! The girls saw to that. I remember them all with great affection. So, in short, I am full of gratitude for my years in Farnborough Hill and for the contribution of each and everyone who helped make them such happy ones.

Sister Rosemary Alexander 1948

Sister Alexander has had a long association with Farnborough Hill as pupil, Novice RCE, Headmistress and Provincial Superior. She follows with interest the life of the school and her correspondence with Old Girls. Now being unable to travel, she sadly misses all of the wonderful occasions but her name lives on in the Alexander Sports Hall.

Sister Patricia Wright 1942

I was born in Farnborough in December 1924, the year that my sister, Peggy, started in the Kindergarten at Hillside. My connections with the Congregation started in the first weeks of my life, as my mother used to take me, in my pram, to meet my sister each day from school. The nuns were always around, making sure that the children went off with the right parents, and my mother said they always peered in at me in my pram. When I was old enough, I too joined the Kindergarten. Mother Mattes, who was my teacher, gave me a great devotion to my Guardian Angel, which has remained with me all my life.

I loved all the nuns, and prayed in my night prayers, that if anything happened to my parents, that the nuns would look after me. Little did I realise then, that I would be a part of the RCE family for life!

Sister Veronica Rennie 1944

Before joining the Community, I always wanted to see the Grand Canyon and Niagara Falls. However, January 1962 changed all that. England experienced a three month frost beginning a few days before the school opened for the Easter Term. Sister Scully woke me up to say she could hear a drip. We discovered the Green Gallery was flooded. Mr Cook was called in and turned off the water. With even that done we had to wait for another 400 gallons to come down before starting the mopping up; first the Green Gallery, then the lower gallery and cellars by candle light! Watching the sheet of water coming down cancelled all dreams of seeing other cascades of water.

Sister Josephine Shannon

During the Centenary of RCE in Farnborough in1989, there were a number of events at the school to mark the occasion. Mass was celebrated by Cardinal Basil Hume for the School, Old Girls and friends and we had our first ball at Farnborough Hill which was well attended. The Old Girls' Reunion was well prepared by Alison Halliwell and her team and was a tremendous success . Over 400 attended and different year groups were allocated different rooms in the school and all were given a lunch box from a refrigerated van parked in front of the school. Eileen Kirkby, Dame Helen Ghosh's mother, made a beautiful centenary cake and Ann Yarnold put up an impressive display about the Empress Eugénie.

The things that make Farnborough Hill special are the friendships made for life and the fulfilment of Abbé Lafosse's motto 'Serve the Lord Joyfully and Wholeheartedly' expressing unity, friendship and mutual respect, This sculpture on the Holly Bush Lawn called 'Joyfullness' symbolises these perfectly.

Sister Monica Mannion

I have a vivid memory of Farnborough Hill's Festival of Flowers in October 1982, lasting for 3 full days and opened by Archbishop Bruno Heim. It was superbly organised by Mr Brufal and Mr Murphy from the Friends of Farnborough Hill and very successfully raised

money for school bursaries. Coachloads of people came from far and wide to see the professional flower arrangements dedicated to Saint's Days and laid out in the Chapel, library, lower gallery and Oak Parlour. It was the year that Grace Kelly died and there was also a flower arrangement in her memory. Mother Mooorat was interviewed by Southern TV. She had individually made all of the flowers in her arrangement which remained in the Oak Parlour for many years.

Sister Philomena MacDonnell

I was Dormitory Mistress between the Green Gallery and the top floor to 3rd and 4th Years for more than 30 years and I enjoyed it very much. I used to sleep in the same room as the girls with just a partition. The girls were always wanting to know what our hair looked like under our veils so they used to try to catch us asleep to peek round the partition! I remember the night that President Kennedy was killed in1963. It was a Friday and I was helping with the laundry when the Head Girl, Anne Fosh, called me to tell me the terrible news. Sister Alexander told the girls at supper that night and I remember how shocked they all were.

The unique and very beautiful services we have in the Chapel are what make Farnborough Hill so special, together with all the dear, dear friendships.

Treasured Memories of our Sisters

In the 1940s, after Sunday Benediction, we would have films laid on in the lower Refectory, into which we all crowded - boarders and Community. On one occasion Sr Teresa, still a young novice, told me after the show, with much giggling, of her most embarrassing experience. At a 'soppy' scene in the film, she had given her neighbouring Sister a hearty nudge in the ribs, only to find when the lights went up that the neighbour turned out to be Abbot du Boisrouvrais who had joined the audience just after the lights had gone down.

Mary Fear Hill 1940

Other than when Sr Rennie confiscated my little transistor radio I had hidden in a box of Kleenex, she was extremely kind to me as the Infirmarian. In June 1961, I developed jaundice (now known as Hepatitis A) while in the Fourth Form and had to be isolated. I did get to go home early for the Summer holidays though!

Louise Martin-Murphy 1963

I remember Sr Mannion asking for a ride in my little red sports car once and while I expected her to hold onto her veil, she held firmly onto her skirt. This is a photograph of Sr Dawson and Sr Mannion holding my new born son in hospital in 1983. They gave him a white rabbit soft toy which remained his favourite for many years.

Gill Chapman (former Head of Physics)

Back in the 80s, I went one Sunday with Srs Josephine and Mannion to Blackbushe Market to buy flowers for the Chapel and Sr Mannion bartered with the stall holder, leaving her with enough money to buy us all ice-creams. I also remember Sr Mullen popping out from under the main staircase to scold Jill Abbott and myself for using the stairs.

Karen Phillips (former Director of Music)

During her time as Headmistress, Sister McCormack knew not only every pupil but also their parents. When she retired from her position as Head, she wrote a message and hand delivered it to every single girl in the school. *Sarah Bunch 1989*

I remember a trip to Ireland, with Srs Dawson and McCormack. As second years, we were still in awe of the staff, and especially of Headmistress, Sr Dawson, but the Sisters were so kind to us and highly tolerant of our rowdy singing and, I'm sure, our interminable giggling. One afternoon, for a reason I genuinely can't remember, 3 of us were confined to our dorm and missed that afternoon's activity. When Sister Dawson knocked on the door ,we quickly hid our Jackie magazines under our pillows, but to our delight she had not come to check on us but had brought us tea and biscuits. How kind was that? *Lizzie Weiser (Nolan) 1982*

When I was at school in the 1940s, I always thought they were saying: ' May the Divine Sisters remain always with us' in the Rosary prayer instead of " May the Divine assistance remain always with us'! *Helen Campbell (Fermi) 1944*

Old Girls' Scholar

My name is Jessica Stinton and I joined Farnborough Hill in 2011. I am currently studying Food Technology, Biology, Chemistry and Latin A-Level, with the hope of studying Food Science and Nutrition at University.

Sixth Form life so far has been wonderful, and I am so blessed to have had the opportunity to stay on as the Farnborough Hill environment is unlike any other. The teachers are so inspirational and their dedication and care create a calm, welcoming learning environment.

Attending the Old Girls' Reunion last year made me even more aware of the family spirit of Farnborough Hill which is so incredibly important and allows the school to stand out as a place of care, as well as one of academic excellence. It was an event filled with joy, laughter and happy memories – one of which concerned the Quad toilets – I won't go into details, but it certainly made me smile. The school was filled with Old Girls reflecting upon their school days and being shocked at the disappearance of corridors and the appearance of new ones!

Thank you for choosing me as your scholar to represent the Farnborough Hill family, both past and present, as it is an immense privilege and one which I will always remember.

FHOGA 100 CLUB

Join our FHOGA 100 CLUB for a chance to win fabulous monthly cash prizes and help finance the Old Girls' Scholarship for only £5 per month! Please contact fhoga100club@farnborough-hill.org.uk for details.

Report from the Head

As I write this first report for the FHOGA newsletter, I am mindful of the long, enduring relationship that some of the membership will have had with Farnborough Hill. This was brought fully to my mind shortly before Christmas when we celebrated Sr Rennie's 90th birthday at the annual FHOGA Community Carol Singing. Not only has she been a member of the Community as an adult, Sr Rennie also attended the school as a pupil. This link with the school seems hard to beat! Yet so many Old Girls speak fondly of their time here, whether in the 1940s or more recently. They share humorous stories and take comfort in the school's ethos and the impact this has had on their lives.

The Old Girls' Reunion in September was a wonderful affair. The combination of activities, special "guest star" Alex Danson and informal opportunities to chat with contemporaries and staff felt so very welcoming and provided good fun for all. Then the poignant and inclusive service in the Chapel brought another dimension to the day, rounding proceedings off perfectly. On that day after tea, I happened to be in my study. Many roving parties of Old Girls spanning the decades peeked in – reverting in many ways to their much younger selves, enjoying the thrill of venturing to once "off limit places". Over the course of the afternoon I was told that the Oak Parlour had been the site of their entrance examination or Spanish oral, or where they had tea on their first day and never set foot in again – or my own favourite, where elocution lessons were given.

While we don't offer elocution lessons anymore the variety of activities and opportunities abound, and I am confident to say continues to grow. Just this Easter holiday we have sent nearly 140 girls away on four wonderful co-curricular residential trips: a Classics trip to the ancient sites of Herculaneum, Pompeii and Rome; a home-stay trip to Granada, Spain for girls to polish their Spanish and to learn more of Spanish culture; a History trip to Berlin – highlights included a visit to Wannsee Conference House and a tour of Hitler's bunkers; a Geography trip of "awe and wonder" to China taking in the sites of the Great Wall, the Forbidden City, the Terracotta Army Museum and the Three Gorges Dam. Such wonderful experiences come only because of the enthusiasm and commitment of the staff.

Trips that set off earlier in the year also worthy of mention are the Languages Department trip to the German Christmas markets in Rhineland in December, while at the same time members of the English Department escorted A level students on a tour of the Somme Battlefields. During February half-term, Mrs Griffiths ably led the annual ski trip to Austria.

All these trips and so many more day events compliment the central academic work of the school.

We pride ourselves on the girls' achievements and last year's public examination results were no exception. Indeed our A level results are among the very best in the history of Farnborough Hill. 48% were A* and A with a superb 97% A* to C. We are particularly delighted with the success of three students who are now studying at Oxbridge; Lucy Collins reading Natural Sciences at Trinity Hall, Holly Smith reading History at Pembroke College, Cambridge and Carys Daly reading Experimental Psychology at Wadham College, Oxford. Our GCSE results were equally pleasing. Despite the national drop in results Farnborough Hill saw no such reduction. 25% of all grades were A*; 58% were A* - A and 87% A* - B. An amazing 18 girls achieved A* and A in all their grades. These excellent grades do not just happen. They represent ability but what is also key is sustained effort, tenacity and passion as well as inspirational teaching and a willingness on the part of teachers to go the extra-mile.

The sheer variety of subjects open to the girls at Farnborough Hill is also notable, and I believe this ensures success, as each girl by Sixth Form is able to "be in her element". Over 24 A levels are offered – including Further Mathematics, Design & Technology, Graphics, Physics, Psychology, Latin, Drama and Government & Politics. In other words, all manner of gifts and talents are nurtured.

Gifts and talents also flourish in our busy extra-curricular programme. Recently we have been treated to the Easter Concert, where Fauré's Requiem was performed to a professional standard. Just a few weeks prior to that, the school production of Pride & Prejudice (double-cast) was staged. Witty and thought-provoking, it offered opportunities for many girls to be involved whether as cast, crew or in production – it brought the school community together.

Concurrently, sporting achievements have been sizeable:

Cross Country – Years 7 and 8 won the District Championships.

Swimming – Years 7 & 8 came 17th in the National Medley Relay Championships.

Netball – Year 7 were unbeaten in the League.

Cross Country – U15s came 1st and U17s were runners up at the District Championships.

Netball – U15A, U15B and U16 were runners up in the District tournaments.

Badminton – Years 7 – 9 were runners up in the Hampshire County Tournament.

As ever we are preparing our pupils to become confident, compassionate and engaged members of the adult world. Particularly relevant events have been our PSHEE days for Years 10 and 11. For instance, in January Year 10 spent a day learning about the Holocaust and how we mark it; exploring the legal system in Britain and the role of Parliament, as well as understanding the importance of budgeting personal finances appropriately. Meanwhile, Year 11 have learnt about interview techniques, considered once more the benefits and hazards of the digital age, and have been offered the opportunity to get involved in the National Citizen Service – a volunteering programme open to 16 – 17 year olds.

Underpinning all this is the spiritual life of the school. Always vibrant, always relevant, it gives meaning to our daily tasks. This year's retreat theme was one of reflection and girls of all ages considered their own strengths and achievements – a wholly positive and important activity. It is also apposite to mention that 2017 marks the bi-centenary of the foundation of the order of the Religious of Christian Education. This is a staggering achievement and the school community is well aware of the virtues and traits espoused by the sisters. We are ever thankful for their commitment both now and in the past and value their continued involvement with the school.

In such an energetic and exciting environment – the year flies by, and so we are even now considering the end of the academic year. Several extremely well-established members of staff will be leaving the school at the end of the year, Jamie Nix and Sarah Bond are both retiring – Jeremy Hoar is gaining promotion as Deputy Head at St George's, Ascot and other members of staff are finding new professional challenges elsewhere. However, eclipsing all this is Anne Griffiths' approaching retirement after 26 years of loyal and dedicated service to the school. Anne will be deeply missed but remembered so very fondly. Indeed we wish all our leavers every happiness in their new ventures and hope they know they will always be valued members of the school community.

With my very best wishes to you all and especially the Community in its 200th year,
Alex Neil

FHOGA September Reunion 2016 - A Tea Party on the Hill

Thank you all for a very special and memorable afternoon. I loved every minute of it - even the Old Girls' hockey match, in which I had somehow been cajoled into playing by Mrs Chapman via Facebook! I was dreading it, having not played for 40 years, but seemed to slot right back in with Mrs Berry shouting from the side-lines; it helped, of course, that we had GB player, Alex Danson, on our side! But it brought back some really good memories of the fun I had playing sport and I have even decided to join my local hockey club since!

It was really lovely to see the Sisters, Mrs Thompson, her daughter and Mrs Hales - full of fun as ever! The high tea was delicious and so civilized, served in the most beautiful china tea set in the refectory. The service was very moving, with personal memories, a time capsule and such heavenly music from the choir. I was particularly touched by the burning lamp outside the Chapel and the prayer that went with it that told us the flame was a symbol of the constant prayers that are said for all Farnborough Hill girls, both past and present. I felt so touched that we were remembered in that way and sent a copy of the prayer to my sister, who also went to Farnborough Hill. *Theresa McMahon (Devereux)1981*

A Day to Remember

September 2016 was not a happy time for me. Peter was in hospital; I was worried sick, tired and very emotional, so the last thing I felt like doing was going to the Old Girls' Reunion and being sociable. But as the school had recently opened the all-weather hockey pitch and Gill Chapman had worked hard to put together a reunion based around hockey and hockey players, I felt a sense of loyalty to her. So I took a deep breath, put on some make-up and went up to the Hill. And, to this day, I'm so glad I did for so many reasons.

Many members of staff greeted me and gave me hugs when needed, made me smile before I cried (Jo Russell!) and generally wrapped me in a cloak of kindness, concern and love that has stayed with me ever since.

And then there were the girls - all those wonderful girls that made my teaching career such a joy: those who loved their sport, those who didn't, the clever ones, the cheeky ones, all of whom, I am delighted to see, have grown up into wonderful women with a wide variety of careers and interests.

But the special part of the day for me was the appearance of my hockey players, from several decades – including my first ever international player, Lyn Rogers, and my latest international player, the fantastic Alex Danson, and others who are still playing and coaching: Zoe Franklin, Wendy O'Toole, Caroline Everard and Jenny Cornelius to name but a few.

And what happened when we had the match? I started coaching from the side-line and felt ten years younger, lighter in spirit and filled up with the happy memories of all the hockey players, the matches, the tournaments and the feeling of pride when beginners develop into accomplished players.

So thank you, Gill, thank you FHOGA, thank you everybody who attended – you gave me a day to remember.

I do, of course, owe all of those happy times to my mentor, Mother Alexander, who inspired me, gave me the confidence to use my talents and instilled in me the qualities and principles to be a proper teacher. A wonderful women, respected, admired and loved in equal measure.

Ann Berry (Tristram) 1965

1980

A Tribute to the Sisters by Dr Jo Russell

Me, I'm a convent girl. Ursuline Convent Chester until GCE, A levels at Paddock House Oswaldtwistle (yes, yes, very funny) with Sacred Heart, first teaching post at the Marist in Sunninghill. And my mum went to the Holy Cross in Wimbledon. So, in the blood. When I came for interview at the Hill, the smell of lavender floor polish and votive candles had me right at home. Sr Josephine showed me round and we had the bonding over our shared name, enhanced by Napoleonic references. Sr Elizabeth McCormack interviewed and appointed me. She looked like someone to whom goose-booing would be a big deal, but that was only the front. She knew everything that went on in the school, every girl, all their siblings, all their parents and grandparents, the name of their dog and their rabbit. A genuinely wise woman, I think. When she 'retired' as head she became a social worker, working in Peckham with big, scary addicts and drunks. They would stand in front of her like small boys being reprimanded by the Head. Steve Morley and I went to take her out to supper. "I'll fetch you from the station," she said. "We've had a couple of drive by shootings recently. Yardies, I think." We felt safe with her.

My daughter-in-law is the grandchild of a Church of Ireland vicar, and not very keen on religion of any sort. I brought her to Advent carols one time, with my granddaughter who was a babe in arms. Afterwards we went for sherry and mince pies in the ref. Sr Hawkins rushed up to meet the baby. Anna reached out to Sister's sherry glass, so she dipped in her finger and gave it to Anna to suck. Later my daughter-in-law said, "My baby has been given alcohol, and by a nun!" Sr Hawkins' taste for Baileys was legendary, so when my dad died and I found a whole litre of the stuff in his cupboard, I knew where to take it.

My dad was for a short time in Abercorne House and Sr Wright used to have Mass for one of the Sisters there so I took my dad along. Sr Wright was probably older than most of the residents. I saw her recently and she is unchanged. I'll have what she's having, I thought.

When I was first at school, the Sisters lived in the building. The door to the corridor at the end of the red corridor was the beginning of their quarters, and if you wanted to get to the Green Gallery you had to go down to the ground floor and up the main stairs. I didn't quite grasp this and wandered into the forbidden ground where I was greeted with pleasure and shown my way by Sr. Mullen, long gone but remembered by anyone who saw her polishing the cutlery after school lunch. When I mentioned it in the staffroom I was told that I'd committed a great sin, but I seem to have got away with it by the good grace of a kind woman.

It's that kindness that I will always remember from our dear Sisters. When I was at school, I can recall only harsh criticism from the Sisters who taught me. Our Sisters are all warm, affectionate women who love the girls in their care and delight in the success of the staff. I swear their prayers have populated the English department with babies, and their care for those of our colleagues who have suffered illness and bereavement is legendary. Institutions come and go, but it's the people who make them persist. Happy Birthday, ladies.

Old Girls Around the Globe

Katie Mageean 2005 - Paediatrics in Uganda

During my time at Farnborough Hill, I always enjoyed the sciences, especially Biology- spurred on by the ever-enthusiastic Mrs Hayes, Mrs Hatton and Mrs Storey. Since leaving the sixth form, I spent 11 years studying and practising medicine in the UK. Three years into my paediatric training, I decided it was time for something a little different, and travelled to Uganda to volunteer through the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health's international health partnership scheme - Global Links. I found myself living in Kamuli, a hot and dusty town in central Uganda, with the responsibility of being the only paediatrician in the hospital - in fact, in the district - and feeling very much like a fish out of water. My role in Kamuli General Hospital was to provide teaching and training to local staff, as well as clinical care. I was faced with a paediatric ward overflowing with children, many of whom were suffering from malaria, dehydration, and severe acute malnutrition; nursing staff who were stretched to the limit with no regular doctor to help or teach them; and a lack of basic supplies including oxygen, water, antibiotics and blood. It was, at first, overwhelming. As I got used to the sweltering heat (not helped by the fact I had to wear a huge white coat, reminiscent in thickness and stiffness of an oversized Farnborough Hill blazer on a brand new year 7) I gradually settled in. I worked with the staff to establish a triage system, as previously the only system for seeing the patients was first come, first served, and this posed a real risk of sick children deteriorating, or even dying, whilst waiting in the queue. We also established a teaching programme, and I was so proud to see my colleagues learning new skills which they then taught to others. Another highlight was starting a sickle cell disease clinic, led brilliantly by a local nurse and clinical officer, to enable children with the condition to attend regularly for check-ups and medication.

During my 7 months in Kamuli, I was lucky enough to live in a small but perfect Ugandan roundhouse in the beautiful garden of a lovely family, who became my own Ugandan family from day one. Cooking on my outdoor gas ring under the thatched roof of my porch, with the sun going down behind me, was a daily moment of happiness. Sometimes, during the big storms, I cooked by the light of my head-torch, and sat outside watching the torrential rain and lightning, seeing the sky lit up pink. I received such kindness from my neighbours and colleagues, and was generously welcomed into their lives. Their support was much appreciated by someone who was a long way from home, working in a very unfamiliar environment, with a lot to learn. The work was extremely challenging, as was witnessing the desperate situations of so many people in Kamuli and across Uganda facing poverty, malnutrition and a lack of basic healthcare. I am grateful that my work as a paediatric doctor enabled me to contribute in some small way to the lives of children in Kamuli, and I felt privileged to have the responsibility of supporting the staff and patients there. I came away with a huge sense of gratitude for our over-stretched, yet incredible NHS, and never before has it been so clear to me just how lucky we are. To all the Old Girls who supported me and Kamuli Hospital last year - thank you.

Emily Malyon-Roberts (2008) - From Russia with Love

I developed my love of languages at Farnborough Hill where I studied French, Spanish, Latin, Greek, and Italian and then went on to study Spanish and Russian at University. I would like to thank Mrs Hall and Miss Casey for inspiring me! I've been living in Russia full-time since 2012 and spent my first year as an intern in Stavropol, a small city in the South of Russia, before deciding to move to Moscow to be nearer friends. I'm currently the Head of an Academic Department for a company called Language Link, which has over 65 schools across Russia and Kazakhstan. Living in Russia certainly has its challenges. For example, we had temperatures of -27°C the other day; a lot of administrative processes are still very slow and bureaucratic as well. It's easier to get over the culture shock by viewing the difficulties as mini-adventures; they eventually become routine and on the whole I like living here very much. It's a fascinating country with beautiful natural landscapes and a wealth of historical and cultural sites and events. Also, I've always felt very safe here, despite living in a huge city. A common misconception is that Russians are rude or unfriendly, but this isn't the case. It's true that they tend to be less superficially polite, as they don't consider it important to be so and prefer to be honest, but there is a great culture of hospitality here and most people would do anything for a guest or friend. Something I get asked about a lot is Russian politics. I have learned that there is a great divide between the government and the ordinary people, so judging Russia by the news headlines or the actions of its politicians does not give a true measure of the people who live here.

Charlotte Smart (Wollocombe) 1976 - Life as an Expat in Penang

When I arrived at Farnborough Hill, I was already used to living in exotic places because my father was in the army and the family continued to move about throughout my seven years as a boarder (1969-76). We lived mainly in Germany, and school holidays provided many travelling opportunities, such as sailing around the Danish islands and skiing in Italy and Austria. Perhaps not surprisingly, I went on to study modern languages at Exeter. My very first job was as a Sales Rep travelling in East Africa and Southern Europe, followed by a similar one in Central and Western Europe; but it was not until my younger daughter set off to University that, as an adult, I made my first actual home abroad.

Geoff and I chose Penang, Malaysia because, although quite well-travelled, neither of us had spent much time in the Far East. We decided to take two years out, to explore the area. That was in 2009, and we are still there...although now making plans, finally, to return...with ageing parents and a first grandchild to think about. We just loved Penang from the moment we arrived. It is easy living for an English couple, and there are plenty of other westerners to mix with. The British were the original settlers, starting in 1786, when Penang had been simply an uninhabited island and quickly turned it into a vibrant trading post. As a result there is a positive attitude to all things British and many reminders of home in the names of streets and buildings. We felt very welcome, which was lovely and rather unexpected.

In 2008 George Town became a UNESCO World Heritage Site and many of the historic buildings, which were crumbling when

we arrived, have been rescued and transformed into wonderful restaurants and shops of all kinds. Add to that the mixed, vibrant cultures of Malay, Chinese and Indians, and the huge sandy beaches...and you begin to see why we ended up staying over seven years!!

Edwina Logan (Norton) 1980 - The British Embassy in Kathmandu

Life in Nepal is full of great experiences and great frustrations, probably in equal measure. I came to live in Kathmandu eighteen months ago when my husband, Ian, was posted to the British Embassy as Defence Attaché. On the following Remembrance Sunday, I found myself unveiling a memorial plaque in the cemetery attached to the Embassy to four soldiers who tragically died on expedition on Mount Nuptse in 1975. I remembered so well attending the beautiful Memorial Service in the school chapel for one of these soldiers, David Brister. His mother, Mary Brister, was my English teacher. Our schooldays never leave us!

Kathmandu is a noisy, chaotic and heavily polluted city which has outgrown itself but is hemmed in by virtue of being situated in a valley. On a rare smog-free day, we can see the white capped mountains from the house. There is an eclectic mix of people living and working here, from 'leftover hippies' of many nationalities to young Nepalese trying to get a good education in one of the many schools here that offer boarding facilities. Sadly, the disruption, upset and destruction caused by the earthquakes in April and May 2015 have left many people struggling to rebuild their lives. It is only in recent months that I have noticed new businesses opening in the city. The rebuilding of homes is a slow process and there is a long way to go. On a brighter note, the Gurkha Welfare Scheme has managed to rebuild over 600 pensioners' homes so far.

Ian and I are able to leave Kathmandu regularly and spend time in the hills visiting pensioners, which is always an adventure. Domestic flights are frequent but the weather often prevents flying, so travel by road is then required. Roads connecting main towns are not too bad but all others are unmade and seasonally blocked by landslides during monsoon. We are lucky to have a good driver and a sturdy Discovery. Opportunities for trekking are boundless. We tend to trek the old fashioned way with porters and camp overnight in beautiful locations. There is nothing quite like emerging from the tent to be greeted by a stunning mountain view or lying in a tent at night listening to distant avalanches .

The highlight for me has been the opportunity to play elephant polo at the World Elephant Polo Championships held in Chitwan. Playing polo on an elephant is quite different from playing on a polo pony. It is definitely never too late to try something new....

Fiona Guertler (Watters) 1977 - Teaching in Düsseldorf

It's astonishing just how much of your school days remain with you. It's 40 years since I left Farnborough Hill after seven years as a day girl. I was inspired by Mrs Falkner-Corbett and the inimitable Mrs Dingwall. ("If you want to learn how to speak French, girls, **go to France**!" delivered in the most deliciously cut-glass English I had ever heard). My passion for languages led me to Nottingham to study French and Spanish. Since then I've taught in the UK, the Netherlands and for the last 20 years have been spent happily teaching the Bac-

calaureate at the International School of Düsseldorf. Loads of exciting adventures have happened along the way. These may be condensed to: two girls, two boys, two husbands…

I love living in an international environment. You come to appreciate just how eclectic and wide-ranging your vocabulary has grown from childbirth in Holland to neurological specificities in Germany, (my husband passed away in January 2106, after living bravely with both Parkinson's and dementia). I love to see the way communication takes on its own organic direction. With each day comes a new word. New hope.

At first, I found life in Germany rather reserved, but have grown to love it. The year keeps its beautiful, predictable rhythm – from the St Martin Parade in November, sparkling with children's lanterns and songs, to those four special weeks of Advent, solemnly illuminated each Sunday with another simple candle on the wreath. We go from eating goose in winter to the long-awaited asparagus season in April. Festivities include, of course, the Christmas Markets and Karneval. Surely to sip a cool drink in a beer garden on the banks of the Rhine, as the sun sets , is heaven on earth!

My daughter and I over Annecy

I miss nothing from England, mainly because it's not far away. I am so sad at the decline in popularity of modern languages in England. I deeply respect Angela Merkel's determination to maintain peace in Europe and admire her compassion for those refugees whose lives have been utterly devastated by the atrocities of war.

Fond memories of Sr McCormack and Sr Dawson blend with one - rather more formidable - of Mother Alexander and my 11 year old self rapidly approaching the invisible door in the mirrored wall of the library. I wonder if the red votive candle still glows there and if tales about Empress Eugenie's unfinished tapestry still abound? What do I miss from Farnborough Hill? Our innocence, Jacob's Ladder, the rhododendrons and the Sisters.

Alison Hall (Porter)1979 - "Down Under"

I left for my first visit to Australia on a working holiday with my husband in 1990. We stayed in Melbourne for about two years. I volunteered at a number of local schools and quickly found a full time teaching job. We spent every weekend and school holidays visiting as much of the country as we could and made some amazing friends along the way.

We returned to the UK in 1993 as I was pregnant, arriving from a very hot summer in Australia to a freezing cold February. Managing to secure new jobs and visas, we returned in January 1995 and have made our lives "Down Under". I have now worked at a number of Catholic Primary schools around Melbourne and am studying for a Master's in Education. Our daughter, Laura, was born here in 1998 and she and her brother Nicholas have both done well. Australia certainly is an amazing country and we have a wonderful lifestyle. We live in a large house with chickens, a veggie patch and fruit trees. We have got used to the 40+ degree summers—the houses not really being well suited to winter (temperatures can be as low as 10 degrees)—the amazing

beaches and the joy of barbecues and the outdoor lifestyle. There are so many places still to see in this vast land.

Whilst we really miss family and friends and realise now that we should have taken more opportunities to visit Europe when we lived there, I don't think we'll ever go back to living in the UK.

Farnborough Hill seems a lifetime ago; but it was lovely to visit recently and to see that some things never change. I remember being silent in the Chapel Corridor, not being able to use the Oak Staircase, great teas when playing Saturday morning sport and also the kindness and generosity of both nuns and lay teachers. Sister Dawson was wonderful as Principal and I always loved Liz Hales' Geography lessons and went on to do a Geography degree.

Susannah Dale 1994 - Settled in Sunny Spain

Before I ever started learning Spanish, I remember sitting and gazing up at a poster of the Spanish alphabet on the classroom wall. The curly ñ fascinated me. When Spanish was offered in the 3rd year (1989), I didn't hesitate to sign up. The memory of my first ever Spanish lesson with Mrs Penny Berry is still vivid: I sat next to my good friend, Maria Curran, and we learned how to ask for some castanets and a fan in the department store. At A-Level, we discovered Federico García Lorca ("The House of Bernarda Alba" captivated us – I think we must have identified with the all-female household without a man in sight!) and Spanish became increasingly important to me. I went on to study French and Spanish at Manchester University and did my third year abroad in Valparaiso, Chile.

In 2004, at the age of 28, I finally moved to Spain. After just two months living in Madrid, I fell in love at first sight with an Andalusian named Juan de Dios! After twelve years and several Spanish cities (Barcelona, San Sebastian and now Malaga), I am established as a self-employed translator and we have two young daughters called Alba and Nora. Having a baby in Spain is a joy. When they cry in public people rally round to talk to them and cheer them up, waiters pick them up to soothe them; they are genuinely welcome in restaurants at any time of day or night, and no one is remotely embarrassed by anything children do. I find the Brits very stiff in comparison.

Spain is my home now but my life here will always be linked to Farnborough Hill through my discovery of Spanish in the classroom: for that I will always be grateful.

Julia Elkins Hennelly (Elkins) 1981 - Embracing Three Cultures

As my eldest son is finishing his High School years, I think back 36 years to when I did the same and realise that my 7 years at Farnborough Hill prepared me for life – I left with a work ethic and morals that are still with me today. Despite living in a very different culture I hope that some of those morals have been passed down to my children.

I am currently living in Chicago with my husband, Pat, and 3 teenage sons. My life in the US began with a one year contract to New York in 1988. I moved to Vancouver, where I met

Pat, we then settled in Chicago where we have been for the last 12 years. It can be a challenge straddling 2 cultures; according to my British family I have become very Americanised and used to the fast pace of an American city. According to my sons I am so British; enjoying a cup of tea at 4 o'clock. As a family we actually cover 3 cultures as my two youngest were born in Guatemala. We try to incorporate all 3 cultures into our lives – we eat tamales on Christmas Eve, enjoy the occasional bangers and mash and, when in England, all of us love fish and chips. The biggest challenge of living abroad is missing family, especially nieces and nephews. When visitors come to see us, the three items I ask for are: Heinz tomato soup; salt and vinegar chip sticks and custard creams, which always remind me of biscuit break – Tania Pilley and I were always happy to volunteer to hand out biscuits on custard cream day! Another fond memory was making the Chapel Choir LP, of which I now have a copy on CD (thanks to Caroline Orme), and can listen to it every Sunday on my way to church.

Guatemala plays a huge part of our family's life; our boys know they can visit their birth family anytime except when they should be in school! My middle son, Jimmy, and I recently took a trip to Guatemala, a country where most people go to bed hungry on a dirt floor but they always have a welcoming smile. We took school supplies on this occasion, donated and gave out rice, shoes and soccer shirts.

Lesley O'Toole-Roque (O'Toole) 1981 - Enjoying the Fast Lane in LA

I arrived in Los Angeles in January 1993, having been "asked to leave" Sydney the previous month due to a visa infraction at my magazine editor's job. My company shipped me to LA and like so many Brits here, I never left, eventually jettisoning that job for the freelance journalist's life. I met a handsome Nicaraguan called Jairo, now my husband, and we conceived our son Kai, 12, in Ireland which, as a half-Irish person, thrills me no end. These days I'm writing a project for TV - with an ex-Salesian College pupil no less, Andrew Corless whose three sisters, twins Rosemary and Maria and Heather all went to Farnborough Hill. I have such happy memories of school, after I became a day girl, anyway. I was perhaps the most homesick boarder ever. Every morning break I would go for tea and biscuits with the School Bursar, Mr Reynolds. While he seemed an imperious Scot to some, to me he was a saviour. He and Mrs Berry anyway, and her fellow PE teachers, Mrs Gibson, Mrs Thomson and Miss Moores, later Mrs Fish.

I was quite sporty at school, competing for Hampshire County at hockey and Hampshire Schools at athletics and though I did well academically, sport was very much my life. I'm still sporty, still run and love yoga, Pilates and boogie-boarding at the beach.

It was a particular thrill to meet Alex Danson recently, but one of my biggest joys has been watching the success of fellow Old Girl, Raquel Cassidy, in Downton Abbey and beyond, and spending time with her in LA when she has been in town for award shows and work. We lived close to each other and used to walk to and from Fleet Station together sometimes. I remember her long skinny legs and her briefcase swinging, seemingly bigger than her. There is much to be said for shared history dating so far back.

Janet Lance (White) 1952 - My Year in Laval

My family history with Farnborough Hill goes back a long way. Two aunts, Gwen and Violet White, were pupils – Gwen represented the Old Girls at Empress Eugenie's funeral in 1920. My sister, Diana, and I were there in the mid 40s-50s, my brother's wife was at school with us and my daughter, Sarah, followed during the 80s.

I left Farnborough Hill at 16 and spent a year at the Order's sister convent in Laval, France. The school was in two houses, St. Marie, in the centre of town and St. Therese, about half a mile away for the top two classes. There was a combination of boarders and day girls. Mother Rowe was the English mistress and she helped me in so many ways. Her knowledge of French was vast – she could beat them all when it came to French crosswords. There were about 12 boarders at St. Therese. The house was quite austere, especially after the splendour of Farnborough Hill. There was no bathroom! Each girl was designated an evening during the week when she could walk down to St. Marie and have a bath. My request to Rev. Mother for a second during the week was met with a firm rejection. For every day washing, we each had a large bowl and jug and collected our hot water from the kitchen, where large pans of water simmered on the stove. To this day one of life's great luxuries is a nice hot bath! I did have my own room, which was a privilege as the other girls were in dormitories.

The girls worked incredibly hard. Lessons began at 8.30 (in pitch black in the winter) and continued with short breaks until supper at 7.30. Following prayers, we had recreation which was really fun – volleyball was played with great gusto – then it was off to study until bedtime at 9.30, or later when an exam loomed. On Sunday there was, of course, also Mass. Thursday afternoon was "free" – we all set off after lunch in a crocodile for a long walk, then back to study as usual. I got off much more lightly, having my own curriculum: French and English with the top classes and first year Spanish. We had a lot of French dictation which had to be translated into English: some of my work was extremely confused, especially in the early days and was often the cause of considerable hilarity.

I also did Domestic Science, including very serious ironing lessons and learning to do the most beautiful embroidery, dressmaking and cooking. We prepared a three course lunch every week, and one of my duties was to cycle down to town to buy the necessary ingredients. My letters home made frequent references to the food: shortly after arriving I wrote: "I have never eaten so much meat in a short time in my life. In fact all the food is wonderful and we have not had the same thing twice since I have been here".

A highlight was the arrival from Farnborough Hill of

Joy Mash, nee Ives, with whom I had a great time. For the Coronation in June 1953. Joy and I were greeted with cheers as we went into breakfast and were served a special dish of fried eggs adorned with Union Jacks. We spent the day in the Parlour listening to the whole thing on the radio, feeling more than a little homesick. My only trip home was for Christmas; and the return to Laval was another adventure – I had a couchette on the Night Ferry, leaving London at 9 pm, arriving at Gare du Nord, Paris, at 9 am the next day. Passengers remained on the train as it was driven onto the boat at Dover, driven off again at Dunkirk and straight on to Paris - very luxurious.

Just before I left to go to Laval, my aunt told me I would probably be the first English person most of the girls had ever met and what they thought of me would form their opinion of the English in general. I have no idea what their impression was – I hope not too bad; but the experience left me with a real affection for them, an enduring interest in needlework and cooking, and a lifelong love of France.

Claudia Turgut 1966 - My Istanbul

My father was posted to Ankara in the early 70s. I remember saying to him on the phone from the security of London: "Well, where is this place anyway?" and his being somewhat disconcerted at my dismal knowledge of Geography. How was I to know that this place which I barely knew on the map would become my home for the next forty odd years?

So, dear Reader, I came, met my Turk, changed all my plans and found my first job teaching English. We were married by the Papal Nuncio himself in Ankara in 1973. Three children later and a move from Ankara to Istanbul, here I am! I've survived! I have witnessed the most enormous changes in the country including massive migration from Anatolia to the cities and breathtakingly rapid modernisation. For me, the hardest aspect of living in a developing country has always been the education. As a teacher myself, it was hard to really accept something that was not Farnborough Hill. On the other hand, one can make amazing friendships here, primarily with other English-speaking women: sharing the experience of being married to Turks has made for extraordinarily strong bonds. Turkish people too are very kind and extremely hospitable. Personally, I have never experienced anything negative; but I was lucky to marry into a wonderful family: well-educated, well-travelled and very accepting of me! I can't say the same for every foreign gelin (bride) as we are called. From having to bring back everything from Nescafe to Tampax, it's all available here now and I really don't think I miss anything any more. The colour and vibrancy of the country which attracted me in the first place is still very much here! It's the plus of the climate that ties me to Turkey making it very difficult to live anywhere else.

Lesley Pierce 1983 - Volunteering in Guatemala

When I was at school, if you had told me that I would be living overseas and speaking a foreign language, I'd have laughed at you. Who would have thought that life would bring me to the distant lands of volcanoes & coffee? For that is where I live – Guatemala, the Land of Eternal Spring. I first came here as part of an overland experience. Having spent 3 days here,

I learned of a huge need for volunteers to work with disabled children. It took me 7 weeks back in the U.K. to quit my job & to change my life completely. My inability to speak Spanish meant nothing, as the children with whom I would be working would be mostly non-verbal communicators...but I had to live. My Spanish class occurred the first morning & I was on the ward after lunch. No one in the building spoke English & so hand signals became critically important. My first experience was to feed a boy a bottle of milk. All he could do was smile at me, as I watched the milk drip out of his mouth and onto his bib. I worried that he wasn't going to get enough benefit from the nutrients. After a nerve-wracking half-hour, I finally saw the last few drops of milk being swallowed. And thus it started… Being here 10 months was the original plan, but it is now 15 years and counting. Most foreign girls come here and fall in love with the place and a Guatemalan man; I found unconditional love in the service of severely mentally and physically handicapped children.

Sam Pemberton (Willis) 1994 - Letter from HK

Eight years ago, bags packed and teary good byes behind me, I arrived in a country which when translated into English is called 'fragrant harbour', but better known as Hong Kong. Little did I know back then that my one way ticket would change my life forever and I'd still be here now, happily married with two wonderful little boys.

What made me move? During the financial crisis of 2009, it was difficult to find a job in Banking in the US so I headed East for my next adventure. I was fortunate to find a role in HK where I spent the next 3 years before moving with my husband to Singapore. We relocated back to HK this Christmas, but with two children and many more boxes than we left with! When people think about HK, they think of the infamous skyline, crowded streets or local cuisine. They tend not to see the remote beaches, small temples down side streets or locals doing Tai Chi early in the morning. Living and working in Asia, I'm fortunate to experience multiple cultures and see life through many lenses, learning how to respect and embrace differences. Through this, I've come to appreciate England and its culture all the more. While my husband and I love that our children are experiencing a truly multi cultural life, we are the biggest advocates of British traditions, especially Sunday Roasts!

I spend a lot of time thinking about what sort of education I want for my boys. Having had such a happy time and made life long friends at FH, I want the same for my children as it provides an incredible platform for life that can never be replaced, wherever you are in the world. I miss many things about England such as balmy long summer evenings, walks in the woods and dear family and friends.

It was Mrs Hales, who gave me the love of travel and desire to learn about different cultures. When I look up at The Peak or look out on the beach where I live, I often think back to all those fun Geography lessons and find myself explaining about cloud formation to my little ones, so thank you Mrs Hales; your memory lives on across the other side of the world.

Andraea Kubista (Lamb) 1969 - School Memories from the Netherlands

I was a 'Day Girl' in the 1960s and it was such a very formative time of my life but sadly, I was not university material. Poor Miss Pospishill did manage to teach me to read the Gothic German script; but I remember Mrs Dingwall and Miss Weston despairing of my written French. They must have taught me well as I have 4 languages at my disposal and have written poems in both English and Dutch.

I remember Mother Alexander sailing along the corridor and a whisper would go round the class, "Shhhh! Alex is coming". In the dancing class, we learnt to curtsey on the move, especially to Mother Alexander. The photograph shows her in an art class. We had Mother Rennie, all in white instead of a Matron: she was always so kind if one had pre-exam nerves; Mother Mostyn is remembered for her patience with my English précis and comprehensions; and Mother Bickford kept popping up with her camera, taking pictures unexpectedly. I still have a little prayer picture from Sister Scully in my Missal.

I was the House Captain of St Paul's house. Our Polish Latin teacher "Madame" was the House Mistress. She seemed not to like me as I was unable to progress beyond the "ablative absolute". I once remember her telling me to walk properly as I "walked like a duck with my feet turned out!"

Rebekah Overton 2008 - Bible Translating in Tanzania

For the past two years I have been based in Tanzania, working as a linguist with Wycliffe Bible Translators. When you hear 'Bible Translation' you might think, 'Aren't there enough translations already?' Certainly English speakers have a wealth of different translations to choose from, yet there are still over 6,300 languages without the whole Bible and over 1,800 languages with no Scripture at all. Some of these languages are not even written down. Tanzania has over 120 spoken languages, and the project I work with in North-West Tanzania works with eight nearby language communities. Most people here know the national language, Swahili, but hearing or reading something in their mother tongue can have a much greater impact. My role as a linguist involves studying languages to understand the sounds and grammar better. This helps the development of writing systems that not only represent the languages well, but also are easy for mother tongue speakers to understand when learning to read and write. All the languages we work with now have a writing system. Some books of the Bible have been translated and printed, as well as some traditional stories and reading primers. In addition, we work with media specialists, to facilitate distribution or written and audio translations via mobile phone apps, and with the JESUS Film Project, which produces a film portraying Jesus in local languages. Huge crowds gather to watch the film and for many this is the first time they realise that God can speak and understand their language.

Alexandra Wadie (Wisdom) 1977 - Teaching in Uganda

I remember Sister Elizabeth teaching us African history, never imagining that I would one day live in an African country. In 1989, I was dating a young man who went to Uganda to

help a missionary doctor, servicing vehicles for a seed project in Northern Uganda. I visited him there for 2 weeks during my holidays as a student midwife and I fell in love with Africa! A year later we got married and later had two children, Esme and Caleb. I never forgot about Uganda and somehow I knew we would go back one day. Well, it took 23 years before we got the green light from God to go and in 2011 we packed our old Land Rover and headed overland with our son, on an amazing three month road trip to Uganda, across 16 different countries. The people are very welcoming and warm hearted and generally live as a community, helping each other where they can. Many of the Christians have a deep and strong faith in God, as they truly have to depend on Him for the most basic things, although they have a wonderful abundance of vegetables and tropical fruit: something I really miss.

The first year in Kampala we helped out in a juvenile remand center. Then my husband got a job with a Dutch Safari company. I volunteered at a small international school, teaching Years 3 and 4 part-time, which was a great experience for me (especially as I am not a trained teacher, but I had had the experience of home schooling our 2 children for 6 years prior to this). The disadvantages of living in Kampala were that you could never be anonymous, driving was chaotic especially in the city, with very long traffic jams; and corruption was endemic. All in all, I am so grateful for those 5 years we spent in Kampala, not least because of Jesus' deep internal work of restoration in my marriage, for which I will always be grateful.

Old Girl Reunions

Alix Ramage-Hayes (Ramage) 1971

We had a reunion of leavers from our year in June many travelling from across the world to get here! We gathered together Barbara Niedersuess (Walker), from Austria, Moira Connolly Robinson from Texas, Eva O'Donovan, Cathy Long, Maria O'Loughlin from Dublin, Julia de Gersigny (Rogers) from Mauritius, Mary Jane Murray (Newling-Ward), Lynda Robinson, Emi MacColl from Madrid , Finola MacSweeney, Sue Selfe (Hayes), Jo-Ann Moses (Sabga) from Trinidad, Clare Turvey (Coan), Denise Jill Tzekos (Kimber), Susannah Kennedy (Withnell), Annabelle Russo from Madrid, Jackie Bale, Miranda des Moulins (Martin), Lauritta Voss (Hawkins) from Barbados, Katherine Barry, Ann McAllister, Alison Cameron (Elgar) from California, Morag Ranford (Reynolds), and Jenny Pinard (Ilett). For most of us, it was the first time we had seen each other since we left Farnborough, so there were 40 plus years of catching up to do! But the years rolled back and we all felt as though we were back among friends again - which of course we were! An amazing cake was made by my sister, Diana Wardle (Ramage) who is also an Old Girl, decorated with the school crest and berets with red pompoms. I can report that it tasted delicious too, but of course, I am completely unbiased!

Anakalia Phillips 2012

Lucy Higgins arranged a brunch in London for twenty from our year in March 2016 L-R front: Anakalia Phillips, Nicola Smith, Charlotte Baker, Freya-Anne Robertson, Georgina Bernard, Maria Rhodes, Lucy Higgins, Mahim Husnain, Imogen Thackrah L-R middle: Charlotte Heffernan, Natalie Sole, Sophie Welch, Emily Baldwin, Faye Henry, Joanna Fuller L-R back: Francesca Pipkin, Tishina Tapfumaneyi, Chloe Williams, Chloë Metcalfe, Honor Morris.

Old Girls' News

The Four Wisdom Sisters 1962 - 1978

Elaine regularly attends reunions of her Year, the last in September 2016 after 50 years. She continues to work part-time as an art therapist at an ecumenical therapeutic community in North Yorkshire, mainly with mental health issues. She keeps fit by working on her allotment and walking. She volunteers at Ryedale Folk Museum with the Archives and is also responsible for the medieval garden. She enjoys living on the edge of the moors and the coast near Whitby; an area rich in history, archaeology, music and interesting places to draw.

Lorna is married and has 3 children, 1 grandson and 2 re-homed dogs - very much part of the family - all living in the Worcester area. Grand-parenting duties are a large part of her life, along with the small-holding of sheep. She is active in her local Oxfam group and has kept up her interests in botany, natural history, politics and people. She also enjoys photography, and making her own cards to sell.

Loll (Rosemary) is married and living just outside Exeter. She has 4 children and 2 grandsons. She trained as an Occupational Therapist post-children, and specialises in brain injury and trauma. She has many interests contributing to a varied village life, and is kept busy keeping track of her family.

Alex is now living in Bristol after recently returning from 5 years in Uganda. Her 2 children also live in Bristol, and all are part of the 'Love Bristol' Community. It is good to have her home again!

Geraldine Niedersüß (Walker) 1971

I am writing with the sad news that our older son, Oliver, died suddenly and unexpectedly in January this year. He was 36. We lost his younger brother, Philipp, 12 years ago at the age of 22. Happily we have a wonderful daughter, Rebecca, who is 29 and fortunately lives close by and is a great source of comfort to my husband and I.

My Father, Colonel Gerard Walker, who taught at Farnborough Hill for 17 years from 1971 to 1988 and is now approaching 97, lives in a home in Hitchin in Hertfordshire. He attended Prize Giving every year until 2016, when we decided that it would probably be too strenuous for him.

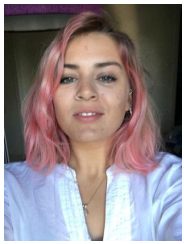
I live in Austria, but I do try to travel over regularly to visit him every 2 to 3 months. Unfortunately, his last visit to us was nearly 5 years ago as the stairs have become too difficult for him. My younger sister, Madeleine (1982), lives in Biggleswade so she sees him several times a week. Barbara (1969) splits her time between Kent and Mimizan in France, visiting when in the country and also having my Father to stay in both of her homes.

Maria Padley (Willey) 1993

I am in the middle of an Open University degree, studying Biology and Chemistry, with a view to making a career change into something more scientific. This is despite not taking Chemistry as a GCSE, (though I did do Biology and Physics). I am definitely living proof that you don't have to get your degree choice or career decisions right the first time around, especially as increasing retirement ages make a second career more feasible. I am loving being an adult student. It's definitely easier in a school / 6th form / university environment, where study is your top priority, rather than something that is squeezed into your free time.

Julia Martin (Willis) 1994

I have recently moved back into the area (Fleet), having lived in Salisbury for the past ten years. I return with my two girls aged 7 and 5 who have been at Godolphin and are very excited about attending Farnborough Hill 'when they are old enough'. I am looking to join the Old Girls' Committee and really excited about 'coming home'. I am Head of Product Development, Trinity College London so I will also be nearer to work.



Lizzie Nash 2010

After graduating with an English Lit & Lang degree from Leeds, I worked for Versace in London for 2 years. I learned a lot, and moved from there to GANT, based in Stockholm, in July last year where I now work as a copywriter. I love it here, and Sweden in general. I would encourage anyone interested in living abroad to give it a go!

Karen Phillips (Kershaw) (former Director of Music)

Since retirement, I now have the time to enjoy spa visits. On one such occasion, I was with a musical friend at 'Champney's' in Forest Mere and when we thought the coast was clear, we decided to play a duet on the piano in the lounge area. Who should walk in the door saying, 'I wondered who was making all that racket!' but Lynette Newman!!

We send our warmest congratulations to the following:

Kate Mieczkowska 1994, for winning the Ward Thomas Award for Fine Art with 'Hunter' at the National Open Art Exhibition in October 2016. National Open Art is an excellent organisation for encouraging and supporting artists of all ages.

Sarah Nelson 1999, daughter of Elissa Nelson, who married James Dalton in August 2015. She is now teaching at Charters School in Sunningdale.

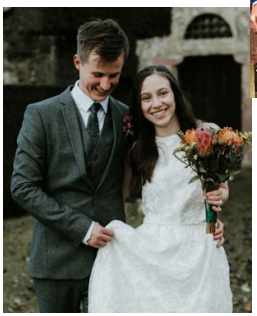
Alex Danson 2003, for her Gold medal at the Rio Olympics and now an MBE! Here she is at Buckingham Palace with fellow GB Hockey players. Well done Alex!

Claire Danson 2007, for being the 1st Brit in her age group in the Aquathlon and 2nd Brit in her age group in the Triathlon at the 2016 ITU World Triathlon Grand Final in Mexico last May. Sadly she broke her collar bone in December but is fully recovered and now training with India Lee.

Yasmin Arbee 2005 ,who married Gary Sahota in August 2016. She has also been awarded the prestigious 'Freedom of the City of London'.

Neyha Phakey 2007, who married Roop Thaker in October 2015. She is currently Head of Finance for IMG which runs UK and International Events.

Gillian Brooks 2005, who married Mat Peacock in December 2016 in Usk. She is now managing 'Just Ingredients' and passionate about community food.



Felicity Gilbert 2007, who married Taz Madhar on 25th June 2016 in Banbury.

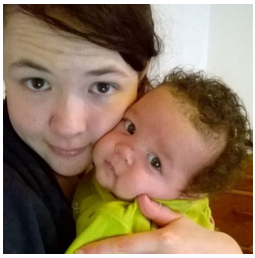
Charlotte Purdue 2007, for being the 2nd Brit to cross the line at the London Marathon having already qualified for 2018 World Championships and Commonwealth Games.

India Lee 2006, for winning the European Elite Women's Trianthlon Championships in Lisbon in May 2016.

Anna Craggs 2009, who qualified as a Doctor of Medicine last July from Southampton and is now working at the Royal Bournemouth Hospital.

Caroline Everard 2006 who, in January 2016, married Emanuele Maccherini, currently teaching Latin and Classical Civilisation at Farnborough Hill.

Hannah Shelley 2009, who is proud to announce she had a son, Ethan, in September 2016. She is training to be an Actuary at KOMG in Reading.



Becky Jones 2009, who completed her PhD in Parasite-induced Warning Colouration at the University of Liverpool where she is now lecturing. The photo is from a recent field trip.

Hannah Thrower 2011, who completed her MBBS BSc (Hons) and will be working as a Foundation Year 1 doctor in Gloucester from August.

Rachel Wong 2012, who completed her Masters in Accounting and International Management and now working in Hong Kong as a Financial Services Analyst.

Katie Price, Head of History, married Eamonn Bell on 23rd July 2016. The reception was held in the grounds of Farnborough Hill. She is expecting a baby in September and hopes baby will arrive in time for the reunion.

We send our deepest sympathies to the families of the following for their loss:

Mandy Swift (Beill) 1980 RIP

The sudden death of our dear and special friend, Mandy, cast a desperately sad shadow over September 2016 for everyone who knew her. Mandy lost her short fight against pancreatic cancer - a cruel disease that she battled with bravery, dignity and gusto.

Mandy's funeral was testament to the remarkable person that she was. All guests were invited to wear something colourful reflecting her cheery character and love of colour. The effect was uplifting. Close friends, Jacky Twomey (Coote), Judith Thompson (Rees), Maggie Baynes (Boag), Sharon Barwood (Dowling) and Nicky Mathews (Orme) joined Sister McDonnell - our much-loved dormitory mistress - and Sister Rennie in a church that was packed to the rafters with family and friends from every walk of Mandy's varied life. The service was beautiful. Mandy had chosen all of the hymns and music. Robin, her husband, sang with the Bletchingley Community Choir, and her children, Freddie and Hannah, read poignant pieces with astonishing courage. Her brother-in-law, Simon, summarised her life and character in a very funny and powerful eulogy. After the service, we had the chance to reminisce and share some laughs with the Sisters about our boarding antics and old times at Farnborough back in the 70s. Their razor-sharp memories amazed us. Mandy would have loved it.

Since Mandy's death, her family have set up the Mandy Supporters Club to raise money for research into pancreatic cancer raising a staggering £27,000. Fifty friends and family including 10 Old Girls gathered to walk in Richmond Park to remember our wonderful friend and vowed to keep in touch. *Nicky Mathews(Orme)*

Lucy Pygott 2016 RIP

Lucy, after celebrating her 17th birthday, was tragically killed in a road traffic accident in Aldershot while out running with Aldershot, Farnham and District Athletic Club on Tuesday 8 November 2016.

Lucy was a very popular and talented member of the wider school community and had many friends still at Farnborough Hill. All of those who knew her and even those who did not, struggled to come to terms with what happened but it was uplifting to see everyone supporting each other, strengthening the community even more.

Tributes made by staff members: Lucy was very academic, a hugely talented runner, coming second in the London Mini Marathon in April, and had a very bright future ahead of her. A truly talented athlete yet extremely modest with it. Lucy was a naturally gentle and kind young lady, who will be deeply missed by the whole school community. The brightness of her hair equalled the brightness of her smile and the energy with which she approached every aspect of school life. The world is an emptier and poorer place without her.

Mary Rose Murphy 1940 RIP

Mary Rose was born in India in 1923. She was a day pupil at Hillside in the 1930s. Being exceptionally bright, she won the Centenary Scholarship in 1937 and as she phrased it, was "the last girl to get a major prize at the last Hillside Prize-giving". Her teaching career spanned an amazing 60 years and, with a phenomenal memory, she remembered all her students many years after she'd taught them. Specialising in teaching special needs children, she had an exceptional talent teaching them to speak and read, and become less inhibited. Her threats of punishment are legendary, especially the threat that green smoke might come out of her ears if one misbehaved, or put on toast with pepper and eaten! Nevertheless, good children were rewarded with Smarties for good behaviour.

Many years later, her 90th birthday will be remembered as a tremendous all-day affair which had to be staggered to accommodate the number of people who wished to celebrate with her, and was testament to her incredible capacity for friendship. She had friends from all over the world and all walks of life, but it was the Sisters and staff from Farnborough Hill who were her family, with whom she spent many Christmases, Easters and feast days. Among her very many voluntary roles were the Rushmoor Mallards swimming group for the disabled, the St John's Ambulance Corps, the local parish church and Phyllis Tuckwell hospice - she was on the FHOGA committee, and helped with many other activities in the school, including teaching deportment. She was generous and kind and never afraid to speak her mind. She has left a lasting legacy with us all of faith, hope, love, and generosity. *Bernie Fife-Schaw (Pole-Baker) 1975*

Liz Hales RIP : Head of Sixth Form and Head of Geography (1976-2006)

Facebook tributes from Old Girls:

Mrs Hales will not be forgotten and she leaves behind a fantastic legacy; students who she inspired and taught with such passion and liveliness.

She really was my favourite ever teacher and such a natural. She was wonderful and a friend. She was the one who inspired me to go on to study Geography at university.

She was a real character! Said it how it was!

I can picture her tucking her hair behind her ear and opening up the world before our eyes.

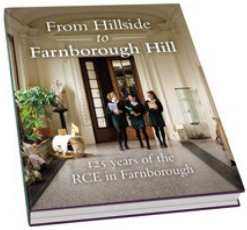
I have so many happy memories of her Geography lessons and crazy antics on ski trips. Mrs Hales you rock!

I have so much to thank her for; not only were her lessons fantastic, giving me a life long love of Geography, but she genuinely cared for all her students. It's down to Liz that I got into Cambridge - she certainly knew how to kick me into working when I got complacent!

She was such fun, and her enthusiasm shone constantly. I also remember her looking so cool, wearing what seemed wonderfully extravagant quantities of eyeliner and trendy clothes. What a beautiful lady!

We also send our deepest sympathies for their loss to the families of:

Patricia O'Donoghue 1935
Ursula Dowley 1940
Eileen Kirkby (Howe) 1941
Joan Scott (Kelly) 1942
Dr Basia Howells (Zamyska) 1950
Diana Watt (White) 1955
Judith Mitchell (Gulson) 1958
Julie Rudge (Griffiths) 1960
Diana Roberts 1968
Carolyn Horner (Coan) 1965
Margaret Starr (Brooks) 1975
Catherine Redford 1998
Peter, husband of Ann Berry (Tristram) 1965
Tony, husband of Connie Anscombe
Son of Geraldine Niedersüß 1971
Father of Teresa, Rosemary, David, Bernadette, Catherine, Patricia and Margaret Clark
Father of Pamela, Kathy, Susan and Gillian Allnutt



'From Hillside to Farnborough Hill'

These beautiful, 125th Anniversary books are now reduced from ***£45 to £30*** *to clear.*

To purchase your copy please email:

secretary@farnborough-hill.org.uk

FARNBOROUGH HILL OLD GIRLS

CELEBRATE 200 YEARS

of the Religious of Christian Education

September 16 2017

2pm - 6pm

Celebrate the unique legacy that our beloved Sisters have left us since their foundation 200 years ago. See the school brought alive by current pupils or relax with a drink from our pay bar. There will be a special Thanksgiving Service for the bicentenary, a scrumptious tea, a scavenge hunt, children's games on the cloister lawn and face painting.

Old Girls and additional Adults: £15 Former staff and children aged 5-16: £7.50
Children under 5 are free

Tickets can be booked online using Eventbrite. Email: fhoga@farnborough-hill.org.uk for the link or send a cheque to FHOGA c/o Gill Chapman, Woodlands, Forest Glade, Rowledge, Farnham, Surrey GU10 4DG including a return address, maiden name and year of leaving.

Ticket deadline: 31st August