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THE PURPLE PATCH

THE NEWSLETTER FOR
FORMER PUPILS & STAFF



SUMMER 2013 EDITION

P Introduction

I am not sure if it is due to working in a cyclical environment religiously broken up by terms, or whether it is the proximity of age 40, but I can hardly believe 12 months has passed since I last wrote the introduction to your annual Newsletter. It's been a unique year in many aspects, with September seeing the introduction of our first Senior Boys. They are taught quite separately to the girls and have added to, rather than subtracted from, our special ethos here at Westholme. Irrepressible, irreverent and impish, they provide a perfect foil to the intensity of an all female environment. The school is changing, yes, but more by small degrees than any seismic shift. We've also had the wrench of seeing our long-standing Principal retire; Mrs Croston finally hung up her gown at the end of the term after 25 years of service to Westholme. This exceptional occurrence meant that we have seen more former pupils than ever this year, as so many of you were keen to come back and pay your homage to the lady who has influenced your lives. It's been epic! We also said farewell to Mrs Anne Patefield, who remarkably, had worked for Westholme in a variety of roles of 29 years, Mr Henwood, our Bursar, Chris Hall, the Librarian, Miss Worthington, Mrs Hampson, Mr Beard, Mrs Hunt, Mrs Griffiths & Mrs Foster. But as we know, you never really leave Westholme, and the frequency with which I see Mrs Gibson confirms this! She continues to feed me your news and she is positive and perky as ever about all things purple. (Photographic evidence attached).



Mrs G perkily
presenting
Adam Barnett,
winner of the
Year 5 Reading
Competition

So, really all that remains is for me to wish you a good read. I wonder how many printed years we have left before it gets put straight onto your tablets and e-readers? Enjoy the stories and the snippets and do keep sending me your news. Staff love to hear how you are all getting on, and it only takes 2 minutes to whizz me an e-mail. The year ahead looks bright and busy for Westholme as we meet our new Principal, Mrs Lynne Horner. It's all change and I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible to tell you all about it!

Best wishes **Viv Davenport**

Echoes from the Past

Guy Shuttleworth (1936)

Guy updated us on the time he spent living in York from '57 to 2012. Before this he taught Maths at Mill Hill School and then at St. Peter's School in York, where he became Head of Maths and coached cricket. After retiring he became Housemaster of the boarding house for 12 years! He kindly wrote: "Best wishes to the School – I have always been very grateful to the start I had at Westholme – starting at the original house nearer to the town centre."

Michael (1946) and Christine Harwood (1954)

Michael was an Industrial Production Pharmacist and Christine a primary school teacher. They have four daughters who are now grown up and three grandchildren. Michael's interests are classic cars, walking and athletics, non-participating now, but as a coach and Christine enjoys walking, travelling and the family.

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P Angela Caton (1953)

A former pupil had reason to be in touch regarding our sponsorship of Lancashire Ladies' County Golf Association. She said:

"You might be interested to know that I was a pupil at Westholme in my primary school days. I was interviewed by Miss Singleton before joining the school at the same time as Mr and Mrs Rouse. My three children also attended the Junior School at Billinge House and my granddaughter Emily is now in her last term with you at Wilmar Lodge. We all have many happy memories of your excellent school that I have seen go from strength to strength."

Fascinating history. Thank you!

Susan Davies (1985)

We had a recent e-mail update from Susan:

Hi, I just read your mail re updates and just thought I'd send you a brief one..

I left Westholme way back in 1985. I had really only kept in touch with Catherine Grime (now Kit Stenhouse) but via Facebook have connected with Emma Hollen, Lisa Hand, Gill Raine, Pippa Threlfall, Anne Tattersall and Nicola Flannigan. Kit is still sailing but less so now she has a gorgeous baby son Oliver. I met up with Emma Hollen in Portugal a couple of years ago.. and we both said the other didn't look any different (30 years later.. ha! we wish..). The accents amused us most.. despite 30 years in Portugal Emma still has a broad Lancashire accent whereas mine is now Southernised after 24 years living in the South! I now live 500m from the South Coast near Chichester but work for Edinburgh University (go figure!) as a business manager/researcher primarily on issues around financing

carbon forestry and ecosystem services. I'm a member of staff and gave my first lecture to Masters students last year but am also doing a part-time PhD in my spare time! My new hobbies include running (trail running in the South Downs) and Stand Up Paddle Surfing... plus still windsurfing and playing golf.. makes up for not being married.. sort of! Love to hear from others.

Sarah Morgan (nee Keegan, 1985)

2013 has been a performance year for Sarah Morgan. She completed a stand-up comedy course with comedian John Cooper at the Comedy Store. She loves the excitement of entertaining a big crowd where tenacity is essential for survival — the piano accordion features in her set, after all, it would be rude not to. She was invited to join the ComedySportz Sunday League troupe in June, and performed her first show of short-form improvisation on August 11. Her first professional acting role was in 'Someone Borrowed, Someone's Blue, The Musical' (New Attitude Theatre Company), which ran for four nights August 19-22 at the Three Minute Theatre, Manchester.

At the University of Manchester, she is an Optometry Teaching Fellow and Sarah continues her consultancy business and lectures internationally specialising in patient-practitioner communication. Her most recent trip to Johannesburg, South Africa, gave her the opportunity to meet up with Victoria Taylor. Victoria has had an exciting career in Fashion, starting as an assistant buyer in London working for all the major department stores. She left the UK in 2007 for a twelve month stint in Moscow, and then moved to Belgium for two years. In January 2011, she moved to South

Africa as head buyer for Edgars (the biggest department store in South Africa). She said how much she loves the people and the climate in Johannesburg — wall-to-wall blue skies, even in the winter. It was 25° in the 'winter' in July when Sarah and Victoria had lunch before Sarah flew back to the UK (see photo attached).



So, I've not seen my husband for a month because of rehearsing for this show I've been in in Manchester - and he left the house at 5:30am to fly to Japan this morning for a week! His good news is that he's been promoted to Chair at the University of Manchester, so I'm now married to a professor.

Sarah

Liz Talbot (nee Brown, 1986)

Liz has had a wonderful year with her Sports' PR Agency. She e-mailed in to say:

Well folks, apparently Andy Murray wasn't the only winner yesterday!

Huge thanks to anyone who voted for me - I'm really chuffed that Talbot PR

won Best PR & Marketing company at the Sports Trade Awards 2013.

The awards are run by one of the UK's largest independently owned publishers, Datateam Business Media, in association with the buying group STAG, FSPA and Sporting Goods Business Magazine. Sports retailers, suppliers, PR companies and buying groups are represented at the event, showcasing everything positive about the UK sports trade. Six finalists are produced in each category and then the secure online voting process, verified by third party scrutinisers to ensure total credibility, does the rest.

Whoop whoop - I'm off to share a glass of bubbly with Andy Murray ;-D

We see a lot of

Jane Ward-Thompson (nee Harrison, 1988)

as her husband's work as a Professor at UCLan has meant that she is now back living in Preston, and her two sons, George and Peter are pupils here. George is in the first cohort of Senior Boys and is apparently having a ball!

Emma Huepfl (nee Slinger, 1989)

Emma touched base: I am in the process of upping sticks from London to move the family to Sutton Courtenay in Oxfordshire. Completely swamped with logistics, but looking forward to the next chapter as we swap Central London living with all its many joys and a few frustrations for SPACE and a different lifestyle. Will report back next year as to whether it was all a huge mistake! Other than that my husband Bernie and I are ageing more rapidly than our 3 children Stani, Josie and Cici, 9, 6, 3 but we are all well.

P Kate Linford (nee Jacklin, 1990)

Kate told us of her recent marriage in March 2012 to Jon Linford! She is currently working for Birmingham Midlands, as part of Lloyds Banking Group, as an Account Manager looking after business relationships with the AA and Saga.

Jennifer Tippin (nee Prince, 1990)

We were delighted to welcome back Jennifer to be our prize presenter at the Junior Girls' Prizegiving in June.

Jennifer is the Business Design and Delivery Director for the Retail Division of Lloyds Banking Group. Lloyds is the largest retail bank in the UK with over 3,000 branches and is the largest provider of mortgages and savings accounts in the country with deposits of over £200 billion. Jennifer is accountable for all aspects of branch and telephone banking support and delivery of strategic change for 22 million customers and over 40,000 colleagues. Prior to her current role, Jennifer was the Shared Services Director for the retail branch network. She also ran telephone banking and account processing for millions of Halifax / Bank of Scotland customers, leading over 4,000 colleagues at the height of the financial crisis.

Before joining Lloyds, Jennifer was the VP, Global Accounts at Invensys plc where she was responsible for sales of over £3bn to several major oil and gas clients. She started her career at British Airways Plc where she assisted the Board and General Counsel at the time of 9/11 and was the General Manager, Flight Training, where she had full P&L accountability for running BA's flight training business.

Jennifer joined BA after graduating in Modern Languages at Oxford University. She is fluent in French and German with basic conversational capability in Italian. She is married to Phil, a partner at KPMG, and together they have two young children, Luke and Chloe and a new arrival Alexander.

Yes, that's right. Three children and a power job to make your jaw drop. Amazing and inspiring. Thanks for coming!

Jessica Curry (1991)

A wonderful e-mailed update from Jessica telling us of her recent success:

Hi there,

Lots has happened since I was last in touch. It's been an incredible few years for me. I am still composing and am also now Co-Director of computer game company The Chinese Room, which I run with my lovely husband Dan. Earlier this year we were nominated for 5 BAFTA's for our first game, Dear Esther, which was a surreal and wonderful experience. The game has now sold close to one million copies, we've made our second game, due for release in September and we're working with a major publisher on our third title. It's been a complete whirlwind and a very steep learning curve! It's such a laugh every day and I can't think of anything I'd rather be doing. Writing music is the best job I can think of and I've written music for Royal Opera House, Welsh National Opera, Arts Council England, Old Vic Tunnels, The Wellcome Trust and a load of other wonderful organisations.

I'm going to be 40 in a couple of weeks and I can't believe how fast the time has gone. **Vicki Henry**, my old partner in crime, is also about to hit that critical milestone and we're

comparing notes on how we're coping with the big birthday. I'm crying a lot, drinking too much gin and over-sharing on Twitter mainly.

My son Oscar is going to be 10 later this year and he is funny, silly and generally a real laugh. Being a mum is wonderful - exhausting but wonderful. Oscar is obsessed with football and I'm bewildered to be a season ticket holder at Brighton and Hove Albion.

I still miss Mr Ratcliffe a lot - we corresponded for 20 years, until his death. His wisdom, warmth and erudition carried me through my life and I am grateful to have known him. He was a wonderful person and an exceptional teacher.

I know I was seen as a bit of a firestarter at Westholme so this update goes out to all the girls who feel like they don't fit in and get in trouble a lot!

Very best wishes to everyone, Jess

Fiona Lockwood (1991)

I left Westholme in 1991, and went to Dartington College of Arts in Devon, to gain Honours Degree in Music. Due to my love of film and tv production, I gained one of 3 places, and completed a Postgraduate Diploma in Film Production (Sound Specialisation) at Northern School of Film & TV in Leeds. I spent a while working on films, adverts and TV shows ("Bob's Weekend" was my first film, and is out on DVD!). I loved this work, but it was difficult to support myself, being self-employed and not having regular work.

I then moved to Milton Keynes in 1998, and worked in Marketing for the car industry (quite random, I know!), mainly in Skoda and Audi, and went back to college to gain a Professional Certificate in Marketing. There I stayed until 3 years ago, when I decided that

I was really missing working with music, so did my teacher training in Secondary Music. I do love teaching the older students, but have found a lovely middle school (Years 5-8) and will be a Year 5 Class Teacher from September - there is some music on my timetable, as well as English, Science, Geography.....!! Mrs Haythornthwaite would be stunned to find out that I have been teaching Geography, seeing as I missed most of her lessons due to my violin lessons!!

I also work a second job at The Stables, an amazing music venue in Milton Keynes, founded by the late Sir John Dankworth and Dame Cleo Laine. It is through working there that I realised that I needed to be surrounded by music again, and I also work as a keyboard tutor at the National Music Camps, founded in 1970 by John's sister, the late Dr Avril Dankworth.

My family are all well, and mostly are still up in Lancashire - my parents watch their neighbours' girls setting off in their purple uniforms to go to Westholme every day!! I have very fond memories of my days at Westholme, and may try and visit one day; I love the fact that Mr Millett is still there teaching music!!

Erika Hazelgrove (nee Clegg, 1991)

Erika's communications design agency, 'Spring', can definitely report 'green shoots' after slogging through the last four years of recession. Recent wins include Thwaites, an iconic project for The Conservative Party (currently under wraps) and the tourism account for Suffolk. The agency was voted in to the UK's Top Ten most respected agencies by industry peers in early 2013 - an amazing accolade that I'm hugely proud of.

P My work as a board director of the New Anglia LEP has allowed me to launch a campaign for Economic Equality, helping to create the conditions for women (and men, too!) to thrive in the workplace and be able to seize opportunities. It's early days but we've got support from government, the universities and FTSE 100 boards so it's very exciting. I'm also heavily involved with education and young people, and have my years at Westholme very much front of mind when I consider what a good education looks like. Will is 4 in just over a week's time and off to school in September, a really bright, fun and kind little boy - how time flies. Georgie, my step daughter who lives with us, is soon 15 and rapidly turning into an independent, creative and powerful young woman. Scary and wonderful to watch!

Kelda Jones (nee Joyce, 1992)

Kelda sent in an update: I live in Mellor. I am married with 2 boys ages 4 and 5 and work as an Accountant at BAE Systems. My twin Sarah lives near Leeds and is married with 1 boy age 5, she works for a big pharmaceutical company, Wyeth. I sometimes see **Jane Greenhalgh (nee Isherwood)** as her boys go to the same school as mine in Mellor.

Hazel Jessup (nee Stansfield, 1992)

We had an update from Hazel who is currently living on the other side of the world in Australia with her husband Paul and two daughters, after having completed two degrees; Marketing from London and PR Journalism from the University of Hawaii at Manoa! Her best friend before leaving, **Kylie Shaw**, is now a midwife in the same area of Australia! What a lovely coincidence.

Julia Pickering (nee Entwistle, 1993)

After my successful but excessively cold expedition to Alaska in Spring 2012 and an epic 2012/13 winter training in the French Alps, in April 2013 I headed for my next challenge in the Far Eastern Russian peninsula of Kamchatka. I was attempting to make the first snowboard descent of Kluchevskoy Sopka 4750m, the highest active volcano in Eurasia.

After weather cut us short of where we hoped to get to by snowmobile, fine weather finally arrived for us to ski in to our planned base camp. After some successful acclimatisation the weather gods, along with the volcanoes fighting behind our camp, decided they did not want us to summit and 100 mph wind and volcanic rock storms descended on us, tearing our camp apart and forcing a retreat at the first weather window. I'm also currently starring as one of the five True British Characters in the new Lamb's Navy Rum ad campaign that has been going out in National Press and lifestyle magazines <http://www.lambsnavyrum.com/true-british-character/>.

Sarah Raistrick (1994)

Recently e-mailed us with an update about her life in London:

Hello,

Hope you are doing well. Here's a little update and I've forwarded a newsletter from the charity that support our surgery, details of my/ our work are in the coloured column on the left.

Happy to host a London free supper evening if anyone interested. Also happy to have work experience girls for a week with work at different practices in the Hurley Group (RCGP

chair Clare Gerada's included) and host them but may be a bit scary to come all this way!

...Getting used to being a vicar's wife in a new parish in Streatham but loving the challenge of balancing that role and work running a practice in deprived Fulham (not an oxymoron) as well as raising the 3 children.

As ever I am grateful to Westholme for all the opportunities it gave me and this was highlighted when I addressed a rowdy GP conference and managed to control and engage the audience...a real breeze compared to keeping upper school quiet and happy before assembly on the mornings when the teachers came in "late". Thanks too to Mr Marlow and all the others who encouraged us to public speak and debate, skills well used still!

I was chatting to a mum in my son's reception class the other day as her son and mine were playing together. She sounded "northern", well at least not London and after chatting about where we were from we found out we were both Westholmers! She left before I joined. **Victoria Mattinson**, now has 2 boys, a partner who went to QEGS and planning a career change into teaching. (She is happy for me to forward this info!)

Sarah

Angela Clutton (nee Edwards, 1994)

We had another e-mail update, this time from an English fan: I'm now Angela Clutton but I was Edwards. I left Westholme in 1994 for Edinburgh University and on graduation I moved straight to London to begin a career as a theatre producer. It was Westholme and English/drama teacher Mr Marlow who had enabled me to realise that

such a career could be possible.

For twelve years I worked in London as a theatre producer / general manager for plays, musicals and dance productions in the West End, across the UK on tour and internationally (including Broadway and Japan.) I was the Director of the Theatre Royal Windsor before deciding a couple of years ago to change career.

I now run an events business called 'Girl Thursday', producing parties for private and corporate clients in some of London's most prestigious venues. Alongside which I am writing a non-fiction book called 'Things Your Mother Would Have Told You'.

Simone Cunliffe (1995)

Roy Cunliffe, Father of **Simone Cunliffe (1995)** wrote to us and told us of Simone's recently published book 'Simone's Kitchen Secrets'. All proceeds from this book are going directly to the Huntington's Disease Association - congratulations Simone!

Jill Holt (nee Baker, 1995)

Wrote a lovely note:

Life has been very busy since marrying my husband in 2007. As soon as we returned from honeymoon we commenced upon a self build and spent the next 2 ½ years building our own home. Occupational Therapist by day - builder/jack of all trades by evenings/weekends!

We finally moved in for Christmas 2009 and enjoyed a few blissful months in our dream home before the hard work really started with the arrival of twin daughters in March 2010.

Needless to say the occupational therapy took a back seat and I became a very busy full time Mum to Sophie

P and Lucy. The girls are now coming up to 2 ½ years and life is getting so much easier – the glimpses of ‘me time’ are starting to return! I now work part time for the family business and am thoroughly enjoying juggling work and family life.

Kirsty Marcinkiewicz (1995)

Kirsty left accountancy to project manage the refurbishment and redesigning of her house. It was during this time she decided to completely change career paths and so has started 200 hours of Yoga Teacher Training, which is an accredited course by the Yoga Alliance. After finishing this she hopes to set up her own yoga business!

Fiona Edmonds (1996)

Fiona wrote,

Yes, I have two updates:

Birth of my son, Aidan Harald James Fowles, on 19th April (he has my husband's surname, whereas I am still called Edmonds).

Promotion to Senior Lecturer in the Department of Anglo-Saxon, Norse, and Celtic, Cambridge University

I hope all's well at Westholme. I really enjoyed returning to school for the careers seminar; I can't believe that's nearly a year ago now!

Fiona

Alex Carter (nee Gibson, 1996)

Mrs G's daughter Alex (1996) obviously could not let the side down when it came to an update! She e-mailed in:

I had just returned back to work in January 2012 to work full time, after

having baby number 2. Having only been back at work for a week, I was a little surprised to find that I was feeling very nauseous and unwell. Putting it down to tiredness I then realised that baby number 3 was on its way. We now have 3 beautiful children Imogen 4, Henry 2 and Annabella 10 months. I have just returned back to work again.



Alex and husband Andrew, with Henry, Imogen and Annabella

We recently had Annabella's Christening which was quite a Westholme affair, where **Joy Eccles (nee Taylor)** and **Helen Clark** were both Godmothers. My sister-in-law, **Victoria Carter**, is also Godmother to Imogen and is doing well with her career and is studying for a PhD whilst working full time at Manchester Hospital managing the laboratories.

My mum (Mrs Gibson) is keeping herself busy and is always out and about with a very active social and holiday life. She comes down to visit us in Surrey to help out in our busy household from time to time and wears my old Westholme apron (that I made with Mrs Smith in 3rd Year), whilst she performs "Granny" duties.

Best regards

Alex Carter (nee Gibson)

Chloe Cross (1996)

Chloe recently updated us with news of her 2nd child, Jack who is 10 months old! She has been happily married for 5 years and her daughter Amelia is now 3.

Simone Longstaff (nee Wilks, 1996)

Simone and husband Mark have recently had a baby boy called Jack and is apparently the best thing she has ever done!

Emma Wightman (nee Barnes 1996)

A new baby boy, Harry who is now 1 has joined Emma's family!

Claire Allison (nee Forrest, 1997)

Claire and husband Mike are thoroughly enjoying their first born son, Finlay, born on 16th October 2012. We also had news that her sister, **Sarah Forrest** completed the London Marathon in 4 h 34 mins, raising £4000 for Breast Cancer.

She was cheered on by **Julie Sibley (nee Rylance)** who is enjoying working at Westholme at the Junior



Finlay Allison, Claire's son

Boys' School. Her son Thomas is also a pupil here now. We like to keep the Westholme family growing!

Lee Campbell (nee Jepson, 1997)

We had a delightful picture from Lee Campbell (nee Jepson, 1997). She said: We got married on 8th June 2013 at Alderley Edge Hotel, Cheshire. It was a lovely day - glorious weather and so nice to see so many family and friends together. Two of my best friends from Westholme were there, **Adila Afzal** and **Heather Thomson (nee Belfield)**. My new husband's name is Phil, and I am now Lee Campbell.



Helen Smith (nee Brearley, 1997)

I now have 2 beautiful children - Elysia Jane, born 14th July 2011 and Austin John, born 11th April 2013. I'm very much enjoying being a mother. I returned to work (still a patent attorney in Sevenoaks) part-time (3 days) after Elysia and intend to do the same next year when my current maternity leave finishes.

My sister **Gillian** also lives in Sevenoaks and has a daughter, Annie,

P who will be 1 in September. Quite by chance **Harriet Kirkaldy (nee Hoyle)** lives in the same village as me, just outside Sevenoaks, and also recently had a baby, Hector, who is just a few weeks younger than Austin!



Charlotte Ainsworth (1998)

Congratulations to Charlotte whose baby girl Alexis Lucy Ainsworth was born on 22nd March 2012!

Rebecca Donaghy (1999)

Rebecca told us of her recent graduation from Lancaster University in July 2012. She graduated with an honours in Medicine and then moved to Northern Ireland where she started work at Antrim Area Hospital, with her son Jack Patrick Donaghy who is now 3. She is also now married as of 28th September 2012 to Declan, who she met in Sixth Form!

Gillian Tuxford (nee Brearley, 1999)

We saw several old girls at our superb reunion afternoon tea at the Ritz. One of the group was **Gillian Tuxford**. She had a little girl, Annie, last September. Congratulations!

Hoyle Family

We always like to be kept up to date with the Hoyle family, and saw the 'Senior' Hoyles (those of the infamous Horrocks Hoyle Rosebowl) at Mrs Croston's do. **Harriet**, the younger sibling (now **Kirkaldy, 1997**), has had a little boy, Hector. Apparently he has already been introduced to several Old Westholmians, so is definitely keeping the right company! Cutie!



Katie Rowbottom (2000)

A snippet of news from the lovely **Katie**, who is still working for Bloomberg in Hong Kong! She said: Hope back to school is going well, and you had a good break this summer. I'm recovering from **Debbie Yates's** hen do which was last weekend in Edinburgh. It was great (as always) to see my sis **Alexia Charnley, Sarah Walsh (nee Yates)** who was in my class, and Debbie's friends **Lottie Wiltshaw, Lauren Wigham** and **Claire Haymes** who I think left in 2003? Debbie gets married to Rick Barrow on October the 20th. Later on in the year, Katie

e-mailed again: I ran into **Sarah Goodwin (2001)** a few weeks ago in the supermarket. I'm still working for Bloomberg in trading, and she has just finished a secondment post with her firm Clifford Chance here, and is winging her way back to London now to start a new role with them in London. Small world!

Sarah Turner (2000)

I always enjoy hearing from the delightful **Sarah** and I received a typically bouncy missive from her:

Dear Viv,

Hope you are well and Mrs Croston's leaving celebrations went well. I was so sorry not to be there. Here's something from me for the newsletter:

'After five years as a lecturer in the Department of History of Art at the University of York, Sarah is moving to a new job at the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art. The Centre is based in London, but it is affiliated with Yale University and her new role as the Assistant Director of Research will involve quite a bit of travel to the US. The new job will also allow Sarah to spend more time with her partner Jake who is based in London. New meaning to the term 'long-distance relationship' when they were living in York and Papua New Guinea respectively for a while!'

Fabulously exciting!

Saimini Vrimani (2000)

More success for Saimini who e-mailed in to say:

My firm Joseph Frasier Solicitors appeared on the BBC See Hear Programme twice this year! I relocated my firm to new offices in March 2013 and the opening ceremony

was conducted by Rt Hon Jack Straw MP and none other than the Turkish Ambassador Unal Cevikov! Amazing what Westholmers can do!

Natalie Hall (2000)

Updated us to say she has been working for Hays Specialist Recruitment for 5 years and last October she was promoted to Client Director. She runs and manages a multi-million pound account-computer centre in Hatfield, Herts. She wrote: 'Plenty of P+L management and percentage calculations - Mrs Haworth would be proud!'

Fiona Bowen (nee Waller, 2000)

Fiona and her husband Ivor are now the proud parents of Seth Bowen, who was born 23rd September 2011!

Catherine Furniss (nee Butler, 2001)

Catherine also got in touch, on a wedding theme. She said, I was married on 3rd November at Mitton Hall to Adam Furniss. **Catherine Mallord**, who is still my best friend - 20 years after meeting at Westholme, was one of my bridesmaids and I was hers when she married in September.



Catherine Mallord and Catherine Furniss!

P Clare Lambert (nee Sutlieff, 2001)

An e-mail from Richard Sutlieff's daughter, Clare (2001), who certainly seems to be enjoying life! Having worked in Bangkok, I have just moved to Hong Kong and currently work as Head of Music for Discovery Bay International School. I live here with my husband Nick and my son Blake William who is nearly 2. We are loving the opportunities here and have recently also set up a construction business which will no doubt keep us in Asia for quite a while!

Sarah Evans (nee Matthewson, 2002)

Sarah gave birth to a beautiful baby girl, Sophie Grace, in November.

Catherine Mallord (nee Prest, 2003)

Catherine was married last September, with bridesmaids being fellow old girls. I believe a baby is also on the way! Congratulations. She has recently set up her own business doing marketing, PR and copywriting, so all go!



Catherine Mallord's bridesmaids and guests

Amanda Donelan (2003)

And finally, we also heard from another newlywed in the same friendship group, **Amanda Donelan**. She married Andrew Etherington on

25th August last year in Lytham. Her bridesmaids included a fine selection of Old Westholmians too: her sister **Alexandra Clarke (nee Donelan)**, **Chloe Newmark Buckley (M.O.H.)** **Sally Crawshaw** and **Kate Buchanan**.



Amanda Donelan celebrating with her bridesmaids

Amanda also updated us on her career path, saying, I have returned back to Blackburn from living in Manchester to return to University. I am currently in my second year of studying dentistry at the University of Central Lancashire which I am thoroughly enjoying and finding incredibly rewarding. Before returning back to University, I was working at Manchester Royal Infirmary as an Audiologist in the Ear, Nose and Throat department after graduating from the University of Manchester.

Catherine Clarke (2004)

Graduated in 2007 from Lancaster University with a 2:2 BSc Child, Young Person and Family Studies with Applied Social Sciences and thoroughly enjoyed a four year career in the social care sector, working as lead Professional for Action for Children, in the Family Intervention Project, where she worked with families at risk of eviction and, also, those who had already been evicted due to anti-social behaviour, where she helped re-house the families and helped reintegrate them into society. She also

travelled all over Lancashire in many children's homes where she gained valuable experience and knowledge, and acquired a lifetime's worth of memories. She has currently put her career on hold for the foreseeable future in order to dedicate more time to her son who is now 4 and due to start Reception class. She now works full time in a job closer to home and is still involved with cars, working up at Wanon Stock Cars Club in Carnforth as a Marshall. Her words are – "I'm totally insane!" She also wrote:

"Hope everyone is well, I look back and realise what an absolute nightmare of a pupil I was at times and will always be sorry for the way I was during my time at Westholme."

Ellen Gallagher (2005)

Got in touch to send Mrs Gibson a lovely update:

My apologies for taking so long to write back – we've been moving offices from one side of Camden to the other, and so have been in chaos – we're back to relative calm now; I have a desk and computer again, which is a relief! I've certainly landed on my feet here at Blake Friedmann – I used to work for Hammer Films, the resurrected production company behind all the Christopher Lee/Peter Cushing horror movie classics, as the assistant to the CEO. I loved working for a company with such a legacy, and enjoyed being invited to the premiere of THE WOMAN IN BLACK starring Daniel Radcliffe! However, I realised that I really wanted to work directly with writers and their scripts. What with my Dad being a writer, and also my other half being one too, it only seems logical!

So I made the jump from production to agenting, and found my true calling.

I spend most of my days reading screenplays and providing feedback to improve them on the next draft, and in my spare time I produce 60-minute comedy plays for the Camden Fringe. I also step in as a cast member on occasion, if required. So all the English Lit and Drama certainly paid off! Our latest play is on at the Tristan Bates theatre, Covent Garden, at the end of this month. More info here, should you be curious: www.manmoth.co.uk/pilgrim-shadow

Many thanks for encouraging me to do Eng Lit at University, it was certainly the right choice. I learned to speed-read very efficiently during my A-levels and degree, which has been an extremely useful skill for getting through stacks of scripts quickly without missing anything! Writing analytically, coherently and, occasionally, manipulatively has also been quite invaluable in providing feedback to writers. It can be a challenge to find a polite and encouraging way of phrasing the advice 'please throw this away and start again, it's appalling!' – but I manage.

The other bonus about working for a literary agency is that the books department is always well-stocked with sample copies of their authors' work – so I never run out of things to read. One of our 'biggest' clients is Peter James, the crime thriller writer, so I've begun working my way through his oeuvre. We also represent some prominent South African writers, as two of our board members hail from there, and some feminist writers (hoorah!).

I'm still in touch with quite a few of my year group thanks to the magic/irritant that is Facebook. It's fairly rare that we get to meet up, but we do try to keep in touch. I live in Enfield, which is almost in Hertfordshire – the rent

P is much cheaper there and there are lovely fields and trees, so it doesn't feel like part of the city. It's quite a quick commute to my work in Camden too.

I was hoping to get back for Mrs Croston's retirement day, but wasn't able in the end - I've seen photos though and it looks like it was a lovely send-off. Other than that, do you visit Westholme much? As you said, you never truly 'leave' Westholme I think!

I hope you are well, and it's lovely to be back in touch.

All the best, Ellen

Clare Porter (2006)

Mrs Porter who works at our Junior Schools let us know how her daughter **Clare** is doing. She wrote, Clare is now a 'MFDS: Edinburgh. Part 1' (passed first time!)

That's, a 'Member of the Faculty of Dental Surgeons: Edinburgh Part 1'. I can hardly believe it!

Well done Clare, we shall watch your career with great interest.

Dominique Morton (2006)

Dominique recently told us of her interesting work in Medical Sales, selling implants to surgeons for spinal surgery at company called DePuySynthes!

Helen Jackson (2006)

Mrs Croston received a lovely note from **Helen** telling us all about her recent news:

Having left the school to go to Durham University to study sociology, I graduated in '09 with a 2:1. Following this I became a Graduate Recruitment Consultant for Teaching Personnel. After a very successful 2 ½ years with the company, I progressed up the ranks

and was promoted to Branch Manager of Preston in May this year. Onwards and upwards! A huge thankyou to Westholme, I couldn't have done it without you!

Helen

Abbie Northin (2006)

Abbie has recently moved back into the area after teaching Year 3 children at Newcastle Preparatory School for 2 years. In September she became a Year 2 teacher at Highfield Priory School.

Emma Barnes (2007)

Just before Christmas, we heard from Emma. I hope everyone at Westholme is doing well and everyone is in good spirits ready for the festive season.

I am just e-mailing to give a bit of an update for any future old girl newsletters as I last gave an update in 2010 for the careers handbook and a lot has happened since!

In 2010 I graduated from Lancaster University with a 2:1 in Psychology. A career within the Police service had always been a consideration for me, but unfortunately due to budget cuts, no forces were recruiting at that time. I chose to enrol on a Master's course in Social Work at Lancaster in October 2010 which required not only considerable academic work but also required me to complete 200 days of work placements. I was lucky to obtain valuable - though challenging! - placement experiences in an advocacy charity and most recently in the Youth Offending Team in Burnley. In May of this year, Derbyshire Constabulary lifted their recruitment freeze and after 6 hours of calling, I managed to obtain one of 750 elusive application forms for only 80 Police Officer posts. After numerous interviews, role plays

and written and numerical tests, in October I was informed that I had been successful in gaining one of the 80 positions, and I am due to start work as a Police Constable in March/April 2013. I completed my MA in mid-November and am due to graduate this December. I am currently working full-time as a mental health advocate at the organisation where I completed my first placement. And in personal news, I got engaged with a view to a wedding in 2014. Perhaps a purple theme would be appropriate...?!

Kind regards and again all the best,

Emma Barnes

We then heard more recently from Emma, complete with pictorial evidence!



I e-mailed at the end of last year to give an update that I was joining the Police Service. On Friday I successfully

completed my classroom training and have now been fully sworn in as a Constable. Training has been very varied, including roleplays, fitness training - even going to a Post Mortem and being gassed with CS Spray! I am currently enjoying my first set of Rest Days before starting at my new station on Thursday. I am to be stationed at Matlock Police Station for my first 2 years.

I hope all is well at school and that Mrs Croston's leaving party was a success.

Zainab Jawal (2007)

We were delighted to hear from Zainab Jawal: I am an old Westholmer (2000-2007) and I have almost finished my medical degree at Manchester University (I'm taking a year out to complete a Masters degree... and then I'll be done!). Myself and two other old girls (**Nazneen Ismail**, who has just finished dental school at Leeds and **Fatema Patel**, who has just finished medical school at Imperial College London) were interested in coming back and running some sessions about medicine/dentistry? I'm not sure if you already have sessions about this, but we'd be happy to talk about either medical and dental careers/what it's like studying medicine and dentistry, or focussing on applications/personal statement support/interview advice. Indeed we would! Looking forward to seeing you in the Autumn Term.

Bethan Coombe (2007)

A lovely update from Bethan told us of her recently accepted offer to become a residential support worker at a residential home and school for children aged 7-19 who have autism and behavioural problems, and she will soon be relocating to Norfolk to take up this post.

P

Zoe Waddicor (2008)

Zoe wrote and told us of her successes after completing her degree of Physical Education at Leeds Met in 2011, where she continued to study and completed an MSc Psychology conversion award. This award enabled her to pursue a career in Sport and Exercise Psychology, and she started her second Masters degree in this field in September 2012.

Katie Fram (2009)

Katie recently graduated from Durham University with a First Class degree in Natural Sciences – congratulations! She is now embarking on a two year TeachFirst Leadership Development Graduate scheme where she will be teaching science at Darwen Aldridge Academy. She wrote:

“I will be keeping an eye out for job vacancies in the science department at Wilmar Lodge in two years time, having loved Westholme so much myself! I would be keen to come to talk to upper 6th pupils on my time at university if required.”

Mrinalini Dey (2009)

Mrinalini wrote to Mrs Croston with her news:

Further to my last e-mail, I felt I should give you an update - I found out yesterday that I have been accepted to the Cambridge Clinical Course, so will be staying here for a further 3 years. It's such a surprise and relief, since they took so long to release the results following the interviews - I'm just very happy with the news!

In other news, last weekend I presented my research which I did last summer, at the Cambridge Undergraduate Surgical Conference. The poster competition was judged by

the Vice President of the Royal College of Surgeons, and I won first prize. I was just so surprised since I never win anything at these conferences, and it was quite nice to have my work appreciated by such a distinguished surgeon. Having seen my research, he said I should go into orthopaedic surgery...I'd never considered it before, but winning that prize has definitely encouraged me to do so!

Keep us posted - we foresee great things!

Jemma Ibbotson (2009)

A recent update from **Jemma** tells us of her aim to become part of the Navy! After finishing her Masters in Engineering, she hopes to begin Naval Officer Training in Dartmouth,

Emily Yeung (2009)

The University of Warwick sent us a letter on behalf of **Emily** who graduated July 2012 with an Upper Second Class with Honours in Biological Sciences! Well done Emily!

Fern Gordon (2009)

Similarly, we also received fantastic news for **Fern** who graduated from Keele University's School of Law with a First Class Honours and is in the top 5% nationally. Congratulations!

Abbie Van Cleef (2009)

Sent a lovely note through to Mr. Hiller:

Hey Mr Hiller,

I just thought I'd e-mail you to let you know that I've finished my 4 years at uni! I got my results last week and I got a first!! So now I officially have MSci Theoretical Physics! My supervisor, project partner and I are in the process of editing a paper of our master's

thesis project on reluctance accelerator efficiency. Hopefully to be published in an IEEE journal.

Hope things are all well with you and at school.

Choosing physics was the best decision I have made so thank you for all your help!

Abbie

Sana Syed (2009)

Since leaving Westholme in 2009 Sana went into the finance industry and opened her own business which has been running successfully for two years and has branched office premises across the North West. She tells us that she is hoping to open an office in Dubai offering services to expats living abroad over there!

Anambar Rashid (2010)

Graduated with a 2:1 BA (hons) Geography from Lancaster University. Well done.

Fiona Porritt (2011)

Fiona came to see our wonderful production of Miss Saigon. She and I had a quick reminisce about School Food (yes, definitely deserving of the Capitals) and she said that whilst she was on tour with the Westholme Crew in Glastonbury, they had become overwhelmed with longings for school sausages! I have extended an invitation to her to come back from Uni with the gang to have school lunch sometime – I mean it! You'd all be very welcome!

Francesca Wheatley (2011)

Francesca has been raising a lot of money for the charity CLIC sergeant. She recently organised a flash mob

with her friends in Manchester town centre, and at the end of July has hosted a Charity Ball at Mytton Fold with a silent auction and prizes given in order to raise money for this charity, which is so important to Fran, who has been clear of cancer now for 2 years. Great news Francesca!

Rebecca Hodgson (2011)

Rebecca was apparently a great help at the Paralympics but she could not be persuaded to part with photographic evidence!

Lucy Parkinson (2011)

We received an update from **Lucy** who has just passed her foundation year in Media at Sheffield Hallam University with a 2:1 – congratulations!

Emma Holmes

We also received a card from previous staff member and former pupil **Emma**, and her new husband Daniel, (former Language Assistant also at Westholme) telling us all about their wonderful wedding and adventurous honeymoon in British Columbia!

Sad News

We were very sorry to hear about the passing of former members of staff, Ann Langhorn and Connie Thompson, who will be missed by many former colleagues. Their loyalty and commitment to Westholme will be long remembered.

Our thoughts also go out to the family of former pupil Rebecca Joyce, who sadly passed away from cancer last year.

P Westholmians Reunite!



The first of our Reunions took place way back on Thursday September 13th 2012, as Governors and Mrs Croston headed south to meet former pupils for a tour of Buckingham Palace, followed by a lovely dinner at Bank Bar and Restaurant. Although small in number, we were high in calibre and the event was declared a roaring success! Former pupils in attendance were:

- Sophie-Anne Sharples 2011
- Emma Booth 2011
- Elizabeth Talbot (nee Brown) 1986
- Carmen Bowley (nee Smith) 1986
- Emma Huepfl (nee Slinger) 1989
- Kristina Brown 1994
- Seema Kennedy (nee Ghiassi) 1993
- Susie Richardson 1995
- Harriet Kirkaldy (nee Hoyle) 1997



It was back to London the following April, this time for Afternoon Tea at The Ritz. You can see we have an eye for the finer things in life, us Old Westholmians! Again, it was a super affair of animated chat and lashings of cake! The only downside was that our two tables were literally at one end of the room to another – I think the Ritz management feared some Northern Rowdiness! Nonetheless, everyone mingled and Mrs Croston moved around to talk to everyone, and afterwards most of us stayed for an eye-wateringly expensive cocktail in the bar. It was another occasion to remember!

- Kate Konn (nee Dewhurst) 1995
- Ann Brennan (nee Warland) 1995
- Katie Hardy (nee Hoyle) 1995
- Charlotte Lamb (nee Whitman) 1995
- Claire Barton 1993
- Sara Turner 2000
- Kristina Brown 1994
- Julie Evans 1980
- Jenny Hepworth 2004
- Liz Lowrie 2004
- Lynn Hepworth (ex-staff)
- Victoria Derbyshire (nee Lowrie) 2001
- Laurenne Chapman 2001



P The Big Farewell

Well, it can only be described as monumental. How else could the fond farewell to "She Who Has Captained Westholme For A Lifetime" possibly be? Mrs Croston has indeed finally hung up her gown and bid adieu. And you all came to pay homage in your droves!

The goosebumps started on the Saturday evening of her Retirement Weekend. Several former pupils secretly had been invited back to play some of her favourite pieces, and Miss Roberts and Mr Oracz did a brilliant job of keeping it under

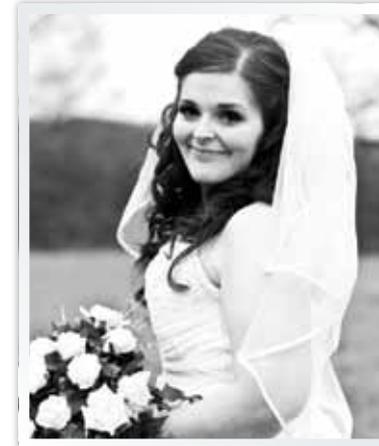
wraps. We had some stunning vocal and dance performances from Melissa Magdy (nee Gray, 2006), Jessica Avison (2008), Katherine Donnelly (2012), Alice Hutchinson (2012) and Liz Singleton (2007). It really was a fantastic prelude to a night of celebration, and Mrs Croston was genuinely touched that so many of her former stars had returned to shine, just for her. The audience loved them all!

All Mrs C's performers receive a red rose



Performers Included:

Melissa Magdy (nee Gray)



Melissa joined Westholme in September 1999 and left in July 2006. She is now an English teacher.



Melissa as Mrs Johnston in Blood Brothers at Westholme School in 2005. Spot a young Liz Singleton as Micky!



Melissa on her wedding day with her 'Westholme' bridesmaids.

Jessica Avison



Jessica attended Westholme 1994-2008. She got on the MIT graduate scheme for Abercrombie and Fitch, and is currently an Assistant manager in store. She is also with an agency gigging in Newcastle and at various venues all over the country.



One of Jessica's early photos at Westholme



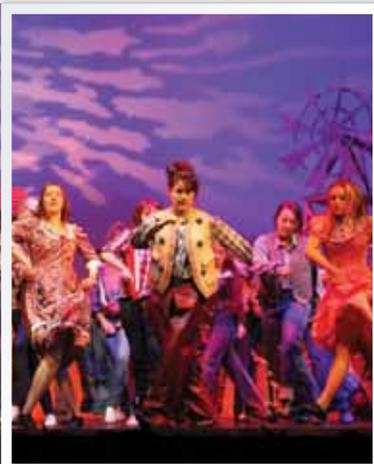
Jessica performs in The Sound of Music, 2008.

P

Katherine Donnelly



Katherine has performed in CHMS' production of West Side Story and was the youngest member in the cast. She also took part in the largest university dance show 'Fusion' which is renowned throughout the country.



Katherine in Oklahoma! Westholme Theatre, 2011

Katherine has also played the lead role of Polly Peachum in York Drama Soc's production of The Threepenny Opera.

Jade Jones



We are thrilled to learn that Sixth Former, Jade Jones has won a place to play at the Cambridge Folk Festival from 25th to 28th July, 2013. This huge festival, covered by the BBC, celebrates folk music and diverse folk artists. Jade originally applied by submitting three of her own original songs.

Competition for places was immense, but the organisers said that they awarded Jade a place because they were impressed with her beautiful voice and found her simple accompaniment incredibly interesting to listen to!



Alice Hutchinson



Alice in Oklahoma!, Westholme Theatre, 2011

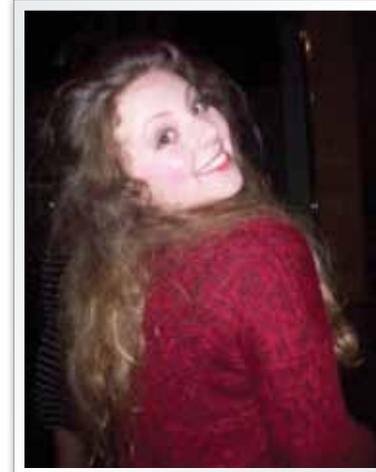


Alice in The Phantom of the Opera at Westholme School 2012

Alice is now studying a Foundation in Acting in association with RADA at Cambridge School of Visual & Performing Arts.



Hannah Dagnall



Hannah is going to attend Leeds University to study Classics.

Hannah as the The Phantom in Phantom of the Opera



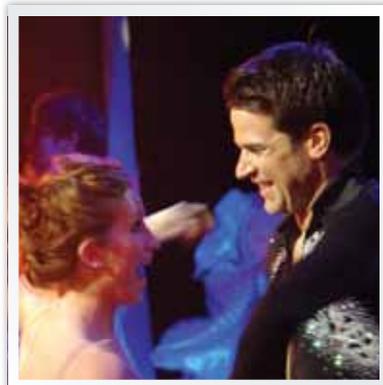
P Liz Singleton



Graduated from Westholme in 2007 to study at the prestigious Guildford School of Acting. Now a West End Star!



Liz as Eponine in Les Misérables at the Queen's Theatre, West End 2013



Liz dancing with Gethin Jones in the panto Cinderella, 2009/10.

Liz will be returning to Westholme in next year's Concert Series to perform songs from her favourite musicals.

She will also star in the touring production of Craig Revel Horwood's 'Fiddler on the Roof' from September 2013 with Paul Michael Glaser (from Starsky and Hutch!)

Sophie Ward

Sophie is going to Oxford University to study Biomedical Sciences, taking her ukulele with her!



Sophie as Piangi in The Phantom of the Opera



Sophie as the Genie in Aladdin

Although Sophie is technically leaving Westholme this year, she's sure she'll return in the future... whether you like it or not!

And the fact that there were so many former pupils as guests also made it even more special. We saw a resplendently pregnant **Charlotte Maclean-Bristol (nee Ward, 1995)** with her Mum. This is her third child, so hubby will need to keep hard at work to see if he can stump up for three sets of Westholme fees one day! **Saffron Milligan (nee Wilson, 1994)** who had helped us greatly in the offset, chasing names and details of Head and Deputy Head girls was also there, and was sitting with **Tansy Sabben (nee Smith, 1995)** and **Kristina Brown (1995)**. Kristina is still enjoying life as a Barrister, Tansy is about to join Westholme as a Physics teacher and Saffron has a new career in Client Development with Momentum Instore.

After dinner we were treated to another surprise, a video compiled by Mr Oracz, which featured many clips from former Head and Deputy Head girls. Every one of them recalled the zany tights, the joyfulness and the care Mrs Croston had exhibited over their years. Perhaps one of the most memorable snippets was

from **Katie Hoyle** and **Katie Hardy** who, resplendent in Princess Leia costumes, and wine in hand, told the camera their three words to sum up the Principal: Brightly...Coloured...Tights. Comedy gold!

Many of you turned up for the Sunday Family Fun Day and I cannot even guess how many former pupils were there! It was a glut of Old Westholmians! Mrs Croston was particularly delighted to see the first cohort of Junior Boys (now very One Direction-esque 18 year olds) who had come back to join in the festivities. There was a good representation from 1992 leavers, including **Vikki Fickling (nee Wilson)**, **Melanie Weaver (nee Williams)** and **Kathryn Hinds (nee Wilkin.)** I also spotted two of the **Belderbos girls**, Helen, also 1992 and elder sister Louise, who despite three children each, had not changed one bit! I also glimpsed **Sarah Snowdon (1988)** who is a firefighter extraordinaire. I know there were scores of others there so do forgive me if I didn't know your name or recognise you.

Left to Right:

- Liz Singleton
- Olivia Wallbank
- Sophie Howarth
- Mrs C!
- Amy Toole
- Emma Haymes



P

Right:

- Simone Lee
- Amy Howarth
- Mrs Cl
- Dominique Morton
- Lucy Calvert



Right:

- Ashleigh Clarke
- Olivia Reed
- Candis Lightbown



Left:

- Fiona Porritt
- Rosie McCann
- Rebecca Hodgson
- Kate Reynolds
- Leena Najia

Below:

- Amy Toole
- Olivia Wallbank
- Liz Singleton
- Amy Howarth
- Lucy Calvert
- Simone Lee
- Sophie Howarth
- Emma Haymes
- Dominique Morton



- Jessica Cherry
- Nicola Maher
- Charlotte Haworth
- Amy Shipley
- Leanne Blomeley
- Zoe Waddicor
- Rebecca Francis



P Mrs Croston's Archives

I also decided it was the perfect moment to dust off some of those early shots of Mrs Croston, the ones of her looking no older than a pupil herself!

Here are a few of my favourites:



Anyone for a swim...across the Channel?

Mrs C. and Mr Joseph Blum, the director of College St Andre at Colmar in France and a special charter they signed to bring the two educational establishments closer together. (April 22nd, 1992.) ►



Mrs C. and girls give a big cheer to Diana Vickers after watching her perform in 'Little Voice'. ▼



Mrs Croston, Louise Belderbos, Natalie Charnley, Mrs Porritt & Mrs Rouse give a cheque to the NSPCC (May, 1990)

Proudly showing off their ski certificates. (2006) ►



Competitors in the regional final of the Rotary Club Public Speaking competition 1991 at Carnforth, with Mrs Croston. From the left: Ann Warland, Rebecca Cronshaw, Anya Cunningham and Rachel Blake. ▼



P

I also uncovered an amusing review of a week in her life which she wrote in Summer 1993, five years into her tenure. I can say this for a fact – 20 years later and she is still as frantic! Happy retirement from us all.

A WEEK IN THE LIFE OF A BUSY PRINCIPAL

Saturday

Independent Junior Schools' athletics meet. Arrive at School at 8.30a.m. to find most Middle School staff, sixth form helpers and maintenance staff already at work ferrying benches, hurdles, cones and stop watches onto the field. Weather looks threatening but rain holds off and clouds provide ideal conditions for many records to be broken. Children from twelve schools enjoy competing, tramping wet grass down corridors to the toilets and all over the hall where they eventually pick at their sandwich lunch. They fight through the scrum to receive their awards, beaming but unsure about which hand to use in their handshake. By 1.00p.m. it's all over.

Mr. Marshall, Mrs. Cook and I race for the brushes and the Hoover. All floors must be spick and span for the Piano Master Class in the afternoon. We make a splendid job, much to the delight of the sixth form who have now taken up their ushers' positions.

It's 2.00 p.m. and visitors for the 2.30 p.m. event start arriving. I suddenly panic about the cleanliness of the cloakrooms. Hurriedly I flush the toilets and despair as I observe the moody stinks. It will have to be a quick paper towel job. I'm just wiping the last one down when two of the elderly visitors decide they cannot wait to use the facilities. They elbow me out of the way as they make their way to wash their hands. I am not impressed by their lack of courtesy but say nothing and quietly disappear. They obviously did not have a Westholme education or they would have learned to treat everyone, whatever their station in life, with respect. I wipe my hands, find Martin Roscoe to wish him and the event well and rush home to complete further domestic chores.

Sunday

Read and sign reports for a large part of the day. In the evening we entertain the two German teachers visiting with the exchange group from Düren. Their English is impeccable so it makes for an enjoyable occasion. Our pupils tell us that in the German school pupils chat and eat crisps most of the time but the teachers demolish this theory. Their continental day of lessons from 8.00 a.m. until 1.00 p.m. sounds appealing but they say they prefer our system where pupils get much wider extra-curricular activities at lunch time and after school.

Monday

Staff meeting at Beardwood Bank. We are self-congratulatory on the success of the Sports meeting and particularly impressed by Miss Booth's and Mrs. Ward's calm, efficient and meticulous organisation. The only trouble is that we have been asked to host this event again next year for the third time. We are told "Few schools can provide such excellent facilities and arrangements!"

Final plans made for events to say farewell to Mrs. Cook. We are all downcast. We are going to miss her.

Conduct assembly on making the most of our opportunities and then rush to Wilmar Lodge to find more of mine. Quickly sift through the mail and deal with urgent matters. Government questionnaire on attendance rates to be returned immediately. Form is unnecessarily complicated and involves checking the whole School's attendance rates for twelve months. Midnight oil will burn tonight.

Spend second half of the morning teaching. Thank goodness for the welcome peace and order of the classroom. It's so enjoyable when young minds constantly refresh one's own, flushing between lessons I bump into Mr. Rouse and his New Zealand visitors. Bid a hasty welcome and farewell, explaining that 'areas and perimeters' cannot wait.

Staffing matters and timetables fill the afternoon and I arrive home late for tea only to make a quick



Inspecting the site

return for the Governors' evening meeting. It passes without too much stress and we say a convivial farewell to Mrs. Cook as this is her last meeting.

Tuesday

Staff meeting at Wilmar Lodge followed by assembly. Make many sports presentations to swimming team (Lancashire, Cheshire, Merseyside and Isle of Man Champions), Lancashire's under-fourteen long jump champion, our Blackburn and Darwen champion number team, and Lancashire tennis champions. We cannot fail to be proud of Westholme's amazing sporting achievements.

9.30 a.m. Site meeting to discuss progress on the Science block. It's going to be such a marvellous asset for the girls and staff. But the time spent on meetings and on site! I shall never learn as much again about boilers, drains, workspaces, door fittings and fume cupboards. Perhaps we shall get a respite from the temporary emergencies – no electricity, no water, no drains, no gas. I'm not sure what I shall do when it is finished. That's not true, I suppose we'll just get on with the next development.

Dash to Billinge House for lunch where one of the children asks why we do not have wine at lunch time like at home.

There has been an air of excitement in the Upper School all day. It's in anticipation of tonight's first night of 'West Side Story'. The Junior Heads invited prove a jolly bunch and are very appreciative of cast, music and set.

"Does Mr. Millett really have three hands? How else can he play the piano and conduct. We notice he uses his head a lot!" I am thankful, relieved and happy that the first night has been so successful. I see the last pupil off the site, lock up in the peace of the warm evening and go home clutching my "midnight oil" reports.

Wednesday

School is buzzing as the success of 'West Side Story' reverberates around the classrooms. Some slight commotion in assembly as two young American boys and the German visitors sit amongst our pupils.



Man at work

Mrs. Cave and I depart hastily for an ELTEC meeting in Padstow. The scheme seems to be going well and our students' work-shadowing placements have proved suitable. They are gaining valuable experience, learning a lot and growing as people.

Spend the afternoon interviewing Lower Sixth students about their aspirations and plans for the future. Contact with pupils is always so welcome. These young women are such good communicators. Their zeal for life is inspiring and their enthusiasm and optimism shines out in this otherwise all-too-gloomy, recession-filled world. I am very lucky to be amongst them.

Wander down to the Hall at 5.00p.m. to check that seats and flower arrangements are all in place for the performance. Cast an eye into the Boardroom and my heart misers a beat as I glimpse two nudes standing in a corner. What on earth... Oh wait a minute – it's the shop window dummies we have decided not to

use in 'West Side Story'. I wish someone would cover them up or take them back to the shop. It could have been a major scandal!

Catch up on staff room news as those of us staying to act as front-of-house, make-up, props, costumes and programme sellers share our tea in the staff room. A quick change and a room tidy before welcoming tonight's visitors, the committee members of the Westholme Association.

Thursday

Meetings all morning with the Bursar, the Chairman and various members of staff. Welcome a new girl and her parents and then dash to Lancaster for a professional mentors' meeting regarding the new teacher-training initiatives in schools. Return late afternoon and today I meet a strange fellow, who looks like The Laughing Cavalier, coming into the Hall. I'm just about to jinx again when I remember there's been a History theatre workshop.

I deal with paperwork and decide at 6.00p.m. that I shall go home for three quarters of an hour before returning for the evening performance. This is a mistake. I reach the top of the drive to find the school gate closed. I feel indignant. I haven't ordered that. Climb out of the car and open the gate to meet a herd of cows. The farmer looks plaintively and despairingly at me so I leap back into my car and use it to barricade the drive. The cows friskily pass safely down Mead Road and I laugh. Well I keep assuring everyone that Westholme's rural location is idyllic. I suppose that means cows and all.

Friday

Meet informally with Mrs. Cook and other staff at Billinge House before Richmond, the teddy bear conducts assembly for me. This week he's got a stinky about smugglers but we soon discover that not all five year olds understand precisely what a smuggler is.

I should be at Beardwood Bank for lunch as it is their clubs and activities day but have to meet the Provost instead. He is coming to see me about the possibility of an exhibition of our school artwork in the Cathedral. The rest of the afternoon is spent forward-planning about staffing, room provision and curriculum matters, with senior members of staff.

Final room tidy and a few more reports before welcoming the Governors to the last night of our show. It's a tremendous finale after a fabulous week and tributes abound. Mr. Marlowe, Mr. Millett, et al are smothered in glory and the cast retire to the library to eat supper and unwind. My family and I leave at 12.15 a.m. – my boot stacked with reports.

Saturday

As my 8.15 a.m. train draws away from Preston Station my tired eyes gaze at the platform. Two Westholme pupils peer back and with a happy grin, gladly wave me away. It was going to be my day off but seeing them strikes a guilty chord. That article for the 'School Magazine' is still outstanding. By Chrove, I've read my newspapers, discovered the order of play at Wimbledon, eaten my hot bacon and tomato roll and cannot find any other excuse to delay writing. Hopes of conversation with my travelling companion, my son, about his activities are pronounced a 'no-go' area. He insists on withdrawing into his own world with his Walkman and book, 'Jurassic Park'.

Mrs. Gibson has ordered me to write – but about what? Back my brains – well that only takes a minute! My only memorable 'how to write' lesson came from an American author who said it was better to write about real experience. Simply tell people what you are doing. So here is last week's diary – well the parts I can admit!

London Euston – 11.15 a.m. "Come on, Oliver. Let's enjoy the rest of my day off. Tomorrow will be repeat reading all day. Now which underground line do we need for Wimbledon?"

Lillian Croston





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