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THE PURPLE PATCH

THE NEWSLETTER FOR
FORMER PUPILS & STAFF



SUMMER 2014 EDITION

P Introduction

Another year, another set of fascinating updates from the wonderful world of Westholme. It gives me so much pleasure to read your news and hear of your domestic, professional and social achievements. Every year, more and more Westholmians leave their footprint across the globe and it is comforting to know we are all part of one community, wherever we are.

This year has been one of change back at base, with our new Principal, Lynne Horner, taking over the reins from Mrs Croston. She has enjoyed her first year and has begun to love the colour purple! There have been further staff changes too, which you will read about in the Newsletter, but one of the key ones is the departure of Miss Edgar to take up her own headship in Solihull. Meanwhile, there has been a decision to bring the Junior Boys into Beardwood Bank and the Nursery will become integrated into the Infants next year, so the structure of the School will feel a little different too. Do keep up to date with all our developments on the website. Nonetheless, despite the changes, our core principles of teaching girls and boys separately and bringing out the best in every pupil remain resolute. Westholme is what Westholme always was – a fun and caring community where each child is treasured and encouraged to succeed.

I wish you another happy year ahead where you are treasured and encouraged too!

Viv Davenport (1990)

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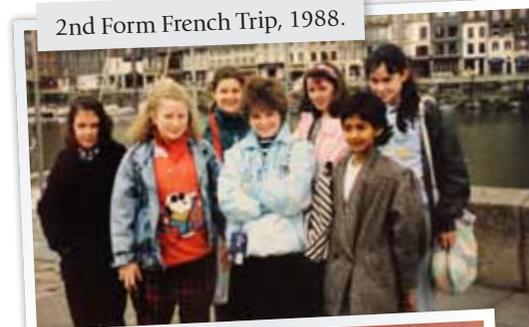
Blast from the Past



The Westholme Puppet Theatre in the 1970's!



A Level Theatre Studies students, December 2000.



2nd Form French Trip, 1988.



Our very first sports day, June 1988.



1st Year netball 'A Team', 1985-1986.



Infant footballers, 1969.

P Echoes from the Past

Jill Hudson (née Barlow, 1939)

Jill wrote to inform us she had recently moved. She is being kept busy with all the jobs a house move brings!

Gillian Marsh (née Kenyon, 1963)

We had a recent email update from Gillian:

"I first attended Westholme in September 1956 after my parents were concerned that I was "just helping the little ones put on their hats and coats" at my local village school. The head was then Mr Arthur Rouse and he and his wife insisted that every girl followed their subjects right through to O level and no one ever failed - quite a pressure! I failed the Eleven plus so was unable to go to grammar school so I stayed at Westholme.

Westholme was the absolute making of me - not only did I do well in my exams but was made Head Girl. This was quite daunting as I clearly remember having to learn to speak in public, first starting at assemblies on the stairs of Beardwood and later on the stage at the school hall in Westholme and King George's Hall in Blackburn.

I moved on to Clitheroe Grammar school for my A Levels which nearly ruined my confidence, moving from a very small class of 14 to a Sixth Form of 120. However, I achieved the grades required to train as a nurse at the Radcliffe Infirmary in Oxford. Looking back it was clear that I liked pioneer type medicine first of all in Heart Surgery Theatre when valve replacements were new and the

operations lasted at least four hours.

After getting married, I started working for the Blood Transfusion Service with the early production of Anti-D which prevents Rhesus Disease in the newborn. After having my two boys, I returned to work in the Special Care Baby Unit in Oxford and, when I eventually returned to full-time work, I managed the Colposcopy Unit which looks after women with abnormal smears.

This was when the speaking in public came to its fore as I presented papers at national conferences for both doctors and nurses. My hospital role by that time had been developed and I was one of the first Nurse Colposcopists in the country. This meant that I could see a woman through the whole process and treat them myself just as a doctor would. I soon became part of the advisory and quality assurance bodies for the Cervical Screening Program and I am sure that this helped to make the service more acceptable to women.

Sad News

Christine Harwood (1954). Known at school as Christine Robinson sadly died in January 2013 after a few months of having cancer of the gall bladder diagnosed. She was 65 years old. Christine was a very able Primary School teacher and taught on and off throughout her life, interrupted by bringing up four lovely daughters of whom she was very proud. Christine had many interests and in particular her family, holidays, walking, dancing and motoring. She is sadly missed by her husband, children and her many friends.

Teaching became part of my role both in the UK and in Germany and I, with another nurse, set up the RCN Colposcopy Nurses Group in order to improve communication and standards for the nurses in what is quite often an isolated role. Nurse Practitioners are now much more common and certainly have helped allay many unnecessary fears.

Westholme still has a great place in my heart and my school memories of there are nothing but good especially sports day on the lawn with displays and a trampoline! It showed how a poor start could be transformed by a couple who had the foresight and drive to develop Westholme as they did."

Thanks for the update Gillian.

John Duckworth (1964)

John sent us this update through our LinkedIn Alumni group:

"I was at Westholme from 1959 to 1964. My teachers included Mrs Bambridge and Mrs Holt plus a few 'Draconis Occidentalis'. I had a bit of a mishap in a painting class when all I did was paint my hand blue, plus half my arm. Sports day was best. The first to finish the races got jelly babies. The laggards lost weight. All of this at the premises in Preston New Road," - lovely memories John.

Kristine Dobson (née Holman, 1964)

Kristine also got in touch through our LinkedIn Alumni group with this comment:

"I was at Westholme from 1960 - 1964, it was nothing like it is today! I'm not in contact with anyone from my school days but would love to hear from anyone who was at the school when I was."

Steven Brindle (1971)

Steven returned to present the prizes at our Boys' Junior School Prizegiving ceremony last year. He has worked for English Heritage since 1989 and is now in his fourth role with the organisation. He is currently working on a new history of Windsor Castle to be published by the Royal Collection and has published several books and articles about history and architecture.



Jane Bury (1972)

It was lovely to catch up with Reverend Jane Bury when she returned to School to take a special morning assembly in The Croston Theatre.

She spoke to our current students about the changes she has seen in Westholme since she attended the school herself. With all the improved facilities, she encouraged students to make the most of their time here and not take the facilities and opportunities Westholme offers for granted.

Reverend Jane shared with us her memories of Westholme which have stayed with her and her family for many years.



P Pam Brown (1983)

Pamela wrote to us to share her fond memories of the Dr Bond years! Pam now lives in Cornwall and is only in touch with one old class mate and two teachers. She would love to hear from anyone who may have attended Westholme at a similar time.

Lesley Quinn, MBA (née Hunt, 1985)

Lesley lives in Manchester and works from multiple locations. She's worked in Financial Services since leaving Westholme and is still grateful for the start in life she received from such good schooling - during the days of Dr Joan Bond and some incredible teachers.

Sarah Morgan (née Keegan, 1985)

"I've just been through the last 12 months, and there's plenty to report. It has been quite a year of music, visiting Westholme friends and lecturing in foreign languages.

Westholme gave me great musical and performance opportunities for which I remain forever appreciative. Opera singers always sound so



Sarah performing opera.

impressive, so I fancied giving it a try. In June 2013, I started some singing lessons with a terrific vocal coach, and on August 27, 2013 I performed opera for the first time. I was honoured to be accompanied by harpist Maxine Rose, who teaches harp at Westholme (my daughter Amelia is one of her pupils).

October was a very exciting time for the Keegan family, as my brother Joe made it through to the Blind Auditions of the BBC One series *The Voice*. This meant that the family, including fellow sisters **Claire Keegan (1992)** and **Bethany Keegan (2013)** were filmed in the Red Room backstage with Marvin Hulmes from boy band JLS. We watched with bated breath as Joe stepped onto the stage, and Kylie Minogue was the first to spin round on the famous red chair quickly followed by Ricky Wilson (lead singer of the Kaiser Chiefs). Joe chose Kylie and was mentored by her during the competition. Joe made it through to the Battle Round and even taught will.I.am to Irish dance!



Sarah with brother Joe.



The Keegans backstage.

In November, I was invited to give a lecture at the annual Assottica conference in Rome, Italy. The opera singing had whetted my appetite for the Italian language, and with the help of my sister Bethany (studying French, Italian and Spanish at Liverpool University), my presentation was translated into Italian - even with some jokes! It was a terrific experience. This was later followed by my singing two opera pieces at the pre-dinner cocktails - 'Il Mondo È Nostro' (an Italian opera version of 'Rule the World', by Take That) and the well-known soprano aria 'O Mio Babbino Caro' (Puccini). For me, this was courage at its height, as this was Rome and performing in front of over 300 Italians. I really enjoyed it, and the opera singing continues!



Work took me to Scotland in early December, and I was fortunate to be training some staff both in Aberdeen and Elgin. **Jill Gower**

(née Gurr) lives in Burghead, near Elgin. Via Facebook, I liaised with Jill and visited her lovely family. She has two daughters Elspeth (17) and Morven (14), and a son, Fergus (10). Morven is very musical, sings beautifully and plays the bagpipes - and I got to have a go on them and played 'Flower of Scotland'.



The New Year kicked off preparing for Joe's TV debut on *The Voice*, and I filmed and edited three music videos (accompanying him on piano on one) in Final Cut Pro X. This was a labour of love. Do give them a watch - I particularly like his original songs 'China Town' and 'Tales of an Old Town' (filmed in Manchester city centre and Rivington respectively, which I'm sure you'll recognise - www.joekeegan.co.uk/videos). In mid - January, I got to pay **Sue Maguire (née King)** and family a visit when I was working down in Wokingham where they live. It was good to see everyone at home that day - husband Hugh, and sons Joshua (22) and Luke (20).



The Maguire family.

P It had been ten years since I'd seen my friend **Louise Smith (née Rostron, 1983)**. It might have been ten years, but it felt like ten minutes, when in February, I was down in London and took my son George (14) to see her in her beautiful home in Chelsea. He got to meet her two charming sons George (13) and Freddie (10). Sadly, Louise lost her father, Peter Rostron, in March. It was good to be able to see her again shortly afterwards in April. This time I visited her with my daughter Amelia (16).



I've recently returned from the inaugural German contact lens congress held in Munich in May. Ruth Davies, a good friend of former Head Girl **Jane Grant-Abban (née Palethorpe, 1985)**, lives in Munich and helped me translate my entire lecture into German. Mrs Edge taught me O level German for three years, but 31 years had passed since I'd spoken the language! It was a terrific experience, and being able to communicate with the audience in their native language means that this approach will continue, however 'stretching' it may be!

I guess Westholme taught us all to go outside of our comfort zones once in a while. There have been more 'whiles' than 'onces' this year! Life is for living!"

Kate James (1986)

Kate returned to Westholme to be our Prize Presenter at our Annual Prizegiving Ceremony back in October. At the time, Kate was working as a Chief Communications Officer for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Prior to joining the foundation, Kate worked in the financial services industry where she most recently served as Senior Vice President, Global Corporate Communications for Citibank. She has held senior leadership roles at Standard Chartered Bank and GlaxoSmithKline in the areas of communications, international government relations, strategy and sustainability. Kate is also a board member of Vital Voices, founded by Hillary Clinton to empower women in politics, business and civil society in developing countries. Kate is now working as Chief Corporate Affairs Officer at Pearson, the world's leading learning company. She divides her time between London and New York.



Kate pictured above with Principal, Mrs Horner and Head Girl - Harriet Dagnall & Deputy Head Girl - Lucy Horsfield.

Leanne Romney (née Downes, 1987)

A recent update from Leanne:

"My last update was several years ago, so I thought I would fill you in on what's been happening..."

I am currently a Business Manager for Newcastle College Group, specialising in Post-16 Education for Young People with additional needs, based in Bolton.

I have been married to Paul for six years and our son, Josh, is getting ready to move to Newcastle in September to study Chemistry at Newcastle University. Josh has also recently returned from Everest, after being selected to represent UK Scouting on a volunteer expedition!

Recently, I have been able to catch up with my old BFF, **Cath McKnight (née Meager)**, on her recent year in Blighty- she now lives in New Zealand, with her three fabulous daughters. We had a ball catching up and reminiscing!

I enjoy receiving my Westholme updates and seeing what you're all up to!"



Jennifer Tippin (née Prince, 1990)

Jennifer told us about her recent career changes:

"Since presenting the prizes at the Girls'

Junior School Prizegiving Ceremony last year, I have been appointed as the Managing Director of small business banking for Lloyds Banking Group responsible for a million customers. In addition I have also been appointed as a Non-Executive Director of the Kent Community Health Trust, one of the largest NHS Trusts in the UK."



Kate Linford (née Jacklin, 1990)

"I think the last time I was in touch was to let you know I am now married, well now I have a new(ish) addition. Thomas was born in March 2013. He's a non-stop baby who runs rather than walks and is constantly on the lookout for the next activity. He's an absolute gem (most of the time!) and I'm enjoying being a stay at home mum."



P Erika Clegg (1990)

Erika got in touch and sent us this update:

"2014 is shaping up to be a big year. Low light so far has been losing my darling Dad the day after my wedding anniversary in March, following an aortic aneurism. He was due to turn 70 this year and has left a huge hole in our world. Mum is being stoic and amazing.

Better things have been happening though. Will started at Southwold Primary in September and is loving school life, gathering a great little posse of friends and revelling in the beginning of a Suffolk summer. His older sister, Georgie, my resident stepdaughter, is in the first year of GCSEs and throwing herself at Duke of Edinburgh, choir and drama, makes me quite envious!



Spring, my communications design agency, seems to be getting back into growth after a few fairly flat but productive recession years. In May I found myself in Albania, presenting brand recommendations to their Prime Minister, which was screened live on national TV! So now I can say 'As seen on TV' on my business cards... We are currently in the shortlist for Morocco's tourism account and working hard on ideas. Last year's work highlight was our creation of the Conservative

Party's official Maggie Thatcher memorabilia, which had absolutely heaps of press coverage including *Elle*, all the national papers, the BBC and the American press.

I'm still a board director for the Design Business Association and the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership, where I have launched and am leading their Economic Equality manifesto, as well as getting involved with skills and creative cultural industries. It sees me giving a lot of speeches and trying to cut through red tape to get things moving. It's a great opportunity to improve things for people in Norfolk and Suffolk and a real privilege."

Susannah Sladen (née Booth, 1991)

Susannah is pleased to announce the safe arrival of a son, William Gabriel, on 31st May, a little brother for 15 year old Alice... Long awaited!

Elizabeth Lehnich (1991)

An email from Elizabeth informed us that she has been living abroad since leaving Westholme in 1991. She has an eleven year old son who is at Grammar School in Hamburg, Germany. Elizabeth runs the School Association there.

Kathy Hinds (née Wilkin, 1992)

Kathy wrote to us with her latest news:

"My family (husband Richard, and children, Oliver - seven, William - five and Annabel - three) and I are heading south to Buckinghamshire in the summer and leaving beautiful Cheshire behind.

I have been lucky enough to accept a role teaching Biology part time at Stowe School and am really looking forward to the new challenges ahead!

I hope I can remain in touch with the many wonderful friends I made at Westholme that I am still in contact with now that I will be further away."

Helen Summers (1992, née Wood)

We spotted this article about Helen in the local paper:

From Pele to Jose and Drogba

Language expert Helen Summers and, inset, meeting Pele

Simone O'Kane meets multi-lingual Helen Summers who helps footballers around the world

COMBINING her passion of football and languages, has enabled East Lancashire-born Helen Summers to work with some of the biggest names in sport.

Helen, who started out as a television producer and director, has interviewed Brazilian legend Pele, and taught languages to Frank Lampard and David James.

She now runs her own business Vivresida, offering language solutions.

Vivresida incorporates the words 'live' and 'life' in a combination of French, Spanish and Portuguese, languages spoken by so many top Premier League and other league players.

A former chief press officer at Chelsea FC, one of Helen's most memorable events in her career was when she sat alongside Jose Mourinho as he declared himself 'The Special One'.

Her multi-lingual skills - she is fluent in French and Spanish - have taken her across the globe... not bad for a girl from Higham.

"The business is important in every way and, as more international players come through, interpreters are sought after," she said.

"Football players or managers need more support when they come to England, they need to get their message across. Players have claimed they have been mis-quoted in the press, but more often than not, they are not certain or covering what they have actually said."

After graduating with a degree in modern languages at the University of Salford, Helen produced and directed three one-hour football documentaries: *History of Football: The Beautiful Game*.

And, although she is well-travelled, Helen still manages to make time to follow her beloved Burnley FC. "When I was in Brazil I did a long interview with Pele but I couldn't have left filming without having him sign two Burnley shirts. He wrote on them both 'Up the Claret's'. I gave them to my brothers Colin and Graham but never saved one."

"The Special One" Jose Mourinho

children who suffer heart defects.

She also worked with Tony Adams, teaching him French as he embarked on an international management career.

"I thought it was good of Tony to take on another language. He needed to be able to speak French to improve communication between himself and the players," said Helen, who has also built great friendships with footballers such as Didier Drogba.

Currently, Helen is helping Sunderland's Senegalese player Kader Mangane and his wife and daughter.

The mother-of-two has also played the game - she was a midfielder for Brentford Ladies FC and Stade Nyonnais in Switzerland.

"The team that I have at Vivresida are experienced in every way. We provide immigration assistance, wealth management, help with accommodation, schooling and transport, commercial and charity partnership opportunities as well as providing links to the local community.

"The care an international player gets varies from club to club, but it's rewarding working with them to ensure they are happy and well-settled."

**P Hazel Jessup
(née Stansfield, 1992)**

Hazel contacted us with some old photos. Hazel was part of the swimming team and got to the Nationals.

These photos were taken in her last year at Westholme, before her family then moved to the south of England in Hampshire. Now, Hazel is living in Australia but is still in touch with friends from Westholme and has fond memories of her time spent at Westholme.



Left: Ruth Hart holding the handle to the right of the trophy: Hazel Jessup.



Centre (back): Ruth Hart
Right (back): Hazel Jessup.

**Helen Whipp
(née Atkinson, 1993)**

Helen has been living in West London for the last 13 years. She married a 'northerner' and has two young boys aged five and three. She works part time as a pharmacist at the Royal Free Hospital in Hampstead and would love to catch up some time with any London based ex-Westholmians from her year.

Look out for details of our London Reunion in November Helen!

Emmalou Johnson (1994)

"I can't remember when I last sent you some news, so apologies if some of this is old news! Last January (2013) I had a baby boy - Millar - which was of course the wonderful, yet all-consuming experience everyone says it is! I love being a mum and wish I'd done it sooner really, but there's never the perfect time to have a baby these days, is there?!"



We have a very busy, but happy life; we still live in London, although earlier this year we moved a little further out and are now

officially in Surrey, although it is really still London! I've taken a side-step with my career, too, as producing TV commercials, which I'd done for many years prior to this, just would not have worked with being a mum to a young baby. The hours I used to do were crazy and it wouldn't have been fair on anyone. So, I now work for a music company, called Major Tom, which I love. We do music clearances and composition for TV ads and feature films. It's really interesting and I initially came to London to work in the music industry, so it's nice to have finally gone into that field. I work three days a week, which is the perfect balance with the wee one; he loves nursery and I get to use my brain in a different way, and talk to adults for some of the week!

In March 2012, my husband launched his own company, Vulpine, which makes fashionable cycle clothing, which you can wear on and off the bike. It's been a tough few years setting it up, etc. but now the fruits of our labour are beginning to show and things are going well. Only last week, my husband was in *Short List* magazine and is going to be in *Esquire* soon, and cycling just seems to be becoming more and more popular, so it's all pretty exciting.

I still go up north from time to time to see family and my old Westholme friends, **Rosemary Johns (née Holden)** and **Sally Garwell (née Jones.)** They are very well and Sally has two children - Minnie and Monty and Rosemary has a little girl, Cerys, and another one on the way - due in October."

**Phillippa Smith
(née Taylor, 1996)**

Phillippa wrote to us after the birth of her son Joseph Edward in September. He is pictured below with big sister Kate who is now four. Phillippa is enjoying maternity leave and will return to work as a GP in Keighley in September, where she has recently become a partner.

"I still regularly see **Jackie Carter (née Maine)** who has also had a baby girl, Isla earlier this year. I always love to read the Purple Patch magazine and hear stories of old girls!"



**Morna Watts
(née Reeve, 1999)**

"I am happily married to Chris and have two fabulous daughters, Esther and Phoebe. I have been a Primary School teacher for almost eleven years but have recently decided it's not the job it once was and I have escaped! I have recently started work in a Children's Hospice, working with children with life-limiting conditions and their families. It is truly fabulous! I have only been there a short time but it is such a privilege to work with these children and their amazing families.

P I've also enjoyed meeting up recently with some old Westholmians and am in touch with lots more via Facebook."

Gillian Tuxford (née Brearley, 1999)

Gillian sent us an email to let us know that on 15th May 2014 she gave birth to twin boys - Toby Jonathan and Zachary (Zach) James Tuxford - weighing 6lb12 and 5lb2.



Gillian wrote:

"It was certainly a surprise when we found out we were expecting twins but we are absolutely thrilled! They're both doing very well and I'm loving having double cuddles! Life will no doubt be very hectic for the next few years, especially as their big sister Annie is only 20 months older,"- you certainly have your hands full Gillian!

Shabnam Parkar (1999)

Shabnam got in touch to let us know what she has been up to since graduating from Imperial College Medical School in London:

"I am now a senior registrar in paediatric surgery about to start my final year in training before

hopefully becoming a consultant. I am currently working in Chelsea and Westminster Hospital in Central London, where we have managed to raise funds for a surgical children's robot. In fact I was lucky enough to be involved in the first robotic operation done on a child in the South of England last year. I still stay involved with spoken word and drama as well as fundraising. I organised an acoustic night a couple of years ago to raise funds for our surgical trip to the rural parts of Nepal - an experience which was very humbling to say the least. I was chosen to be a part of a video for the Women in Surgery Committee which will be shown to many young medical students and school children to encourage more women to pursue surgery. It has received great feedback already so far.

I also got married in September 2013 to Imran Ahmad who works as a film composer in London. We got married at 'The Mere' in Cheshire and Mrs Croston attended our wedding. It was great to see family and friends and even catch Mrs Croston strutting her moves on the dance floor!"



Katie Rowbottom (2000)

Katie sent us the following email update:

"I've been working with Bloomberg LP in Fixed Income Electronic Trading since 2006, first in London, and now in our Hong Kong office since 2012.

I'm having a wonderful time, and seem to bump into ladies from school on a fairly regular basis! I found **Sarah Goodwin** in a supermarket last year, and this year I was at the Happy Valley Horse Racing one Wednesday night when I saw **Claire Lambert's (née Sutcliffe)** Dad, who I remembered accompanying us on Choir Tours, and then looked to the left and saw Claire too!

I travel to Australia, Singapore and Japan for work, so I'm pretty busy, but have joined the Hong Kong Cricket Club Ladies Rugby team, and also took part in the Stanley Dragonboating Championships in 2012 and 2013 where 200 boats race against each other (in the sea!). This year must have been a lucky year for us because we finally won a cup!"



Jude Hartley (2001)

Jude emailed with this update:

"I wanted to drop you a line to update you about what I have been doing since leaving Westholme. As ever Westholme seems to go from strength to strength which is great to see! I certainly remember my days there very fondly.

I was there from (1991 (I think) -2001) and then did a BSc in Geography at Manchester. After graduating I became an air hostess with British Airways for three years. It was lots of fun but after three years I felt it was time to move on, being permanently jet lagged isn't that fun after a while!

I started studying for an MA in Colonial and Postcolonial Literature part time with the Open University whilst flying, and, on leaving, decided to go for a career change and study for a degree in Law. While studying I started temping in London and fell on my feet by getting a role working for the Department for Environment (Defra), essentially as a private secretary to one of the ministers, writing her correspondence and helping with parliamentary questions. This was really interesting but was only ever going to be a temp job, so after a year I had the opportunity to work on a cruise ship in the Caribbean looking after the charter flights and the turnaround (passengers' changeover) of the ship in Barbados. I absolutely love the Caribbean (and ships) so it was great fun to get to be based out there for six months travelling round the islands (although hard work as you don't get a day off). I was on P&O's ship *Ventura*, which was their newest and biggest ship at that point. When the contract expired, I got a new contract working in their head office as part of

P the training team for two new ships they were building (P&O's *Azura* and Cunard's *Queen Elizabeth*). I spent part of the contract out in Italy (near Trieste) in the shipyard where they were building the ships. It was really interesting to see the ships take form and then sail with them from the shipyard to Southampton for the first time.

By this point I had finished my MA and Law degree and was really missing London so I got a job as a training and business consultant with a legal publishing firm (LexisNexis). I trained lawyers and accountants on information systems (and business development for small firms) mainly in London but around the UK as well. Following three years of doing that, in August last year, I got a position as Learning and Development Manager for the UK office of a US firm based in St James' Park. My role is very full on but I love it and we are currently working on expanding into the UK and Ireland so never a dull day!"

Gosh, life has certainly been busy, Jude!

Emma Lowde (née Lomax, 2001)

Emma gave birth to a beautiful baby boy, Harry James, in November who weighed 7lb 14oz.



Michelle Fletcher (née Shread, 2002)

Michelle was married to Gary in February 2014 at Rivington Hall Barn. She had two bridesmaids, including **Sarah** her sister, who is also an old Westholme girl, and three flower girls including her daughter Bella. Michelle is in regular contact with Westholme as she works for Academy Print and Design who produce many of the Westholme publications!



Michelle pictured with her bridesmaids.

Olivia Jones (2003)

Recent news from Olivia...

"It's been an incredible few years for me since leaving Westholme in 2003. I went on to read Physics with Astrophysics at the University of Leeds and during this time I developed a love of scientific research. I was awarded a STFC studentship to study Astrophysics as a postgraduate at the University of Manchester and last year I became Dr Olivia Jones after four years of study and publishing research papers.

I am currently a postdoctoral research associate at Jodrell Bank, where

my research speciality is Infrared Astronomy and Galactic Chemical Evolution. Who knew the place I visited on a Westhome school trip, which ignited my passion for science, would now be my place of work!

My Astronomy PhD and research has taken me on many adventures around the world, including observing with the VLT in the Atacama Desert, Chile. My home while living in the driest place on earth, the Residencia, was featured (and blown-up) in the James Bond film 'Quantum of Solace'. I also lived in Taiwan for several months, when I was involved in designing an instrument to go onboard a spacecraft! I had a brilliant time there; living in an environment where you know very little of the language and can't read anything is quite an experience.

I would like to say many thanks to Mrs Mason for encouraging me to continue with Physics, and to all my other teachers from Billinge House to Wilmar Lodge who helped me develop a passion for science. Due to this I am involved in cutting edge research and was able to pursue my childhood dream of becoming a rocket scientist! I would also like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to Mrs Haworth. I was always asking, 'When will I ever need this?'. It turns out that it is every hour or so, be it Pythagoras' theorem or differential equations. Maths is at the heart of what I do and those lessons gave me a solid foundation for learning more advanced methods and techniques later on.

In the summer time I will be changing continents once again and heading for my next challenge. I have recently been awarded a prestigious research fellowship in the Science Mission Office at the Space Telescope Science

Institute. This is NASA's science operations centre for the Hubble Space Telescope and the (soon to be launched) James Webb Space Telescope. I can't believe that I have been given a chance to work there! I am very much looking forward to the new adventure and I can't think of anything I'd rather be doing.

When I am not gallivanting around the world, I often meet up with ex-Westholmer's **Kinnera Tanuku** and **Winnie Cheung**. Both are doing very well, Kinnera is an architect while Winnie works at the BBC. They both pass on their fondest regards."

Emma Evans (née Lee, 2003)

Emma's mum, Jane, a Maths teacher at Senior School updated us:

'Emma is now a qualified veterinary surgeon. On 3rd April 2014 she gave birth to Austin Collin Evans weighing 9lbs'.



Naomi Longworth (2003)

Naomi emailed us with this update:

"I'm currently living in London by Battersea Park and really enjoying life. I'm now a senior account director at Brands2Life, a

P European communications agency, working on a mix of technology and professional services clients. It's pretty fast paced and it's keeping me mentally challenged!

After four years of working at the firm, we are given a two month sabbatical at half pay! In February and March this year I took the opportunity to travel the world skiing in St Anton, seeing **Laura Jayne** in Singapore (who went to Westholme until aged nine), visited Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia followed by a cycling trip to Cuba with two uni friends! All very action packed but an incredible two months.

I am still in touch with several Westholmers including **Suzannah Ravenscroft** who had her hen do earlier this year! 'Sooz' is currently undertaking a PhD in Psychology researching child anxiety at the University of Reading. This summer I am travelling with fellow Westholmers **Jenny Whiteside** and **Jo Keelan** to New York - Manhattan watch out! I also occasionally see **Sarah Cawtherley** and **Kathryn Bell** and it's great how we can pick up where we left off.

I continue to play hockey and have moved clubs to Wayfarers - we play in the Surrey League and have been promoted, so next season will be even tougher! I am training for a 77 mile cycling event this summer known as 'Tour of the Borders' with my brother Elliot - the Scottish hills will be gruelling! In my spare time I'm playing a bit of tennis and going to British Military Fitness!

I enjoy reading the Westholme news and have fond memories of school. I can see that Westholme is going from strength to strength."

Aimee Schofield (2004)

Aimee recently emailed to tell us about her wedding to Dr Ben Lee on 25th April at Melton Mowbray registry office.



Aimee pictured at her wedding ceremony.

Lucy Calvert (2004)

Lucy took part in the London Marathon in April this year to raise money for Lara's Foundation. This educational charity was set up in memory of Old Westholmian Lara Jones who died in 2012. Lara was a dedicated teacher who taught English as a foreign language all around the world. The goal of Lara's Foundation is to assist in increasing English Language capacity in low income communities around the world through providing scholarships for key individuals to travel to the UK and receive English Language tuition. The charitable foundation is run by Lara's family and friends, many of whom attended Westholme.

Lucy sent us this report on her marathon efforts:

"It was an incredibly hot day in London on Sunday 13th April! This made the already tough challenge a lot tougher! I'd battled through quite a few injuries leading up to the

marathon too and had a displaced rib put back in place just four days before....so was still a bit sore! With that and the heat it was definitely a mental battle on the day. The first half of the race was incredible! The crowds were unbelievable. There was no point on the course where there weren't masses of people. That really helped carry you. They had showers positioned along the course to help cool everyone down but it was quite tough seeing people around you drop out, collapse or faint with the heat. Mile 20 was horrendous for me. My body was in agony and I was probably very dehydrated! But I just kept my head down and kept moving forward. At no point did I want to have to stop and walk. I had a lot of friends and family out on the course too which was amazing support. As I ran by The Houses of Parliament and towards Buckingham Palace I knew it was one last push for home! I've always wanted to do the London Marathon - ever since I was a child watching it on TV. I crossed the line in 4 hours 29 minutes which was



Anyone wishing to find out further information about Lara's Foundation can do so at the following address: www.larasfoundation.co.uk

fantastic as my goal was to finish in under four and a half hours! It was an incredible experience for such a wonderful charity."

Lucy raised £706, well done!



Helen Shipley (2005)

Recent email from Helen:

"I'm currently studying Graduate Entry Medicine at the University of Warwick. I recently went to Nepal to complete my elective with the International Porter Protection Group at a rescue post near Everest Base Camp. The charity provides medical services for trekkers, porters and locals, and campaigns for porter welfare. It was a great opportunity to practise high altitude medicine in an extreme environment. We were usually working in below freezing temperatures and only had an hour of burning yak dung each day! I also enjoyed trekking in the area, reaching altitudes of 5900m, with fantastic views of Everest. I'm now back in Warwick for my final year of medical school."



P Jennie Williams (née Marsden, 2006)

"After leaving Westholme in 2006, I gained a scholarship to the Royal College of Music in London where I completed my BMus (Hons). Since graduating, I have returned to Lancashire to teach singing and piano, whilst singing professionally on a freelance basis.

Last year was an amazing year for me both professionally and personally; I travelled to Santiago with *The Sixteen*, sang at the BBC Proms in The Royal Albert Hall with *The Orchestra Age of Enlightenment* conducted by Marin Alsop and sang again with *The Sixteen* in the Greenwich Naval Chapel and at The Barbican, London. I also sing with a young and upcoming Consort group, Fieri and we will be featuring on BBC Radio 3 over the summer, live from The Ryedale Festival.

I became Mrs Williams on the 28th September 2013. We were married at All Saints Church, Pendleton, where we had a beautiful string quartet, arranged by Mrs Rigby and Mrs Smith. Our reception was held at 'Eaves Hall'

in West Bradford and the weather couldn't have been more perfect. 'Mr Millest and the Swing Band' serenaded us in the beautiful sunshine, and lots of my old school friends journeyed up from London to share our special day with us. It couldn't have been more perfect.

Since getting married, I have been travelling between Westholme and Kings High School in Warwick each week, another lovely Independent Girls School where I am a singing teacher. My husband Pete is currently serving with an EOD Regiment in Oxfordshire and having already moved twice in our first year of marriage, I am looking forward to next year when Pete will come out of the Army and we will settle in Lancashire, hopefully with our new puppy!

I was a pupil at Westholme for fourteen years, and now in my fourth year of teaching at the school, Westholme still remains a huge part of my life. It's only when you come back as an adult, you realise how very lucky we were to have such a fantastic education. Hopefully, I will be with the school for many years to come."



Jennie at her wedding with other old Westholmians!

Anna Griffiths (2006)

Former Westholme PE teacher Frances Griffiths emailed with an update about her daughter Anna:

After leaving Westholme Anna went to Loughborough University to study Psychology.

She went there as an athlete but after her first year changed to play hockey. She played for the first team in the National League when she won Most Improved Player of the Team award twice, and won a BUCS silver medal. Whilst at Loughborough she won the Loughborough Superstars competition three times (she did not enter in her final year being too busy with university work). This involved a selection of sports from several athletics events, swimming, canoeing, basketball shots, football shots and each year culminated with the gym tests for the top four competitors. It took place at midnight in the Students' Union and was one minute of press-ups (80 scored) and another minute of squat thrusts (90 scored) – so very tough!

Anna then went to Birmingham University to study for a Doctorate in Forensic Psychology. She worked very hard and achieved this in three years. Each year involved a lot of academic work (as you would expect) and three days a week for the whole year at three different placements. She played hockey for Birmingham University first team and won a gold and two BUCS silver medals while there.

She graduated in December 2013.

She is currently travelling the world and has spent some time in Japan, China, Malaysia and Cambodia. She will continue to travel around more of Asia in the next few months, before going to New Zealand, Australia and

the United States. Anna will return and look for work sometime next year.

Frances herself has also been busy enjoying her first year of retirement. She has visited Turkey; Singapore, Australia, France and next year plans to go on a world cruise!



Liz Singleton (2007)

Liz has returned to Westholme three times this year. Her first visit was to perform her 'Show Time' concert in The Croston Theatre. Her performance on the Westholme stage was amazing; from the magical hushed tones of her opening song from *Sunset Boulevard* to overwhelming moments of vocal power and expression. The audience were captivated by everything she said and sang.

Secondly, Liz returned during the spring term to conduct a workshop for students wishing to improve their performance skills. Pupils were asked to perform a piece of work they wished to improve on, whether it be a monologue, a poem or a song. Afterwards, Liz offered advice on how they could get the best out of their performance and improve their stage presence. This was a fantastic opportunity for students as they received exclusive training from a theatre professional.

Finally, Liz was invited to be the



P Prize Presenter at the Junior Girls' Prizegiving Ceremony in July. She sang an amazing rendition of the song 'Let It Go', from the Disney film, *Frozen*. She really was an inspiration for the young girls who were watching in the audience.

It has been lovely to see Liz on so many occasions this year and we hope to see much more of her in the future!



Liz returning to perform her 'Show Time' concert, earlier this year.

Charlotte O'Connor (2007)

An interview with another Old Westholmian appeared in the local press:

BLACKBURN-born singer-song writer Charlotte O'Connor has been busy working on material for her new album following the release of EP Colour My Heart.

The 23-year-old former Westholme School pupil tells Simone O'Kane what she has been up to...

You've just got back from Los Angeles recording your debut album, tell us more...

"I spent a few months in LA working on my music. I've been collaborating with my producer Tim Anderson, and some other talented musicians, recording and honing my sound.

Colour My Heart was a huge hit on the download chart how is this EP different to your previous records?

I made my first records when I was 16 and 18... so the music I made was very happy and very young sounding. I was a very 'young' 18 year old, so you can definitely hear that in the music.

When I made 'Colour My Heart', I was in the beginning stages of my young adult life and spending more time in London. This music reflects the new experiences I had, and the new emotions I felt, so everything was new.

How would you best describe your music now that you have grown up?

Most recently, my music has definitely become darker. I love electronic music and I've grown to love it more as I've grown up. I definitely wanted to involve that side of things into my traditional songs.

So how often do you come back to Blackburn and what do you like about being here?

I come back home as often as possible, especially if I've been in LA or anywhere for a long time.

The best things about Blackburn are my family, eating takeout, and taking my dog for walks in Billinge Hill Wood."

Jessica Townson MRICS (2007)

"Having left Westholme after 14 years of being a pupil there I began the next part of my education at the University of the West of England in Bristol studying Building Surveying. Not necessarily an obvious choice for someone of my age and gender, however this career was suggested by Mrs Lawrence-Beard whilst I was working towards my A Levels. After undertaking a week's work experience at AJH Associates in

Clitheroe, I realised that this diverse career was possibly the right route to ensure that my working life would include not only a varied workload but, also, give me the opportunity to spend time out and about and not always "stuck in the office".

After completing my degree of three years in university and one year as a placement, I graduated with BSc (Hons) degree in Building Surveying. I was offered a job back in Clitheroe at AJH Associates (Chartered Building Surveyors) where I had done my work experience some five years ago.

Building Surveying is often a career that is misconstrued, the breadth of our work spans many areas from design and planning applications to project managing, dilapidations, building inspections and even a touch of interior design!

Once I got settled into my role at AJH Associates, the next step was to pass my Assessment of Professional Competency (APC) and become a Chartered Surveyor; this involved producing a 3000 word critical analysis of a project that I had managed, along with proof that I have achieved all 18 competencies that are required to ensure that I have the relevant experience and knowledge. The competencies include Client Care, Building Pathology, Measurement of Land and Buildings, Accounting and Business Management, Building Inspections, Design and Specification along with Legal Requirements and many more. Once this was complete and submitted, I was then called for an interview with a panel of three Chartered Surveyors as my interviewers. This interview comprised of ten minutes



Charlotte on her most recent visit to Westholme in 2012.

P where I was able to present to the panel my experience, which was followed by 50 minutes of questions on everything and anything with regards to Building Surveying and upholding a professional practice.

Thankfully I received an email a week later and I had passed my APC which allows me to be a member of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS). Since being Chartered it has opened many doors with respect to job opportunities and I have been invited to speak in front of the Belfast branch of the RICS to promote new technologies within the Surveying industry." Goodness - what busy times Jessica!

Amy Shipley (2008)

"After leaving school I studied French and German at Lancaster University. As part of my course I spent my third year abroad in France and Germany. In France I worked for seven months as an English language assistant in a secondary school in Montélimar (famous for its nougat). I joined the Montélimar Ski Club and enjoyed numerous days and weekends skiing in the French Alps. In Germany, I stayed in Wuppertal where I was an au-pair to two little girls aged two

and four. I have become a friend of the family and have since returned there twice. My experiences assisted me greatly in my spoken French and German. On graduating, I spent a year doing a PGCE in Primary Teaching. I am currently completing my NQT year, teaching Year 5 at a school in Blackburn."

Dr Angharad Chilton (née Lewis, 2008)

"I'm delighted to say that I am finally living my dream. After all the hard work at the University of Sheffield, I graduated as a doctor last year. I am about to start my second Junior Doctor year and then I hope to begin Core Medical training to become a consultant in some area of general hospital medicine – possibly acute or in gastro. I feel like a 'round egg in a round hole' doing a job I love. My wedding last October was a very happy day made all the better because Mr Millest brought the school swing band to play during the drinks reception. My new husband, Joshua is a Maths teacher. I always hear about Westholme because of my mum (Mrs Lewis) and I never miss coming to see the summer production because of the happy memories it brings. I still enjoy making a lot of music. I will always be

grateful to Westholme for the 'never give up' spirit that it engenders in its pupils because without that I would be doing this wonderful career."

Katie Fram (2009)

News from Katie:

"I am currently in my second year teaching Science at Darwen Aldridge Community Academy. My route into teaching has been via the Teach First Graduate Scheme and I would recommend this to anyone interested in teaching. As BBC Three's *Tough Young Teacher's* documentary portrayed, you are given your own classes to teach from September which can be difficult to manage in terms of behaviour. However the ability to learn to be a teacher by teaching everyday is great and you definitely become tough quickly.

I am leaving teaching this July to start a consultancy job at Accenture in London. This opportunity arose through Teach First as I completed one of the summer internships offered last summer. I am looking forward to the new challenges this job will bring but will miss the funny, although often inappropriate comments the students make!"

Lucy Hutchinson (2009)

Lucy Hutchinson was awarded a first class degree in Fine Art from Coventry University in 2013. Her degree work was selected to be exhibited in London. Lucy is also represented by a gallery in Hong Kong, which represents other British artists such as Peter Blake. In spring 2014, Lucy was awarded a residency at the Birmingham City Library, where she currently has an exhibition. The Art Council have also bought some of her work which will be exhibited in galleries around the country!

We are hoping Lucy will return to school in the next academic year to talk to the GCSE and A Level Art students.

Sana Syed (2009)

News from Sana:

"I started my own company in 2011 in the financial services industry providing financial advice on a national basis. I updated the school previously that I intended to move my company abroad to Dubai. However instead of moving the company I have decided to open a completely new one!

I am also currently studying for my Law degree with Masters which I hope to use to extend the business further by advocating in the Dubai legal system. I will be flying over in June 2014 to partake in some priceless work experience with some top firms."

Ella Westall (2010)

After leaving Westholme, Ella completed her A Levels at Cardinal Newman College, and is now studying English Literature with American Studies at the University of Manchester. Ella is currently in Denmark on a semester abroad at the University of Copenhagen, which she is really enjoying, and hopes to do some more travelling before she returns home this summer.

Rebecca Stanford (2011)

"I thought it was time for a little update; I am now finishing third year of Biochemistry at Imperial College London and looking forward to another year here to study Management.

I spent the past two summers interning in Shanghai and Singapore



The Westholme Swing Band at Dr Angharad's wedding

P – in marketing and an immunology lab. Anyway, the focus of this email was about a meet up I had with **Raihana Ghiwala (2011)** last summer while I was visiting Malaysia. I had not seen her in over two years and to have a catch up six and a half thousand miles from home was a bit surreal! We had afternoon tea under the famous Petronas Towers in Kuala Lumpur and of course, Westholme was the main topic of our conversation.



Rebecca (right) & Raihana (left) catch up in Kuala Lumpur.

After being back in the UK, I continued to be a hall senior at Imperial, which involves organising a range of events for freshers and taking care of the hall which is a lot of fun. In the midst of it all, I am searching for career opportunities in the finance industry, possibly auditing."

Sophie-Anne Sharples (2011)

I left Westholme in 2011, and I have just completed my degree in Mechanical Engineering at the University Of Hull, which was quite a change to the all-female classes I was used to as over 95% of the lecture theatres were male. Over the past three years I have been a part of the Hull University Tennis Club (HUTC as it is affectionately known to its members). This year I was elected as HUTC President for 2013/2014. Last year I was elected as the HUTC Social Secretary for 2012/2013. I also assisted with Captaining the team for 2012/2013 and 2013/2014, and in so doing, helped to propel

the University of Hull Ladies Tennis team to the Finals of the Conference Cup in 2013, where we were placed second in the whole of the North of England; and this year we came top in our league and so we have been promoted into a higher division. Even whilst having such a huge involvement in the Tennis Club I managed to attain a 2:1 in my degree, and I am looking forward to my graduation which will take place in July.

I have made many friends at university who I know I will stay in touch with for a long time; I have already met up with a few in London a couple of weeks ago! This is a trait which I have obviously picked up from Westholme, as since leaving Westholme I have kept in good contact with my school friends, and we see each other regularly when we are home from uni. We will often go out for dinner and on the past two occasions we have bumped into Mrs. Croston who is as interested in what we are up to as ever!

Fiona Porritt (2011)

Fiona emailed us an update:

"I recently acquired a year's internship working for the famous London based theatre company, *Les Enfants Terribles* which I've been enjoying immensely! When I performed at the Fringe with



other ex-Westholme students last year we went to see their show 'The Trench', that Miss Roberts and Miss Armstrong both really enjoyed. This year, I will also be working for *Les Enfants Terribles* behind the scenes of the Edinburgh Fringe Festival for the whole of August!"

Bethan Seward & Ruth Scott (2013)

Bethan and Ruth popped in for lunch with Mrs Waldron at the beginning of the summer term. Bethan is now a trainee accountant at Beever and Struthers and Ruth is at Nottingham University studying Law. It was lovely to see you, girls!

Stephanie Tacchi (née Leaver)

We received an email from Stephanie in December 2013 who has certainly been busy...

"Just a quick line to say that we have moved. Not a huge move by any means – around half a mile from our old home but we are now much closer to Xavier's school and Emeric's pre-school which makes for a slightly calmer school run in the morning (and gets rid of a big hill on the walk home). This "relaxed dash" will be put to the test soon when school starts and we have to be up and out, without Christmas chocolate for breakfast, and at the gate for 8.45am! It has been a very relaxed Christmas as we had the madness of family visits throughout December so that it was just the four of us on the day itself, and it will be a shock to the system when we return to work/school!

Other than our move, life at Chez Tacchi has been pretty busy with the myriad of activities that our two small



Sophie-Anne celebrating her 21st birthday in April 2014 with the Westholme girls. From L-R Fiona Porritt, Milly McAllister, Harriet Jones, Sophie-Anne Sharples, Jessica Flanagan, Laura Wolstenholme, Kate Reynolds, Rebecca Hodgson, Lucy Parkinson, and Leena Najja.

P

boys do. We seem to be constantly on the go between swimming, Beavers, gymnastics, tennis and rugby clubs, coupled with Xavier taking up the violin last September (a privilege of being in Year 3). He is also a member of the school ocarina group and was involved in the school nativity production and also played it, along with the violin, at a school recital. Emeric is growing rapidly – he was four last October and is desperate to start school as many of his friends started last September. For him, starting this coming September seems a long way off, whilst it seems awfully close for me!

I got together with some other 'old girls' last October: **Clare Logan** kindly provided board and lodgings for myself, **Jane Hunter (née Eastham)**, **Liz Black (née Fleming)** along with numerous spouses and offspring for a lovely weekend in North Yorkshire; full of fun, countryside adventure, the odd glass of wine and an awful lot of nattering!"

Claire Palser (née Saulet)

Claire sent us this lovely update:

"After studying at Oxford Brookes University (and loving every second of university life!) I now live in Oxford. I got married to James Palser in August 2010 and now have a gorgeous, lively little boy called Leo who was born on the Queen's Diamond Jubilee day! I love being a mummy and work part-time as an ICT co-ordinator and teacher in Bicester: (Have no idea how I and any other parent fits in work with a busy toddler timetable!) I gave up my KS2 management position at school when I had Leo which was



hard to do but definitely the right thing for me at the moment!

I had a walk around Westholme's grounds at Easter while showing my husband around - such amazing developments since we were there.



Lots of memories came flooding back - Sixth Form farm house; free periods, trying to cram in last minute General Studies information in the library while being tempted by the chocolate vending machine outside the door, trying to not take part in swimming galas; playing hockey on the lovely but very windy pitch, learning Latin in the bungalow, having to wear those very elasticated sports knickers and a t-shirt while competing, seeing the ICT block being built and lots of attention being given to the builders rather than our studies!"

Elizabeth Gibson (former Head of English and usual bearer of gossip!) got in touch with updates of some fellow Old Westholmians.

Caroline Warner (née Sutcliffe, 1991)

is still living in Caterham, Surrey. Her daughter Mae has just finished in Year 1, and is beginning to enjoy reading books herself now, Caroline says. Her MA is going well, with its emphasis on Victorian literature. She is particularly excited by Matthew Arnold, William Morris and Henry James, an eclectic mix of writers by anybody's measure! She is struggling to decide on a PhD topic, with all the wealth of Victorian writing before her. Caroline continues to enjoy 'some of the wonderful friendships I forged at Westholme'. Her year group turns 40 this year. She is still best friends with **Seema Ghiassi (née Kennedy, 1993)** after 36 years. I have coincidentally just seen on today's teletext news (June 29) that Seema has been selected as Tory candidate for South Ribble in the next elections. One step

closer to following in the footsteps of Margaret Thatcher? Westholme may have to have a Kennedy wing to match the Thatcher wing leading to the dining hall!

Emma Huepfel (née Slinger, 1989)

has moved from central London to Sutton Courtney in Oxfordshire. It sounds as if the family had to live through a big building project before settling into a new and happy way of life. The children have made new friends and like their schools. She and husband Bernie commute into London now, so it's all been a big change for everyone.

Joanne Robbin

Head of Performing Arts at her school on the Wirral, tells me she has found her true vocation - having been bought a weekend welding course in the Yorkshire Sculpture Park, and returned home with an immense door handle inspired by pumpkins and big enough to grace Hogwarts, she has had a 'road to Damascus' shifting of allegiance from her old artistic loves to... well, welding.

P Former Staff

Elizabeth Gibson

"Greetings Westholmers past and present, retirement sees me spin further away from Westholme, and yet the threads that will forever bind me to it are as strong as ever. There's a thriving community of former staff out there, many of whom meet regularly or are in contact in other ways. I am often accosted by pupils and parents from years gone by - 'Boundary Mill' at Colne is the place for this! From 'Stringers' in Lytham to 'The Range' in Blackburn, retail is a happy hunting ground for Westholme encounters.

A few examples of staff meet-ups are the monthly get-togethers of myself, **Mrs. Meadowcroft (Latin)**, **Mrs. Wilson (Geography)** and **Mrs. Pollitt (RE)**, where we often reminisce about the various girls we taught and school life in all its manifestations. **Mrs. Kershaw (Sociology and Law)** and I have joined a Latin class to revive our distant skills. We wrestle with the Oxford Latin course once a week in the Preston Archive Centre before retreating for lunch, brains stretched to full capacity on a Monday morning. I even managed to distinguish myself with a bit of Virgil's *Aeneid* the other day and received a bar of chocolate for my efforts! It felt like winning the class prize. Going back much further, Mrs. Kershaw sees **Mrs. Holden (Art)** and **Mrs. Wilcock**. There's a thriving community of former staff in the South Lakes too. Many's the glass of wine I've shared with **Mrs. McDonald** on the balcony of her lovely lodge at Silverdale, and meals eaten with Pam and Peter Martin at their bungalow in Levens,

often concocted from the delicious organic vegetables and fruit grown by Pam in her interesting garden. And so on and on... the point is that you're never more than a few feet away from a Westholmian! Of course, my own daughter Alex was a pupil at Westholme, so there are a whole new raft of threads from that direction. Alex has a new job, in a strategic management role at Gatwick Airport, so look out for her if you're passing through - she doesn't look much different. I still get emails, Christmas cards, etc. from many of you, which are always welcome. I suppose you're all LinkedIn or on Twitter or Facebook or other social media sites. The nearest I get to Twitter is listening to Tweet of the Day on the radio every morning. Keep in contact with each other - it's a wonderful thing to have shared your schooldays or your working life with so many colourful, interesting and intelligent people."

Anne Patefield

Our former Vice Principal, Anne Patefield emailed us this lovely update:

"I needn't have worried that I might struggle to fill my time in retirement - I just can't believe that it will soon be a year since I finished but on the whole, it has been all that I hoped for. We have had some wonderful holidays - a mix of exciting visits to new places and quiet relaxation on a beach, with the rest of the time being split between our two lives. Our new apartment in Northampton (which was great fun to equip) enables us to spend time with our son and his family but also allows us to escape to our own little oasis

of calm at the end of the day. It was particularly useful when grandson number two, Joshua David, arrived in January and continues to be so. I enjoy spending quality time with Noah (incredibly bright, loving and funny - loves stories and cuddles) and Joshua (placid, always smiling and trying to talk, also loves cuddles) and providing some much needed respite for my son and daughter-in-law, although night feeds are definitely harder when you are my age! It was particularly special to have my lovely mum down there with us for a few days last month and to see her with her great-grandchildren. Blackburn is still 'home' and when there, I have made quite a lot of progress with my family tree but still have more to do when time permits. David and I will celebrate our Ruby Wedding in August so I am looking forward to making the cake for our family party. I love the freedom retirement has given me and although life is often still hectic, I can honestly say I have never been happier."

Donna Worthington

We received the following flyer promoting Donna's forthcoming play *Through the Leaves of the Green Tree*. The play has been written to celebrate the centenary of Etty Hillesum's birth in 1914. Etty Hillesum, a remarkable Jewish woman, has become an insightful, profound and inspirational voice through her diaries, which were published in the 1980s. The play follows Etty's journey and her experience and witness of life in Westerbork detention camp.

The play is running from Friday 19th September - Friday 26th September.

Please visit the website www.throughtheleaves.com for more information.

through the leaves of the green tree
a play by Donna Worthington

Dates:
 Tabors Carmelita Retreat Centre
 To book tickets: 01778 797122
 donna@normalise.com
 Thursday 18th September 2014, 8.30pm
 Friday 19th September 2014, 6pm
 Saturday 20th September 2014, 7pm
 Sunday 21st September 2014, 2pm

The Civic Arts Centre Ormskirk
 Thursday 25th September 2014, 7.30pm
 Box Office: 01254 396219
www.ticketscans.com/civicsartscentre

The Ardithorpe at The Pines
 Meeting House Lane, Lancaster
 Tuesday 23rd September, 7pm 2014
 Wednesday 24th September, 7pm 2014
 Box Office:
 Lancaster Visitor Information Centre
 01524 562594
<http://www.shepoci.co.uk>

The Arts Centre,
 Edge Hill University,
 Ormskirk
 Friday 26th September 2014
 7.30pm
 Box Office 01695 564480
www.edehill.ac.uk/artscentre

P Careers Convention

The biennial Careers Convention was held in March with plenty of students and parents all keen to ask questions and listen to experts in their chosen field. It was open to students in Years 8 upwards. Exhibitors came and represented a wide range of over 40 careers, including Accountancy, Dentistry, Journalism, Teaching and Medicine. We also welcomed representatives from a number of new careers such as Investment Banking, Environmental Science and even Rolls-Royce!

A number of Old Westholmians also returned to school for the convention and it was lovely to see so many of them talking passionately about their chosen careers.

Jo Bradley (née Lawton)

"I have been working in Environment Protection for a long time now, and it is always a pleasure to meet young people who are interested in working with Environmental Sciences. I really enjoyed my evening at Westholme and the students I met were charming and polite. They asked some fascinating questions and we had a good time finding the answers together by searching on the internet. The girls were keen to learn which websites might be useful to them as they seek careers in the future."

Catherine Mallord (née Prest, 2003)

"It's always lovely to go back to Westholme as an old girl – as soon as you step foot inside you are flooded with wonderful memories, and with the added incentive of the infamous shortbread biscuits who could resist an invite to return?"

So when I received an email from the Head of Careers, Mrs Lawrence-Beard (née Pamphlett), about attending their annual careers fair I was more than happy to help.

After leaving Westholme Sixth Form in 2003, I studied Public Relations at Leeds Metropolitan University then went on to work in Marketing and PR agencies for a number of years before I set up my own consultancy.

Along with representatives from many different industries and organisations we set up stands in the hall, library and Sixth Form centre and prepared ourselves to talk to eager students and their parents about their future careers and study options.

From Finance to Performing Arts and everything in between, hundreds of businesses from across Lancashire were on hand to discuss what was involved in their specific



Sarah Morgan chats about her career in Optometry.

careers, to answer questions on anything from what a typical day in their job entailed to how much you might get paid.

As Marketing isn't the best known or understood subject to most teenage girls, I made a display of related subjects and some examples of work to help interested parties understand and visualise what a job in the industry might entail.

Girls from Years 9 through to Sixth Form came and asked all sorts of questions to give them a better idea of what they might want to do when they leave school and to help them decide what subjects to choose to help them get there.

When you are at school it is really hard to think beyond lessons, exams and what you're doing at the weekend – having a job seems such a long way away so I think an event like this is really useful.



Michelle Fletcher (née Shread) offering career advice from the world of Graphic Design.

Discovering new careers you might not have known about and finding more out about ones you are interested in makes it more real and I only hope the girls found it as beneficial and enjoyable as we did."

Jessica Townson MRICS (2007)

"I took great pleasure in returning to Wilmar Lodge back in March when I was asked to represent my career path and speak to the pupils at Westholme's Careers Progression Evening. It was extremely encouraging to see the interests from the pupils in the assorted career paths that attended that evening. It is often the case at the age of the Year 8-11 pupils that you feel you should have a career in mind when often this isn't the case at all. We have visions and aspirations but with a very limited insight into many careers it is difficult to make a decision. Speaking with the pupils it was clear their interests were broad and their depth of questions was certainly encouraging."

Other Old Westholmians who attended the convention were: Katie Walmsley, Sarah Morgan, Michelle Fletcher, Dr Santosh Tadi, Dr Fatema Patel, Simone Masterson and Claire Haymes.



P Westholme Boys' Junior School 10th Birthday Celebrations

The official Boys' Junior School 10th Birthday celebrations were held at Beardwood House. All past and present pupils, parents and staff had been invited and many could not actually believe that ten whole years had passed by since the opening of the School!

George Horsfield (2008)

We received an update from George who also attended Westholme Boys' Junior School. He now attends Lancaster Royal Grammar School and is currently in his second year.

Ben Milnes (2010)

"The past four years have flown by since leaving Westholme Boys' Junior School. I started the next stage of my education at Bolton

School and have really enjoyed my time there so far. I have made new friends, studied new subjects, chosen my GCSE options and turned my hand to new challenges such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Bronze Award which I am due to complete this August. Cricket has remained a huge part of my life and I am now lucky enough not only to play for school and Chorley CC but also Lancashire U15 squad. All of these see me playing in matches



across the North West and I am thoroughly enjoying them all.

I still get to visit Westholme from time to time as my sister is now in Year 8 and my mum is still teaching at Billinge House. It is lovely to come back and see the changes that have taken place since I left and it was great to visit Beardwood House

for its tenth anniversary, where I was able to meet up with old friends and teachers. I am still in touch with many of the boys who were in my class at Westholme, all of whom are well. The next big step for us all is our GCSEs next summer and beyond that planning out A Level options and career paths."



P

A Letter from our Former Principal Lillian Croston (Principal 1988 - 2013)

Dear Westholmian,

Do you know the name of the southernmost town in the world? In the Antarctic, do you know the main species of penguin found and where is the best place for you to swim? Do you know what Hiram Bingham... is famous for? Just a few questions, the answers to which I have been discovering in my travels: for travelling is what I have been doing in my first year of retirement.

It has been a very exciting time with trips to the Caribbean, Atlanta, Georgia, Florida, Columbia, Costa Rica, Peru, Ecuador, the Galapagos Islands, the Amazon jungle, the Antarctic, the Panama Canal, the Rhone - Saone valley in France and the beautiful English Lake District. In fact it feels like we have been away for most of the year! So now I need to settle down a little and enjoy being in my home.

I have started by practising my golf and am very appreciative of the lovely set of clubs the school gave me as one of my farewell gifts. In the second week of June I finally gained my handicap of 36! The next day I came fifth in a competition which I thought was quite good for a beginner. The following week however I played very badly. People reassure me that that is the game of golf so I am not giving up and will keep on trying my best to improve! I find it very easy to hit a moving ball but a stationary one in golf is a completely different matter! In terms of moving targets, I am still enjoying immensely my badminton in the Bolton League and hope to hold my place in the team next season.

So what have I missed about school? Well all the people for a start - students, staff, parents and governors. The daily buzz of school, morning assemblies, the good fun we all shared

and of course school lunches! I have however been eating rather well and now need to somehow shrink back into my clothes!

I am currently rejoicing in my first free June for over 35 years. Watching the French Open tennis tournament, Wimbledon and the World Cup have glued me a little too much to the television but it has been great. In between Alan and I have climbed a few mountains, visited friends, gardened in the sunshine and assisted with Rotary charity fund raising events. Altogether it has been a glorious June.

From time to time I bump into former students and/or their parents and am always hungry for news. When in post one of the great joys was receiving your letters and emails: so many of you are doing interesting things whether it be in your careers or your travels or raising your families or coping with all three. I still take a great pride in all that you achieve and am looking forward to receiving the next newsletter. I hope that you have written in and there will be lots to digest.

Just in case you need information for the local pub quiz or University Challenge then Ushuaia in Argentina claims to be the most southerly town in the world. Adelie penguins are now outnumbering the Gentoo with Chinstraps being third in abundance. Deception Island, Antarctica is an active volcanic cone so the water in the crater is warm enough for swimming and there is no snow and ice on land because of the warm rocks; and finally it was Hiram Bingham... who told the world about Machu Picchu, the Inca settlement in Peru. An amazing place to visit.

Keep on learning and seize every opportunity to enjoy new experiences. I can recommend it!

Can you spot any of your former teachers or colleagues in this staff photo taken in 1984?



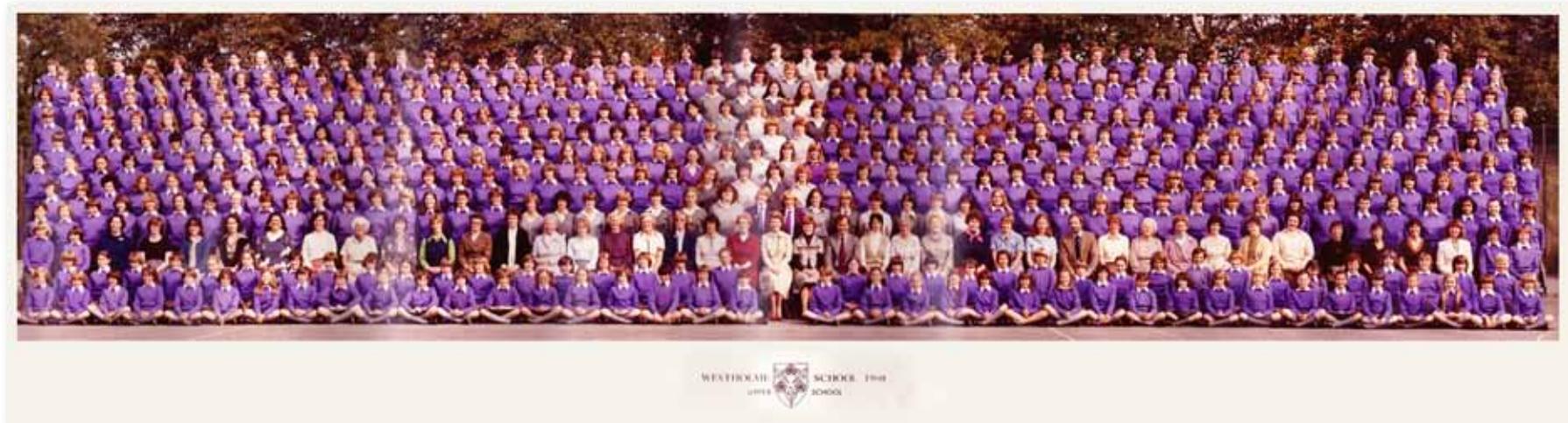
P From the archives...



Mrs Campbell's class photo from 1972



Fifth Formers in 1994 collecting their GCSE results!



Thanks to **Hazel Jessup** for sending in this photo from the archives - it was taken of the whole school in 1980.

Forthcoming Events

London Reunion

Thursday 25th September 2014

Venue: 'A Trip to the Shard' followed by dinner at La Cave

Manchester Reunion

Friday 14th November 2014

Venue: The Alchemist Bar and Restaurant

If you would like to register your interest for either of the above events, please contact pearsona@westholmeschool.com or call 01254 506070

We are hoping to arrange work experience for our Lower Sixth Form students.

If any of you would be able to assist with this please contact

waldronr@westholmeschool.com



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