

LAUREL LEAVES



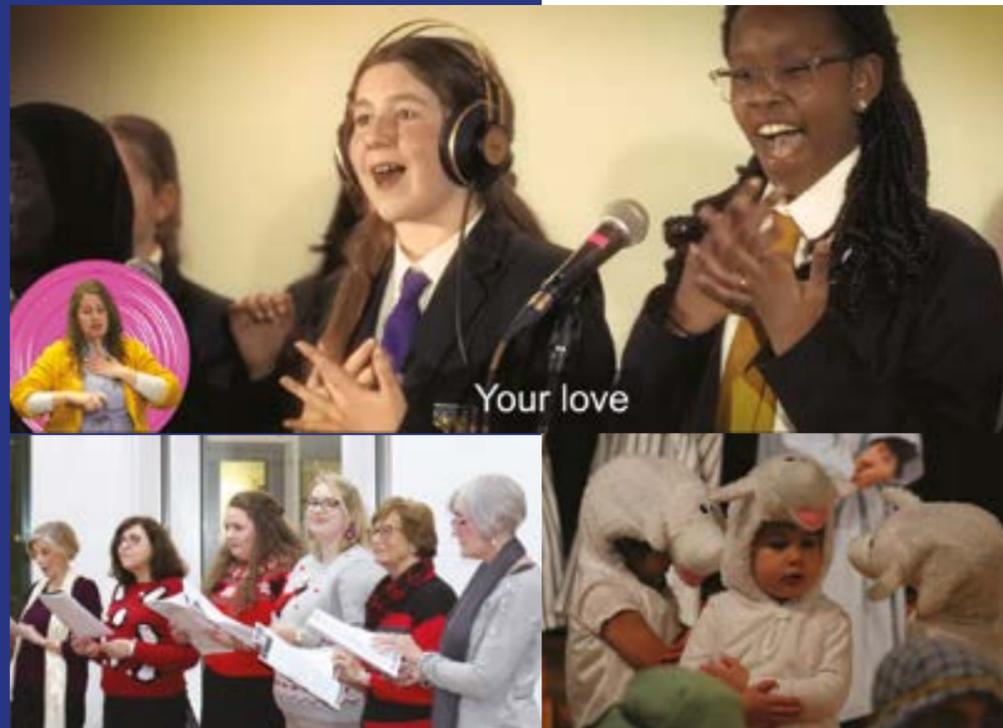
The Edgbaston High School
Old Girls' Association Magazine

Winter 2022

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CO CHAIRS' MESSAGE

Hello everyone and welcome to another edition of Laurel Leaves.

It has been a busy six months for the Association. We were delighted to welcome so many of you back to EHS for our recent 'A Merry Little Christmas with the OGA' event on Saturday 10 December - it was a lively, fun event and we are grateful for the support! We are very much looking forward to the full program of events in the year ahead and you can read more about what we have planned later in this issue.

We are delighted to announce the introduction of a new award for Sixth Form students and

recent leavers in the form of the Laurel Leaves Award. Read on to find out information about this exciting new initiative.

Finally, we have launched a new Facebook page for the OGA and would love to grow our following as much as possible. It is a fantastic way to stay in touch and to get the latest news and information, so please do follow us and share with your fellow Old Girls: in Facebook search @EHSOGA.

We hope to see or hear from you soon!

With all best wishes

Anne Lacey and Anne Lacey



COMMITTEE

Anne Lacey

Hello all!! I retired from my busy and amazing time at EHS four years ago. I cannot believe where the time has gone!! You may remember that I love travelling and here I am on my most recent trip looking at botanical specimens in the Canary Isles. I look forward to seeing many of you at our upcoming events during this academic year so do come along and say hello - we are a friendly bunch!



Caroline Sprackman, née Wall

I joined the committee earlier this term after attending a couple of the Old Girls' Association events. It has been lovely to visit school and catch up with teachers and school friends. I enjoyed bringing my daughter along to the Open House event earlier this year to introduce her to the EHS community in preparation for starting at Westbourne in September 2023. I'm hopeful that the future events we have planned will tempt some of my year group to come along and have a catch up.



Lesley Bowler (née Plant)

By far, the most rewarding occupation since leaving EHS as a pupil (1978) has been being a teacher back at my old school. I returned to EHS as a member of staff in 2009 and have been teaching Reception pupils, in Westbourne, ever since. It has definitely been the highlight of my working life. I joined the OGA Committee a few years later and am now the Staff Representative and Secretary.



Sophie Glover

I left EHS in 2010, going on to Nottingham University to read History. I was interested in teaching and so after graduation approached EHS for some work experience. Work experience led to me enrolling on the King Edwards Consortium (KEC) teaching programme and then eventually to a job here at EHS as Head of History! I have recently joined the Committee and am looking forward to being involved in the work of the association. It would be great to see some of my year returning for one of the forthcoming events over the coming months.



Do we have your correct details?

Please let us know if any of your personal details have changed. We have lots of exciting activities planned for the New Year and don't want you to miss out! Send an email to oldgirls@edgbastonhigh.co.uk or telephone us on 0121 454 5831. Please state your current name, previous or maiden surname, postal address including postcode, telephone/mobile contact number and email address. Alternatively, visit the OGA section of the school website to complete an electronic form: www.edgbastonhigh.co.uk/oga

Stay up to date

We have launched a new Facebook page! Please help us to grow this page EHS Old Girls' Association: Like the page and share or tag in your fellow Old Girls. Thank you in advance.

OGA Reps



Sidrat Javaid

My name is Sidrat Javaid and I am aspiring to be a neuroscientist in the future. I am fascinated by the wiring of the brain and neuropharmacology.

I am studying Chemistry, Biology and Maths at A-level. My involvement in the work of the OGA consists of having meetings and discussing new ideas to see how the association can be made more prominent in the wider community. I am enjoying communicating with former pupils and teachers, learning about their experiences and how I can share their stories in school.

Jessica Scurlock

My name is Jessica Scurlock, and I am currently in Year 13 at Edgbaston High School. I am a Classics Scholar studying Music, English Literature and Classical Civilisation at A-level.

I share the role of the school's OGA representative, and I am thrilled to be a part of the OGA Committee. Apart from my studies at EHS, my interests are varied. I enjoy both musical and sport activities that range from being a member of the CBSO Youth Chorus where I sing regularly at the symphony hall and being a member of the Birmingham Rowing Club. I recently completed my Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award through school, and I am involved in many music ensembles.

I am both delighted and honoured to be an OGA representative and I look forward to having the opportunity to get involved, bridging the gap between the Sixth Form and the OGA.

OGA Committee

President

Mrs Clare Macro, Headmistress

Vice Presidents

Dr R A Weeks (former Headmistress, 2006-2019)

Miss E M Mullenger (former Headmistress, 1998-2006)

Mrs S J Wakefield née Horsman (former Headmistress, 1987-1997)

Co-Chairs

Elizabeth Hartley (1998-2009) and Anne Lacey (former staff member, 1992-2018)

Secretary

Lesley Bowler (1969-1980)

Treasurer

Lindsay Lucas (née Farnath, 1973-1981)

Past Staff Representative

Stella Pinkess (1946-1960)

General Committee

Priti Bansel-Branch (née Bansel, 1985-1997)

Chris Evans (1998-2017)

Sophie Glover (left 2010)

Sally Hartley (Prep Headmistress)

Anne Howarth (née Stirling, 1954-1961)

Lizzie Hughes (née Case, 2003-2010)

Sarah Learmonth (1993 - 2009)

Jennifer Powell (née Mayhew, 1999-2009)

Caroline Sprackman (1988- 2003)

Year 13 OGA Liaison Representatives

Sidrat Javaid and Jessica Scurlock

Legal Advisor

Miss S Thomas (1961-1972)

Production of 'Laurel Leaves' publication

Helen Holmes (née Maros, 1980-1985)



I was recently at the GSA (Girls' Schools Association) conference. This conference always celebrates women and is about empowering girls, and this year the name of the conference really spoke to me and our vision at EHS. It was entitled 'Future Female: Fearless and Bold'.

Every time I speak to an Old Girl, or I see one of our fantastic career summaries of EHS alumnae I am minded to think: fearless and bold! The paths EHS students have taken are something we enjoy highlighting to our community, and it is wonderful to read how the skills developed at school have continued to be grown and developed. Outcomes really do speak louder than words.

But I did spend some time with the current students at the start of this half term reflecting on how far we have come globally in empowering females. In 1995 Hillary Clinton gave a speech to a UN conference on women's rights. She started by talking about how women come together every day in every country to support each other, talk

about their concerns, their aspirations, and their hopes. She drew attention to issues that matter most in our lives: access to education, health care, jobs, the chance to enjoy basic legal and human rights and to participate fully in the political life of our countries. She raised the fact that some questioned the reason for the conference she was speaking at; whether it was necessary, whether the lives of women and girls matter to economic and political progress around the globe. In response she points out what we know extremely well now but was still hidden in '95 that, 'if women are healthy and educated, their families will flourish. If women are free from violence, their families will flourish. If women have a chance to work and earn as full and equal partners in society, their

families will flourish. And when families flourish, communities and nations do as well. That is why every woman, every man, every child, every family, and every nation on this planet does have a stake in the discussion that takes place here.'

Women comprise more than half the world's population, 70 per cent of the world's poor, and two thirds of those who are not taught to read or write. She talked of the responsibility of speaking for those who could not. Throughout her political career Hillary has claimed to speak for women around the world who are denied the chance to go to school, or see a doctor, or own property, or have a say about the direction of their lives, simply because they are women.

She ended her speech at the UN, 'let this conference be our, and the world's call to action. Let us heed that call so we can create a world in which every woman is treated with respect and dignity, every boy and girl is loved and cared for equally, and every family has the hope of a strong and stable future. That is the work before you. That is the work before all of us who have a vision of the world we want to see.'

So, thirty years on from that speech, I asked the EHS pupils to consider how far we had come. We reflected on the fact that 150 million girls still have no access to education, 15 million girls will never set foot in a school, compared to 10 million boys (neither statistic is good), that women make up more than two-thirds of the world's 796 million illiterate people and that globally, an estimated 736 million women have been subjected to some kind of violence in their life. We also considered that over 2.7 billion women are legally restricted from having the same choice of jobs as men.

I did not ask this question to make my students feel low or deflated. In the same book that I came across Hillary Clinton's speech I also read Tarana Burke's given at TEDWomen 2018. Tarana Burke is the woman who started the 'Me Too' movement; she works as an activist and advocate of social, sexual and racial justice. A survivor of abuse

herself, she gained further insight into the extent of abuse suffered by young, black females when she took a job as a youth leader in Alabama. Tarana would say that we have not come very far in thirty years, but we cannot give up. In 2006 she introduced the phrase 'Me Too' to social media in a bid to bring together victims of abuse, predominantly young black women, from criminal assaults to workplace harassment, empowering them through solidarity. In 2017 the 'Me Too' movement gained renewed momentum when the slogan was adopted by some high-profile celebrities. Burke is now the senior director of the Brooklyn-based Girls for Gender Equity. She used her speech in 2018 to emphasise that the work of the 'Me Too' movement was a work in progress. She spoke eloquently of the backlash the movement had received, the need to change a culture that suggests that vulnerability is synonymous with permission and that bodily autonomy is not a basic human right. She ends by saying;

'I know some of y'all are tired, because I am tired. I'm exhausted, and I'm numb. Those who came before us didn't win every fight, but they didn't let it kill their vision. It fueled it. So, I can't stop, and I'm asking you not to stop either. We owe future generations a world free of violence. I believe we can build that world. Do you?'

As I said to the girls, we may not have come very far in thirty years, but that does not mean we give up trying to make a difference; progress has been made and we need to continue using our voices to make changes; standing up and speaking out, and doing it again, and doing it louder. Hillary Clinton believed that one of the key drivers for change was the solidarity that women show each other, the admiration for each other, the care for each other. When we do this, we are stronger, more capable of supporting others and driving for societal changes that will stay and become embedded, so that in another 30 years things will have moved on again. Real change takes time, but the future is female, and it is Fearless and Bold.

Clare Macro

A MERRY LITTLE CHRISTMAS...

WITH THE OGA



What a cheerful and enjoyable event this was. Led by Choir master extraordinaire, James Jones with musical accompaniment from former teacher Heather Howell, a selection of lively songs were included such as Jingle Bells and Hark the Herald Angels Sing! We all enjoyed shaking bells and chatting while eating mince pies and festive cakes! The event was supported by the infamous OGA Choir, especially created for the day. Thank you to everyone who attended.



CHRISTMAS IN THE PREP SCHOOL

With events having to change over recent years due to Covid restrictions it was nice to feel rather more back to normal this year and to be able to return to more traditional Christmas activities.

The Westbourne Show, was, as ever, a triumph. The audiences really enjoyed the performance of 'Donkey for Sale.' The youngest girls charmed everyone with their confident singing, acting and dancing in the Octagon and impressed by their learning of sign language to communicate one of the Christmas songs.

For the first time Year 2 girls were joined by Year 1 for their musical Nativity of 'Lights, Camel, Action - the Sequin!' All parents and guests had their toes tapping to the lively songs and music as the girls rivalled the well known BBC TV show Strictly with their polished performances. We would definitely have given them an 11 as their

score if we had been the judges.

Year 4 travelled back in time too but to the Tudor age as we were invited to Selly Manor to join the Lord and Lady of the manor in their Christmas celebrations. We learnt a huge amount about their traditions and enjoyed some dancing and a Mummers' play.

The Prep School Carol Service did see a break with tradition in holding the service in the Octagon this year. The format, however, included carols sung by the two choirs, orchestra accompaniment, hand bells and communal singing as usual interspersed with readings telling the Christmas story.

The festive season included Christmas parties and assemblies, cards and singing and a new event - 'The Christmas Door Tour!' All girls in the Prep Department toured the school in crocodile fashion as they voted for their favourite decorated classroom door. The hunt for the hidden elves on route added an extra air of excitement.



PAM JELF MEMORIAL CONCERT

In October, the school's Director of Music, Mr K Robson and his brother, Mr J Robson, gave a special piano recital in the Octagon to raise money for the Pam Jelf Memorial Fund. The Pam Jelf fund was established 25 years ago by Pam, a former Director of Music who sadly passed away. It was her wish that the fund be set up in her name to support the musical education of girls at EHS. This fund has been supporting EHS girls since and, thanks to continued fundraising efforts, will continue to assist pupils long into the future.



The recital also featured several speakers who gave tributes and shared their memories of Pam and her work in the school. Due to illness, Mrs Harper, former Director of Music, was not available to speak at the event but we are grateful to Mrs Day, current parent and former Old Girl of EHS, who read Mrs Harper's words and gave us an excellent insight into Pam as a Music Teacher, musician and truly inspirational character. Committee Member Lindsay Lucas and former student of Ms Jelf also spoke. To conclude the tributes, Zoha Sohail, student Head of Music and recipient of the fund, spoke about how this has helped her in her own progression in music as she approaches her music college auditions.

The closing address and thanks was given by Old Girl Priti Bansel.

At the time of writing total funds collected both in cash and online have amounted to over £800.



EHS DOES THE COMMONWEALTH GAMES

'Anyone who was taught A level PE by me in the build up to the 2012 Olympic Games will know just how much I loved the idea of the UK hosting a home games! So, it should come as no surprise that when my home city was chosen to host the Commonwealth Games I had to be involved!!

'Two years ago, I applied to become a volunteer at the games and really did not mind what I did. Luckily for me I was selected to be a part of the Media team at the Athletics Stadium in Perry Barr - as someone put it - 'what a gig'! It was a truly amazing experience, mostly spent in the press stands, level with the finish line! My job involved ensuring the written press were not filming any of the events as they had not paid for a licence to do so; effectively it was just like being on lunch duty at EHS looking out for year 11 using their mobile phones illicitly!

'I had a fabulous 10 days at the stadium; the events were so well organised with the transport system working like clockwork. As the games came to an end there was one very proud Brummie!'
Chris Evans



'I was lucky enough to volunteer at the Commonwealth games at the Sandwell Aquatics Centre and it was an amazing experience. I was part of the Protocol team that dealt with the Games Family, otherwise known as The Royal visits, diplomats, ministers and general VIPs from the Commonwealth countries.

'My role was to meet and greet, check accreditation and generally keep our guests happy during their visit. We escorted the medal

presenters and made sure everything kept to time for the TV schedules.

'I was lucky enough to spend time inside the pool at the VIP seating area and witnessed many fantastic races and amazing diving.

'Our Royal visitors were obviously a highlight of the experience but to see many happy faces among our Commonwealth visitors as they enjoyed the Birmingham vibe was just fabulous.'
Mary Bracey



'I was so excited when I was told that I had been given a role as part of the Commonwealth Collective, (volunteers), for the recent Games in Birmingham. I was allocated to the 'Media Team' at the Athlete's Village at the NEC. This meant that I was inside the village with competitors from all over the world, helping them to settle in and facilitating media coverage. I was also sent to Leamington to help the photographers on the gold medal matches- I had no idea that Crown Green Bowling could be so exciting and wonder if I have found a new hobby to take up in retirement!! I am so proud of Birmingham, putting on such excellent events for the 'friendly games'.
Anne Lacey



EHS student and netball captain Abida Mohamed featured in a project in the run up to the Games. People, Place and Sport is a celebration of local grassroots sports in the West Midlands by artist and photographer Jaskirt Boora. Funded by the Arts Council England, Boora's work explores representation in local sporting communities and shines a light on lesser-known sporting facilities and clubs in the build up to the Commonwealth Games. Abida is a member of the Rowley Regis Grasshoppers Netball Club which was one focus of Boora's work. She was joined by Abi Aston, Prep Deputy Head, who is also a member.

The photos were on display in locations across Birmingham and Sandwell including Bourneville Village Green and also featured in a large scale outdoor exhibition at Sandwell Valley Country Park over the past summer.



Anyone that follows EHS will know that the lifeguarding team are making quite a reputation from themselves. After being invited to lifeguard the test event at Sandwell Aquatic Centre ahead of the Commonwealth Games in early summer, the girls were delighted to be invited onto the official lifeguarding at the main event!

With EHS lifeguarding teacher Mrs Hayward as Lifeguard Supervisor, Isabel Jones, Marie-Eve Kavanagh, Georgina Day, Diya Hanji, Afia Malik and Charlotte Meek, joined a team of 60 lifeguards on rotation for the entirety of the Games: four weeks in total.

Mrs Hayward said: "We had an absolutely amazing experience and I am sure the girls would agree with me! It was a once in a lifetime opportunity to watch such a high level of swimming and diving from poolside: the atmosphere was incredible, whether it was a heats session or finals. All our lifeguards did themselves and EHS proud, and we have some amazing memories of summer 2022."



Before departing EHS at the end of Year 13 this summer, Caitlin Kisumba played her part in the Commonwealth Games with her involvement in 'Your Love Lifts Me Up - A BSL Community Chorus With A Purpose For Birmingham 2022, a multi-agency collaboration featuring Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, and other local community organisations.

The vision of the project was to elevate the deaf community who were overlooked during the pandemic: they could not lip read due to everyone wearing masks and couldn't receive the 5pm updates until later as there were no interpreters. The project was a part of the Commonwealth Games Cultural Festival and involved children from Longwill School for the deaf. There were other schools in the region involved, as well as Watoto Children's Choir from Uganda, the home country of Caitlin's father Andrew Kisumba.

The song was penned by Andrew Kisumba with Caitlin composing the introduction and performing a violin solo whilst sister Eryna, also a former EHS pupil and Martineau Music Scholar, composed the orchestral arrangement for the introduction and played cello. Caitlin, Eryna, and another Old Girl and former Martineau Music scholar Jody Smith can all be seen in the video, alongside Mrs Kisumba, also playing violin. We implore you to watch the video on YouTube and challenge anyone to watch it and not feel inspired and uplifted!

<https://youtu.be/TWZQdHU5gYw>

Caitlin Kisumba



EDGBASTON HIGH SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY

Edgbaston High School is seeking two Governors to join the School's Governing Body.

We are looking for specific competencies:

Finance

The Finance Committee works closely with the Head Teacher and Finance Director, is responsible for monitoring financial performance, ensuring appropriate financial controls are in place and makes recommendations to the full Governing Body on financial decisions.

Health & Safety

The H&S Governor would be a member of the Governance & Compliance Committee which has responsibility for integrating and co-ordinating all aspects of non-financial corporate governance, legal and regulatory compliance and risk management. This remit includes Health & Safety, upon which the H&S Governor would be expected to lead and provide recommendations to the full Governing Body on such matters. The Health & Safety Governor would be invited to attend termly Health & Safety meetings with the Senior Leadership team.

Being a Governor

Being a school governor is an opportunity to use your professional skills and give back to the community. Your impact will make a real difference to children's educational journeys. As a member of the Governing Body, you will be involved in the highest level of decision-making; having overall responsibility for the strategic direction and financial oversight of the school.

These positions are voluntary, unpaid appointments with expenses paid.

This may be your first board appointment, but you will need experience as a strategic leader with commercial understanding. The Governing Body benefits from recruiting individuals with a diverse range of backgrounds, skills and experiences; therefore, experience of business operations, IT management or Real Estate property management would be beneficial.

To comply with KCSIE Edgbaston High School for Girls is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and Disclosure and Barring Services.

To request a job pack, please contact Meahwish Mahmood on Mahmoodm@edgbastonhigh.co.uk

DESTINATION OF LEAVERS

<i>Aberystwyth</i>	Equine Science	1
<i>Aston</i>	Accounting and Finance; Medicine; Psychology	3
<i>Birmingham</i>	Aerospace Engineering; Business Management (2); Biomedical Science; Global Environmental Change and Sustainability; Mathematics; Medicine; Modern Languages	4
<i>Birmingham City</i>	Adult Nursing; Business Management; Marketing with Professional Placement year; Secondary P.E.	4
<i>Bolton</i>	Visual Effects and Animation	1
<i>Cardiff</i>	Architecture; Economics	2
<i>Cardiff</i>	Economics; French and Spanish; Psychology	3
<i>Coventry</i>	Civil Engineering	1
<i>Durham</i>	Ancient, Medieval and Modern History	1
<i>Glasgow</i>	Mechanical Engineering	1
<i>Keele</i>	Physics with Astrophysics	1
<i>Kings College London</i>	Global Health and Social Medicine	1
<i>Leicester</i>	Politics and Economics	1
<i>Liverpool</i>	Law; Therapeutic Radiography and Oncology	2
<i>Manchester</i>	American Studies	1
<i>Newcastle</i>	Japanese Studies	1
<i>Norwich University of the Arts</i>	User Experience Design (UX)	1
<i>Nottingham</i>	Cancer Studies; Psychology	2
<i>Nottingham Trent</i>	Fashion Marketing and Branding; Law	2
<i>Oxford</i>	Classics	1
<i>Oxford Brookes</i>	Business and Management	1
<i>Plymouth</i>	Dental Surgery	1
<i>Queen Mary</i>	History and Politics	1
<i>Reading</i>	Economics	1

NEW SHOOTS

This autumn we welcomed our Year 13 leavers, our newest set of Old Girls, into the Association. Congratulations Class of 2022 - we look forward to seeing what you will achieve in the future and hope you will stay in touch.

YEAR 13 LEAVERS

Fatima Abras	Rominique Deol	Fareedat Kenyon
Omala Abrol	Anaiya Dhama	Mehar Khattak
Zahra Al-Ani	Amrit Dhillon	Caitlin Kisumba
Rawan Al-Saidi	Francesca Draper	Amber Lyttle
Freya Arden	Ellie Egan-Williams	Maryam Maher
Lucy Atkins	Jessica Gannon	Ayesha Mahroof
Molly Baker	Olivia Grice	Gracie McKeever
Yi Bao	Iram Hamid	Charlotte Meek
Nicole Barker	Megan Hardiman	Aizah Oppal
Natalia Barrios-Mejia	Bethan Harrison	Vibha Patel
Manroop Basi	Salsabil Houdane	Saalihah Sajjad
Ilene Braham	Lujayn Ismail	Onella Samuel-Thambiah
Liberty Byrne	Sophie Jesson-Ward	Kayoureka Sivanesan
Safa Chishti	Niamh Johnson	Mary Smith-Holmes
Asmaa Choksi	Marianne Kail	Kajol Sohal
	Alicia Karim	Hibah Ul-Haq
	Vismard Kaur	Madeline Vernon

<i>Salford</i>	Fashion Design	1
<i>University of Law</i>	Law with Criminology	1
<i>University of London</i>	Economics and Chinese	1
<i>UEA, East Anglia</i>	English Literature	1
<i>UWE, Bristol</i>	Graphic Design	1
<i>Warwick</i>	English and Theatre Studies; Film Studies; French Studies	3
<i>Worcester</i>	Biology; Biomedical Science	2
<i>York</i>	Biochemistry	1

NEW FOR 2022: LAUREL LEAVES AWARD

The Old Girls' Association (OGA) is delighted to announce the creation of a new award which will benefit EHS students and alumni as they continue their journey of lifelong education.

The 'Laurel Leaves Award' will be open annually to students in EHS Sixth Form OR students who have left school in the last three academic

years. It is to encourage continued education (in any subject other than Music, which is already separately recognised in the Pam Jelf Memorial Fund) and is for a maximum amount of £500.

We welcome applications for this inaugural award. The closing date is February half term 2023. Applications will be reviewed and awards will be determined and announced before the end of the Spring Term.

Further information can be found in the OGA section of the school website www.edgbastonhigh.co.uk

LOST... AND FOUND?

Hilary Williams-Smith (née Smith) looking for Tina Blake
Ellen Jefferies

"I'm trying to track down an old friend of mine, Ellen Jefferies, who attended EHS from 1987 and would have done her GCSEs in 1992 and finished Sixth Form in 1994 I believe. She lived in Selly Park on Kensington Road from memory. She went on to train to be a primary school teacher and successfully worked as one I believe, but we lost touch. "I wasn't actually at EHS; I attended the nearby Holy Child School but we became firm friends through our passion for gymnastics. I haven't been able to trace her even though I am in contact with other mutual friends of ours and I wonder if she got married and if so, I do not know her married name. If anyone is able to put me in contact with her I would be most grateful."

Tina Blake (1966 - 1977) now Christina Williams (married name) would love to connect with some old school friends and is hoping if she can locate one or two. "Does anybody know how to get in touch with Caroline Scroggy (attended Junior school c1967 and then went to Birmingham University), and anyone from O Level year 1976 - 1977 particularly Sarah Laxton (now Lyttleton), Noula Stillianou, Judith Knott, Gillian Barnsley, Elizabeth Rogers, Jane Edwards and Hayley Mucklow? Many thanks in advance."

Contact the OGA if you are looking for a lost friend - we'd be happy to help.

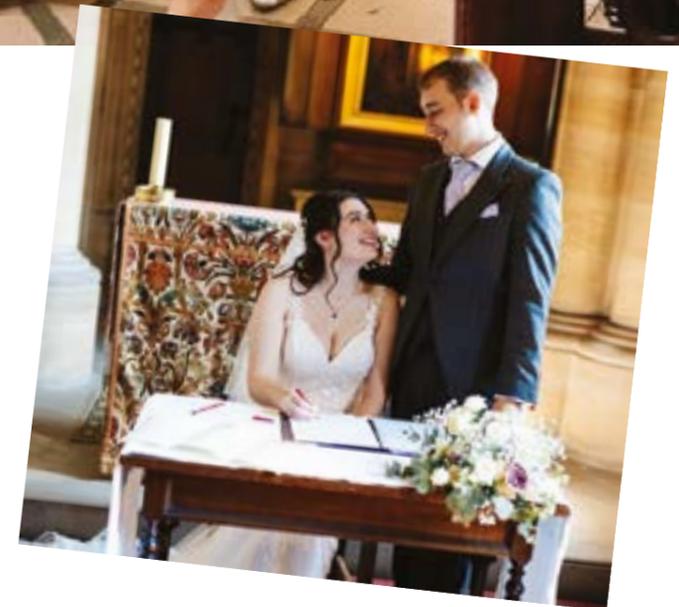
WHERE ARE THEY NOW?



Wedding Bells

Bethany Lucas married fellow-Keble graduate, Adam Ferguson, on 12th August, in Keble College Chapel, Oxford. They met on day two as Freshers, Beth studying Theology and Adam, Computer Science and got engaged at the end of their Masters year.

The chapel was where Beth had been a choral scholar and choir friends sang beautifully during the service. A stunning setting on a very hot day guaranteed a memorable occasion, before more celebrations were held south of Oxford in a beautiful setting by the river. Mum, Lindsay, was thrilled to be asked to accompany Beth in the car and down the aisle - a very special day for them, and all the wider family and friends. Adam has followed his heart into teaching while Beth is now an assistant with the Kate Nash Literary Agency, and will represent her first authors in the New Year.



Kate Hardy

I left EHS in 2012 and went to Durham University to study physical geography. Inspired by a field trip to Iceland and my life-long love of skiing, I then headed to Val d'Isere to do a ski season as a chalet girl. I had the best time...and so did two more! After three seasons and lots of travelling in between, I decided it was time to enter the 'real' world.

I got on to the People Consulting graduate scheme at KPMG and moved to London in 2018 to get started. In my team, we help public sector clients on anything to do with their people, whether that be designing a learning programme, transforming their HR function, helping to model and plan their workforce or helping to improve employee experience. I'm now working predominantly with healthcare clients, which has been amazing, not least because this enabled me to work out of our Bermuda office this year for 9 months! And I should hopefully be heading (back) to Iceland next year to help their hospital introduce medical job planning for their doctors.

Work aside, something big happened to me in 2019. After a long 4 months of uncertainty, I was diagnosed with M.E./CFS - also known as Myalgic Encephalomyelitis or Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. In short, this is a full-body illness that leaves you feeling exhausted, in pain, susceptible to flu-like 'fare-ups' and unable to sleep - to name just a few symptoms. I was told there was no cure, but I didn't take this for an answer. I took recovery in to my own hands and am now much, much better, live a totally normal life and am back to working full time, exercising and going out.

My takeaway from this experience was to never underestimate the importance of your health, happiness and fulfilment. In fact, those things need to be prioritised!



Pauline Bryan

I joined in 1952 when I was 10 years old and started in lower third with Miss McConnell who retired at the end of my first year. I left eight years later after two years in the Sixth Form. Such wonderful memories! I have enjoyed remembering many teachers and also Miss Caswell who was a great Headmistress.

At school I was encouraged to follow a safe professional career, but, instead I found myself operating in the motor trade. I became an independent automotive paint supplier, with the backing of PPG industries an extremely large supplier from Pittsburg, I was helped and respected by the Americans and enjoyed 21 free outings to the US helped by my knowledge obtained from Mrs Ridsdale, a wonderful mentor. I employed about 10 personnel and distributed to garages, body shops and multinationals enjoying everything most of the time, although it was not always easy. I did 35 years and managed to sell up.

Some of my retirees were at my recent 80th birthday celebration and I'm still in touch with EHS friends whom I've now known 60 years. I am an EHS 'Golden Girl'! I loved school, loved my job and now loving travel (although it is proving to be a bit harder now, I'm still called a geographer). I wish everybody good wishes.



Suzie Murphy

I left EHS in 2016 with A levels in Dance, Music and History. From there I went on to complete a three year course at the vocational Dance College Kate Simmons Dance.

I'd always known university wasn't for me so it was great to study a purely practical dance course with lots of opportunities to perform. I began auditioning for professional dance jobs in my third year and in May 2019 was offered a contract performing in Cats the Musical in Vienna, Austria. My role was as Swing, first cover Victoria (the white cat) and first cover Jemima.

As a swing I learnt all the female ensemble tracks and had to be ready at any moment to go on stage (even if you're told half an hour before the show.) The show was sung entirely in German, but having studied some German Lieder (songs) and German to AS level at EHS I was able to learn the lyrics quite easily.

At the moment I am performing two shows simultaneously with the Landestheatre Linz (also in Austria): "Anastasia" and "Catch Me if you Can". Again, both shows are directed, learnt and performed entirely in German.

Now, going into my fourth year of living in Austria, I have a much better understanding of and fluency in the language.

I think I would like to continue to try and work in and around Europe over the next few years and see where the dancing takes me!



Kiran Sokhi

I attended EHS from 1983 - 1995. I am a Primary Deputy Head teacher (hopefully Head teacher soon) and I have a lot to thank EHS for.

I trained mainly as a classical singer with Miss Lovegrove from 1990 - 1993. I sang solos at lots of concerts and sang the prestigious 'Once in Royal' solo. I studied music with both Miss Jelf and Miss Harper.

I am still singing and recently I sang at my cousin's wedding. I really thought of the wonderful opportunities I was given at EHS whilst I was singing. I have been privileged to sing in the Royal Albert Hall, Kings College Chapel, Cambridge, Eton School Chapel, Ely and Southwark Cathedrals and many more. None of this would have been possible without the fantastic music teachers that supported me whilst I was at school. Today, in turn, I inspire the children in my schools to find their talent and contribute positively to society.



Carol Hanis

I have been meaning to write to the Old Girls' Association for many years. And now I have reached 82 years! I attended EHS in the late forties and early fifties. My sister, Rosemary Pattman, also attended. She was four years older and sadly passed away in 2004. After leaving EHS I attended the Ballet Rambert School in London.

Afterwards I married and moved to Athens with my Greek husband. I opened the first Royal Academy of Dance ballet school in 1972. My daughter following in my footsteps, studying in the Royal Ballet School. On her return to Greece, she danced with the Greek National Ballet and joined me, teaching in the school. This year we are celebrating 50 years of the RAD in Greece. Two years ago I was awarded the RAD Presidents Award, an award given to only three teachers around the world. I was very honoured and it was most unexpected! I was teaching up until we were hit by Covid in 2020.



Georgia Khanna

We recently welcomed Old Girl Georgia Khanna back to EHS to give a careers talk to students.

Georgia left EHS in 2015 at the end of Year 13 after joining in 1998 when she was just two years old. Since then she has had an incredible journey, but is still very thankful for all of her experiences of EHS. "When I drive past and look at the building, I get a warm fuzzy feeling. I loved my days there", she said.

Georgia told us how she studied politics and international relations at London School of Economics. She used the summer break at university to intern for an MP, and upon completing her degree the MP asked her to come and work for her in her constituency of Wolverhampton. It was through the MP that Georgia met David Miliband, and her next career step was to move to New York to work for David in an international charity. This experience inspired Georgia to return to LSE to complete a masters in Human Rights.

Most recently Georgia has been successful in gaining a much-sought after place in the Civil Service fast stream where she currently works in the Ministry of Defence.



Carolyn Jones (née Radnor)

I attended EHS from 1947 to 1959 at Greenoaks and then the old EHS on Hagley Road of which I have fond memories, especially of Miss Ashton who taught Biology and who inspired in me a love of science. As a result of which I obtained a PhD and DMedSc on placental studies.

Although I formally retired in 2008 as a Research Fellow in the Maternal and Fetal Health Research Centre at the University of Manchester, I was so involved in research that the university offered me an honorary post so that I could continue. Since then, the University has continued to support me and I am about to have my contract extended so that I can continue into my eighties! It has been worth their while as since 2008 I have published 165 scientific papers, mainly on the ultrastructure and biochemical characteristics of the human and animal placenta and associated tissues.

I still love science and, despite some health issues, hope to continue for many years to come!



Vinisha Katamaneni

I left EHS in 2016 after seven years there with A Levels in Biology, Chemistry and Spanish with a view to studying Medicine, something I had wanted to do for many years. I subsequently went on to study Medicine at the University of Buckingham where I enjoyed the hands-on patient contact we got from very early on in first year and made some amazing friends for life! Studying medicine was so interesting and intellectually stimulating, however it was also really challenging sometimes, with so many moments of doubt and feeling like maybe I wasn't cut out for it. Not to mention the impact Covid had on my final year in the form of reduced patient contact and not getting to go on an elective abroad. However, I always knew it was ultimately what I wanted to do and I went on to graduate as a doctor in July 2021, starting my Foundation training in University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire the following month.

After considering the possibility of specialising in Acute Medicine or Endocrinology, I have returned to my original plan for the future which is to enter GP training in the next few years, as primary care has always been my dream setting as a doctor.

I see being a doctor as a tough job, but also one of the most rewarding and privileged positions you can be in. It also has lots of scope to get involved in additional projects e.g. research, teaching, quality improvement (if you want to)!

My advice to anyone thinking about careers is that it's okay to have setbacks and for things to not go your way; it doesn't mean you aren't good enough to do what you've always wanted to do.



Spot the Teacher

A group of past staff met for lunch and a good catch up recently.

Can you name any of these familiar faces?



LASTING MEMORIES OF EHS

They say your school days are the best days of your life. Whilst it sometimes takes the passage of time for us to realise this, leaving school certainly represents the end of an era and is often bittersweet. We thought it would be interesting to share with you some of the outgoing Year 13's most cherished and vivid memories as they embark on life beyond EHS.

Omala - "Mrs Rees in my Class Civilisation GCSE class telling me to never give up."

Natalia - "Mr Rees has been such an inspiration and one of the reasons I work so hard in maths!"

Manroop - "Miss Harrison has really encouraged me to be more confident in lessons."

Ilene - "Miss Glover has definitely made a difference and was instrumental in finding my love for history."

Lujayn - Miss Harrison (English, EPQ, UCAS) believed in me and taught me to be confident in my ability; her enthusiasm inspired me so much. And the Gold Duke of Edinburgh in the summer of Year 12!"

Niamh - "Dancing in the rain and winning house gala."

Kajol - "Macmillan Coffee Mornings!"

Hibbah - "Dancing in the rain at the end of the school picnic in Year 13"

Madeline - "Watching the annual house gala and trips to Rome."

Bethan - "All the trips abroad making unique memories with friends."

Aizah - "Ms Ajmal helping me to realise how important school is."

Lucy - "The amazing house galas!"

Kayaveka - "Going skiing to Canada for the first time."

Freya - "Miss Hayday getting us through RS A Level."

Amrit - "Mrs Parsons made school enjoyable."

Maryam - "Trips abroad, Iceland and Canada and making lifelong friends."

Liberty - "On the Canada ski trip having to use café chairs as ice skating penguins!"

Megan - "Mrs McAlister really inspired me when I was learning Latin for GCSE. I really enjoyed her lessons as she is so passionate about her subject."

Some memories from recent staff leavers and retirees

Miss Jenny Harrison - "As head of Drama auditioning dogs for a play; a massive dog fight ensued in the hall and the dogs weed up the stage curtains!"

Mrs Clare Syer - "Great British Bake Offer Winner Nadiya Hussain judging our Year 10 food group's Lemon Meringue Pies."

Ms Alison Bosc - "I was prone to running up and down the lab with flippers on! (I was a Biology teacher)."

Mrs Chris Evans - "Let's go girls!"

Mrs Rowena Richardson - "Some particular memories for me: "Singing the school song in a school in St Petersburg not long after the fall of communism. Being abandoned on the school trip to Goodrich Castle by the Deputy Head."

What lasting memories do you have of EHS? Do contact us and let us know and we'll be happy to publish them in the next issue of Laurel Leaves.

