

Polished CORNERS

QUONDAM FRANCIS HOLLAND REGENT'S PARK ALUMNI ASSOCIATION



2020 MAGAZINE

Dear Polished Corners

Well, what a year! None of us at Francis Holland was expecting a coronavirus to come, less still for it to close down the school and the country for six months. To be honest, I am not sure that many of us, outside of the Science Department, had ever heard of a coronavirus before, had you?

As I write to you now, the new academic year has begun and some element of normality has returned to the corridors and classrooms of the school. The girls are moving around the building less than usual and the clubs will need to be only for one year group at a time; there are no choirs and no whole-school assemblies; we have adjusted how we offer lunch and there are dispensers for hand gel on many of the walls. Nevertheless, school is pretty recognisable and lessons begin promptly.

If you were to look back at the months of schooling since lockdown began in March, you would be proud of your old school. The girls and the teachers adapted really rapidly to a new way of working. Within two weeks, every one of us had learned how to use Microsoft Office Teams so that lessons could be taught via live video streaming. We continued to enjoy assembly three times a week and there were countless extra-curricular opportunities ranging from cake-baking and photography to Shakespeare recitation competitions, the Christian

Union and marathon fitness challenges. We even managed to hold an FHS sports day of sorts. My feeling throughout this time has been that the school itself never closed – it was just the buildings that were shut.

The academic year which has now just finished (although by the time you read this we will be settled into the school year) contained other notable positives which we should not allow to be overshadowed by COVID-19. Firstly, let me mention the innovative staff development programme which ran throughout the year. Francis Holland has become something of a trend setter in teaching and learning and, over the last 12 months, seven different study groups have been operating in which teachers challenged each other to make use of the latest academic readings and to develop their classroom practice. Topics ranged from educating the most able to developing oracy and understanding cognitive load theory. This coming year, the staff will be building on the success of the project.

Another noteworthy event came in February when the school hosted 200 headteachers as well as the vice-chancellors of both Oxford and Cambridge to discuss access to elite universities for young people from BAME backgrounds.

In the light of the Black Lives Matters protests later in the year, it would seem that the school was ahead of the national zeitgeist. It is important to me that Francis

Holland is a national leader in equality. Naturally, we have long championed women's rights – there is still more to be done in that area. In addition, I will be pleased when I am able to say that we are also a school which excels in supporting and enabling young women of every ethnicity to succeed and to progress without barriers. We have a role to play in shaping the future society of Great Britain.

In the summer, the marketing department worked tirelessly to develop new websites for both the School and the Trust that went live at the end of August. Please visit www.fhs-nw1.org.uk - alumni have a dedicated page which is clearly signposted.

Finally, let me pick out the concert which we hosted back in the Spring Term at St Marylebone Church jointly with our very good friends from Sloane Square. The massed choirs of the two schools combined made a very impressive sound indeed. I do not know when we will be able to perform such an event again, almost certainly not in the next couple of months, but I hope that we will be back at St Marylebone for our annual carol service in December. All members of Quondam are warmly invited to attend.

With best regards,

Charles Fillingham
Headmaster



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HISTORY BOOK

First published in 2015, 'Polished Corners, A History' can be purchased at the special price of £20 by email at quondam@fhs-nw1.org.uk



Quondam\KWAHN-duhm;
KWAHN-dam
adjective:
Having been formerly;
former; sometime

KEEP IN TOUCH TODAY!

There are three main ways to keep in touch with our alumni community:

QUONDAM ALUMNI NETWORK

The best way to keep in touch is to join the online Quondam Alumni Network. Here you can update your contact details at any time. You can also connect with former classmates and staff, and see all the photos, videos and news stories we post about our wonderful alumni community!

Join here: <https://alumni.fhs-nw1.org.uk>

SOCIAL MEDIA

We have a Facebook page dedicated to our alumni which you are all encouraged to 'Like'! We also have an alumni LinkedIn group. Please do follow the school on Instagram and Twitter @FHSRegentsPark



@FHSRegentsParkAlumni



Francis Holland Regent's Park
Alumni Association



@FHSRegentsPark



@FHSRegentsPark

EMAIL AND POST

You can always contact us directly by email: alumni@fhs-nw1.org.uk or quondam@fhs-nw1.org.uk or by writing to:

Alumni Relations Officer
Francis Holland Regent's Park
35 Bourne Street, London SW1W 8JA

You can reach the Chair of Quondam, Susanne Nedas, by email: quondamchair@fhs-nw1.org.uk

NEW SCHOOL WEBSITE

FHS Regent's Park have recently launched a new school website. The website offers a comprehensive guide to the School, complete with a reworked Quondam Alumni Association section. The website also allows you to keep up to date with the latest in school news and events, term dates and access to the full school calendar. We hope you enjoy taking a look around! <https://fhs-nw1.org.uk>

QUONDAM COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT/HEADMASTER: Charles Fillingham

CHAIRMAN: Susanne Nedas née Quastel (1971)

JOINT SECRETARY: Alison Edelshain née Day (1972)

JOINT SECRETARY: Vivien Rose née Lind (1974)

TREASURER: Benita Mathews née Thomas (1970)

SCHOOL QUONDAM LIAISON REPRESENTATIVE:
Amelia Slocombe

Jeannine Addinall, Former Deputy Head (2011)

Isobel Apter (2011)

Nadia Demetriou Ladas (1988)

Nina Edelshain (2007)

Felicity Forde, Former Pastoral Deputy Head (2017)

Georgina Guy née Nedas (1995)

Maria Hadjipateras (1979)

Jennifer Purchase née Shier (1973)

Manuela Robson (1989)

Lucinda Sanford née Nedas (2000)

Julia Strauss (1987)

LETTER FROM THE QUONDAM CHAIRMAN

Dear Fellow Polished Corners

Whoa! What a year this has been! And where did it go? As I write I am struggling to think back to September 2019 and write about life as it was then. It seems to have been subsumed by all things Covid!

Quondam is our very special Old Girls' Association of our very special school and I hope you are proud to be a member. The Association, originally called "The Quondam Club", was one of the early such clubs to be founded. Its first meeting was in 1886 so it was founded in the first decade of the school.

At last year's AGM in November your Committee asked attendees what, specifically, they would like from Quondam and more recently we have asked you to complete a survey (page 19). We also asked for a show of hands in support of our establishing a Quondam Bursary. We were thrilled to see everyone in favour, and that 91% agreed in the survey. This is the most exciting and helpful thing Quondam can do for the School, and the Committee are all hoping that we will raise enough funds to make this dream come true and give the gift of a Sixth Form education to an exceptionally bright young girl who would not otherwise have been able to attend our school. (page 9 and the enclosed leaflet)

After the AGM we enjoyed a lovely lunch with some terrific entertainment from current pupils, more about it from Claire. (page 11)

We are so very lucky that the School invites us to some of its events. They are always advertised on the Quondam Alumni Network <https://alumni.fhs-nw1.org.uk> and I recommend you come along and see and feel how your School is thriving.

"What surprise will be in store?" is my thought when I attend the Francis Holland Prize Giving, for Mr Fillingham never disappoints! This year, when the Headmaster stood up to serenely introduce the event, girls popped up everywhere and seemingly, and very convincingly, hijacked the event! The competence and eloquence of the current pupils of our School seemed unsurpassable as the girls gave a newscast of the school year.

I loved meeting the Class of 1979 at their re-union drinks in October (page 12). There was such a special buzz in the room. The Guest of Honour was Mr Fillingham's dog who had joined the sponsored walk earlier that day.

The School's performance of *The Tempest* was electric. It was the first time I had read or seen this play and the strength of the acting and the actors' diction enabled me to get to grips with it. Do try and come to this year's play. They always are a real treat.

Another spectacular event was the Joint Concert by the Sloane Square and Regent's Park schools. Claire, our Alumni Relations Officer, who performed in it, has written an article so I won't repeat the detail here other than to applaud the occasion. (page 15)

As always, the Committee thoroughly enjoyed judging the Quondam Writing Prize. We changed the title to "Covid" to suit the mood and received a flood of entries of exceptional standard. This year, as per your choice on the survey, we have printed the two winning entries. (pages 14-15). Congratulations and thank you to all who entered.

We cancelled the Quondam Travel Scholarship due to travel restrictions but will award two prizes next year so that those girls, who might have entered this year, have another chance.

Miss Marjorie Gustave who taught Modern Languages and was Deputy Head of Years 10 and 11 retired at the end of the Autumn Term. The School and all her pupils owe her a huge debt and we wish her well in her retirement and hope we will see her at Quondam lunches and events in the future.

It is no surprise that Francis Holland handled the sudden and enforced remote learning with competence and aplomb. The Headmaster gave rousing and supporting assemblies on line which you can watch on the alumni network and teaching continued seamlessly due to the tremendous ingenuity and hard work of the Headmaster and his team. The girls were well counselled and supported through any disappointments about missing important exams and not seeing their peers. The Leavers' University Destinations (page 17) are a tribute to both the Staff and the pupils.


This year we say goodbye to two Committee Members. Jeanette Cumine who has served on the Committee for a great number of years and from whose wise counsel Quondam has benefited greatly. Alexandra Whyman, who has been on the Committee since 2017, has also stepped down. Many thanks to both of them.

We have introduced a new article in this year's Magazine: Life after FHS. We are so lucky that Mrs Vivienne Durham has agreed to be our first contributor. (page 10)

Whether you are reading this by email, online, or by a hard copy do please let other Polished Corners know how the School is and encourage them to sign up to the Network and keep in touch with the school. (pages 2 and 20)

Determined not to let this be the first in memory that Quondam has not held its AGM followed by a celebration, your committee has decided to go ahead remotely! The upside is that this will allow those of you living far from school to attend so we do hope to have the largest gathering of Polished Corners yet! Please do join us. (page 11)

Sending warm wishes to all for health and strength to triumph over whatever comes,



Susanne Nedas (née Quastel) 1958-1971
quondamchair@fhs-nw1.org.uk



Susanne Nedas



Sixth Form pupils in 1913, pictured outside the original Baker Street site, before the school moved to Ivor Place

Jill Leuw née Barclay 1958

I became a 'Polished Corner' at the age of 6 in 1946 just after the war. Uniform was very different to that of today and was purchased on clothing rations. Consequently, being small, my first uniform was bought to last. We were never to step outside the school without wearing our thick grey felt pudding basin hats blazoned with the school badge. Apart from the maroon school tie which even at 6 was compulsory clothing, we were dressed in a symphony of grey blazer, shirt, skirt and knee length socks held in place by garters. Underneath we wore compulsory thick grey 'gym knickers'. To this day I avoid wearing grey!!

Cynthia Prince née Haslam 1967

As a pupil in the 60s we did lots of doctoring of uniform! We had the Baker Boy berets which looked dreadful on me. We always removed them as soon as we left the building!!

The grey summer dresses were reasonable to wear as we could hitch them up to be very short with our red belts. Of course we were always told to pull them down by Miss Sifleet, Miss Happs and Miss Curtis.

I do remember the netball skirts, we were not allowed to wear tights with them so some of us got the long johns that were fashionable at the time - not allowed those either!!!

The worst part of uniform to me was the baggy, grey gaberdine mac. Mine was completely shapeless as my mother had

bought a huge one to last all through school, I hated it!!!

Despite these complaints the great point was that we were the first Sixth Formers to be allowed to wear our own clothes, thanks to Heather Brigstocke. Out came the mini skirts, white tights, long fringes and make up.

Catherine McGowan née Coventry 1968

My grandma made this uniform for my teddy, below, when I started at Francis Holland in 1958. Battered but much loved!



Petula Picciotto 1968

The wonderful claret coloured belt with silver buckle and side coin purse. I still have it (not sure why) but obviously it doesn't do up anymore!

Cream coloured panama hats for the summer term - invariably it rained,

and they were ruined in the first week or two!

Grey and white houndstooth print cotton dress with buttons down the front for the summer.

I can't remember the winter uniform except for the claret corduroy hats and presumably we had grey blazers and skirts.



Girls playing netball in the playground, 1974

Amanda Strathalmond née Taylor 1969

Juliet Grainger (Cline) and I remember when the School was approached by a clothing company who wanted to test their ideas for a modernised school uniform range and FHS was asked to provide models of the right age: sweet 14. The Headmistress in 1966 was Mrs. Brigstocke and she asked us, along with one or two others, to model the clothes for the company, Reldan, in the West End. We were thrilled to be asked and had visions of knocking Twiggy off her throne. A far cry from our FHS grey skirts and claret ties, the new uniform range featured check-patterned, bell bottom trousers, figure-hugging waistcoats and flat caps - none of which was ideal for girls with a passion for Cadbury's Dairy Milk. On the day, the fashion show was rather disappointing, so much so that we cannot remember where it was held or who was in the audience and consequently the Swinging Sixties uniform idea faded away. Meanwhile, back at FHS, Miss Sifleet quietly carried on and got out her ruler to make sure our grey skirts weren't more than four inches above the knee. Fifty-four years later, Reldan itself has faded away and Francis Holland girls no longer wear their claret ties but, happily, Juliet and I still enjoy our Cadbury's Dairy Milk!

Colette Blair 1982

Back in the day, we had to wear burgundy corduroy berets and when I say had to, I mean had to. If we were caught not wearing this on any part of our journey to or from school, we were instantly given a detention and our parents had to write a letter to the then Headteacher, Miss Holt, explaining our mitigating circumstances. Now this rule came with its own problems for a number of reasons: one being that my journey home was on the 159 bus which was also the same route as our music teacher, Miss Crees, and secondly, if we chose an alternative bus, we were in danger of being mocked by the boys from a local school en route who also had the habit of flicking our berets off our heads as they passed us by on the top deck of the bus. Either way, it was a lose-lose situation and so I subsequently found my way to writing lines after school on several occasions!

Another memory was the lengths (quite literally) we would go to to make our standard issue grey skirt a little bit more fashionable. This involved either taking it up to make it a ludicrously short mini skirt (in the 70s) or in to make a ludicrously tight pencil skirt (in the 80s). Either way, it would usually last only a matter of days before we were told to unpick the stitching and return to the rather unflattering knee-length A-line version. Hopefully, the rules have eased somewhat since then!

Rosamund Heath née Leach 1984

I was at the school for 12 years, so it was inevitable that the school uniform should evolve whilst I was there; I grew so quickly that we always seemed to be buying more! However, by the time I got to 3J my mother learned to buy me a skirt that would last and I think it



UIV pupils skipping during break time, 1966



Madrigal Group in 1983

probably lasted the duration of my time in the Senior School.

The cape seemed a good idea at the time until I realised I was a victim of fashion and wouldn't wear it; so, I wore my school blazer as a 'coat' all through that winter; the school beret that we would put on for appearances as we got off the bus before crossing the road to school. The summer dress that my mother made me which only lasted one summer as I kept on getting taller! The joy of the school beret being abolished; I don't remember when it was abolished exactly; or whether it coincided with the time that I no longer had to wear uniform - when I entered the Sixth Form.

Ruth Logue née Clifton-Samuel 1984

I started at FHS in 1976 and I remember going to buy my uniform at D.H. Evans with my mother. The item that made the greatest impression on me was the thick hooded grey wool cape with buttons down the front and pockets, it was very long and warm. We also wore a burgundy/ maroon corduroy beret which we were expected to wear out in public or we might get a detention. Initially, we all wore a pleated grey skirt which changed to a choice of having a plain straight skirt which I was desperate to have because I thought it was more fashionable at the time. I think during my time at FHS the maroon tracksuit was also introduced for PE. In summer we could wear a grey or burgundy red checked dress with a money belt; this was very useful as it had a built-in zipped purse. I still have my grey and maroon striped school scarf.

Nadia Demetriou Ladas 1988

Of course, in the true fashionista spirit

of any top private girl's school, I'm sure we all remember the ever rising skirt hemlines, with their journey from the ankle grazing value buy in third form, to the barely a belt length by upper fifth (or much younger, depending on when you first started socialising with boys and got them to pick you up outside the school gates to show off your conquests). I also fondly remember the keys we hung on strings around our necks for our lockers, sometimes used for 'playful' strangulation purposes, but given my lack of interest in sport and countless parental letters excusing me, I soon realised I didn't need to lock anything up, and made every excuse possible to dodge that pungent, dank basement circle of hell otherwise known as the changing room!

But most importantly, as our Class of 88 was under the twilight years of Miss Holt's despotism, sorry, ahem, stewardship, we all lived in fear of our very much needed insulating t-shirts worn under our shirts, the sight of which, even if only a millimetre dared poke above our starched, scratchy nylon shirts, would send Miss Holt into a paroxysm of fury. Off we would be sent to the changing rooms to remove this heinous, abhorrent item, and into the dark vaults of the head's office would it go, UNTIL THE END OF TERM, as we skulked back, shivering and shame faced to our classrooms. And then, on the last glorious day of term, with the long endless joys of summer ahead, we would have to perform the walk of shame, tremulously knock on the door, and await the traffic light to deign to allow us in, to retrieve our offending t-shirt, all life and gaiety sucked out of us for that day....

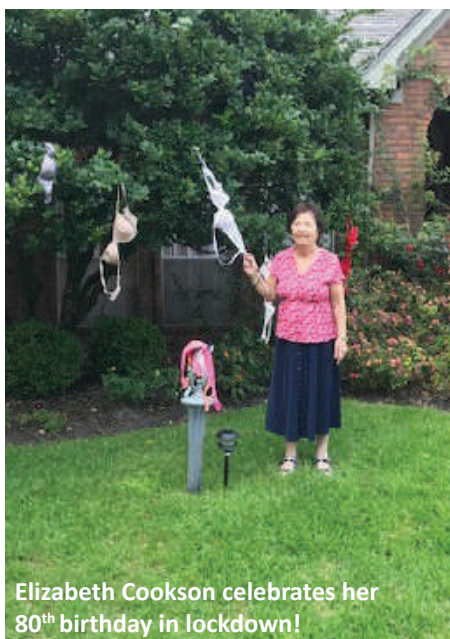
NEWS FROM POLISHED CORNERS

Elizabeth Cookson née Ritblat 1957

rjcookson@aol.com

Life in Houston is slowly returning to normal, if one wants to emerge from home. I celebrated my 80th with many good wishes but no company. My tennis friends, yes - still playing tennis - hung many coloured bras on the front lawn trees and bushes, which is their way of celebrating big events. Quite a picture!

I left in 1957 after A levels, having started in Transition with Miss Lester. In 1946 it was hard to find uniform and my mother was worried that I did not have a hat. She kept the eventual hat for years after I left!! I suppose it was a tribute to her tenacity!



Elizabeth Cookson celebrates her 80th birthday in lockdown!

Yvonne Fisher née Crisp 1957

mny_fisher@hotmail.com

We celebrated our 60th wedding anniversary in April and had to postpone a trip to Uzbekistan. Hope to see you at the November Lunch.

Alison Edelshain née Day 1972

aedelshain@gmail.com

A few major changes for me since last year. Having stood down after 12 years on the Board of Governors of FHS, I was invited to join the Board of Sarum Hall, a small prep school in Swiss Cottage. It is a much smaller school and I was told that it would require much less of my time than FHS and then Covid 19 arrived.... Every school has had to completely change how it delivers its education and it has been a fascinating challenge.

More recently, I was invited to join and then elected to the Board of our synagogue, a major organisation with 3000 members where I have already been kept very busy. So much for ramping down my responsibilities, although to be fair my magistrate duties, school workshops and refugee support have all been minimal since mid-March. Lockdown has been a very noisy and hectic time for us at home, as Laura, husband and two children have moved in. Living with a 4 and a 2-year-old again is both delightful and exhausting, but I would not have it any other way!

Dee Clayton née Gard 1984

dee@clayton.bz

I went to FHS from '79 to '84. This is my year! Starting from June 2019, I was finishing my degree at The Royal College of Art. I am an artist/painter and I loved doing this degree. The degree finished in September with a wonderful symposium and exhibition at the RCA.

My art is intended to help people with their fears and anxieties; to help with the worries of our minds and its health, to be lifted and enchanted and to experience our spirit connection. Ask me why is this my mission - FHS played a significant role!

I have been very keen to continue my research into Auras and I hope to be admitted onto a PhD in fine art, for this coming academic year. I was also involved in many other exhibitions across the UK and internationally. I had a solo show at Museum Bait Alzubair which was so interesting: www.degard.org/exhibitions-events/museum-bait-alzubair/

Further to that (sorry I sound like a super woman! I do work about 18 hours a day around my husband, two grown up kids and three doggies – shih tzus!) I bought a pub and redeveloped 3 flats. I was flat out! And it was such fun!

We had only just come back from Oman when the pandemic struck – not to be deterred I curated a virtual exhibition www.degard.org/exhibitions-events/quintessence-of-consciousness/ with some wonderful artists: Turner prize nominee Mark Titchener and Gabriel Rico just finished at Venice Biennale to name a couple.

And now lockdown! Just getting to the 'never thought I would get it done' part

of the to do list! And trying not to worry about the future.

Hope you are all well with the pandemic. Xxx

Rosamund Heath née Leach 1984

Rosamundheath@gmail.com

I have finally qualified as an Osteopath, after five hard years studying in Maidstone and trailing backwards and forwards between Maidstone, where I would stay for the week, and home in South Oxfordshire. I will start work as an Osteopath in July 2020 near my home.

My daughter finished her degree in Fine Art this summer and my eldest son has one more year studying Civil Engineering at Southampton. My youngest son is 18 and a Chemistry whizz-kid having been entered for the Cambridge Challenge test a year ago and the Chemistry Olympiad in January 2020. His knowledge of chemistry and his application of it is phenomenal.

Sarah-Lou Lewis née Stirling 1988

sarahlou@uk.com

Both of my children are now at university. My son is about to start his final year and my daughter is entering her second year. Both are looking to work in the financial sector.

My cake business continues to flourish. This year I have been challenged with some fantastic projects including a koala bear and a bumble bee as well as cupcake bouquets and many very bespoke cakes. I'm on Facebook as "Hugs & Kisses Celebration Cakes" and Instagram as "xoxoxCakes" if you would like to have a look. I hope my FHS art teachers might be impressed since I wasn't their best Art A-level student!

Wishing all my FHS friends well.



Areeba Asif 2010

contact@areebaasif.com

I wanted to share news of a big day, as I got engaged on 22nd December 2019 in Lahore, Pakistan to a Barrister, Mr Momin Malik. We are hoping to plan the wedding soon later this year or earlier next year. It was an intimate and beautiful ceremony at my residence in Lahore where we had almost 150 guests, family and friends, and the entire decoration theme was done by a family friend and very famous wedding decorator whose name is Mr Qasim Yar Tiwana. The theme was red roses and lots of candles.



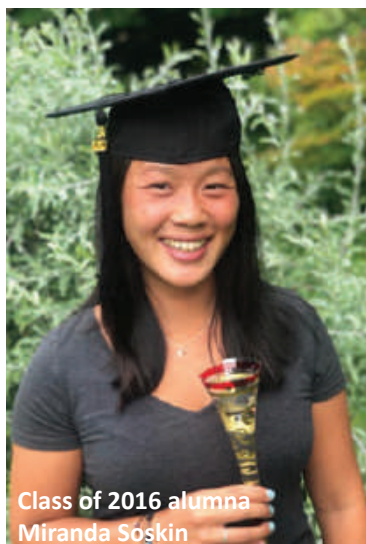
Ms Areeba Asif announces news of her engagement to Mr Momin Malik

Miranda Soskin 2016

Vivienne Durham writes: "I have news of Miranda Soskin, who left FHS in 2016. She has just received a First in Oceanography from Plymouth University."

Quondam sends many congratulations to Miranda. We love news like this!

Submitted by Vivienne Durham



Class of 2016 alumna Miranda Soskin

Hope Jones 2018

Hope Jones volunteered her services for the NHS Trust with some of her Year 13 friends, making medical gowns for the doctors and nurses to wear on the Covid 19 Wards. Collectively they make up to 800 a day! They are still looking for more volunteers in the afternoons, at the WAC, Belsize Park. Contact alix.temple@nhs.net if you want more information. Hope is hoping to start her Art Foundation at Camberwell later this year.

Submitted by Rebecca Lyndon-Stanford



Hope Jones is making medical gowns for NHS staff at Belsize Park's WAC

Valerie St Johnston

Teacher of History 1966-1987

Valerie St Johnston, too shy to write about herself, has been busy with The Primrose Hill Library, bought by the local community to avoid closure by the Council, where she is Chair of the Book Committee. Her confidence in the ability of the young gained from her years at Francis Holland, led her to promote an 11 year-old to her Committee, average age 50 including two distinguished authors, where she has been a great success over the last few years advising on purchases for the children's library.

Submitted by Colin St Johnston



Valerie St Johnston, pictured on the right

POLISHED CORNERS' LOCKDOWN NEWS

Reaching out to Polished Corners became more important than ever during the uncertain time of lockdown. We wanted to make sure our entire community felt both connected and supported. Our first action was to contact all Polished Corners and offer the opportunity of practical and emotional support to those in isolation. The offer to be connected to other Quondam members in their area or just online via our network was invaluable to many. Just having someone out there with 'Francis Holland in common' was in itself a huge comfort when family and friends couldn't be close. In the absence of our usual events programme, we focused on creative ways to further engage our members. We asked how they were best adapting to life during lockdown, and also requested that those who work for the NHS get in touch with a brief word on how they tackled the challenges faced. This resulted in April's publication of a collection of inspirational stories, each detailing how alumnae were creatively transforming their day to day lives indoors. We've put together a selection for you to read below:

Hello from Canada! Wishing everyone safety and wellness and a Happy Easter, however you can celebrate. I have the good fortune to live near a forest and a river and walking there is permitted daily. I am continuing tutoring Maths from home via the phone and computer (thank you Miss Sifleet!) and engaging in conference calls with two Boards of Directors of charities on which I serve. Like all charities and not for profits, many difficult decisions around how best to support vulnerable people are being made and revised on a frequent basis as we journey with this epidemic. I am keeping in touch with friends and family by telephone – I think I have spent more time on the phone in the past three weeks than in the previous whole year!

It is good to be in touch.

Warm regards,
Karen Ann McKinna née Arbuckle, Class of 1966

I am excited for term to start again so I can rebalance back to teaching students from afar whilst necessary, and going in when needed for key workers' children.

Jo Paterson, Class of 2009

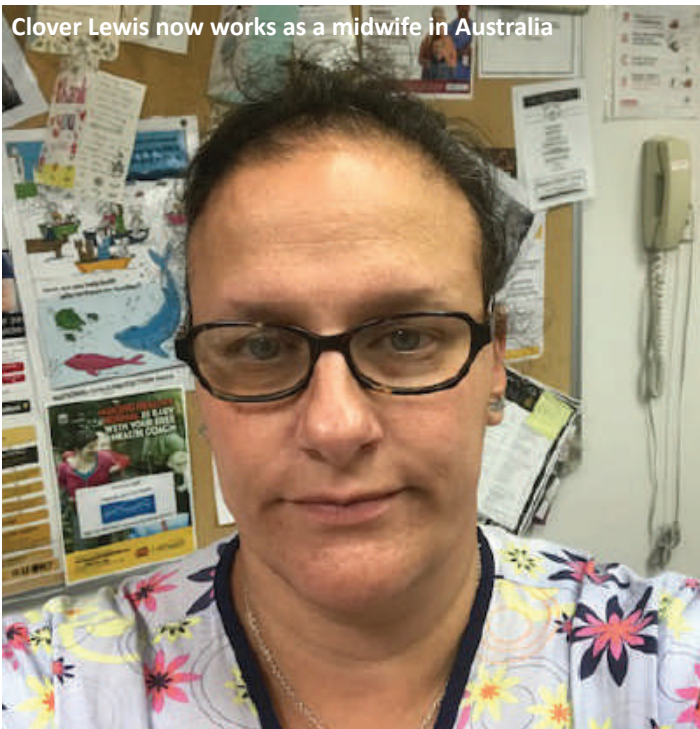
I'm managing to juggle my time in lockdown as a single mother, artist and carer to my mother who has MS and lives down the road from me in Fulham. I have found that online Fiit videos are really helpful for indoor training when I have time, as is Vedic meditation for 20 minutes twice a day. When my toddler, Freddie, sleeps (he will be three in July) I am painting little watercolour sketches and selling them via Instagram in support of The Artist Support Pledge. Here is some information about this:

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many artists have found themselves without work: teaching, technical support, gallery work, exhibitions and sales have disappeared. In an attempt to help alleviate some of this stress

@matthewburrowsstudio has instigated the #artistsupportpledge. The concept is a simple one. You post images of your work to sell for no more than £200 each (not including shipping). Anyone can then buy the work. Every time you reach £1000 of sales you pledge to buy another artist's work for £200. Many artists are taking part in this and it's a great way of supporting other creatives. My Instagram address is @alfelstead.

Very best wishes,
Anna-Louise Felstead, Class of 1998

Clover Lewis now works as a midwife in Australia



Hi. I'm Clover Lewis. I left FHS in 1992 and work as a frontline worker in Australia as a Midwife in a busy hospital. Covid-19 has brought us many challenges at work and we are still fine-tuning aspects in relation to the birth and delivery of babies in this scary time.

I have three daughters who have been home-schooled for the last three weeks as we are at stage 3 of pandemic plan. No social gatherings, only leaving the house to exercise or visit the supermarket or the doctors. My daughters have become very artistic though!

Today is my birthday. Self-isolation is very hard on days like these. I'd love to go out for dinner, but I will wait as nowhere is open.

I miss the UK and friends and family but very grateful I have a hubby who can work from home whilst I work in the hospital fearing though I may bring Covid-19 unknowingly home.

Great to be recognised on the frontline. We have a Facebook group called "Adopt a Healthcare Worker NSW" which has provided much support.

Clover Lewis, Class of 1992

THE LAUNCH OF THE QUONDAM SIXTH FORM BURSARY BY SUSANNE NEDAS

The Dream

One of my first and very enjoyable tasks when I became Chair of Quondam was to telephone Ruby MacGregor to tell her she had been awarded The Quondam Travel Scholarship for 2019. I was touched by her gratitude, excitement and enthusiasm.

She proudly told me that she attended Francis Holland by dint of being awarded a Bursary. Some phone calls make a lasting impression, and this was certainly one of those. It filled me with determination to see other girls benefit in this way and set me wondering whether it would be possible for Polished Corners to have a hand in Polishing new Corners and collectively to fund a Sixth Form Bursary place of our own.

Ruby says: *"I am so grateful for the generosity of the benefactors who donated funds to enable Francis Holland to provide me with a Bursary. This allowed me to receive a world-class education at an incredible school, something I would not have been able to experience otherwise. I hope that other girls in similar circumstances will be able to thrive at FHS in the same way that I did."*

The Committee was not only supportive but enthusiastic. The small gathering at our 2019 AGM reacted in the same manner. We included a question about the Bursary Fund in the recent survey and again received a positive response to setting up a Quondam-sponsored Bursary place.

Despite the enthusiasm, ladies, and gentlemen, I am somewhat nervous about this ask. Will we succeed and, if we do, how long will it take before we have enough funds in the kitty to send our first pupil through the Sixth Form of Francis Holland, Regent's Park?

The Numbers

Francis Holland is well known to be inclusive and we would love as many of you as possible to contribute in whatever way you can.

The cost of sending a girl to Francis Holland for two years of Sixth Form education, including an allowance for inflation, and to enable her to benefit from educational outings and obtain the necessary study resources is currently £45,000. This magazine is sent out to 2,000 Members and if each of us gave £11.25 a year for two years we would be there in a blink of an eye and our first beneficiary could begin in September 2022. There will, we hope, be some Members who are able and would like to give a large gift, either in a lump sum or as an annual or monthly donation, and others who may like to make a small one-off donation.

Quondam's Support Through the Years

The School has always been dependent on its community to raise funds and the old girls have historically played a key part in this. "In 1891, when Miss Fanny McRae resigned, she handed to her successor a school running on clearly-defined lines, with a strongly marked corporate feeling and a devoted body of Old Girls."

In the first issue of the School magazine an anonymous essayist wrote: "If the question were asked 'What do you regard as the special feature of this School?' it might be fitly replied: - "..... the loyal, almost chivalrous, feeling towards the School and all belonging to it, which does not die out, but



THE QUONDAM BURSARY APPEAL

is carried on" (Quotes from Miss Moberly Bell's book of Francis Holland School published in 1939). Our President, Headmaster Charles Fillingham, has answered that question today: "Francis Holland is academic and kind. The school has strong core values and it knows where it is going."

Quondam has been supportive of its School in so many ways. It joined with the School in 1905 on Mission work for the Lady Margaret Hall Settlement. When the Metropolitan Railway exerted its power of purchase in 1913, seven years before the expiry of the leases granted to the School by Lord Portman, Quondam came to the rescue with a promise to raise a massive £1,500 (Google tells me that is the equivalent of £174,000 now). Quondam exceeded its goal and new premises (part of our existing ones) were found. There have been many repetitions of such generosity: one with which I am familiar is the Quondam Room in the existing Sixth Form Centre which was funded by Quondam in 1971. I remember this well as my Form was the first Sixth Form to use it. How proud we were of it!

Through the wonderful work of the Trust's Director of External Relations, Vanessa McKinley and the Trust's Alumni Relations Officer, Claire Brazer, members of Quondam are still involved in school life with the Mentorship and Career Champion programmes.

Your Committee appreciates that fundraising, especially in our present and uncertain climate, is daunting and challenging but we do so hope you share our enthusiasm and that we will achieve this dream. Quondam is so very lucky in having such a supportive President and such an excellent and professional team from the Francis Holland Schools Trust in Vanessa McKinley (Director of External Relations), Claire Brazer (Alumni Relations Officer) and Holly Mumford (Development Manager) who do so much for us and who are so generous with their time. Without their input and help to produce the enclosed brochure this project would not have been launched, now we need you to see it fly!

I do hope that you will share your Committee's passion for this project and be willing to support it. Gifts which are eligible will have the benefit of GiftAid. Is it just too ambitious to admit that we are harbouring a hope that The Quondam Sixth Form Bursary will become a regular and not just a one off? Please email me at quondamchair@fhs-nw1.org.uk if there is anything you would like to discuss.

LIFE AFTER FHS BY VIVIENNE DURHAM



Former Headmistress Vivienne Durham

When I left FHS in December 2015, after more than eleven years as Headmistress, I had no idea what lay ahead.

Teaching had been my passion for more than 30 years and I had known from the first morning I visited FHS Clarence Gate (as we then called it) as an interview candidate, that this was a school like no other. It was my dream job – and I have never quite believed my luck in being appointed to lead a school of such dedicated and talented girls and colleagues.

My final assembly seems a life-time ago, but I remember as clearly as yesterday, the “Twelve days of Christmas” being sung at record-decibel levels. To this day, I do not know how the balconies in the Hall withstood the energetic cheering and applauding of the Upper and Lower Sixth! The wonderful Kath Whiteman (Deputy Head) and the Senior Leadership Team helped me to get through the emotional roller-coaster of valedictory speeches and goodbyes.

I just about managed to retain my composure, until after the staff Christmas lunch, when the school caretakers came to surprise me with the brass-name plate from my study door, which they had mounted on a wooden plinth. I shall treasure it forever. Working at FHS had been a golden decade in my life, but my husband’s ever more acute illness made the unexpected offer of a non-school role with much reduced hours and commitments, too good to refuse. Technically I was not “retiring”, but I was leaving my life’s work.

“Honour the past, but live for the future” has been my life-long professional and personal mantra – a nuanced gloss on “carpe diem”, I suppose. In Spring 2017, a friend suggested that I consider applying for the vacancy of Chief Executive of the Girls’ Schools Association (GSA). Recently bereaved, I knew I needed a new focus. I also remembered how often I had been inspired by girls or colleagues at FHS who had thrived beyond adversity. Above all, GSA had been invaluable to me as a Head and so, despite my low mood, I submitted an application, dug out my favourite suit and crossed my fingers.

Fast forward to July 2020 and my life today could hardly be more different from anything I imagined when I left FHS. I had no thought of being a CEO, far less of leading a national association, which represents the Headteachers of girls’ independent schools – especially, during the COVID-19 lock-down and beyond. Zoom calls seem to dominate my working my day and I am still amazed that online meetings feel more exhausting than real discussions.

Above all, I have huge admiration for the dedication and skill with which leaders and teachers in independent schools have responded to this crisis.

What is the best part of life beyond FHS? Well emotionally, I feel I have really never left – and today’s increasingly interconnected world means that news of former colleagues, pupils and governors reaches me fairly frequently. Best of all, I meet “Polished Corners”, by chance, and when I least expect it, which is always a delight. Of course, the (pink) box that I stood on for so many years, in order to see over the lectern at assembly, would be my prized possession on a desert island. Not only was it made for me by the legendary “school keeper” Vic Sherriffs, but it was painted pink and signed inside by a long-grown up Upper Sixth year group on their final day – and their messages make me smile to this day.

All great schools should grow, change and adapt, while holding true to their core values. It gives me enduring happiness to see FHS going from strength to strength and Charles Fillingham has been the most kind-hearted of successors. Making history

himself, by being the first male Head of either of the FHS schools, Charles has also brought energy and new ideas to all areas of school life. It is a great bonus that my professional life enables me to catch up with Charles at GSA events – “Wow! Why didn’t I think of that?” is normally my default mode during our discussions!

This Christmas, I shall really, really retire. God willing, there will be more time for family, friends and a large number of interests and hobbies that have been given too little focus, in recent years.

One thing in my life beyond FHS won’t change: my love of a school that will forever feel like home. My very final words to the school in December 2015 ring true to this day:

“Thank you for having me.”



Vivienne Durham is now the Girls’ School Association Chief Executive

QUONDAM REMOTE AGM AND CELEBRATION 2020

STOP PRESS!

BY SUSANNE NEDAS

NEWS OF EXCITING VIRTUAL EVENT FOR A PRESENTATION BY THE HEADMASTER, THE QUONDAM AGM FOLLOWED BY ZOOM CHATS BY YEAR GROUPS

4.00-6.00pm Saturday 7th November 2020

Even a pandemic will not stop Polished Corners holding their AGM and annual celebration. We have, however, had to reinvent the format! Whether you are a regular attendee or have never been before, do please join us! You won't have to travel and, if you are not enjoying yourself, you can just leave! There is nothing to lose! You can come just for the presentations and AGM or just for the chat or for the whole event.

The programme will start at 4.00pm with a live talk from Quondam's President, Headmaster Mr Charles Fillingham. Mr Fillingham is always entertaining as well as informative about what's going on at Francis Holland and it will be well worth tuning in to hear him on the following link at 4.00pm on Saturday, 7th November.

This will lead into the AGM which, hopefully, will be done and dusted within ten minutes. Luckily, there is very little business

to conduct this year so we will hear from our Treasurer, Benita, with the accounts and there are a few members of the Committee due for re-election and then we will hear from any members who have an idea or question to put forward.

After that, we will break into smaller year groups to chat. Where there are only a few people from a particular year attending, we will combine a few consecutive years so you are still likely to recall each other then chat away. All guests will receive a complete guest list so they will know who else is attending and be able to drop in and out of other groups. Just as they might wander around the room spotting old friends they want to catch up with. Felicity Forde, former Pastoral Deputy Head, is hosting the Staff and they will send invitations out to join them too. We will join altogether again to close the day at 5.45pm when Jeannine will announce the answers to the quiz!

You know, I was so disappointed when we realised that we might have to cancel our actual lunch but as I write I am hugely excited! Maybe this will be Quondam's biggest gathering yet!

We do need hosts who have Zoom Pro to host the form chats. Please do visit <https://alumni.fhs-nw1.org.uk/events> to register for the event.

QUONDAM LUNCH 2019

Last year's annual Quondam Lunch was undoubtedly our busiest yet: not only did we have a stunning piano recital from UV pupil Scarlett Brandman, we were also treated to a presentation by Class of 2017 Travel Scholarship winner Ruby MacGregor.

The event began auspiciously with bright blue skies and a champagne reception in the school library, where alumni of all ages, some of whom hadn't returned to the school in decades, re-acquainted themselves with former peers. Included in the gathering were 16 former staff; also returning was Polished Corner Judith Neuling (Class of 1975), who flew in especially from Germany.

With lunch well underway, Ruby MacGregor took to the stage to deliver a presentation about her recent trip to Vietnam, where she taught kindergarten children in Ho Chi Minh City. Ruby, winner of the 2019 Quondam Travel Scholarship, chose

Vietnam as "it's in desperate need of volunteers in many areas due to the effects of recent war and I wanted to make the biggest impact I could." You can read the full report of Ruby's trip on page 16.

Chair of Quondam Susanne Nedas addressed the audience, speaking of the importance of keeping connected and building upon existing relationships with old school friends and the joys of keeping in touch with the school itself. She also talked about the Committee's aspiration to found a Quondam Bursary.

The event ended on a jubilant note; UV pianist Scarlett Brandman, introduced by Quondam Committee Secretary Alison Edelhain née Day, performed a skilled and emotive piano recital, drawing the day to a close with a warm thank you from joint Secretary Vivien Rose née Lind.

With grateful thanks to all who helped make the day a success.



Class of 2009 (L-R) Maya Farr, Sue Drummond (staff), Holly Power, Joanne Green (staff), Iona Denniston, Hannah Roeg, Emma Marshall



Class of 2017 (L-R) Millie Williams, Ruby MacGregor, Serena Khemany (Class of 2016)

ALUMNI REUNIONS

Virtual Reunion of Class of Pupils

born in 1952/53/54 By Susanne Nedas

It is always so daunting to organise a reunion when a group of people become separated not only by time but also by continents. The planning has to start at least a year ahead with fixing a date and then, knowing many have travelled many miles, everything must be perfect. Here was an opportunity, when many of our age group have emptier diaries than usual, to plan a virtual reunion in a matter of weeks.

I started at Francis Holland, Clarence Gate (as it was then known) when I was four or five (1957 or 1958) in the Kindergarten Form which was situated in the classroom by the second doorway to the current library. This form room was divided by folding doors with the Transition, entered by the first door to the current library.

I have kept in touch with Jane Harris (now Grabiner) and Elaine Gastman (now Doran) so had their email addresses, as well as Anne Bowyer (now Paterson), who was a fount of email addresses. Claire Brazer, the School's Alumni Relations Officer, added two or three more. There were many bounce backs from the first round robin email suggesting a Virtual Reunion, but after many conversations we became fifteen. Some had attended only the Junior School, some only the Sixth Form, so there were some who had never met before. Nevertheless, we, bound together by our memories (good and bad) of FHS, stayed online chatting for an amazing two and a half hours.

We spoke in alphabetical order of our maiden names, each giving a brief resume of the last fifty years and interjected with a few stories of our school years – with hindsight maybe we should have just introduced ourselves and gone down memory lane chatting about various friends and teachers. I circulated some school photos before the reunion to jog everyone's memory. It is strange how, when you look at forty to fifty-year-old group photos, images prompt the memory to come up with names long since forgotten. I hope, judging from the lovely emails I have received, that everyone had a good time and really encourage anyone with a little time to spare to create this experience.



Top Row left to right: Lesley Powell (Canada), Susanne Quastel (UK), Jane Harris (UK), Naomi Halsted (Israel). Second Row left to right: Atalanti Hadjipateras (Switzerland), Despina Fafalios (Greece), Elaine Gastman (USA), Nancy Hawley (USA). Third Row left to right: Melanie Franklin (USA), Julia Hodges (France), Vicky Veal (Canada), Caroline Ede (UK). Fourth Row left to right: Anne Bantin (UK), Anne Bowyer (UK), Jane Seymour (UK)



Class of 1979 40 year Reunion Party, October 2019

By Maria Hadjipateras, Class of 1979

40 years! What a long time ago it may sound like but when we actually all reunited it felt as though the years had flown past. We had a fabulous evening reconnecting, reminiscing and immediately decided to set up a WhatsApp group named 'Polished Corners' - promising to keep everyone in touch and stay connected.

We were warmly welcomed to the School by Headmaster Charles Fillingham, and some of us were offered a tour to see all the changes made over the years. Together with flowing wine and delicious canapés, the School provided us with some old photographs from the archives, which brought about much laughter.

Many of us have kept in touch over the decades but it was particularly exciting to see some of our old teachers; in particular Felicity Forde who very kindly initiated and helped to organise the gathering. I personally feel very privileged to have been part of FHS for 14 years and I hold tons of fond memories.

We had been a lively, sporty and very friendly year group and the energy in the room brought back so many stories from the past. Some girls had even flown in for the event and we're all looking forward to future Francis Holland reunions and other gatherings arranged by Quondam and the school.

We'd like to thank everyone who helped make our reunion so memorable. It was a truly successful evening.

Class of 1987 Virtual Reunion Party

Many thanks to alumna Julia Strauss, Class of 1987, who organised a virtual Zoom reunion on Thursday May 28th. Said Julia, "Thirteen alumnae of our class from the 1980-87 group met up this afternoon - three live in North America, one in South America, one in India and the rest in the UK. (Didn't manage to get all thirteen on at the same time, hence only twelve in the photo!) It's the first time some of us had seen each other in thirty-three years!!"



Top row: Kathy Stewart, Julia Strauss, Laura Hossenlop, Dena Lalic (née Othman). Middle row: Lizzie Peskin, Mel Williams (née Cartwright), Lucy Lyons, Payal Asnani (née Gangarami). Bottom row: Sarah Jefferys, Daisy Moore, Lale Nicoletti (née Kutluoglu), Virginia Issaris Sere.

LASTING FRIENDSHIPS BY ROSEMARY MACKEY

Alumna Rosemary Mackey (née Wiggins) wrote in with this wonderful tribute to her peers, highlighting the importance of strong alumnae friendships during challenging times. Rosemary writes: "The support of these long-time friends (from almost 70 years ago and for two even longer because they started in kindergarten) is really important. I hope this is helpful and might inspire other classes."

"Like all the classes that had gone before and have come after us, we all had 'best' friends while we were at FHS. We kept in touch with them while we began our chosen careers, married and had families but it wasn't until about 2004 that we made a conscious effort to meet as a larger group. We think the impetus was that, while most of our class lived in England, two, Diana (Wilson) Carlton and Rosemary (Wiggins) Mackey had strayed further afield and lived in Australia and the United States respectively, and were coming to London at the same time with their husbands. This prompted the first of many reunions since then with an ever-expanding group that has included as many as 11 of our class.

Our first gathering in a lovely Italian restaurant included husbands, many of whom didn't know each other, but delighted in all our "Polished Corner" stories. Subsequently in other years, we have met for a walk along the Regent's Canal from Islington to the Limehouse Docks, met for lunches at various of our houses, including the Charlton's in Hertfordshire at bluebell season, and the annual Quondam luncheons at the school.

Perhaps, most excitingly, we celebrated our 50th anniversary of leaving school in New York City and northern Vermont in October during "leaf peeping" (October) time.

Most recently, Di Carlton had us all connected on WhatsApp and during our current COVID-19 lockdowns, we have ventured into Zoom calls which are challenging given the time differences between the UK, USA and Australia!

We always have lots to talk about – catching up on the news of children and grandchildren and, before this year, holiday adventures we have enjoyed. Whenever and wherever we meet, we are the party that is having the best time!

We would love to find other members of our class. Claire Brazer, FHS Alumni Relations (Claire.brazer@fhst.org.uk) can get us in touch, so if you are from the Class of 1958 or know the alumni listed below, please do email in."

Pictured left:

Rosemary Mackey née Wiggins,
Rosamund Wheeler née Machray,
Ann Charlton née Wigg, Celia Read née
Vaughn-Lee, Elizabeth Cownden née
Wheeler (at back), Alison Brooke née Baxter,
Joan Mushin née Behrman (at back), Diane
Carlton née Wilson, Janet Politi née Henry.

Deceased:

Jessica Garvin, Jane Parsons née Llewellyn,
Victoria Bingham.



QUONDAM WRITING PRIZE WINNERS

In light of the pandemic, this year's Quondam Writing Prize theme was changed to Covid-19. We were delighted to receive an array of thought-provoking and absorbing essays, poems and stories. In the end the judges had the difficult task of selecting the winners. We are pleased to announce the following Junior and Senior Category winners are:

JUNIOR CATEGORY

1st - Poppy Brewster LIV

2nd - Saiiba Shamnath IIIM

3rd - Clare Hodges LIVM

Have you seen by Poppy Brewster

Have you seen the empty streets in the closed down cities
shops, pubs and restaurants now an empty space.
Places of worship once for all the people,
now the doors have closed to every living face.

Have you seen the old man staring out of his window
isolated, lonely, time not on his side.
Families in lockdown uncertain of their future,
nowhere to turn to and nowhere to hide.

Have you seen the young nurse starting on her night shift,
tired and uneasy no protection anywhere.
Volunteers and carers, worried and uncertain,
doctors work all hours; how can this be fair?

BUT

I have seen the nation clapping on their doorsteps.
I have seen the families supporting with pride.
I have seen the wildlife that we had once forgotten.
I have seen communities standing side by side.

SO

When you see our nation come together hand in hand,
remember those who pass before us let us understand.
We are united together for one thing
to walk this journey before us, undivided we shall sing.

SENIOR CATEGORY

1st - Deia Leykind LVIJT

2nd - Cara Bossom LVC

3rd - Sophie Hudson UVL

Covid 19 by Deia Leykind

I held my breath. I was tucked behind a cluster of filao trees, perched precariously on a fallen tree trunk. My knees were drawn up to my chin, an attempt to make myself as inconspicuous as possible. I clamped a sweaty palm over my mouth and then, as a second thought, put the other one on top. Silence was key.

The air was sticky and simmered with heat, and I was grateful for the shade that the tree fronds offered. I longed for a tall glass of water flooded with ice cubes. Or better yet a popsicle! The thought of a frozen cherry popsicle gave me an involuntary shudder. Oh!

A slight rustling sound coming from behind me made me jump. My ears pricked up as I strained to discern if the source of the noise was friend or foe. Tentatively, I began to crawl towards the other side of the trees when I perceived a hazy nebulous shape advancing towards me. Loose sandy blonde hair streamed across its face, and it was clad in a neon pink swimsuit dotted with butterflies. Foe. Definitely foe. Just as I got up to run she saw me. Too late.

"Found you! Found you! I found you!" she jubilantly squealed. Charlie gave me a hand up, and I brushed the sand from my hands and knees. "Well it took you long enough" I grumbled. Charlie just giggled.

Then we were racing down the path towards the sea. Some others were there too. My cousins? I don't think so. Maybe Charlie's. "Last one there's a rotten egg!" I intoned tauntingly.

I ran and I ran and I ran. No time to stop for breath. The wind cooled my sweltering flesh and benignly nudged me on. I supposed this was what it was to be free. I could feel it in my aching limbs, taste it in the fierce roaring of the wind. I stole a hasty glance behind me, and grinned when I saw that I had

overtaken the rest of the herd by far. I plunged into the opaline pool of liquid before me. Fragments of light and colour danced on the surface tantalisingly, and the zestful waves bobbed up and down, moving about me, playfully pulling me to and fro. The interminable movement comforted me. The sea would never be static, and neither would I.

A splash of droplets sprayed my face as the others tumbled in. Too enervated to speak, we floated about in silence for a few moments, enjoying the sea's deliciously icy embrace.

Oh, to be in the sea again! Why, the sea was the most wonderful thing in the world. She was beguiling - all those blues! - and she knew it. She was seductive too- every time I passed her by she would call to me, her outstretched hands beckoning me in, enchanting me; to say no to her was impossible. But most of all she was kind. She would cradle me in her arms, and make my worries seem so small, so insignificant! "It doesn't matter", she would reassure me, and I would believe her.

Later that day, or perhaps a different day. Charlie and I were seated on that swinging chair on the porch. It was evening, the last rays of sunlight had dissolved into night hours ago, and we were now honoured with the presence of the stars. I thought they winked at me, as if they knew something I did not. The soft murmur of voices, interrupted only by an occasional hearty laugh, made me feel drowsy. It was past our bedtime, but we'd begged our mother to let us stay up for her birthday and, too preoccupied to argue with us, she complied. Holding back yawns, with my head on her shoulder, and her hand in mine, we drowsily revered about all the glories the future held. Parties, dancing, first loves. We could not wait.

(continued on page 15)

These scenes flit back to me one by one, a dizzying montage of faces and places colourful and bright. But these are memories, beautiful, shining, intangible memories. Yet I am locked in the all too tangible present. I set the photo album aside.

The future looks so dreary now. And for how much longer? Oh how I long to crawl back and seek refuge in the bosom of the past - why had I taken it for granted?

I gazed out of my window. It was a warm April afternoon, spring's soft warmth called to me - "why do you not come out?" she wailed. It was all wrong. A shroud of despondency hung around the frail limbs of the country. COVID-19, like a manic mechanical hand, hovered above, ready to grab its next victim. Who would it take next?

I felt as if I were in a papiermaché parallel world, living in the shadows of reality - everything was grey and seemed to be crumbling beneath my fingers. Everything used to be vivid and busy and exciting. I felt much heavier now.

As I looked at the ghost town that lay below my window - uninhabited, unappreciated, unseen, I wondered if things would ever go back to the way they had been before.

Appreciate the little things in life. Everyone said it. I promise I will, next time. Next time I will listen.

EVENTS

FHS Joint Concert at St Marylebone Church

On Thursday 13th February, we joined together with Francis Holland Sloane Square for a joint concert in the beautiful St Marylebone Parish Church. Held on our 142nd Birthday, it was a wonderful occasion in memory of our founder, the Reverend Canon Francis Holland. FHS Regent's Park's String Orchestra performed Vivaldi's Concerto in G, and as an extra treat, we heard a wonderful performance of Edvard Grieg's Holberg Suite by FHS Sloane Square. Exceptional cellists Saskia Teeger and Teresa De Oliveira Munoz De La Espada represented each school as they came together to perform Vivaldi's Concerto in G for two cellos. We were also fortunate enough to be joined by world-renowned violinist and alumna Laure Chan, who left FHS Regent's Park in 2011. The choirs of both schools were incredible with their performance of John Rutter's Requiem as a combined choir of almost 130 voices. Thank you to our talented pupils, parents, staff and alumni for joining us for a wonderful evening of music. A huge thank you to our Directors of Music, Miss Una Murphy (FHS Regent's Park) and Miss Helen Vickery (FHS Sloane Square) for putting the evening together.



FHS Joint Concert



FHS Inter-House Drama Competition

Inter-House Drama Competition judged by FHS alumna

We were delighted to welcome an alumna, and star of many such productions herself, Amelia Mehra, who kindly judged our competition with wonderful enthusiasm. Amelia is currently finishing her studies at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama.

Many thanks to Amelia for giving up her time to return to FHS for the benefit of our pupils.

QUONDAM TRAVEL SCHOLARSHIP 2019

Class of 2017 Polished Corner Ruby MacGregor was 2019's winner of the Quondam Travel Scholarship. Ruby travelled to Vietnam to work with disadvantaged children.



Ruby used flashcards to teach children English

In August 2019, with the generosity of Quondam behind me, I set off to teach English to disadvantaged children in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Although, to many of us, the atrocities of the Vietnam War are a distant memory or even just a feature within a history textbook, the impact of the war still resonates with every family in Vietnam. Many of the children at the school I volunteered at were impacted indirectly by the chemical weapon Agent Orange, which can cause devastating genetic effects. I strongly believe that all children should have the right to an education that will prepare them for whatever path they want to take in life. As the effects of the war are still felt by Vietnamese children to this day, I have long wanted to give my time to provide what I can to help them along the road to reaching their potential.

Prior to the start of lessons, I attended both a cooking session and a language session in order to gain an understanding of the cultural aspects of Vietnam. Whilst the Vietnamese language turned out to be extremely complex and my accent terrible, to this day I still make the 'summer rolls' we were taught how to prepare in our cooking class.

Each school day consisted of an early rise, followed by the short walk over to the school. Despite the language barrier becoming very much apparent on the first day, the children quickly put me at ease with their joyful demeanour and quirky personalities. Each week I planned educational but fun lessons, drawing flashcards and creating songs for the children. I was so impressed by the children's unwavering positivity, as well as by the effort they put into every single piece of work.

Teaching finished at 2.00pm every day, giving me time to explore the cultural and historical side of Ho Chi Minh City and deepen my understanding of Vietnam. The standout attraction was without doubt the war museum, which was an emotionally taxing, albeit powerful and informative, experience. I also took the time to explore the famous Ben Thanh Market, which was an experience like no other. The sheer number of items, colours and scents was overwhelming, and I made sure to pick up a few interesting-looking foods to try.

I am so grateful to Quondam for providing me with the opportunity to carry out voluntary work within an area I am passionate about, all whilst fully immersing myself in the Vietnamese culture. I left Vietnam aware of the distinct sense of joy radiated by everyone I had met, despite often having very little. To this day my experiences have shaped me, and I hope that I may have had even a small impact on the children's lives as they go forward to reach their goals.



Ruby enjoyed cooking classes in Vietnam

UNIVERSITY DESTINATIONS OF LEAVERS' 2020

Baring, Poppy
 Bachu, Simrat
 Bonny, Connie
 Bor, Phoebe
 Dineen Vanstone, Caelo
 Dodgson, Manrica
 Drukier, Mathilda
 Edmunds, Aleesa
 Filippi, Letizia
 Ford, Isobel
 Frederikse, Ruby May
 Gavanski, Thea
 Hajipateras, Kalliopi
 Handelsman, Allegra
 Kay, Eliza
 Khursheed, Natasha
 Knox, Isabella
 Li, Jiachun (Emily)
 Livingstone, Olivia
 Loomba, Devina
 Mahapatra-Andrade, Isabella
 McBurney, Charlotte
 McNeil, Courtney
 Mitford, Clementine
 Moss, Minnie
 Perez, Eva
 Radcliffe, Emma
 Rafter, Cecilia
 Rawla, Ria
 Roberts, Amy
 Saunders, Olivia
 Sheehan, Stephanie
 Sindi, Talia
 Stick, Anki
 Suresan, Swathy
 Therond, Gabrielle
 Winters, Rachel
 Yazji, Maria

CENTRAL ST MARTINS
 BRIGHTON
 NYU, USA
 CENTRAL ST MARTINS
 CENTRAL ST MARTINS
 MANCHESTER
 DURHAM
 KCL
 UCL
 SUSSEX
 CHARLES H CECIL STUDIOS, FLORENCE
 UCL
 DURHAM
 QML
 EXETER
 KCL
 NEWCASTLE
 UCL
 NORTHEASTERN, USA
 BRISTOL
 BATH
 KENT (DEFERRED)
 OXFORD
 MANCHESTER
 LEEDS
 OXFORD
 UEA
 DARTMOUTH, USA
 LOUGHBOROUGH
 NEWCASTLE
 MANCHESTER
 EDINBURGH
 GEORGETOWN, USA
 KULEUVEN, BELGIUM
 BIRMINGHAM
 LEEDS
 EXETER
 WARWICK

Art Foundation
 Psychology and Criminology
 Liberal Arts
 Art Foundation
 Art Foundation
 Medicine
 Archaeology & Ancient Civilisations
 Neuroscience & Psychology
 Biochemistry
 Anthropology & International Development
 Art
 Russian & History
 Archaeology
 Politics & Sociology
 Business & Management
 International Development
 Chemistry
 Pharmacy
 Liberal Arts
 Anthropology
 International Management & Spanish
 Drama & Theatre
 German
 Mechanical Engineering
 Biological Sciences
 History
 Drama & Creative Writing
 Liberal Arts
 Bioengineering
 Geography
 Psychology
 Mechanical Engineering
 Liberal Arts
 Business Administration
 Economics
 Criminology
 Liberal Arts
 History & Sociology

GAP YEAR STUDENTS TO START UNIVERSITY IN 2021

Allen, Lily
 Von Malaise, Maia
 Commander, Olivia

de Winter, Lola
 Cocco, Ines
 Unwin, Hannah

Upton, Emilia
 Joukovski, Stas
 Wilson, Sadie

Irani-Kermani, Parastoo
 Waite, Isabella
 Yuxin, Wu

POST A LEVEL

Gill-Boniaszczuk, Kate

Geography with Foundation Year at Brighton

OBITUARIES

Joanna de Bertodano née Winsor

I should like to notify Quondam that Joanna de Bertodano (née Winsor) died on June 16th 2020. She attended Francis Holland (Clarence Gate) from 1946 to July 1954. She completed her 'A' levels in Switzerland, at the Chatelard school. Submitted by Margaret Moss.

Professor Margaret Burbidge née Peachey

Astronomer and Astrophysicist, Professor Margaret Burbidge died in April aged 100 years. She is most notable for her prolific career in astronomy. Margaret attended FHS before studying astronomy and mathematics at UCL, where she graduated in 1939.

Margaret went on to become the first female director of the Royal Greenwich Observatory in 1972 and was also involved in planning the Hubble Space Telescope.

Unfortunately, sex discrimination blighted her earlier career: Margaret applied for a second time to join the staff at Mount Wilson Observatory in the U.S in 1955, and was again turned down because of her gender. Her husband applied and won the post! Margaret then took over the fellowship he had been chasing at the nearby California Institute of Technology in Pasadena. When he went observing, she went along as his assistant. In reality, however, she operated the telescope and ran the observing programme. In 1994, Margaret recalled that the rejection opened her eyes to gender-based discrimination, "A guiding operational principle in my life was activated: if frustrated in one's endeavour by a stone wall or any kind of blockage, one must find a way around it — another route towards one's goal. This is advice I have given to many women facing similar situations."

Her academic achievements include co-authoring a landmark paper on astronomy which was published in the *Reviews of Modern Physics* in 1957 and described how chemical elements are created from hydrogen in the stars.

Retiring in 1988, Margaret subsequently became Professor Emerita. In 2005

she and her husband were jointly awarded the gold medal of the Royal Astronomical Society.

Margaret died after a fall on 5th April 2020 and is survived by their daughter, Sarah, and a grandson, Conner.

Top: an edition from the Birmingham Post in 1971 announces one of Britain's 'top scientific jobs is to go to a woman'.

Bottom: Margaret in the 1950s

Top science job goes to woman

One of Britain's top scientific jobs — directorship of the Royal Greenwich Observatory — is to go to a woman.

The appointment of Prof. Margaret Burbidge was announced yesterday by the Science Research Council.

She is to succeed Sir Richard Woolley, the present director, when he retires at the end of this year, and will take up her post next summer.

Sir Richard was also Astronomer Royal. Whether Mrs. Burbidge will take that post as well, to confirm her as the first woman to be Britain's top astronomer, is still uncertain.

The two posts were separated earlier this year. Appointment of the Astronomer Royal is the Queen's prerogative.

Mrs. Burbidge, now Professor of Astronomy in the University of California, is a British citizen, as is her husband, Geoffrey Burbidge, Professor of Physics at the same university.

They are two of the most



Prof. Burbidge

highly regarded astronomers and astrophysicists in the world. Mrs. Burbidge became a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1964. They have one daughter.

Mrs. Burbidge was assistant director and the acting director of the London University Observatory from 1948 to 1951, before going to California. She was educated at the Francis Holland School, London, and University College, London.



STAY INVOLVED WITH FRANCIS HOLLAND SCHOOL

ALUMNI MENTORSHIP SCHEME

SUPPORTING THE TRANSITION TO THE SIXTH FORM AT FHS



At Francis Holland, through a planned programme of Careers Education, Information and Guidance, the Careers Department aims to help every girl to develop the skills and abilities to realise her full potential and play an effective and rewarding role in wider society. Alumni can support the school by supporting our Careers Department and becoming a Careers Champion.

Champions provide a range of opportunities for pupils and fellow alumni, including mentoring, interview practice, work experience opportunities, lectures, network contacts and judging school competitions. Our Champions cover a diverse range of industries and we are always looking for more, so volunteer today by emailing alumni@fhs-nw1.org.uk

In conjunction with the School, alumni relations have developed a mentoring scheme for our new LVI students, in order to support their transition from Year 11 in their current school to the Sixth Form here at FHS. We are fortunate enough to have 12 alumni mentors signed up to the scheme, which commenced this September. Mentors will provide support to the students through a series of 30-minute one-to-one sessions once a week for the first month and then 30 minutes every fortnight and will span one academic year.

THE QUONDAM SURVEY BY SUSANNE NEDAS

A big thank you to all those who responded. We have left the survey up and running and hope to hear from more of you. Surveys only become a true representation of what members of an Association such as ours want if they are filled in by the majority. It's a big ask but please do follow this link <https://tinyurl.com/y9ez9d2v> and let us know your thoughts!

The Committee were relieved to read that 59% of the responders were 'very satisfied' with Quondam, that 41% were 'somewhat satisfied' and that only one individual was 'dissatisfied'. Equally, we were disappointed to learn that 31% of you did not know there was a Quondam Alumni Network! This is brilliantly run by the Trust's Alumni Relations Officer, Claire Brazer, and it is well worthwhile keeping an eye on it for news of the School, fellow Polished Corners, and school events to which Quondam members are invited. You can access the network here <https://alumni.fhs-nw1.org.uk>

We asked if you enjoyed reading the magazine and were pleased to hear that 66% of you did but we also noted from this result that there is room for improvement – 'can do better'! We promise we will try, and have made a few additions to this 2020 edition. We hope to introduce more changes in 2021 but need input from more of you to make sure we get it right! We listed some activities and asked which you would enjoy. By far the most popular was Year Group Reunions. If you would like to instigate one for your year, do please contact Claire at alumni@fhs-nw1.org.uk and she will try and make it happen. About a third of those who responded wanted to keep the AGM and the lunch as the main Quondam event but slightly

more than that were interested in either having a drinks and canapés event on a weekday evening or alternating the two.

The best news for the Committee was that 91% are in favour of Quondam establishing a Quondam Bursary Fund. Hence this is our principal focus and why a leaflet has dropped out of your magazine!

There was some interest in becoming a Careers' Champion or a Mentor. I know the School will be appreciative of this and Claire will be in touch with all who have so generously offered to participate. By far the most popular articles to see in the Polished Corners Magazine were, in order of popularity:

News from Old Girls and Retired Teachers

Short Reminiscences by Fellow Polished Corners

Features on Retired Members of Staff (hence our new "Life After Francis Holland" article)

Marriages, Births & Obituaries

Articles written by current pupils.

We have included the winning Quondam Writing Prize Entries in this magazine for the first time.

Those items in red are dependent on what you send us! We would love to publish more!

Under half reported being in touch with their school peers. Please do use the Quondam Alumni Network and reunite with old friends or acquaintances through Claire Brazer.



FRANCIS HOLLAND SCHOOL
REGENT'S PARK

CLASS OF 2000 20 YEAR REUNION



WEDNESDAY 13TH JANUARY 2021

PLEASE JOIN US AT 6.30PM
IN THE LIBRARY
FRANCIS HOLLAND SCHOOL

RSVP BY 6TH JANUARY
ALUMNI@FHS-NW1.ORG.UK

QUONDAM REMOTE CELEBRATION & AGM 2020

Sadly, we had to cancel the annual Quondam Lunch, which had been scheduled to be held on November 7th in the School Hall. In its place we are now holding a virtual event which will incorporate a presentation by the Headmaster, the AGM and reunions organised by year group. For more information, please visit <https://alumni.fhs-nw1.org.uk/events>

CAREERS

Email alumni@fhs-nw1.org.uk to express your interest and tell us more about your current employment.

Join one (or more!) career groups online:

<https://alumni.fhs-nw1.org.uk/clubs>

Complete an online career biography for our pupils to read:

<https://alumni.fhs-nw1.org.uk/announcements>

UPCOMING EVENTS 2020

Please check the school website events page <https://fhs-nw1.org.uk/events> for up-to-the-minute information regarding venues and timings. Events may be subject to changes and/or cancellations in light of Covid-19 restrictions.

November

- 4 Virtual Joint Careers Fair with FHS Sloane Square - 6.30-8.30pm
- 7 Quondam Remote AGM and Celebration
- 26 Autumn Concert, 6.00pm venue TBC

December

- 2-4 School play, 'Into the Woods' 6.30pm, School Hall
- 15 Christmas Carol Concert 3.00pm, St Marylebone Church

January

- 13 Class of 2000 20 Year Reunion

KEEP IN TOUCH!

If you have changed your contact details or name, or if you have a new job or qualification, please update your details on the Quondam alumni network at <https://alumni.fhs-nw1.org.uk> and select your name in the top right hand corner, then 'my settings'.

We are committed to communicating responsibly with regards to the environment and would therefore like to encourage you to visit the alumni network where you can opt to receive this magazine, and other communications, electronically, by following the instructions above.



QUONDAM TRAVEL SCHOLARSHIP 2020/2021

Unfortunately we had to cancel the Quondam Travel Scholarship 2020 due to travel restrictions as a result of the pandemic, but will award two prizes next year so that those girls, who might have entered this year, have another chance. The closing date for applications is 22nd March 2021. Email quondam@fhs-nw1.org.uk to apply.