

Polished **CORNERS**

2021

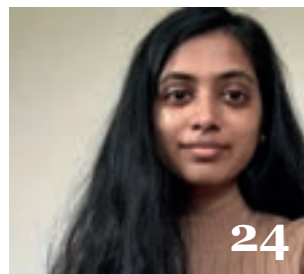
**Quondam's Newest
Members**



Polished CORNERS 2021

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From the Headmaster

Welcome to the 2021 edition of Polished Corners Magazine



Prize-Giving is a double-visaged creature: Janus-like, it is an opportunity to look back at the year and to look forwards too. This year, I was pleased to be able to move Prize-Giving to the very last day of the Summer Term and this is the place in the annual calendar in which I hope it will remain.

Looking back on the academic year just gone, I thanked my colleagues for their hard work; I praised the girls and staff who had continued with clubs, societies, drama and music; I acknowledged the learning and teaching accomplished in lockdown and in facemasks and in the cold, open-windowed classrooms of December; I reflected on the last week of the summer term, the so-called Discovery Week, where girls acquired new skills and learned new things – there were unforgettable experiences, such as the Science Fair and the Science Museum, European cookery lessons, a whole year group dancing to the music of West Side Story and a “philosothon” (marathon of philosophy), a Model United Nations and Kew Gardens.

Other schools staggered to the end of term; some even had to close early in order to comply with coronavirus restrictions. At Francis Holland, we roared to the end of term and made Discovery Week a great success!

Looking forwards, I was delighted to be able to say that the generosity of parents had kick-started a programme of investment in the buildings. Last September, we opened the Ivor Place Seminar Room, in June we opened the new Classics Centre just across the road on Ivor Place and there is more work underway. When girls returned after the holidays, the downstairs toilets were fitted out afresh. The Art room had been brought bang up to date; and the Music rooms, including the Music Practice rooms, were fully renewed and refurbished; the Lecture Theatre had been cleared out and repurposed as a Drama Studio. It was a massive package of investment in the Performing and Creative Arts – the first such investment in over 30 years. Next summer, I suggest that we overhaul the sciences and that we create a STEM Centre in the heart of the school – more details next year!

Before that, we have in train the biggest single investment in our site ever. Just over £5 million has been set aside to create a new Sixth Form Centre on Linhope Street. It is just 90 seconds away from the corner of our main site – slightly less if it’s raining and you’re in a hurry. The change of use planning application is currently with Westminster City Council and, by

the time this edition of Polished Corners goes to print we should be able to add in a STOP PRESS note to confirm that their Planning Committee has given the green light. I'll keep you posted. The school is in good heart. Although we have both endured and enjoyed the craziest year since our foundation in 1878, we remain the magnificent school we have always been and we are on the right track for the future.



Charles Fillingham
Headmaster

STOP PRESS

Great news! The Planning Committee has now given the green light for converting Linhope Street into a school.



Above: Pupils on their first day of Autumn Term



From the Chair of Quondam

Susanne Nedas is the current Chair of Quondam. She is both a former pupil and a former parent at FHS and has been Chair of Quondam for the last three years.

Dear Fellow Polished Corners,

Who on earth would have thought that 2021 would carry on the trials and tribulations of 2020? We should all feel exceptionally proud of the strength with which our School has weathered the storms of Covid and all the disruption it has caused. I was at the opening of the new Classics Centre which happened during the brief period when gatherings of up to 30 were allowed outside. It was a cold, wet and and grizzly afternoon, but the girls sang and the Headmaster spoke and there was such joy that no-one cared about the weather! I also 'attended' this year's Prize-Giving, albeit remotely, and felt the same warmth, sense of achievement, drive, compassion, and calmness of the School, even through the screen.

The excellent examination results show just how much has been achieved and certainly congratulations are due to all concerned for the hard work, immense concentration, and ability to adapt to new ways of both teaching and learning.

Many of you will remember Mr Harry Clayton who taught History and Mr Adrian



Smith who taught English and Music. Both have left this year after twenty years at Francis Holland. The School and all the pupils they have taught owe them a huge debt of gratitude and we all wish them every happiness in their futures and hope they will keep in touch through Quondam.

Your committee has met every term, with a couple of extra meetings to discuss the arrangements for the Spring Drinks Party which then, like so many other things, had to be cancelled and renamed the Autumn Drinks Party – thankfully it didn't see any more seasons and we celebrated in style in October following a delicious tea for those Polished Corners who preferred a day time event. The AGM was sandwiched in between the tea and drinks parties.

The main topic for discussion at Committee Meetings this academic year has been the revamping of the magazine. You will have noticed immediately that it has a different format!

Thank you to all the contributors for taking the time to produce such good reading. I so enjoyed reading each and every article you sent. It is fascinating to read your memories of FHS from the 40's through to



Above, the Autumn Drinks Party and Afternoon Tea, both held on October 11th

the 80's. The school I joined in 1958 seems remarkably similar to the one described by Katherine Holland, Yvonne Fisher and Margaret Moss who were there a decade before me! Huge evolution was brought about by Heather Brigstocke and continued under her successors. Further stories of life at FHS are in "Running in the Family".

I recommend the "NHS & Me" for an eye opening insight into life behind the scenes during Covid.

Huge thanks go to Claire Brazer who agreed to take on the mammoth task of re-inventing our magazine and has worked tirelessly and endlessly to produce this first edition of the new Polished Corners Magazine. We hope you enjoy it!

Quondam is a multi-generational members' Club and we past pupils of FHS, Regent's Park, aka Clarence Gate, are the members and our past teachers are the honorary members. Its magazine and activities need to appeal to all of us. Please do complete the survey on page 8 to tell us what you'd like from your club.

This year we co-opted two new young members to the Committee, Shivani Gohil and Srutti Suresan. They were then elected at the AGM on October 11th. You will meet them on pages 23-30 and I can tell you they have already added interesting dimensions to your Committee's discussions.

Congratulations from all at Quondam to our President, Mr Charles Fillingham, on his prestigious appointment as Headmaster of Solihull School. We are delighted for him and thrilled for us that he remains Headmaster and our President until January 2023!

I hope you all feel, as I do, that we are all still a part of the strong community of Francis Holland School, Regent's Park.

With warm wishes to all our Francis Holland community and hoping everyone has a good year ahead,

Susanne Nedas (née Quastel)

Pupil 1958-1971

Parent 1988-2000

Upcoming events

A Virtual Quondam Celebration

Our second ever!

Saturday 15th January, 2022

4-6pm

Following on from the success of last year's virtual celebration, we are hosting another online event for a second year running. This is your chance to re-connect with Polished Corners from across the globe and catch up with former classmates and members of staff. If you would like to organise a year group reunion, or for more information, please email alumni@fhs-nw1.org.uk

Please save the date - further details will be announced nearer the time.



Quondam Survey 2021

Your Committee does its best but it can do so much better with your help! Quondam is your Club and it must work for you – please do let us know how by completing our survey via this link:

<https://forms.office.com/r/oEuKBPVsv3>

If you are full of ideas please do email
Susanne Nedas at
Quondamchair@fhs-nw1.org.uk



Quondam Sixth Form Bursary

The gift of education is priceless. It cannot be lost or taken away.

It is **nearly a year** since the launch of our Quondam Sixth Form Bursary and we have **50%** of the funds needed and this from just **41** donors. Let's make this bursary representative of as many of us as possible. Every pound counts!

Please do be part of this effort **and help change a young girl's life**. Wouldn't it be fantastic if we collect enough funds to send our first pupil through the Sixth Form at FHS this next Autumn Term?

There is no better way we can show our support for and love of our school than contributing, in however small or large a way, to the Sixth Form education of a talented young girl who otherwise would not be able to attend a great school like ours.

Here's what some of our sponsors say:

So that others may benefit from this wonderful school.
Felicity Forde –
past PE Teacher/
Geography Teacher/
Pastoral Deputy
Head

The Quondam Bursary Fund is set to transform the life of young women in London. I am pleased to support this scheme and I am delighted that the Polished Corners are rallying around the school. Thank you.
Charles Fillingham

I feel so lucky to have had an FHS education, and I am proud to support the Quondam Sixth Form Bursary. Well done for all the money you have raised so far, wishing you all the best on reaching your target rapidly.
Tamsin Ogilvie née Tillier

I have seen many times how transformational such a Bursary can be, and for a school for which I have so much love and respect I feel honoured to be able to contribute in a small way.
I like thinking that our first recipient is out there somewhere, though we don't yet know her!
Jeannine Addinall, Former Deputy Head

I was so happy to assist in a very small way. I am not well off, but was glad to support in appreciation for the education I received at FHS and for the friendship of Susanne's dear late sister, Margot Grant née Quastel.

Karen Ann McKinna

What a great cause - fingers crossed you meet your target All good wishes from Sue, Ted and Zoe Silkstone

Delighted to be able to help a student take advantage of the education FHS offers in the Sixth Form and reach her full potential.

Caroline Rolls

We're delighted to support this wonderful initiative – FHS truly offers an excellent education as well as provides a stable environment that fosters personal growth.

Thank you! Shivani, Athena, Isolde, Grace, Tilly, Zoe, Georgia.

Class of 2015

It's great to support this bursary, as someone who joined Francis Holland for sixth form only due to my family moving to London. It is great to be able to help other young women to attend.

Charlotte West

Happy to support a great initiative.
Carole Harris

If we'd had a daughter, I should have wanted to send her to FHS, so this as a lovely way to help towards someone else's daughter enjoy the experience.

Benita Mathews née Thomas

Having enjoyed and benefitted from an education at FHS I would like others, regardless of means, to have this same opportunity. Vivien
Rose née Lind

Thank you for facilitating this brilliant opportunity – I hope that it can grow and benefit more girls over time. Katie Fiszman

So that other girls can also benefit from the wonderful education I had at Francis Holland. Atalanti Moquette

I am delighted to help support an individual who otherwise would not have been able to attend such a wonderful school and know that with all the opportunities provided at FHS, their full potential will be reached.

Alison (née Day) and David Edelshain

The donation which touched our hearts the most was a lifelong contribution from Evangelia Kordomenidis who has pledged a donation in memory of her late sister. Evangelia writes: "In memory of my sister Angeliki who was also at FHS and who died aged 21. We both had a wonderful time at FHS and I am quite sad that my daughters will probably miss out as we are living in Switzerland."



How to donate

- Bank transfer to:
 - Account name: Francis Holland Schools Trust
 - Address: NatWest Bank, 2 Sloane Gardens, London, SW1W 8DL
 - Sort Code: 60-19-26
 - Account Number: 23725168
 - Reference: RP-FUND-QUOND
- Please make cheques payable to Francis Holland Schools Trust and post to: Quondam Chairman, c/o Accounts Department, Francis Holland Schools Trust, 35 Bourne Street, London SW1W 8JA.
- Or visit our JustGiving page: www.justgiving.com/fundraising/quondamsixthformbursaryappeal or just search "Quondam Sixth Form Bursary" in Google.
- Or direct via the school website: <https://www.fhs-nw1.org.uk/support-us/fhs-giving/how-to-donate/> Please select Quondam Bursary from the drop down list.

If you are a UK taxpayer, the value of your donations can increase by 25% under the Gift Aid scheme – at no additional cost to you. Please ensure you check the Gift Aid box when donating so we can maximise the value of your gift.

giftaid it



Actual Quondam Parties!

Goodbye virtual



After the AGM, at 6.30pm the Hall began to fill! Words can't really say how thrilling it was to see each other again and to be back at school! Some of you hadn't been back for years! The photos say it all! Do come to next year's party.....rally a group of your year together. Let us know through the survey what sort of party would work for you!

<https://forms.office.com/r/oEuKBPVsv3> or email me, Susanne Nedas, at quondamchair@fhs-nw1.org.uk

Who do you recognise?





At 4pm twelve of us sat down at a table laden with teatime goodies.



Year Group Coordinators – we need you!

**If you are interested in representing
your 'Class of' at future Francis
Holland events, please get in touch by
emailing alumni@fhs-nw1.org.uk**

Quondam's First EVER Remote Celebration

Pandemic restrictions dictated that the 2020 Quondam AGM and reunion had to be completely re-invented. Your committee was not to be beaten! This was not going to be the first year in memory that there was no Quondam AGM and celebration. And thus we decided to hold it remotely! We went through the same agonising worry as the Disney brothers did when they opened the first Disney park! “What if no-one turns up?” Thanks to so many of you, we needn’t have worried. Over one hundred attended! More than ever before! I wish you could have all been there to see the excitement as all arrived on screen! The shrieks of “oh, there’s---”, and “I remember you so well”, etc. It really was a huge, buzzy party.

Your committee hopes to hold other Quondam Remote Reunions so that those from far away can meet. There is a question in the survey about how you feel about that.

With huge thanks to our President, Mr Charles Fillingham, the Committee, to our formidable Polished Corners who worked so hard organising the ‘Class Reunions’, the Hosts, and especially to Laura Barron of IQPC and Claire Brazier, and to all who attended and helped to make history for Quondam!

- Susanne Nedas

With physical separation a necessity, one of the few blessings of the pandemic was the opportunity afforded to Polished Corners from across the globe to attend.

Instead of the usual lunch and AGM in school, a virtual celebration was devised and streamed to over 100 former pupils and staff, creating a hat trick of firsts for Quondam. Not only was this our first major event to be held remotely, it was also the first to be attended by so many Polished Corners who live abroad – and with attendance figures surpassing 100, our most popular event to date!

Hosted by Quondam Chair, Susanne Nedas (née Quastel), the event – streamed virtually on Zoom – included a film made by Headmaster Charles Fillingham and Francis Holland School Quiz compiled by Former Deputy Head, Jeannine Addinall, and of course the AGM.

Individual chat rooms were created for guests to catch up with their former peers, some, such as the Class of 1988, chatting on way past the scheduled finish time of 5.45 until 7.30pm! The event closed with the School Hymn, which was performed by pupils and filmed during lockdown.

- Claire Brazier

**To prepare a girl for university,
Simply Google “Quondam Bursary”
Via that page you can donate,
Any amount, small or great.**

Minimalist Menu

Short on time needn't mean short on taste. Former Deputy Head Jeannine Addinall shares some quick options for a simple, 3-course meal

Starter:

Give each guest a pear, a wedge of pecorino cheese and a sharp knife. These two foodstuffs go incredibly well together.

Main:

Grill or simply cook whatever vegan, fish or meat items you like.



With them serve the following:

Stir-fried Greens

675g spring greens

2 tbsp olive oil

3 garlic cloves cut into slivers

2 tbsp pine kernels

salt and pepper

1tsp honey

1 tbsp vinegar

If you like things spicier, add 1 red onion cut into wedges and 1 Thai chilli deseeded and sliced.

Shred greens. Stir-fry in the oil the vegetable ingredients for 3 minutes, then add the pine kernels and stir fry for another minute.

Stir in greens and stir fry for 1-2 minutes. Add seasoning, then the honey and vinegar, and finish off with a final 30 seconds.

Depends on appetites how many this will serve - it was fine for 3 of us.

Dessert:

1 or 2 scoops per person of good vanilla ice cream.

Pour over a glass of Marsala OR a small cup of espresso OR the pulp and juice of a passion fruit. Decorate with a physalis and a cherry.

Quondam Travel Scholarship 2022

Covid-19 and its restrictions dictated we were sadly unable to award a travel scholarship in 2020 and 2021, so we are now awarding 3 scholarships in spring 2022. Each scholarship is up to the value of £1,000 to help current sixth form pupils. The committee has decided to increase the age limit from 25 to 27 years for 2022.

Preference will be given to projects that support education or charitable endeavours.

Polished Corner, Ruby MacGregor, was awarded the scholarship in 2019, which she used to part-fund a trip to Vietnam. Ruby chose to volunteer as a school teacher, working in a kindergarten. Said Ruby, “I decided to travel to Vietnam because it’s a country still reeling from the effects of the recent war, and so in desperate need of volunteers in many areas. I felt it was the programme that would suit me best, and would allow me to make the biggest positive impact I could.”

2018’s winner, Arisa Loomba, travelled to Italy to support incoming refugees.

- Please email alumni@fhs-nw1.org.uk and an application form will be sent to you
- The deadline for the scholarship is 31st March 2022
- Please note that you can only be awarded the scholarship once.

2016 winner, Amy Fass
in Sri Lanka



2018 winner, Arisa
Loomba volunteered in
Italy



2019 winner,
Ruby MacGregor



Quondam Writing Competition

The Quondam Committee voted for this year's theme, 'Pandemic Positives', with pupils asked to submit either an essay, poem or piece of creative writing with a maximum count of 1,000 words. We were delighted to receive consistently high standards of writing; it is with great pleasure that we publish the two winning entries.

Congratulations to the winner of the Senior entry, Robin Laurenson-Clark with her essay titled, 'Pandemic Positives.' The Junior category winner was Meg Ingham with her essay, 'Half-full.'

Both girls won a £50.00 book token.

Half-full by Meg Ingham - Form IIIM

I recently got told by my dad that a positive always comes out of a negative. This statement really tells me to not think further into the future about any consequences that may affect me, however think brightly. I also recently got asked by my mum whether a cup is half-full or half-empty. Coronavirus is an illness that can affect you if you are diagnosed with it or not. It is also contagious which is why everyone has been in lockdown for over a year. There has not been any water taken away from the glass, but the glass has just not yet been filled up.

Lockdown may have made everyone stare at a screen most of the day though due to this, I both finished school in my house and my family had the desperate need to get some fresh air. A healthy wellbeing is crucial and going outside each day after straining your

eyes is vital. My family and I are very fortunate to have both a garden and a local park which we went to each day. The park was usually very busy and most days, we always found someone to talk to other than each other. Going outside after spending 5 hours on a screen made me realise how both socialising with family and being around nature supplies you with a huge smile. Breathing in fresh air uplifts everyone's spirit and enhances your mental health. Despite not being able to attend school in the school building, I had weekly walks with friends which gave us the opportunity to both catch up and accomplish our daily exercise. I feel very blessed to be able to walk to a park each day without any obstacles in my way and to not have to bottle all my feelings in a jar throughout the duration of this dreadful pandemic.

Pandemic Positives

During quarantine, going outside on Thursdays at 8 o'clock was an exciting and positive event. It raised awareness on how much the NHS do for us and how grateful we should be to have them. When my family and I went outside on this dedicated time and day, we were surrounded by smiles, cheers and a joyful environment. Banging spoons onto lampposts to clapping my hands together attempting to make the loudest sound I could always planted a smile on not only mine but the whole community's faces. It's the special moment where we appreciate and acknowledge the huge amount of work and effort which is constantly being put into by the NHS not only in these difficult circumstances but through every day of every year. I notice how everyone is grateful hence the loud sounds which fill into my ears which travels all the way down to my heart. Bashing my hands together to show appreciation is incredible but doing this with loved ones sets the mood. Happiness.

I am very grateful to have such a supportive family, school and friends and so fortunate to carry a smile on my face throughout this lockdown. People were dying and many were not happy throughout this pandemic which made me feel so blessed to be so lucky and to be surrounded by caring and loving people.

This pandemic may have seemed like so much water was taken away from the glass though the glass has just not yet been filled up. But I firmly believe, with our renewed sense of community and friendship, it will be soon.

Pandemic Positives by Robin Laurensen-Clark - Form VIDW

F. Scott Fitzgerald wrote to fellow writer, Sheilah Graham, "That is the beauty of all literature. You discover that your longings are universal longings, that you're not

lonely and isolated from anyone. You belong." This is the resounding truth that I have discovered over this period. That there is unity in isolation. That the human experience, although defined by individual circumstance, is more united than divided. We all experience this lifetime in a finite number of ways. In seeing this time of uncertainty directly reflected in the writings of those who have never experienced anything remotely similar clarified this universality to me. That is why Jane Austen and William Shakespeare still infiltrate literature courses today. Past and present; male and female; Romantic and Utilitarian. There is no need for dichotomy and boundary in literature, nor in life. As simple as it may sound, this pandemic has allowed me to read more. When I found out about the cancellation of my GCSE exams, I felt my world was grinding to an adamant halt, like it was screeching past, a missed train that I was feebly chasing down. My world became an inaccessible space of chaos, so naturally I searched for an alternative. I found quiet in the worlds of others. Virginia Woolf, Donna Tartt, Oscar Wilde. This year has led me to some of my favourite authors and for that I can be nothing but grateful. As Fitzgerald states, I found that my longings were universal longings. Literature is contained chaos. A world as vibrant and intense as your own that you can enter and leave as you wish.

As the daughter of an antiquarian book dealer, literature has always been a part of my life, guiding me through life milestones. Every novel is a state of mind, being, existence. My father's profession is not one of extensive profit. He read economics at university, in his parents' desperate attempt to funnel him in to the acceptable career of banking, so naturally he opened a book shop. With a limited online presence and the restrictions on travel, as well as uncertainty around government support for

small businesses, lockdown was a time of financial unease. My father missed his shop. It was a tangible presence throughout our home. A festering yearning for the cramped room of walls lined with bookcases, the overpowering scent of aged novels and the bustle of Bloomsbury. So at home we did what we could. I rather unsuccessfully attempted to set up a Twitter account for the shop, and we all started thinking about ideas for the future. Focusing purely on possibility rather than restriction gave us purpose during this time, a sense of action. Utility seeped into our household running: We reformed our 'Brexit bunker' of microwavable meals and toothpaste into our 'Covid-19 bunker' and converted our kitchen table into a table tennis table. We began to focus more on the things we have and the people around us. We learnt the beauty of the mundane. Systems of regularity and repetition need only innovation and perspective to become an experience.

In Virginia Woolf's essay, *A Room of One's Own*, she argues that "a woman must have money and a room of one's own to write fiction". Unlike many this year, I was fortunate enough to have access to both these requirements, so I did as Woolf advised: I began writing fiction. I make no claim for the writing that I produced, but it illuminated yet another truth to me: the vitality of creation. Life is a process of creation. We forge our actions, our personalities. We create each other. Yeats argues that:

Life is a journey up a spiral staircase; as we grow older we cover the ground covered before, only higher up; as we look down the winding stair below us we measure our progress by the number of places where we were but no longer are. The journey is both repetitious and progressive; we go both round and upward.



I would agree. There is a roundness to life in its routines and patterns. Although I would argue that there are chances to rupture the pattern, to expand the circle. To do so we must create. In creating we find an extension in our world, perhaps, even a gateway to another. We are able to reach feats of no boundary. During lockdown, I felt whispers in my ear urging me: “Find your art. Embrace it with the entirety of your being. Let it consume you.” So I did my best, let the process of fiction wash over me and just allowed myself to write without judgement.

Certainty in the future had diminished. Society bares the the scars of the pandemic. But society has always been dented, corrupted by subtle evils. Looking forwards we must hold on to what we know. New truths and old truths, public and personal truths, spoken and unspoken truths. My new truth is this: Life will always hold inspiration. The silent muses of the people around us and ourselves. Art will always exist, even if we are stripped of all that we thought fundamental to our existence. In the ability to think freely and fully we create. This is the beauty of the human condition and what I hope never to forget.

The pandemic will stay with us, a resounding tragedy, as so many of the tragedies before us have remained, infiltrating the air. We breathe in these past sorrows, we let them shape us and the world around us. As memories of the events of 2020 and 2021 fade into obscurity, they too will form the culture and people of the future. Yet through this all, art will prevail continuing to make the world wider.

¹ *Recounted in: Graham Sheila and Gerold Franc, 1959, Beloved Infidel: The Education of a Woman, Book Club Publishers*

² *Woolf, Virginia, 2019, A Room of One's Own, Penguin Books, London*



Life after FHS: Jeannine Addinall

Jeannine was Head of Classics and Deputy Head at Francis Holland School. She retired in 2012.

Well, well, well! Can it be nearly 10 years since I retired from F.H.S in 2012? I arrived in 1981 as Head of Classics and got to be Deputy Head in 1983 to my surprise and delight. It was like Royston Vasey “You’ll never leave” but in a good way because I never wanted to.

Having got lost on the way to the interview, I finally beheld the front door and felt as if I had come home. What a wonderful place – students bright, altruistic and creative, the talents of all recognised and encouraged, really inspiring staff. It also had and has the quirkiness of all great schools.

So there’s nowhere like FHS, and I am lucky that I have never really left in that I am part of the Quondam committee, and participating in events like the school birthday on Zoom has meant being able to chat with Polished Corners from across the globe. Thank you Susanne and Claire – thank you Zoom!

It has been great working with Susanne and the committee, Claire and Vanessa and of course Charles Fillingham, all people of many ideas and great commitment.

Life has bowled along busily since 2012 – I did another three years as a governor at the Cavendish School, Camden. We also travelled a lot – Malta and Finland which I had never visited, and were very exciting

Jeannine pictured here with fellow Quondam Committee member, Nadia Demetriou-Ladas



especially given my love of the Moomins. We also continued to travel a lot in England – Stafford is a regular voyage to see my husband’s identical twin cousins and their families. Owing to the presence of a Gurkha unit in a base nearby there are a number of excellent Nepalese restaurants, including a former “rough pub” which thanks to the Gurkha presence is now different in many ways!

We also usually go to Rochester for the Sweeps’ Festival at the beginning of May, which is like a three day long party. We are often in Cambridge, because it is where we met and Emmanuel College is so good at putting on concerts (which continued on line in lockdown), dinners, visits and other events. We are cinephiles, belong to the British Film Institute and go to many a concert, often at Cadogan Hall.

After leaving I also took on being the Education member on state school tribunals, which I am still doing, and chair as well. I am also chair of a choir in Highgate and a cantor and reader in the local church. All of this has fallen a bit into abeyance because of Covid, but the Highgate choir did two virtual concerts on Zoom and is now rehearsing again in sections.

Many people have not liked Zoom, but it has been great for me in many ways – I have been more in touch with old College friends than I have for years. Lockdown, indeed, has given me a new mini-career. I started writing quizzes for the choir which then expanded to include mini-“blogs” and also went to another separate group. I have now also done/hosted quizzes for F.H.S. and the local church. It has been a lot of fun to do.

I have also been very lucky in staying in touch with a number of former staff and pupils and in non-Covid times have become a bit of a lady of lunches.

I live with my husband and grown-up son. We all love restaurant meals, museum visits and long late night conversations!

Like many we have found ourselves ordering more stuff on-line, and what a well-known supermarket gives us as substitutions sometimes beggars belief. At Christmas we ordered one of those “sticks” of Brussels sprouts where the vegetables are still attached to the stem. They apparently couldn’t do this, so sent us one small Brussels sprout in a bag....

One woman was sent kitchen paper instead of a bottle of wine. I really can’t understand this, unless she ordered Chateaufort du Pape and they just added r to the final word....

We shouldn’t really complain, as a glut of plums which were another unwelcome substitution are currently being turned into plum gin and also plum and ginger gin for us by a family friend. Amazon thinks that because my husband ONCE ordered me a Victorian style nightdress, that he will always be interested in a range of frilly ladies’ underwear.

There have been sad moments since leaving, such as the loss of four siblings and a good College friend over six years, but there has been so much to make me very grateful.

For example I am very thankful to the N.H.S. as I have had a few hospital appointments recently, and while waiting have heard some funny conversations. Mum – “Why did you do it?”, small daughter – mumble, Mum – “Just tell me why you did it. My phone’s died in the middle of grandma panicking at the other end. Just tell me why”, s-d – mumble, mumble, Mum – “It should have been my day off and I’m here instead. Why?” s-d - silence, Mum – “It’s going to hurt when they take it out and I just hope it teaches you”, s-d – silence, Mum (sudden inspiration) – “Did someone put you up to it?”, s-d – mumble, mumble, mumble, Mum – “So you’re going to spend the rest of your time at school doing just what this Alexander tells you to, are you?”

My imagination was running riot as to what s-d could possibly have done. Turned out that Alexander had dared her to push a daisy into her nose, and she had accepted the challenge.

In conclusion, all I can say is that I hope life goes on being as interesting and unpredictable as it has always been – and long live F.H.S.!



Jeannine with the Duke of Gloucester at the opening of the Gloucester Wing



Meet your Quondam Committee

Convening three times a year, the Committee works tirelessly on your behalf. Here, we introduce its members.

President



Charles Fillingham

I became a teacher in September 1996 and I have served in five schools over the course of my career – boys, girls, mixed, selective, comprehensive, inner-city, suburban, state and independent. I have been the headmaster at Francis Holland, Regent's Park since January 2016 and it is a role which I enjoy thoroughly.

There are four of us in the Fillingham family: I like reading, cycling, posting stories on Twitter, meeting people and

being a teacher. My wife, Clare, is creative, she loves to read, write and laugh. She works with children and young families at our church. Our son, John, is a Sixth Former who is hoping to read Classics at university. Our daughter, Lizzy, is thirteen. She is creative like her mother with a leaning towards languages like her father. We also have a small, white dog called Clementine who enjoys exploring the corridors and classrooms at Francis Holland whenever she comes into school.

Chairman



Susanne Nedas née Quastel

I joined my late sister, Margot, as a pupil at Francis Holland School, Clarence Gate from 1958-1971. I was very involved with the Charity Fund, which I had permission to rename as The Francis Holland Help Fund,

and sold stationery from a cupboard in our classroom to raise funds!

Our two daughters, Georgina and Lucinda, went to Francis Holland from 1988-2000. I joined the Parents Association in 1994 and was its Chairman from 1996-2000. One of our eight grandchildren goes to Francis Holland, Sloane Square. I am currently chairman of Quondam and a Governor of the Francis Holland Schools Trust since 2019. You can see I have FHS DNA! We also have a son, and three delightful children-in-law, a black pug and a waif who resembles a shih tzu.

My passion is family and I was a full time wife and mother until, out of the blue, my late father decided I was to run his property companies, which I have been doing now for twenty years.

Treasurer



Benita Mathews née Thomas

I was a pupil at Francis Holland starting in Lower Thirds in 1961, becoming Head Girl in Upper Sixth – they were very happy schooldays! I studied Accountancy at University of Kent and went on to qualify as a Chartered Accountant.

After 10 years in the profession, I joined a traditional city institution and enjoyed a successful career path as Finance Manager of their various divisions. During this period, I became a Christian through attending St Helen's Church, Bishopsgate. Being made redundant in 2000, I then became a Business Manager (School Bursar) at two independent schools. Since retiring I've been able to be more actively involved at our local church, helping in the Ministry to the Elderly.

I joined the Quondam Committee to take up the role of Treasurer in 1976. This led to the privilege of being on the Governing body of the FHS Trust for many years, also serving on their Finance Committee as Deputy Chairman. My husband, Jonathan, and I have just celebrated our Ruby anniversary. We have one son, Daniel.

Secretary



Alison Edelshain née Day

I attended Francis Holland for 13 very happy years from a little 5 year old to the Upper VI when I was Head Girl.

I then studied History at UCL, followed by post-graduate study at the LSE in what used to be Personnel Management (now HR) and then, many years later, did an MBA at London Business School, with a semester at Berkeley, California. I then spent the next 35 years in various HR roles, ending as Recruitment and International HR Director for LCH.Clearnet, London's financial Clearing House. In 2012, I started my own HR consultancy business and combined this with a wide range of voluntary roles. This included being Governor and Deputy Chairman of the two Francis Holland schools and Chairman of Quondam. Currently, apart from being on the Quondam Committee, I am a magistrate in the adult and youth criminal courts, a governor at Sarum Hall School and Deputy Chairman of the West London Synagogue. We have three children and both our daughters attended Francis Holland and while they were there I was also Chair of the Parents' Association. As you can see, FHS has been a constant thread throughout my life!



Vivien Rose née Lind

I enjoyed 13 incredibly happy years at FHS and left in 1974. The school has always

meant a great deal to me and I have been on the Quondam Committee for many years as Joint Secretary. I did not go to university but after a secretarial course pursued a career in television as a researcher on *This Is Your Life* – the light entertainment surprise tribute programme. I married Stephen in 1983 and brought up three children, whilst working with my husband in his energy efficiency consultancy. Since retiring I have become a keen golfer and enjoy travelling and spending time with our children and 3 grandchildren and walking our English Pointer.



Jeannine Addinall

I worked at F.H.S. from 1981 to 2012, for most of that time as Deputy Head, while also teaching Classics and the occasional bit of French! I was also school governor of the Cavendish School in Camden for a number of years before retiring in 2015. Since then I work on school tribunals, sing in and run one choir in Highgate and sing in another in Golders Green. Since the first of the lockdowns began I have found myself writing lots of quizzes and blog type

plain emails (no TikTok here I'm afraid) which are sent to several groups. I live with my husband Geoffrey and grown up son Charles in Temple Fortune. *Read more about Jeannine in our feature article, Life after FHS on page 19.*



Isobel Apter

I started at FHS in 2004, joining my older sister Chloe, who was then in the Lower Fifth. I went on to study Business at Oxford Brookes, graduating in 2014. After completing a stint as a ski instructor in Austria, I started my first job in London working at Coutts. Currently I work for a member's club in Marylebone, developing their business community.

Quondam Sixth Form Bursary. We're half way there!

If Polished Corners spare a dollar Quondam soon will have a scholar!

If you Google "Quondam Bursary" We can prepare a girl for university!

Find out more on page 9



Nadia Demetriou Ladas

Fifty years old, varying hair colour from black to white to pink depending on lockdown situation! I think education is the most important gift you can give anyone, so I'm very happy to still be involved with FHS after all these years. I started as shy 11 year old and left in 1988 having gained a scholarship but failing to get into Balliol! I spent three hedonistic years at Manchester Uni supposedly studying English, but made greater progress on the student newspaper reviewing bands, restaurants and meeting my then hero, Peter Hooton from The Farm. I completed my law conversion course at the College of Law, and did everything I could to immediately forget what I had learned.

Finally in my late twenties I set up Vessel Gallery with my partner, literally an angel called Angel in Notting Hill, which really was my first baby. This was swiftly followed by two real children, now at various stages of moody, dependent and yet somehow still inspiring teens, who keep me busy whilst running various family properties. Still love restaurants and the theatre, though my Instagram feed tends to focus on clouds and glasses of cold coffee.



Nina Edelshain

After following in both my mother and sister's footsteps in joining FHS, I left in 2007 to travel for a year before I commenced my BSc in Psychology at Nottingham University. I then went on to complete a MSc in Management and Human Resources at the LSE and a Post Graduate Certificate in Employment Law. I started my career in HR in 2012, starting at a PR company before switching industries to an office management company and back again into the media world where I am currently working as the HR Director for a Social Media Company in London.



Felicity Forde

I worked at FHS from 1974 - 2017 teaching PE for many years. When I became Pastoral Deputy Head I started teaching Geography and ran the SEN department.

Since retiring I have enjoyed travelling and I keep busy at home doing gardening, voluntary work and keeping fit. I also do work in the local community, helping the elderly with a chair exercise class. Having lived in London all my life I thoroughly enjoy being a Team London Ambassador, mainly during the summer months.

I still keep in touch with quite a few former members of staff meeting up with them in London to visit Museums and Art Galleries.

.....

We'd love to hear from you.

Head over to our survey on page 8 and let us know what you'd like from Quondam! Complete the survey via the link below:
<https://forms.office.com/r/oEuKBPVsv3>





Shivani Gohil

I attended Francis Holland from 2008 to 2015. Having discovered a love for languages at FHS (thanks to Mr Gridelli, Mrs Slocombe and Mme Gustave), I went to the University of Bristol to study French and Italian. I now work for a luxury French beauty brand called Chantecaille which not only aims to develop the BEST beauty products, but also supports conservation efforts around the world. It's nice to be a part of a company that spreads goodness!



Georgina Guy née Nedas

I was at Francis Holland from Sept 1988 to July 1995. I married John in 2006 and we have a son, Charlie, who is now 11 and a mad cricket (and Spurs) fan! After school, I went to St Catharine's College, Cambridge and then the College of Law in London. Having worked in private practice at two law firms and an accountancy firm advising on tax law for 17 years, I moved to Brown Advisory, an investment firm, in February 2018 as their Head of International Strategic Advisory. I work with our clients, in collaboration with their other advisers, to help navigate the complexities and dynamics involved in their personal and family matters as well as their investments and business operations.



Maria Hadjipateras

Following fourteen lovely long years at Francis Holland I went on to do my BSc in the Social Sciences- Economics, Psychology and Sociology. Then I went on to get my MBA in Marketing and finished off my studies with a MSc in Sociology at the LSE. I then worked for my family shipping business until I got married in 1987. I have 2 children, Dimitris and Markella.

Since 1995 I have been working on various charity projects organising fundraising events which I continue to do to this day.



Jennifer Purchase, née Shier

I started in the Kindergarten at FHS aged 5 in 1960. The Junior School, headed by Miss Yule, was on the ground floor of the building, and the Kindergarten and Transition form rooms were where the Library is now.

I left FHS in 1973 after 13 years at the School and went on to read Classics at Girton College, Cambridge, following in the footsteps of our then headmistress, Mrs Brigstocke.

After graduating in 1977, I commenced training as a Chartered Accountant, but subsequently changed to the Law, and in 1983 I qualified as a solicitor, specialising in commercial litigation. After many years as a partner in private practice, I moved in-house and I currently work three days a week, handling professional indemnity claims for a large insurance company. I live in Islington in London with my husband and our elderly Pekingese dog. We have grown up twin sons, and two lovely grandchildren, Oscar, 6, and Daisy, age 1. I enjoy keeping in touch with the School through Quondam and the committee.



Manuela Robson

I spent 12-plus years in public relations, primarily working within the travel sector (promoting luxury boutique hotels) and also within sports and fitness for brands such as Reebok and Fila. I then changed career to become a foreign exchange trader, working on a trading floor and coaching delegates, before branching out to become an independent trader and latterly entering the world of FinTech with a new app designed to specifically help other independent traders. I graduated from the University of Birmingham with a BA combined honours degree in French and German and a Masters with distinction in French. Key passions include travelling and sports/health & fitness.

*Would you like to advertise in next year's magazine? Half page: £100.....Full page: £200 Back cover £250 10% off these rates if a discount is offered to Polished Corners.
Email Susanne Nedas at quondamchair@fhs-nw1.org.uk*

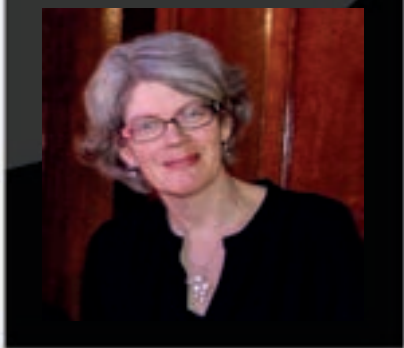


Lucinda Sanford née Nedas

I left Francis Holland in 2000 and read International Relations at St Andrews. I married Ed Sanford and we have three children who are 10, 6 and 2 and we live in SW6. Our middle daughter is at Francis Holland in Sloane Square and moved to Year 2 in September.

I run my own Architectural Design Company and a Building Company based in Fulham working across London and where ever else work might take me!

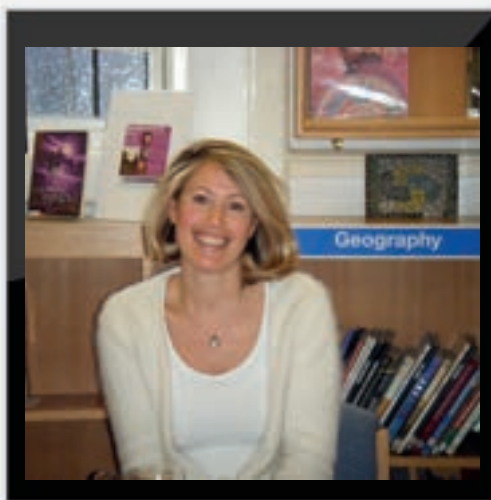
Teacher Liaison Representative



Amelia Slocombe

I am about to enter my eleventh year working at Francis Holland having started off here as a part time Italian and French teacher returning to work after my second child. I have in the interim been Director of Higher Education, Joint Head of Sixth Form and am now Senior Deputy Head. I taught previously at two other London independent schools and I also spent 12 years training and then practising as a solicitor in the City.

I absolutely love the school, and somewhat wish I could have been a student here myself, but I grew up in the country so that would not have been possible. In my spare time I enjoy continuing to learn other languages, playing the piano and walking with my family and our naughty dog Matteo!



Julia Strauss

After leaving FHS, I read Classics at Oxford and then became a scuba diving instructor in the Caribbean! A PhD on Roman shipwrecks and trade followed (very slowly) at UCL before further research for Oxford into ancient wrecks. After the birth

of my daughter, I became a French, Latin and Greek tutor. I'm very proud to say that my daughter has now finished her first enjoyable year at FHS.



Srutti Suresan

I attended FHS from 2007 to 2014, during which time I was very involved within the music department by taking part in string ensembles, senior orchestras and choirs and have wonderful memories of my time at FHS. During my final year in FHS, my sister joined as a third former and also completed her A levels at FHS. As human biology was my area of interest during A levels, I pursued a degree in medicine at Barts and The London School of Medicine, Queen Mary University and also completed an intercalated BSc degree in Global Public Health. I can now say that, after 6 years at university, I currently work as a Junior Doctor in Yorkshire during the pandemic.



Living the dream

A full-page underwater photograph serves as the background. It depicts a diver in a black wetsuit and scuba gear, reaching out with their right hand towards a large, heavily rusted and encrusted metal statue. The statue appears to be a human figure, possibly a religious or historical figure, standing upright. The water is a deep blue, and there are some bubbles visible near the diver's head. The overall mood is one of discovery and exploration.

*Polished Corners
Mary Best and
Xenia Lemos
find paradise*



Our Island Escape by Mary Best, née Simmonds

Where can you find a small tropical coral island surrounded by the clear warm waters of a marine conservation area teeming with turtles and a kaleidoscope of fish? A destination which has, for over 20 years, received accolades from the world's press as a world-class holiday destination. Where can you enjoy a comprehensive range of very affordable international class hotels, resorts, restaurants, bars and activities for every age group? Finally, where can you breathe only pure sea air, unpolluted by traffic fumes....motor vehicles are banned from the island. After years of worldwide travel, we found the answer 12 years ago when visiting our daughter who was instructing at one of south-east Asia's highest PADI-rated dive centres. The answer is Gili Trawangan, not far from Bali

and off the north west coast of Lombok in Indonesia.

Gili Trawangan is small...one and a half miles from north to south and one mile from east to west. You can walk around the coastal path in under 2 hours but stops for a cold local Bintang beer or other liquid refreshments extend the pleasure. The south and east of the island are the main centres of activity: dive shops, bars, clubs, open-air cinemas and restaurants abound. Gili T's reputation grew initially as a young persons' party island but a maturing process now offers facilities and activities for everyone, from a range of water-based activities to the relaxations of yoga, cookery classes and horse riding. The north and east are quieter, with beaches famed for their views of spectacular sunsets. But nowhere is ever too far away: on foot, by bicycle or, for the less energetic, in a cidomo, the island's horse-drawn carts.

During that first visit we were persuaded to learn to scuba dive. Approaching our 70s, we were at least 40 years older than our fellow students but age proved no barrier and a new exciting underwater world in bath-warm water temperatures (28 degrees C at 12 metres depth) was opened to us. Two years later, we decided to buy a plot of land in a jungle-like coconut palm forest in the quieter north and build our own holiday resort. Family and friends of all ages listed the essential and desirable features they thought necessary for an enjoyable and effective break from busy lives.

Our main aims were, of course, good value for money, high standards of accommodation and facilities, quality service and good food, all in a peaceful,

relaxing environment. ‘Belukar Villas’ (translated from the Bahasa as ‘clearing in a palm forest’) is the result and, after 7 years in business, customer feedback emphatically supports the view that we chose then ticked all the right boxes.

Belukar Villas consists of 14 comprehensively equipped villas, each with a verandah overlooking the 25 metre swimming pool. The air-conditioned rooms are furnished in bespoke teak furniture with all the home comforts in an Asian ambience. As an added attraction, staying at Belukar Villas entitles visitors to a discount on the full range of PADI diving courses. So, why not pay a visit to our website www.belukarvillas.com and widen your horizons?

Agriturismo Casetta by Xenia Lemos

I hope this finds everyone in good health and good spirits wherever they are in their corner of the world. As I write this, warm and vivid memories of my time at FHS immediately come flooding back... I was enrolled in 1969 with the amazing Mrs Brigstocke and left 13 years later with Miss Holt as my headmistress. I remember the fun walking through Regent’s Park to the netball and tennis courts with Mrs Forde; Ms Blyth and Mrs St Johnston on our Russia Trip in 1981 and our Chemistry lessons in the lab with Mrs Berberian. They have always accompanied me throughout my life and in my memories and I am forever grateful to them.

When I graduated, I didn’t realise where life would take me and the unexpected and serendipitous adventure on which I would soon embark. After moving to Italy to

continue my studies, my uncle willed to me a 270-year-old beautiful stone farmhouse that needed some loving care, nestled in the sun-drenched hills of the Tuscan countryside. This is from where I write this piece. While far from being the charming Agriturismo Casetta that it is today welcoming guests from around the world, I knew its potential was to be a very special place from the start, and so I poured several years of work and energy into reimagining the property inside and out. Because of its location amidst olive trees, I went back to a specialised school to learn how to plant, grow and cultivate the trees – so education never really stops, does it?

Each year, I looked to add something new from large additions to smaller, special details: a saltwater pool overlooking the countryside; a custom-built traditional wood oven for our in-house Chef and pizzaiolo to entertain guests dining al fresco; over 1,000 olive trees which supply us with olive oil each year; and a signature

Roveta Dodici cocktail of muddled raspberries and locally sourced vodka to enjoy at sunset and this year an art installation by Florentine artist Marina Calamai.

Slowly, but surely, my vision for Casetta came to life: an inviting and luxurious Italian oasis paired with warm hospitality and personalised experiences for every traveller. I personally respond to every traveller's query when scheduling a stay at any of Casetta's five double rooms, complete with Italian linens and luxurious Florentine toiletries. From the second you enter the cypress-lined road and take in the sweeping views of our olive groves until the moment you depart, each detail of your stay is meticulously curated for an unforgettable experience.

Pizza oven calls for pizza evenings under the stars



Sunrise. Casetta waking...



At Casetta, we also offer an exclusive “Enrichment Series” for guests with once-in-a-lifetime bespoke experiences. During my time at FHS, art and history became passions of mine that I carried through to my career. Run by a set of unique local connoisseurs in their respective fields, the Series includes truffle hunting with royalty in the private woods of a 400AD castle, private gallery tours led by an art historian, coaching sessions with a professional facilitator and horsemanship expert and access to some of Tuscany’s rarest wine cellars.

If it is not already apparent, my true passion lies in hospitality and creating truly distinct and unforgettable memories for all of Casetta’s guests who quickly turn into friends. I’m so grateful for this community and I hope I get the opportunity to welcome you in Tuscany at Agriturismo Casetta one day soon and reminisce about our time at Francis Holland School Regent’s Park. In the meantime, please follow my adventures on Instagram @agriturismocasetta and leave some comments.



Casetta sunset.
Aperitivo time!



Saltwater heated pool

Life as an Actress

Polished Corners Clare Samson and Louise Nicol reflect upon their acting careers to date

**Clare Samson née Horne,
Class of 1960**

Being the third generation of a theatrical family on my father's side, perhaps it was natural that I should go into 'the profession' or 'the business' after A-levels, though my parents insisted that I take a secretarial course first - for periods out of work.

I spent about six happy years in various repertory theatres, playing as cast, which means wide experience playing every kind of part, whether one's suited for it or not. I started off at the very bottom of the pile as a student assistant stage manager, doing whatever was required: sitting on the prompt book, making endless cups of tea, making sure that all the props (and actors' personal props) were in place and doing the calls, such as "Beginners please", and understudying. All wonderful experience.

It wasn't thought necessary for me to go to drama school, as I'd been brought up in theatres and learned voice production at home. I also listened to my father recite his lines, charging half a crown an hour, I remember, as it becomes so boring and repetitive that I considered it fair do's and often knew the part before he did! The most difficult jump was to go from being an acting A.S.M. to being employed solely as an actress. I finally got a touring job playing the maid in an Agatha Christie, needing the vocal power to reach the back of



1000-seater theatres, such as the Liverpool Empire.

Towards the end of what proved to be my last job in the theatre, the man who was to become my husband joined the company. There was a big intake of men for 'Romeo and Juliet', but as he was to play Tybalt and I the Nurse, I didn't think I stood a chance, padded and with blacked out teeth!

Perhaps it was the fact that my hired costume had once been worn by Edith Evans and the charisma rubbed off. John had contacts in radio and through him I met directors and burrowed my way in. I was lucky enough to be in many plays and series, read some Morning Stories and serials for Woman's Hour. It's the most glorious medium: no lines to learn and it doesn't matter what you look like.

Ultimately I gave up the business and gardening became my creative outlet until physical incapacity intervened. But what a wonderful life, making lifelong friendships.

Sixth Form 1958/9

Back row: L to R

**Louise Nicol, Ann Davis,
Judith Gabriel, Patricia
Wallace (Head Girl) and
Rosemary Elliott. Julie
Hacker, Pamela Kelland,
Belinda Poolman,
Elizabeth Stileman**



Louise Nicol, Class of 1955

My first year at FHS was at the end of the war - the second one, not the first! Miss Joslin was our smiling Headmistress at the time and I was relieved to discover that I was not the only new girl in the class. Ann Bristow and Belinda Poolman were to become life long friends and it was at FHS that my father enrolled me in an after school drama class taught first by Miss Morrell and later by Miss Robinson. Joining Belinda and myself was Joan Collins who would later have a successful career in Hollywood and who would have a principal part in the series "Dynasty". Joan's sister Jackie was also at school then, later to become a novelist.

Joan played the lead in our production of "Antigone" and later in J.M. Barrie's play "Quality Street". I was only a maid in that production but I remember getting a laugh when I closed the door, pulling it shut with my left foot, (or was it my right one)?

In later years as an actress I played many maids, both on TV and on the stage. It was then that the uniforms worn by our own maids during the war became well used in the days when we had to provide our own costumes.

The first time I went for a TV commercial audition the director told me I would be useful in commercials.....because I had the kind of face people forgot! Not a very auspicious start!

In 1951 my parents moved to the U.S.A and it was here while living in New York that I got my first professional job - at the Circle in the Square Theatre, in a production of Garcia Lorca's "Yerma". For the next three years I alternated between acting jobs and regular jobs needed to pay the rent!

I did weekly summer stock in Wisconsin, rehearsing during the day for next week's production while performing the current play at night, a scary season of learning lines, although in those days the assistant stage manager stood in the wings, script in hand, ready to prompt when needed.

In 1954 I got a call from my friend Jane Gourlay who had also been at FHS suggesting I might like to come and stay with her for a few weeks as she was expecting a baby quite soon and her husband felt nervous about her being alone during the day while he was at work in Toronto. I packed my bags (as they say) and got on a plane to Toronto and it was here that I would spend the rest of my life.

Television was just getting started in Toronto at the time and there were still very few Canadian playwrights, as a result most of the TV dramas were written by English writers. This suited me perfectly and I worked steadily for some time in TV.

One of my favourite roles was as Jane Seymour in “Royal Gambit”, a play about Henry VIIIth and his six wives. Henry was played by Albert Dekker, imported from Hollywood. He sent this photograph to my husband taken during a rehearsal and on the back he had written“all in a day’s work”!

That seems so long ago by now, but I’m still working in the film business. I was rarely the leading lady, usually the character actress. If you have Netflix I play a woman who brings her cat to the vet in an episode of the series “Schitt’s Creek”. It’s in the second series and I’m in one of the later episodes (Robert’s party). Perhaps I should mention that I married artist Angus Macdonald in 1959 and lived happily with him until his death in 1986. We had our daughter, Fiona, who became a ballet dancer and presented us with two lovely granddaughters.

I am still working in the film business at age 90 (how did I get to be 90?) and lived with my second husband until his death a few years ago. And so life goes on. I haven’t been at a school reunion for a few years, but I remember when I was still at school

and there would be a reunion, Lady Parry was the oldest old girl at the end of the semi circle we formed in the assembly hall.

Below, the actor Albert Dekker
(image courtesy of Louise Nicol)



A Life of Writing.

By Polished Corner,
Anna Hodgson

I had always enjoyed English at school with Miss Rawstorne and went on to do a degree in English Literature at Southampton University. But although I had always loved writing, coming into contact with the greats of English literature had made me feel somewhat intimidated and inadequate. It was only when I was working as a volunteer at the Oxfam Office in Nairobi and was offered the chance to edit and write for The Pastoralist, a newsletter for those involved in working with Oxfam animal projects in the dry regions of Northern Kenya, that I started writing in any form again.

*Right, and over the page:
two book cover designs*



IS THAT IT,
SCREECH

Three more murder mysteries
involving Detective Inspector St John

Anna Hodgson

On returning to England I decided to do a BITEC course in journalism. It was the first time this course had been offered at this particular college and it wasn't up to much. But I did learn some important lessons with regard to journalistic writing: tell a story, edit by half what you have written, use short sentences and never use adjectives with any value judgements.

My first published article was for The Publican, the brewing industry's erstwhile principal publication. I had been ski-ing in California and was surprisingly impressed by the beer brewed in various microbreweries, so I decided to write about them. The Publican was publishing an anniversary edition and requested ideas for two further articles. The excitement of seeing my name in print for the first time and receiving my first cheque were out of this world.

I continued writing articles that ranged from prop makers and doll's hospitals to opera workshops in prisons. Basically, if I met someone with an interesting job, or found a subject that appealed to me, I would write about it and shoot the article off to as many appropriate publications as possible. Not that this is the "correct" method of approaching magazines - you are supposed to tailor the content and the style of writing to the individual publication - but it worked for me.

I then decided that I wanted to write fiction, so I joined a weekly writing group, run by the film producer and screenwriter, Ruth Beni. Her imaginative assignments and gentle criticism were responsible for getting my creative juices going. One of her assignments - writing a ten part thriller, each short chapter ending in a cliff hanger - became the template for a series of detective stories I wrote and self-published.

A word about getting your writing published. The writing is the easy part. Finding an agent and publisher is the hard

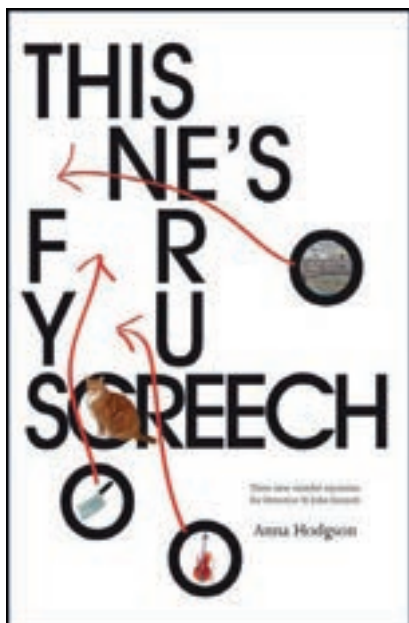
part though joining the London Writers' Club will enable you to actually meet agents and present your work.

The other route to follow is self-publishing. Companies such as the New Generation Publishing company offer packages that include editing, printing, cover design, distribution and publicity or any one of those services. But you will need to be prepared to do plenty of the promotional work yourself.

I have written radio plays, a novella, short stories and five volumes of detective stories. I love the way in which writing takes you out of yourself and the research that introduces you to other worlds. As a writer of fiction, it is extremely difficult to make money. Only a few hit the jackpot. But I can't think of a better way of spending my time.

The Detective Screech stories, Kindle version available on Amazon through my website, www.annahodgson.co.uk or for hard copies contact me at: anna.hodgson@ukgateway.net.

By Anna Hodgson, Class of 1972

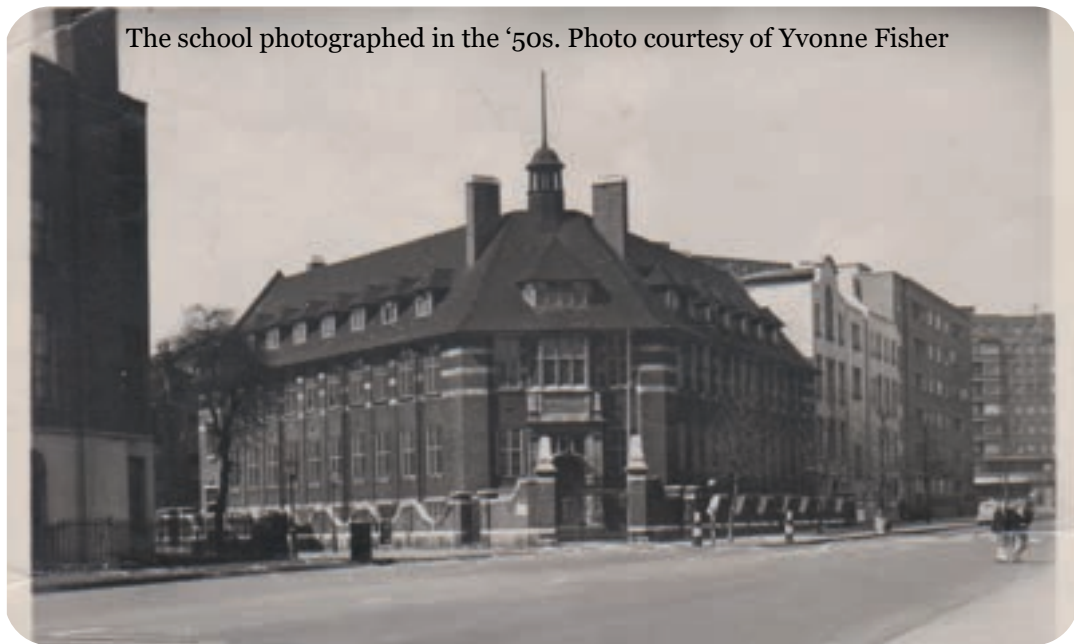


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The school photographed in the '50s. Photo courtesy of Yvonne Fisher



Memories of FHS

Polished Corners share their recollections of school life in the '50s and beyond

Katherine Holland, née Welsh
Class of 1955

I went to FHS in Sept 1947. I left in 1955. My younger sister Patience was much lower down the school.

Jackie Collins was in my class until Upper Fifth. She was one of the oldest in the class and I was one of the youngest. We were both quite good at netball and she and I played all the matches, I played centre and she was centre attack. She was quite big and active.

She was already writing and on wet days we had to stay in our classrooms during

break, sometimes she read to us. It was very informative for me, she lived in a very theatrical household in a mansion flat near the park. I can remember going there for a children's party. Joan was very glamorous and higher up the school. I remember her coming to school in a very long skirt. 'the New Look'!!

I was interviewed by the head of the junior school Miss Guy, to get a place. I had to sit at the front of a class she was teaching while she asked me some questions, she put me in the class above, the 2nd form which was first year in the senior school at that time. I was a bit young I guess and I ended up at university when I was still 17. A bit young, but I was going to do Architecture, such a long course it seemed at the time.

I think I am Francis Holland's first architect. I ended up as the only girl with 40 men.

I stayed in the Sixth Form, there were only 5 of us, I was vice Head girl, the school wanted me to stay on for a third year in the Sixth Form to be Head Girl and do Oxbridge entrance, I did not want to delay starting such a long course so I struggled to do my A levels, very indifferent results but enough to get into Liverpool School of Architecture, one of the best at that time.

It was a tricky culture shock after FHS, a different language, much older boys who had done National Service and Catholics and Protestants, Orange Marches too.

The class sizes throughout the school were only 20 at the time I was there, we had a few different nationalities, girls from the legations, we had a Danish girl and a Finnish girl and a Greek girl. The world in London was not so multi-cultural then. Miss Joslin was the Head all the time I was there. She took all the assemblies but

admitted to someone who visited her late in life that she did not believe in any of it as she was a physicist!

Yvonne Fisher, née Crisp **Class of 1956**

The School

Approaching FHS in autumn 1947 as a small eight-year old, I saw this large triangular building. I walked up steps to (to me) enormous oak doors; inside were more stairs with Headmistress Miss Joslin's study on the left and Miss Simmons' (School Secretary) office on the right. The main floor divided into a 'V'; the right-hand side comprising classrooms for the senior school while on the left-hand side stairs led down to the kitchens and the remainder comprised the Junior Department in the charge of Miss Guy.

I spent half a term there; every afternoon we were given a mat, a blanket and a pillow for a rest. I was moved into the main school after half-term. Between the corridors



was a large hall with two galleries and a platform at one end, used for assemblies. Later on, as Head Girl, it would be my duty every morning to put up the hymn number and lay open the hymn book and bible on a lectern; each form would file in in turn and I would fetch Miss Joslin for Morning Assembly. Behind the hall was a wood-panelled library with glass-fronted bookcases. We were only allowed in for reference books and quiet study. Continuing down the right corridor, stairs led down to cloakrooms where we changed from outdoor shoes to indoor shoes. The cloakrooms led out to a small playground, just large enough for a netball court and benches around where we would spend break-time. Beyond this was a large gymnasium, the last lesson of each term we would play Pirates – a form of 'It' where the objective was still to avoid being caught, but where we were not allowed to touch the

ground, so we climbed up bars, swung on ropes, ran along benches...great fun!

Upstairs were the main classrooms. Each Form had its own room and teachers came to us, except for Science, Music and Games. At the front was the dining room where everyone, including staff, had school dinners. We sat at long tables and one person from each would collect plates and dishes from which we would help ourselves.

Finally the top floor contained some small music rooms, mainly for piano lessons, along with the biology lab, behind which were the A-level Physics and Maths labs. Later a small room behind this became a Sixth Form Common Room – with a kettle! In 1955 being able to make our own coffee was really something! The rest of the floor was Miss Joslin's private flat which was only entered if being prepared for confirmation.

Below left, Yvonne is pictured second from the right, and, below, a staff group photo.





Day-to-Day

Morning started with Assembly in the hall – we sang a hymn, listened to a bible reading, Miss Joslin said one or two prayers, then any notices. We filed back to our respective classrooms, where teachers came to us.

During my time there, there were:
 Miss Happs (Geography / Deputy Head)
 Miss Brown (English)
 Miss MacGregor and Mrs Lockwood (Latin)
 Miss Beale and Miss Sifleet (Maths)
 Miss Curtis (Science)
 Mlle Orry (French)
 Mrs Cochrane (Physics)
 Miss Milne-Hume and Miss MacLeod (later Mrs Garvin) – History

We went to Regent's Park for tennis and lacrosse, and walked to Seymour Place swimming baths. There was a church service on Ascension Day led by the Reverend Perry-Dore, we would pile into coaches with a packed lunch and be taken to Kew Gardens or Hatfield House separating into classes with our form teacher.

Some of my contemporaries in the Upper V ~1953 /1954 were: Erica White, Elizabeth Simmonds, Christine Lauritzen,

Joanna Winsor, Willow Batt, Diane Miller, Jeanette Clark. Also Helen Boyson, Myrtle Hewson, Caroline Saxon and Penny Cove-Smith (Head Girl before me), Clare Hilton and many others.

Later my Upper Sixth consisted of Elizabeth Davis, Sue Lloyd, Carole Griffiths, Anne Rees, Margaret (Fraser?), Susan Thomas, Jennifer Manning and Judy Knight.

In my form, I was friendly with Jackie Collins; we visited each other's homes and we often visited the cinema together. I also learnt to dive with Liz Ferris from the year below me; subsequently she went on to win a Bronze at the 1960 Rome Olympics and Golds in the '62 and '66 Commonwealth Games. She was Godmother to my eldest son and remained my best friend until her death just before the 2012 Olympics. I had a very happy time at FHS and feel it gave me a well-rounded education and confidence; I was fortunate to have Miss Joslin as Headmistress for my time there (a sentiment evidently shared by Joan Collins who invited her to her first wedding); she was an outstanding lady who taught us that we should treat everyone with equal respect, no matter what their station in life.

Margaret Moss, née Fraser Class of 1956

School trips

I attended FHS (Clarence Gate) from 1946-56, with a break of 18 months, when my father was working in Paris. Miss Brown always took the Lower Sixth to Stratford in the Summer Term. She failed in our year. Something went wrong with the travel, or perhaps the hotel booking or theatre tickets. I have no idea, but we were told there would be no trip. We were pretty cross and decided to try and organise something ourselves. Jennifer Manning's parents had a cottage in the Cotswolds and were hugely

Susan Mercer, née Thomas, 1954



helpful. Some of us stayed there, others with friends of the Mannings'. We acquired tickets, I think it was for 'The Merry Wives of Windsor', and off we went. Where there's a will...

Tiered skirts were very popular. Spooky had one I coveted and the one I'm wearing in the photo on the right I made in school sewing lessons, which I did not enjoy as I always seemed to end up with the treadle machine which liked to run backwards. However, the skirt was finished in time for the Stratford trip, and we had a lovely time. The photo to the right shows the group in the Mannings' garden, looking so 1950s! Left to right: Susan Mercer, née Thomas, Margaret (Maggie) Moss née Fraser, Jennifer Wilson, Susan Eckersley, née Lloyd, Judy Knight, Carole Barton Booth, née Griffiths, Jennifer Manning and Willow Batt.

Ascension Day

Above shows a happy Ascension Day photograph of Susan (Spooky) Mercer on the 'Viscount' returning from Greenwich.

We loved the Ascension Day outings. The day began by walking up to St John's Wood Church for a service, then back to school to be given a bag containing a picnic - (we filed past the hatch near the big dining room and Mrs Penfold, the Housekeeper, doled them out) and then we would set off by bus to the day's destination.

I think the Preparatory all used to go to Richmond Park but the Senior School went to different destinations. I remember going to Sion House, Hatfield House, Virginia Water, Greenwich. I remember a lot of tree climbing (illicit probably) at Virginia Water. One of many different destinations. One of my godfathers remarked to someone afterwards: 'It's so charming the way the girls of Francis Holland School ascend on Ascension Day.'

I remember those of us at the back of the bus singing Noel Coward's "The Stately Homes of England..." on the way back from Hatfield House and one of the Mistresses at the front looking back, probably wondering whether to reprimand us for disrespect, but she smiled instead with a shake of her head.

The Mannings' garden



Upper Fifth, 1954



My O Level year pictured above, with Miss Happs in the middle row. Back row, L-R: Lalage Booser, Stephanie Cohen (I think), Elizabeth Simmonds, Yvonne Crisp, Elizabeth Cunningham (I think) Middle row L-R: Willow Batt, Elizabeth Davis, Sue Eckersley née Lloyd, Miss Happs, Susan Mercer née Thomas, Joanna de Bertodano née Winser and Jennifer Wilson.

Front row: Carole Barton-Smith née Griffiths, Anne Rees, Claudett Griffiths, Anne Rees, Claudette Warshaw, Diane Miller, Jeanette Clark, Jennifer Manning, Judy Knight. Many of the above will have married, but I either don't know or have forgotten their married names. Some have died: Elizabeth Davis, Joanna de Bertonano, Carole Barton-Booth and maybe others.

Clare Samson, née Horne Class of 1960

I arrived in the kindergarten in September '49 to be looked after by

lovely Miss Lester, then up to Miss Moore, Miss Gill and finally the terrifying Miss Yule. That must be the single greatest difference between then and now: a junior school, before we went upstairs to become seniors. Also the acquisition of a swimming pool. No more walking in a crocodile to the Seymour Baths.

I bet the food's improved from the days of Mrs. Penfold, when you could smell cabbage boiling from 10.a.m. and at the end of each term, to add insult to injury, we had to line up to curtsy to her and say thank you! We also curtsied as we left each day to whichever teacher saw us off the premises. And huge reprimands if we were seen in the street without our hats. O tempera O mores!

We did have the best headmistress you could imagine, Miss Joslin - and a very jolly school secretary, Mrs. Simmonds. Both very approachable. All in all very happy memories. Does morning break still include a small bottle of milk and a lovely squishy bun? And do those in the

kindergarten still have a rest on blankets in the gym while being read a story before going home? Of course not. The junior school's gone.

Karen Ann McKinna, née Arbuckle, Class of 1966

The school was quite different from today, at least in outward ways. There was no seating in the Main Hall. We sat, knelt, and stood on the wooden floor for Morning Prayer and Assemblies. Despite the thick woolen uniforms, we were always cold as the heating was turned low by today's standards. The set menu for the cooked lunch was required eating, and though filling, was largely unappetizing.

When I complained to my mother she retorted that we girls were all living such privileged lives at home that we needed to be toughened up and experience the lack of comfort with which others had to live. And there was therefore no place for complaining!

I do not mean to paint an unpleasant picture of life at FHS in the sixties but rather to point out that despite the physical limitations to comfort this was a 'values' education from which we benefitted in our formative years. The school spirit was alive and active, and the sincere kindness that lived daily within those school walls and was modelled by the staff was palpable. I believe that despite the absence of hardships and the much expanded and improved facilities of today that the school spirit is alive and well and inspiring new generations of students, parents, and staff to the highest standards of humanity.

Atalanti Moquette, née Hadjipateras Class of 1972

I spent my entire school career at FHS Clarence Gate, as it was known at that time.

I saw the school grow, transform with new building projects, become a Senior School only (it used to be have a Junior School which occupied the ground floor), have state of the art labs and much more. I was there when the sixth form no longer wore uniform and had a wonderful common room at the top of the school. The constant throughout all of this was the commitment to creating a welcoming atmosphere for academic and personal growth.

My days at Francis Holland were extremely happy, surrounded by wonderful friends and committed teachers. I loved the fact that it was multi-cultural before anyone even used that term. Our class had Greek, Japanese, American, Argentine and French students to name a few.

Under the inspirational leadership of Heather Brigstocke we were encouraged to be curious, learn, engage and grow. I have extremely fond memories of my teachers, Mrs Haselgrove, Miss Sifleet, Miss Ravold, Mrs St Johnston, Mrs Newcombe. All of whom left in me a lasting and continual love of learning. However, it was Miss Dickie, who taught me my passion for the history of art which has accompanied me throughout my life.

Thank you to Francis Holland for the wonderful school years I enjoyed and the love of learning you inspired in me.

Marianna Hadjipateras née Lemos Class of 1973

I arrived at Francis Holland in 1961 - I have vivid memories from my Junior School years, starting with Mrs. Roberts my Kindergarten teacher! As you can tell from my dates, I spent all my school years at Francis Holland - I have the happiest of memories and have retained a life-long affection and appreciation for the establishment that afforded me such a



wonderful education. Along with a not unsubstantial number of fellow Oinoussians, we were lucky enough to be taught by many inspirational teachers not to mention our Headmistress Heather Brigstocke who undoubtedly had a special place in her heart for all her Greek pupils. I am and always will be very proud to be an old girl and as us Oinoussians left our mark, so FHS will always be in my mind and heart. Athens, 23rd June 2021.

Lucy Lubbock, née Simms Class of 1975

I was one of the few pupils who arrived in kindergarten in 1963 (the Junior School ended in 1969) and remained throughout leaving after my A levels in 1975. As everyone is aware the big change to FHS in that era, was Mrs Brigstocke's arrival

as Headmistress in 1965. She took a 19th century school well into the 20th with her intelligence, drive and panache. My earliest memory is of the first day, having not been to nursery school, this came as a big shock, we had labels put round our necks so the older girls could 'greet us'. The kindergarten form room, as it was called, was in what became the library. Milk arrived at morning break in miniature glass bottles, too cold in winter and too warm in summer! The Hall seemed vast, smelt of polish and we all sat crossed legged (except the senior girls who were in the gallery) the platform was the other side (from the current orientation). The school's new wing (again under Mrs Brigstocke's leadership) felt very modern, with pale wood and carpet, including a lecture theatre with up to date projection.

I, as Head Girl, introduced many a visitor there, including Arianna Stassinopoulos and (Sir)Anthony Hopkins. Mrs Brigstocke was keen to widen our cultural and intellectual reach, she created close ties between FHS and Westminster school, including talks from their Headmaster and visits to their Latin plays (she herself being a classics scholar). All this created a more dynamic and enlarged Sixth Form, where a 'can do' attitude towards academic achievement prevailed for women (when it was not the norm).

From the early years to Sixth Form, we benefitted from outstanding teachers including the charming Miss Holt L1 and the formidable Miss Melchior 111, (inspiring German émigrée), Mrs St Johnston (young and fashionable like our new Headmistress) and the redoubtable Miss Curtis (Science) and Miss Sifleet (Maths). My favourite area of study, art and art history was overseen by the splendid figure of Miss Dickie. Her lessons were lively and stimulating, as were the trips she organised (especially to Florence and Venice) the art room (top of the school, and little changed since) was her domain and she always treated us (in the Sixth Form) as young adults always ready to discuss a range of cultural topics. In art history we also had Mrs Moore who suggested studying at the Courtauld Institute which I was lucky enough to do. I should also mention Miss Brewis, a deeply knowledgeable and inspiring English teacher who inspired a love of literature amongst her English A level students, 'always read around the subject' was her mantra.

Overall, the transformation that took place from the mid 1960s to the 1970s (both physical and cultural) laid the foundations for the outstanding school we see today.

Elly Hadjipateras, née Lemos Class of 1981

My memories of Francis Holland during the 70s were mostly happy ones filled with fondness even though I spent most of my teenage years working out ways to make myself ill so I would have a precious day at home! I made the best friendships of my life, enduring deep connections that will never be broken. I was always in trouble, always bunking off (in fact my Ballet report card simply said "who's she?") and spent far too much time sitting in dread on that green sofa cringing when the light above Miss Holt's door went green.

Many memories have stayed with me but one in particular I'll never forget. There was a teacher called Mrs Sang, I believe she taught me French literature. That year my mum was diagnosed with breast cancer and I was having trouble sleeping so I would sleep in the 6th form common room during assembly. She noticed this and found me one day, gently woke me up and asked if there was anything wrong at home. I poured my heart out to her and by the end I think we were both crying!

The Sixth Form years were the best as the teachers suddenly started treating you as adults and the friendships that I'd made consolidated into real sisterhood. I still see those wonderful girls now from time to time and it's as if time never went by. There's something so special about FH. And I believe it has gone from strength to strength.

The *NHS* and Me

Polished Corners reflect on their experiences with the NHS during the age of Covid-19

The NHS and me in the last [hopefully] days of lockdown. By Jeannine Addinall

Because of some problems with my legs, I have encountered far more NHS professionals than ever before in the last couple of months. All I can say is that no-one could have deserved the George Cross more - and what interesting people they have all been. My conversations with them have ranged over the following topics: African literature from Nigeria and elsewhere; why the English have such a complicated system of referring to different generations of cousins; how even when your children have grown up and left home they still come to you about whether a pimple looks threatening or how to make cheese on toast; having to treat a boy who really had accidentally shot himself in the foot; whether or not we are reincarnated and carry our characters from one life to the next, explaining why siblings behave differently; is the spirit world really there or why else would a medium be able to name your grandmother; which is the best ice cream shop in Camden; days out with Thomas the Tank Engine, that perennial childhood favourite; and traditional songs from Carrickfergus near Belfast, to name but a few.

We have also had many a 'good laugh' together, and it has made it all a positive experience.

How they have retained their senses of humour in such thankless circumstances, not to mention their kindness and sociability, I have no idea, but I am so grateful to all I have met from the NHS.

COVID, the NHS and me. By Victoria Arad, née Martyn, Class of 2002

Undeniably COVID has affected everyone in many ways.

As the world ground to a halt in March 2020 one thing that needed to keep going and did was the NHS.

It is scary and strange to think that I have just celebrated my 10-year anniversary of qualifying as a doctor. Prior to this I had worked for 6 years as an obstetric sonographer also within the NHS. I trained in London, spent my junior doctor years in Nottingham and Lincolnshire and then came back to work in Luton to train and practice as a GP. I now work in an inner-city GP practice with over 26,000 patients. Before the pandemic hit, our practice was very well set up. We had paramedics and physician assistants doing minor illness appointments and home visits, in-house pharmacists and diabetes specialists, and daily phlebotomy. As a GP, 60% of my daily list was phone appointments with the remaining 40% of my day being face to face appointments.

I was approached to write this article about my experience working within the NHS during the COVID pandemic. When I told my husband he laughed, as I only worked during the first 3 weeks of lockdown and have only been back at work now for the last 2 months. He ended up making his own dinner that evening. However, thinking back over the last 16 months I think I have been in a very unique position and probably can report on the NHS from every side. I've been a front-line NHS worker, grieving relative, inpatient, and new mother. So, as you can imagine it has been a whirlwind.

On 16th March I left work at 6pm. Thirty minutes later my boss rang and said that I was not to come back to the practice for the foreseeable future and that I would be working from home. I was 31 weeks pregnant and the new government guidance had just come out. I started conducting telephone consultations with my 2-year-old daughter Persephone sitting next to me, who was reading my BNF (medication guide), and saying goodbye to all my patients at the end of the phone calls. Luckily my patients thought this was funny. Then on Monday 23rd March, the first day of full lockdown, I received a phone call to say that my 89-year-old fit, healthy and brilliant grandfather Clive had collapsed at home. I immediately advised phoning 999, ran to my car and drove to my grandparents' house. I arrived 10 minutes after the ambulance team. My grandfather was already in a wheelchair with an oxygen mask on. That was the last time I saw him and I never got the opportunity to speak to him. He was taken to hospital and died just over 12 hours later. To say we were devastated would be an understatement.

On Easter Sunday 2020, I was a day shy of 35 weeks and my waters broke. I found myself going into hospital alone as only patients were allowed in and leaving my

poor husband waiting for 6 hours in the car park until we knew what was going on. My second daughter decided to be as stubborn and strong-willed as her older sister. She waited until I was about to be discharged 30 hours later to decide she wanted to join the world. My husband luckily made it just in time to see her born and then was told to leave soon after. Clemency (named in memory of my grandfather) was born during the worst week of COVID in London. For the next 7 days I was alone on the maternity ward with her, with no visitors, reduced numbers of staff, and constant fear of her being transferred to NICU (baby intensive care) where I would be only allowed to see her for an hour a day. Looking on the brighter side of this experience, after 7 days of only hospital food whilst breastfeeding, I was pretty much back to pre-pregnancy weight and shape when I left hospital. No celebrity fad diets needed.

Now with any job there are workers who are great, those who are indifferent and those who you want to stay right away from you. This can be said about the NHS. I have always tried to be the type of clinician that I would want my family to see. As I work very hard at delivering the best care that I can to my patients, I am always surprised when I see such poor care being received by patients from others. Whilst in hospital I did feel bullied on some days by the midwives and ignored by the paediatric team. However, there were also times when I felt looked after. One midwife was kind enough to look after Clemency for a few hours, so I could get some sleep, and the midwife in charge let me have some of her personal tea stash. When I disagreed with my daughter's management plan and asked to see a senior doctor, I was reviewed within a few hours by a senior registrar with no quibble.

Surprisingly the best service that I was able to access through the NHS during lockdown was the health visitor service. I would call with a question and within a few hours I would have a call back with my health visitor. They were brilliant. In my experience the health visitors are underappreciated by the medical profession and the general population. It's amazing though that this was the service that was the most accessible and most helpful during lockdown.

I'm sure many of you will agree that lockdown has not been the easiest thing. Not being able to see family or friends, and not being able to get out and involved in activities to lighten the monotony, has all taken a toll on my mental health. Luckily my mother kept me supplied with chocolate, my sister rallied her medic friends who were working in the hospital I was in to come and see me when no one else could, and my elder daughter gave me multiple hugs and kisses each day. My husband, bless him, was trying to be useful.

Now I am back at work as if I haven't been away. I ring the patients on my list and am greeted with jovial hellos, questions about my new baby, and a few grumbles about how dare I have been gone for so long and how they hope I don't have any plans to go on maternity leave again. What I have found with most patients, regardless of how complex their needs are, is that they feel confused and ignored. Amazingly COVID has brought some big positive changes to my ability to practice as a GP within the NHS. During my maternity leave, as everything was via Zoom, I was able to attend meetings and courses whilst simultaneously breastfeeding or changing a nappy. I am now able to do video consultations and patients are able to share pictures of their issues before even seeing or talking to me. We now also have

a very comprehensive consultant connect service via phone or app, which means we can get specialist advice the very same day if needed.

I have been trying to think of a good analogy for the NHS and how to sum up this year. It's 1am and my husband has fallen asleep fully clothed on the bed, Clemency is fast asleep between us and Persephone has just come into our bedroom and made herself comfortable at the end of the bed. The NHS as a whole I don't feel has greatly changed over the last year. Think of it as a husband – it tries to be effective, gets things right on occasion, makes a mess of things accidentally, is a little slow to move with the times, but ultimately you hope it will be there for you when you really need it. The last 16 months has in no uncertain terms been awful in many ways. However, as I look at my sleeping daughters I can't forget that the last year has also brought me a lot of joy. I've watched my elder daughter grow from a toddler who hardly said a word into a little girl who doesn't stop talking (which includes both medical and dental jargon, her father is an orthodontist – she is a maxillofacial surgeon in the making) and I have Clemency. Clemency has changed from a small baby who was always asleep to a cheeky toddler who loves to dance, smile and cuddle her sister. I think it is easy to focus on the negative things in life, but we have to remember that good things happen too.

What a time to start my career in medicine! By Srutti Suresan, Class of 2014

I joined FHS in 2007 and left in 2014 to study medicine at Barts and The London. After 6 years of study, 2020 was the year I was to sit my final year exams. A couple of weeks before finals, the news of Covid-19 hit headlines and soon speculations about



Thrown in at the deep end! Srutti receiving her degree and ready to serve during Covid.

potential cancellation of exams were being spread. Wouldn't it be great if final year exams were cancelled! Of course, life never comes that easy and to our dismay, our university decided to go ahead with exams unlike other universities. So, I re-shifted my focus from procrastination to last minute revision and turned a blind eye to any updates about Covid-19 to avoid further distractions. Whilst awaiting my results, the UK went into its first lockdown and the country was in hibernation mode and I remember being told that this infection would linger for few weeks or so and then somehow magically disappear. Well wasn't that wrong.

In the midst of worsening daily statistics, I received the most awaited email. I passed finals and completed my MBBS degree - my place to work as a junior doctor in Yorkshire for the NHS was secured! Never have I felt so much relief as six years of hard work finally paid off! Having lived in

London all my life, it was time for me to venture out of my comfort zone and start a new chapter.

I left the hustle and bustle of London and was greeted by the stunning Pennine hills of West Yorkshire. My commute, which used to be an hour and a half long underground tube journey, was now a twenty minute scenic walk. On my first day in Acute Medicine, I was delighted when I heard that scrubs was the dress code. This meant I had guaranteed pockets every day and a few extra minutes of sleep as no time would be wasted on choosing what to wear.

It was a dynamic work place where I was introduced to many healthcare workers. Remembering new names can be difficult but now trying to remember names of people, whose faces I couldn't see, as they were hidden by blue masks, was a greater task. Funnily enough, it was only during lunch times where we would pleasantly

surprise each other with our sweaty faces when masks were removed to eat.

Within a few days of starting, I was caring for patients with Covid and with each patient interaction, I was made aware of the stark reality of Covid. I saw people struggling to breathe. I saw fatigued faces of patients trying to fight their battle of survival. I heard the cries of loved ones, the frustrations from staff members and endless phone calls to the ITU team, urging them to allocate an ITU bed for their patients.

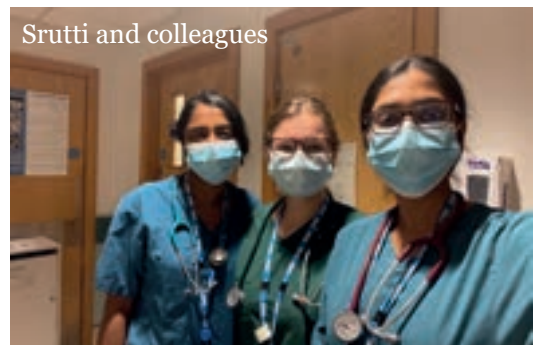
This didn't end in a couple of months. This continued. It continued in waves throughout the year and now, we are facing another rise in patients being admitted with Covid. Witnessing the physical manifestations of the infection and the emotional turmoil it causes was heartbreaking.

One day, a patient tested positive for Covid despite being in hospital for a few weeks. That same day, another patient started to have breathing difficulties. It was likely that there was a Covid outbreak on the ward and so I had to break the news to the patient that further investigation was needed to see whether his symptoms were due to Covid. He looked at me and asked 'what do I tell my wife now?..... Do I tell her that I have Covid or Cancer?...I just got diagnosed with oesophageal cancer last week and I'm meant to be seeing my wife today to tell the news..... With cancer, I have at least a year or so but with Covid I don't know what'll happen tomorrow.' I froze. How do you respond to this?

Covid has made the simple every day things difficult. Likewise, it further complicated the most difficult things in life too - grief was no exception. Visitors were restricted from entering the hospital to prevent the spread of infection but in instances when a patient was nearing end of life, two visitors

were allowed. In many occasions, I was the bearer of such news and I had distraught family members who would plead with us to give permission for another family member to visit. Unfortunately we couldn't. How is it fair to ask a grieving family member to choose two people to see the patient for the last time? It is just inhumane. Nothing could have prepared anyone for these emotional challenges. It was draining and distressing. Luckily, I was part of an amazing team of healthcare professionals whose support and morale helped to keep my spirits up.

Fortunately, my university re-organised our graduation ceremony a year later in June and the British weather didn't let us down! Graduation took place at St Paul's Cathedral and finally I got the chance to celebrate our achievement with my year group. It was such a memorable event and a time of reflection. Never did we imagine that we'd be working during a pandemic in our lifetime, let alone begin our career during one. This year has been a milestone. It has been about growth, independence, emotional resilience and gratitude. It is an incredible feeling to work for the NHS, a system which strives to put patients' needs first and I'm forever grateful to my family, friends and teachers who've helped me achieve this. This is just the first step and I'm excited to see where else medicine takes me in the future.



Canon Francis Holland

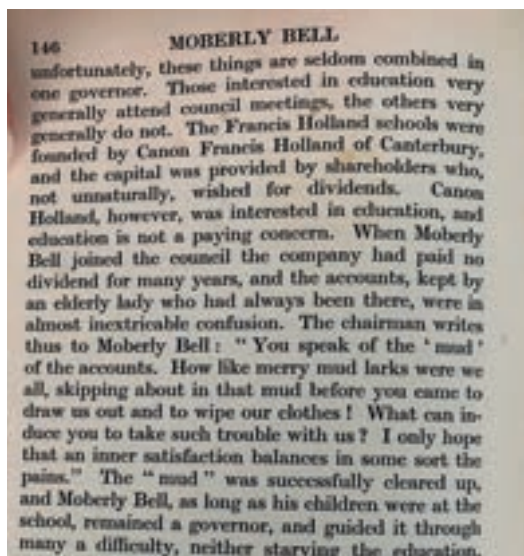
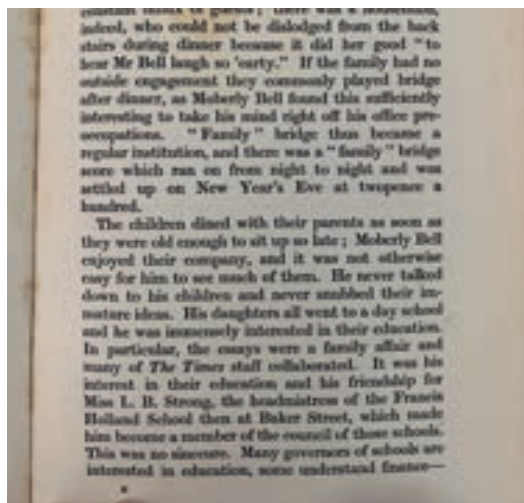
By Margaret Moss, née Fraser



I attended Francis Holland School from 1947 until 1956. During my years at Francis Holland, Enid Moberly Bell was the oldest Old Girl and it was she who started the handing on of the torch (Hanc lampada etc) at the birthday. The story was that she was one of the three little girls taken to school on the very first day by Canon Francis Holland himself. From the account of her father joining the council it sounds as though the school had existed for some time when Enid and her sisters joined the school, so it was perhaps just Enid's first day that the Canon took her, rather than the first day of the school.

Note from the Editors: Margaret Moss very kindly has given the school some very interesting archive material, including "The Life and Letters of C. F. Moberly Bell" which she found whilst clearing her house in preparation for downsizing. (Many of you will know that Miss Enid Moberly wrote a

history of Francis Holland School, Baker Street 1878-1914 and Clarence Gate 1915-1938.) We are hugely grateful – thank you Margaret. Here follows some excerpts from the book, p.145 below followed by 146:



Running in the family

We speak to Polished Corners who are keeping FHS firmly in the family

Beth Hill, current pupil (2020-2027) and daughter of Polished Corner, Julia Strauss

I was excited to start at Mum's old school but luckily not to the extent that she seems to have been; she says she threw up at the end of her first day from over excitement! FHS has always been part of my life as I'd been to a few carol concerts and even a Quondam lunch when I was little, so I really hoped that I could follow in her footsteps.

What Mum didn't warn me about was how noisy secondary school could be! Like her, I came from a small primary school so I'm really pleased to be able to go for a walk in the park at lunchtimes to get some peace and quiet.

She says the feeling of the school hasn't changed. I don't know what it was like in her time but I find it cheerful and energetic. This year has been strange due to Covid but even throughout online schooling, the teachers were amazing. I can't imagine what it was like for Mum without all the technology we have now, but she doesn't seem to mind me talking to friends for hours after school on FaceTime as she says she did the same on the phone, except her parents had to pay astronomical phone bills!

After Covid, it'll be a return to normal for the older girls in the school, but for my year it'll be the start of something new. I can't wait to embrace the traditions of whole



school assemblies, sponsored walks, and productions and concerts with an audience!

will also make lifelong friendships and have as much fun as I did. Below, Julia, and left, her daughter, Beth.

Julia Strauss, Class of 1987

I didn't imagine as a nervous 11-year-old walking through the front door of FHS in September 1980 that forty years later my daughter would walk through the same door in a school uniform that has hardly changed.

What has changed of course is the building; so much bigger than when I was there, (although that means it's easier to get lost), and the joy of having swimming onsite rather than going to Seymour Leisure Centre, with its dirty-looking pool, verruca-y floor and the mangle to squeeze out the over-chlorinated water from your swimming costume! The expansion of the school means no more climbing in the rafters of the attic unfortunately, but also no more having to beg from the Rudolf Steiner School for balls that had been thrown too hard in the playground.

Our lunches were rather formal affairs – grace was said before eating and there was a head of the table and a clearer, but I enjoyed the food, old-fashioned as it was. Now there's so much choice! And you can sit wherever you want!

Music was a big part of my life at FHS and I'm really pleased that Beth is enjoying what's on offer too. There's such a range of clubs, I don't know how she'll fit everything in.

I love that I can picture her running around the same corridors as me, knocking nervously on the same staffroom door and smelling the same odours from Mumtaz restaurant across the road! I made many great friends at FHS, both pupils and teachers, and the girl I met on my first day is now Beth's godmother! I know that Beth



Quondam Virtual Reunion

Come and join our online celebrations on Saturday, January 15th, 2022 when we will be reuniting with Polished Corners from across the globe in our second ever virtual event. For more information, please email alumni@fhs-nw1.org.uk

Juliet Moss, Class of 1981 - aunt of Victoria Arad whose article you can read in “The NHS and Me”

You could say without question that Francis Holland is very much a “family” school to my family as not only did my older sister, Alexandra Martyn, née Moss, attend at the same time as I did but many of my cousins were there before us. In fact my aunt (by marriage to my uncle Jack), Janet Politi, née Henry, was the first person to go there when she wasn’t even part of our family! She went there more than 60 years ago. The next person in my family to attend was my mother’s first cousin, Elizabeth Day, and she was quickly followed by some of my mother’s other first cousins, namely the five Day sisters – Carol, Prudence, Averil, Eileen and Alison who were all there for much of the time from at least the 1950’s onwards. Their first cousins on the other side, the Da Costa family and Candida Bruce, also went to FHS. You can imagine how disappointed my mother was when she was sent to South Hampstead High School instead!

I remember my own excitement at the fact that my mother’s first cousin Alison Day, now Edelshain, was to become Head Girl when I joined the Senior School in the early 1970’s.

Our family’s relationship with Francis Holland has remained steadfast throughout the years with Alexandra’s older daughter, Victoria Martyn, now Arad, attending as well as Alison’s daughters, Laura Edelshain, now Nahum, and Nina Edelshain, attending the school in the 90’s.

Both Victoria and Laura have daughters, so who knows, perhaps another generation of our family will become “Polished Corners” in the years to come!

Top right, music in the hall with Miss Vyner in 1974. Juliet is first on left wearing a headband.



Jeannine Addinall, former Deputy Head 1981 -2012

I, Jeannine Addinall, and my niece, Anna Hillier, overlapped for a few years in the reigns of Steve Jenkin and Hana Baig/ Packford as successive HODs.

She is the daughter of my sister Monique.

Anna also uses the name Addinall, but to avoid total confusion at the staffroom door or having to ask for the young or the old Miss A, she stuck with Hillier at FHS.

It was lovely to have her there, and while we did not in fact meet that often as she was



part-time, we did see each other at meetings and school occasions.

She often helped me out, as when I had sciatica and she got me out money from one of the Baker Street banks as I couldn't walk too far, or when I needed an academic gown for a FHS occasion and she, having been to the same university, kindly lent me hers.

I know we both have happy memories of our pupils, of the staff and of this unique school. I recall our both accompanying one lovely July school expedition on the boat to Greenwich not long before I retired.

She and Hana were wonderful at running Riding Club even in the middle of London!

I always feel a special bond with Anna because of the FHS link.

Pictured above: Jeannine, Anna, her sister Suzanne [also a teacher], their mother and my sister, Monique. I think it was taken in Regent's Park.

Renée Van Wijnen, Class of 1972

We, the van Wijnen family, arrived in London in January 1964 having recently left Washington D.C. In April my sister Frédérique and I started at Francis Holland. She was 11 and I was 9 years old. The difference between life in Washington D.C. and life in central London was huge. We went from a co-educational school without uniforms to a 'Church of England School for Girls' with uniforms, summer hats and indoor and outdoor shoes and curtsying to the teacher at the door. The five minute walk from home to school became a 45 minute journey by bus (two buses in fact). Thank goodness we had each other in this new environment! I do not remember this being a traumatic time for us. Our sister Elizabeth, who was 14 at the time, joined Francis Holland in the Autumn Term and I know she found the changes difficult. Frédérique and I settled in quite quickly and often had the company of the Norgren

sisters on our bus journeys home. I regularly let Frédérique sit next to the window on the top deck of the bus and then hemmed her in by sitting next to her. I would then ask in a loud voice "Shall I tell you a dirty joke?" and greatly enjoy her squirming with embarrassment before saying "Four white horse fell in the mud". She still remembers it vividly!

I do not remember ever being compared to my sisters by any of the teachers, although Miss Diss and Miss Sifleet must certainly have noticed my Maths skills were not up to Frédérique's standards.

Being the youngest, it wasn't until the sixth form that I was the only member of the family at school so I do not really know what it is like to be the only one at a school. I realise now that I never felt lonely and subconsciously knew that there was always someone I could go to if necessary.

Below L-R back row: Susan Winter, Frédérique van Wijnen, Michele Najmann, Renée van Wijnen, Diane Chanteau.

Maritsa Lemos, Class of 1985

Attending Francis Holland from 11 - 18 years of age was undoubtedly one of the happiest periods of my life. I followed in the footsteps of my sister and several cousins some of whom had even attended the prep school before it was disbanded.

I remember that when I was taking the 11 plus at Sarum Hall there was no question as to which secondary school I would be going to. There was only one choice for a North-West London Greek girl. The Greek community at the school was very vibrant and active; as a new girl joining in 3M it was very comforting to know I could reach out to my sister or cousins for advice. Occasionally because we all had similar names the odd detention may have been sat by an innocent party when the real culprit got away with it purely because all that separated their names was a middle initial.





Above: Kalliopi and Maria Hadjipateras, both to the left of the teachers

Kalliopi Hadjipateras, née Lemos Class of 1979

My memories of Francis Holland were good ones and of course it was lovely to have various Oinoussians in the same class as myself and my sister. This gave us a feeling of belonging and security as we would spend the long summer months together as well as being together in school and we formed lasting friendships with our Greek friends.

This photo made me laugh as we invited our teachers to our tenth birthday party (Miss Rentoul and Miss Triggs) in March 1971. At Channing junior school where I work, I sometimes threaten to turn up at a child's party and they always laugh, with horror!

Maria Hadjipateras, Class of 1979

Our families arrived in London from around the world in the late '50's and searched for the best all-girls' school to educate their daughters.

Francis Holland Clarence Gate, as it was then known, was the chosen one and thus began many decades of sisters, cousins and friends attending. Our forefathers originally came from a tiny island in the northern Aegean Region called Oinousses but due to their seafaring roots ended up in Canada and USA before settling down in London.

I personally feel very privileged to have been at Francis Holland from 1965 until 1979, having made so many friends and learnt so much from inspiring teachers. I had particular respect for Miss Sifleet who gave me my love for mathematics. Miss Blyth and Mrs St Johnston for history and Miss Jones for languages.

Having members of my family in almost every academic year was really lovely. We felt safe and secure and that we really belonged there.

I can honestly say that I felt quite strange and sad when the final year came and I realised I wouldn't be returning to school in September.

I will always treasure the wonderful times and my enormous appreciation for my happy schooldays.

Dr Katingo Hadjipateras Giannoulis, Class of 1978

The only British place in London where my name wasn't a mouthful for the adults therein, where they didn't look weirdly at me and ask me to repeat my name countless times was FHS, purely because in the year above me there was a pupil called Katingo Hadjipateras, just like me! My peers did grapple with my name, were puzzled at such an odd name, but the teachers pronounced it with such familiarity that I was forever grateful to my cousin Katingo for easing my way into FHS when I joined in the 1st year of secondary school.

The abundance of cousins during my school years at FHS was a mixed blessing. On the one hand, having cousins who were exemplary pupils who I knew would be a tough act to follow and whom you were expected to aspire to academically was a challenge. On the other hand, having so many cousins within the same environment gave me a soothing sense of security and solace - I wasn't the only Greek one! There was a mini-community of Greek youngsters within the school - we were connected both by family and by school.

I had a particularly close friendship with my cousin Maria - she was one year younger than me. Whenever we had the opportunity, we'd stick together- at break

times, at the end of the school day, at school trips. As I was a year older, I felt somewhat responsible for her; at the same time, we could be innocently mischievous together. We could subtly slip the odd comment in Greek to one another without people understanding what we were saying!

I valued having cousins around in FHS- some older, some younger- as we shared a multitude of school experiences as well as the out of school life that we were expected to adhere to within the Greek community in London. It felt at times like we were living two very different lives, but having cousins to count on within the school gave me a feeling of safety and belongingness.

Xenia Lemos, Class of 1982

Francis Holland School for me was more than just a school it was an extension of my family... we were all one big family. As incredible as it might seem I recall in a school of just 320 students we were over 12 girls from the island of Oinousses, where I have my origins, at the same time. We were quite a loud force I'd say.

FHS was the perfect nest where one could learn, play, explore and create. I joined in 1969 when there was still a junior school and had the good fortune to stay until Upper Sixth. I remember sitting in the hall every morning crossed legged while Mrs Brigstocke would take assembly. I recall looking up into the balconies above, where the Lower and Upper Sixth would sit, and think to myself, "I'll never get to sit there". Low and behold, time sped by so very quickly, I found myself looking down from above at those school girls sitting crossed legged listening to Miss Holt taking assembly.

FHS taught me so many things: Miss Sifleet (maths) taught me that respect must always be in the equation, Miss Blyth (history) the curiosity to change the future

while studying the past, Mrs Berberian (chemistry) that it's not just a bunsen burner that we can ignite and Mrs Forde (PE) that success comes with working in a team. Thank you FHS..... you have been in my heart for 52 years.

Alison Edelshain née Day Class of 1972

I started at Francis Holland when I was five years old. I distinctly remember sitting cross-legged at the front of the hall, knowing that my four elder sisters were somewhere behind me, as well as several cousins. What I don't recall was Miss Eagles, the Headmistress at the time, announcing in Assembly that my mother had just given birth to a little boy who would NOT be coming to FHS. I don't remember this as I had not yet quite started, but I do recall my sisters being very impressed that such an announcement was made in Assembly.

Clearly one of the downsides of having four elder sisters (Carol, Prudence, Averil and Eileen) at the same school was that I always complained that I never had any new clothes – just pass me downs – and this clearly included school uniform. Yet I have to admit, looking at school photos, my clothes always seemed in very good condition, so perhaps it was not such a terrible consequence after all.

To be fair to my sisters, I also have no recall of any of them bossing me around at school. Rather I do remember being taken into my classroom by them when I was very small and if I fell in the playground, I knew someone would find one of them to help me. There was also the huge excitement (at the time!) of finding one of my sisters' or cousins' names inside the textbook that I had been given and feeling a sense of continuity as I studied from a book they had shared. These memories, however, are only

of the junior school. By the time I was 11 and moved into the Third Form, there were no more sisters at the school as the two elder ones had left school and the next two had moved elsewhere for their secondary education. Yet I was still not on my own as this left my cousins. One cousin, Elizabeth Day, had already left by this time, as had Janet Henry, (now Politi) who was not a cousin at the time but who became one by marrying one of my many first cousins; but this still left, only a couple of years above me, Linda da Costa (now Payman) and Susan Kempner (now Lerner). Younger than me were Alexandra (now Martyn) and Juliet Moss and Candida Bruce (now Music). The tradition of older cousins keeping an eye out for the younger ones continued, as well as the opportunity of lifts home. I was immensely happy throughout my years at Francis Holland.

This positive school experience must have been unconsciously passed onto my two daughters who followed me, many years later, at the school. I do recall my elder daughter, Laura coming out of her interview with Mrs Parsonson, and telling me that she had been asked what other schools she was applying for and Laura replying that "I could tell you, but it would be a waste of time, as I only want to come here". It gave me immense pleasure that Laura and her younger sister, Nina, continued the family tradition of attending Francis Holland.

Our Quondam Bursary is half way

And April is six months away
£22,500 is how much we need
So a young girl can succeed.

Please just Google
"The Quondam Bursary"

So our girl excels quite universally!

News from Polished Corners

Mary Best, née Simmonds, Class of 1959

Following on from my obituary to Jenny Gubbins (née Dearman), there are three anecdotes that Jenny and I have always remembered from the many we experienced during our time in the USA:

After working in Palm Beach Florida for several months, we were preparing to set off for San Francisco in our trusty 1957 Chevrolet station wagon, via Texas and Mexico, when one of our friends insisted we should take a gun with us for protection!! Needless to say we declined as neither of us had a clue nor wanted to learn how to use one!!

Secondly, whilst driving through the wilds of Texas, we came across our first sight of the golden arches of McDonalds!!

We bought 5 Big Macs (all stuffed with salad and dressings) for \$1.... equivalent then to 6s 8d (or 36p). This certainly helped our meagre budget as it was our daily food allowance purchased in one hit!!

Finally, whilst trying to locate our friends' flat in San Francisco, we ended up stuck on the brow of the steepest hill in the city!! With no hand brake (just an unfamiliar foot operated parking brake), it was extremely difficult to negotiate the final bit of the hill. We ended up having to go down backwards, with Jenny behind the car clearing the traffic, until we safely reached the bottom and found another, not quite so challenging, way to our accommodation!!

After my return I worked briefly in South Africa then for a Safari Company on the

Okavango delta in Botswana. A lifetime away from working in London.

After 30 years of following my RAF officer husband around the UK (regrettably no glamorous postings) we, and other members of our family, are involved in dive centres and hotel resorts in Gili Trawangan a little island just off Bali. Unfortunately Covid has stopped us from our annual visits, along with virtually all tourists.

A group of my year have been meeting in London for the last few years - Ursula Mountrose, Jenny Fabian, Julia McLaren, Ruth Coleman and Liz Headley Blythe. If anyone from our year would like to join us we would be very happy to catch up with you. Please email Claire Brazer at quondam@fhs-nw1.org.uk if you are interested and she will put you in touch with me so I can give you details of where and when (hopefully soon) we are next going to get together.



Renée Van Wijen, Class of 1972

After 30 years living in the south west of the Netherlands we moved to the centre of the country, not too far from the city of Utrecht. Two of our three children live in the vicinity and the third lives in Rotterdam. We now have five grandchildren, four boys and one girl, between the ages of 8 months and 8 years. They take up a lot of our time but it means there is a strong bond between us.





Carole Harris, Class of 1973

For the last few weeks I have been volunteering at Wembley for Euro 2020, which has been both interesting and quite exciting, although we have only managed one foray inside the stadium, for a photo op.

More importantly, I am also volunteering at the StoneX Stadium (formerly Allianz Park), home of Saracens, which has been turned into a vaccination centre.

Along with these, I am continuing to work with Separated Child Foundation, an excellent charity that provides arrival and sleep packs for unaccompanied refugee minors. As a Saracens Pioneer, I have managed to obtain all the old uniforms (jackets, polo and tee shirts) when the sponsors changed. Many of the others working with me are also 'serial volunteers', they have uniforms from various major

sporting events - London 2012, Glasgow 2014, Summer of Athletics 2017, London Ambassadors, Lord's, to name but a few - and are very happy to be able to clear out their wardrobes of these slightly pre-loved, but no longer useful, items. So I have become a receptacle for all of these, and it saves the charity a lot of money.

Finally, there is the cricket - have had a few shifts at Lord's, but actually had them take away my tickets for the New Zealand test match due to capacity limitations - likewise at the Oval for yesterday's one-day international against Sri Lanka.



Miranda Cullen née Lyons, Class of 1989

I was in class of 1989 leavers and my maiden name is Miranda Lyons. Married to Lindsay Cullen, living in Fulham and have two children Jasper (13) and Sienna (8). Worked in TV production for a few decades. The FHS zoom gathering was a fantastic way to connect with my year group, so much to catch up on, as I've never been able to physically go the FHS school gatherings due to family birthdays! I recently met up with Esther Wilkins and Sophie Rimington and although too many years have past it felt like only yesterday that we had seen each other. Very fond memories of schooldays spent with them and those I saw on Zoom.



Yihuan Lim, Class of 2015

I joined Francis Holland School, Regent's Park as a student in 2010 and left in the summer of 2015, to study English at university. After having completed my undergraduate studies, I was indecisive about what path in life I was to take. I had considered a career in journalism, copywriting, publishing - and even something in design.

Eventually, I went on to complete a PGCE Secondary in English and finished my Master's in Education last October. Although I had a teaching qualification, I was still hesitant to pursue a teaching career, having experienced a few lows during my teacher training. It was only during my short-lived hunt for jobs in publishing, did an email from Quondam pop into my inbox, requesting a couple of Polished Corners to return to FHS to be employed as Cover Supervisors. I applied the very next day, and to my joy, was accepted immediately.

After re-joining FHS as a staff member in November 2020, I only expected to be there for a short while. Little did I realise that nearly 9 months later, I would be sitting here, having worked there for almost a full academic year, and what a year it has been! I have done all sorts: cover supervising, COVID testing administration, scanning exam papers; admin duties: I was even able to teach a poetry lesson to a wonderful Thirds class. My love for teaching has certainly been restored during my short time here, and I am set to begin my first teaching job in September 2021 at an all-girls secondary school, as Teacher of English.

It has been such a pleasure to work with former teachers who I would now call my friends, but also with new faces that I will remember forever. I will miss the ladies

in the office and the chats in the staffroom over hot chocolate and doughnuts at break.

I am so honoured that I have departed FHS a second time, and I am sure I will return. I have learnt so much during my time here and I am so grateful to those who went above and beyond to make sure I had a wonderful time - you know who you are.

Below: Yihuan photographed as a pupil at School, and then in the school library as an FHS staff member



Behind the Scenes at FHS

Director of External Relations, Vanessa McKinley and Alumni Relations Officer, Claire Brazer tell us about their careers at FHST

Claire Brazer, Alumni Relations Officer

My career at Francis Holland Schools' Trust began in November 2018, when I took over the role as Alumni Relations Officer from my predecessor, Alistair Brown. Employed, as I am, by the Schools' Trust means that I work for both Francis Holland schools. My office is based at the Sloane Square school, although we travel a fair amount between the two.

One of the things I like most about my job is getting to know, and building relations with, the schools' alumni communities - known as Old Girls over at Sloane Square, and of course, Polished Corners here at Regent's Park. And no better place to do this than any number of alumni events that are arranged across the academic year. Organising these events is one of the most important aspects of my job. One thing I've absolutely missed in the last year is seeing you all. Zoom just isn't the same!

My role is varied, with no two days the same: all the better as variety is a big driving force for me! I'm currently working on the design of this magazine, including layout and editing, and I also produce an annual publication for our Sloane Square school. I work alongside the Marketing



and Communications team, reporting to Vanessa McKinley, who you'll meet on the next page.

I work closely with this school's Careers Department; we have developed the Alumnae Mentorship Scheme and at Sloane Square we run a number of talks, in partnership with the school, and a variety of events.

Of course, communication is key - as well as social media management I also run the Alumni Network, a communications portal for me to post alumni news stories and send emails but most importantly, a hub where YOU can connect with other alumni. Take a look for yourself, here: <https://alumni.fhs-nw1.org.uk/>

Outside of my work I sing alto in the Sloane Square School Choir which is a lot of fun and a great way to connect with other staff members.

Vanessa McKinley **Director of External Relations**

As Director of External Relations for Francis Holland Schools, I am responsible for admissions, marketing, communications and alumni relations across our Junior and Senior Schools at Sloane Square and our Senior School at Regent's Park. My role has expanded so much since joining back in 2008 when my first priority was to rebrand the schools from Clarence Gate and Graham Terrace to Regent's Park and Sloane Square respectively. The main focus was to unify the schools under one brand, as they share the Francis Holland name, and help parents and pupils understand where each school was located in London!

Suffice to say it's been a fascinating journey since those early days and very different from my previous career in advertising and marketing agencies. There is a tremendous feeling of community and, even though my team are not part of the academic teaching staff, we do very much share in school life. It's so important for us to have close working relationships with staff and pupils so that we can bring FHS to life for parents through daily news on websites, social media and in weekly newsletters and magazines.

The last year presented so many challenges (and opportunities!), and brought our need to communicate effectively with our key stakeholders into sharper focus. Prospective pupils and parents were no longer able to visit us on open days and current parents couldn't participate so readily in school life so virtual content, videos, tours and webinars became ever more important in keeping us all connected.

The same applied to our communication with alumni as those relationships with former school friends, and Francis Holland



itself, became more valued to many and I hope we helped, in some small way, to lessen the feeling of isolation. Claire, our Alumni Relations Officer, was able to invite alumni to attend our careers fair, talks and lectures, which had previously been unavailable in the pre-Covid, non-virtual world, along with online reunions connecting with our more physically distant alumni, so there were definitely some silver linings!

School life is fast-paced and full of exciting challenges. We are all united in our common passion to prepare girls for the future and having two daughters myself (and a son) I am fully invested, personally and professionally, in that mission; so much so that my daughter attended FHS Sloane Square for Sixth Form. Seeing our FHS education from a parental perspective was a wonderfully reassuring experience! As she is now an alumna too, I really do value the lifelong bond we build with pupils, and parents, from when they join through to their life beyond FHS.

Announcements

28th September 2020 Tessa Rosalind Luisa Nedas

Susanne Nedas, née Quastel, writes:
Our eighth grandchild was born on 28th
September 2020. Fourth child for our son,
Tim, and daughter-in-law, Charis. Though
Tessa was born in lockdown, we were able
to stay in Longstock to help with childcare.
What a wonderful, glorious time we had.



Ruby Wedding Anniversary

Many congratulations to Benita, née Thomas, and Jonathan Mathews who celebrated their Ruby wedding anniversary in June 2021. (photographed with their son Daniel). Benita writes: “Our anniversary was in early June, so I think this was probably the first meal we’d had out at a restaurant for months, so it was great fun to dress up and travel into central London for this special occasion.”



**Please send us
your news and
announcements for
2022.**

It's never too early to share good news!
Gladly received by email to:
quondam@fhs-nw1.org.uk

Obituaries

Sally Adams 1934-2020



Sally, a devoted member of the Quondam Club, died on 27 November 2020, age 84. She and I were lifelong friends, and that is the best sort. There is a group of five of us who have kept in touch ever since we met at the Francis Holland School when we were eleven. No, Sal would have been ten, so she was at once different ~ and while our families were fairly conventional, hers was certainly not: her brilliant parents had diametrically opposed political views: her father was a Conservative Member of Parliament, her mother the first female television producer and very left-wing. From this discord Sally emerged resistant to conforming and already with an unconventional attitude to many things. Yet she very much wanted to be one of our group and, as it were, to have our protection.

We five grew up together, often staying with each other in term time and happily spending countless holidays at Felicity's

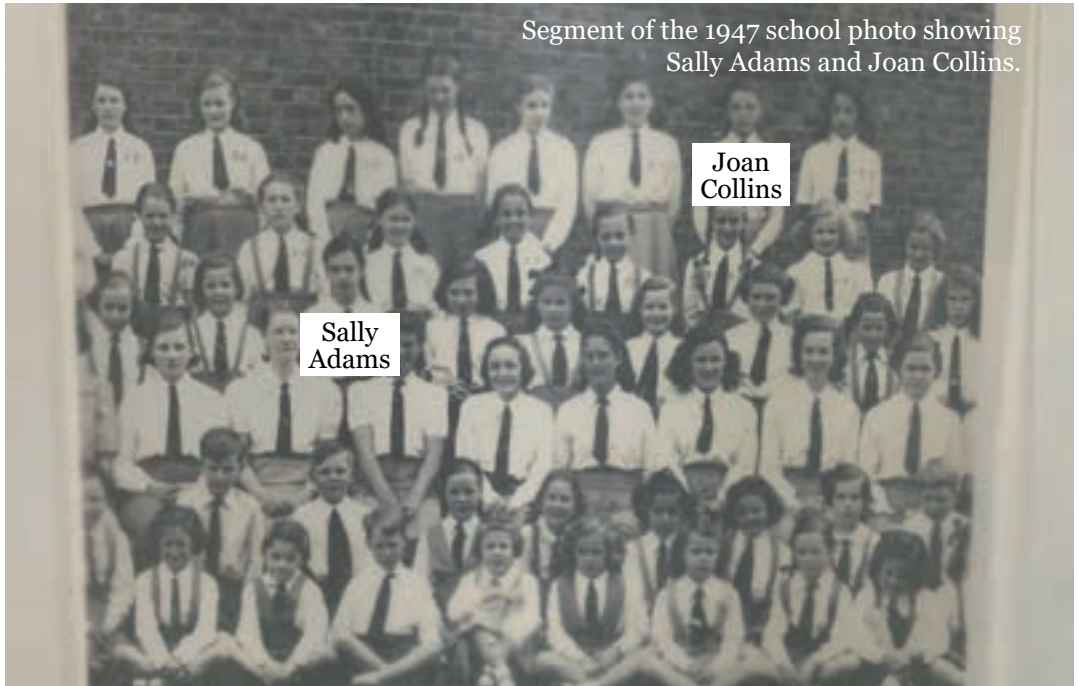
family country house in Norfolk. Sally and her mother suffered the tragedy of her father being drowned on holiday in Cornwall in 1951. Sally was then fourteen.

At school she was excellent at sports and, gradually focussing on the sciences, with characteristic determination went to university, which few of our contemporaries did in the fifties. After graduation, she moved from zoology to help set up the Psychophysical Research Unit in Oxford, where she studied extrasensory perception. Impracticably late in life she decided to try to become a doctor, and later still expended huge efforts, inevitably again unsuccessfully, on having a child.

Below L-R: Sally, Caroline, Margaret, Charlotte and Felicity.



But she had other strengths: when her mother died she organised and chaired a memorial meeting, very literally of the Great and the Good, so expertly that I have always felt that she had untapped, unrecognised talents in further directions. Her capacity for warm friendships survived all the vicissitudes and has never been dimmed.



Segment of the 1947 school photo showing Sally Adams and Joan Collins.

Written by Charlotte Halliday –
representing the group of friends ~
Caroline Webb (née Mannock), Margaret
Shillan and Felicity Spencer née Reynolds ~
at Sally's funeral on 18 December 2021 at
St Marylebone Crematorium, N2.

Susan Cropper, née Davis 1956-2020

I am writing to inform you of the recent
death of my sister, Susan Cropper on 24th
November 2020 - Virginia Ayling.

Susan Dyer, née Jacomb Hood 1948-2018

Susan entered Francis Holland at six
following in the steps of her mother,
Patience Alsop and joining her older sister
Jane, and left in July 1964. At school she
was very diligent and she shone at lacrosse
on the sports field and on the netball court.



Susan Dyer, née Jacomb Hood



Staff Vs pupils tennis match,
1954

Clare Garvin (centre), second
from left, Miss Maureen
Simmons, second from right,
Miss Mary Curtis.

After school she had a varied career in public relations and advertising before marrying Tony Dyer, an officer in the Royal Artillery in 1974. They lived for a time near barracks in Lippstadt, Northern Germany while Tony was on a tour of duty there. When he left the Army, the couple moved to Scotland where Tony had a job with the Highland Regional Council as a parks and open spaces officer involving work on long distance paths and wild spaces. Their son Benjamin was born there and they settled at Fortrose on the Black Isle. I stayed with them there in their house overlooking the Moray Firth.

After Tony retired Susie and he relocated to Suffolk where they built their own house in the village of Hacheston not far from Woodbridge.

She enjoyed village life, and she had a number of jobs including in local government and local housing as well as volunteering at the local primary school and Hollesly Bay Heavy Horse Settlement. She was also a very efficient secretary of the parochial church council.

Susie moved from Hacheston after Tony died to Wickham Market to be nearer her sister Jane, and at the time of her death she was working as a volunteer for Suffolk Constabulary.

She was a keen member of her local Ipswich Fun Run, often choosing to help out at events instead of being able to take part; at her funeral among many friends old and new there was a strong representation of her co-fun runners.

Following her death in September 2018 there was a tribute to her in the East Anglian Daily Times praising her for her courage after a cancer diagnosis at the end of her life.

She was one of the kindest people I have known. - Eleanor Allen, née Schacke Andersen, Class of 1964

Clare Garvin, née MacLeod 1928-2020

At the age of 92, Clare Garvin died peacefully on 27th December 2020, surrounded by her family. Clare taught History at Francis Holland from 1954-1961. She was fortunately able to spend her final Christmas opening stockings with her family and watching the Queen's speech, before retiring to bed. Her family hope to celebrate her life properly in the summer months. A private cremation was held on 6th January.

Pictured above at the school in 1954:
Clare Garvin (centre); second from left
Miss Maureen Simmons, second from right,
Miss Mary Curtis.

Jennifer Gubbins, née Dearman 1943-2021

Jenny died in April 2021 having battled courageously with ill health for some years.

After leaving school she and I spent several years working in advertising in London before setting off for the USA in 1965. It was a huge adventure and, in those days, it was comparatively rare for young 20 somethings to be embarking on a trip of this magnitude. We worked in Washington DC, Florida and San Francisco.

After 18 months and many adventures later we returned to the UK where Jenny met and married her husband Bruce and they had 3 sons.

In 1995 Jenny founded CAS Marketing Communications. At the time it was one of the first marketing agencies specifically working to promote companies that manufacture products to help people with reduced mobility such as those living with a disability, the elderly etc. Without doubt the company helped change the way manufacturers promoted themselves and their products through advertising and PR campaigns. The business continues in the hands of her eldest son Andrew.

In the past decade Jenny continued her love of travel worldwide and I joined her on several trips to Europe.

- Mary Best, née Simmonds, Class of 1960

Jane Jacomb-Hood 1946-2021

Above, Jane Jacomb-Hood, Class of 1962, with her school friend, Anthea Grainger née Shackle Anderson.

Jane died in Aldeburgh, where she had been living for some time, on 30 January 2021. She was predeceased by her younger sister Susan, who had also been at the school. Jane was a free spirit, fun to be with, very



uncompetitive, musical and very good at all sports. I can remember a delightful day with her and Imogen Holst driving round Suffolk on a church crawl, with Jane at the wheel of her car.

A period in the City, which she did not like, was followed by a few years at the RSC, where she was responsible for keeping the sponsors happy. Later she was secretary to the Parliament Choir. The world of the Arts was where she liked to be.

She had a long association with Aldeburgh before moving to live there permanently, as her parents retired to live in Thorpeness, nearby. She was very involved with the Aldeburgh Festival. She also became involved in the administration of the Aldeburgh Jubilee Hall.

Our families were close. Jane's mother was very hospitable and used to help us with our maths homework. She had me and my sisters to stay in the holidays.

We stayed in touch. I shall miss Jane and her great sense of humour.

- Anthea Grainger (née Schacke Andersen)

Kyriakoula (Kyri) Lemos **1963-2021**



It is with profound sadness that we inform you of the sudden passing of our beloved sister, cousin, friend and Old Girl Kyriakoula (Kyri) Lemos.

On 11th January 2021 after a brave and prolonged battle with an autoimmune disease our beloved Kyri died peacefully in her home in Athens, Greece, survived by her brothers, sister, nieces and nephews.

Kyri was born in London on 2nd May 1963 and spent all her schooling at Francis Holland. She was the epitome of a Polished Corner!!! Science and Maths were not one of her strengths but she excelled in Languages which later led to a career as a translator and teacher. On the sporting front, though not a natural athlete, she was nevertheless an excellent fencer and won the annual fencing cup, a copy of which still stands on her mantelpiece, a testament to this sporting achievement!!

She made some enduring and deep friendships namely Elly Lemos, Katerina Louloudis, Francine Seward, the late Lisa Foster, Marina Engel and Patricia Spencer all of whom still recognise the loyalty and

love Kyri always showed to her dearest friends.

She left Francis Holland to read Modern Languages at the University of Kent. During her year abroad in Florence she met her future husband Andreas and later married him moving permanently to Greece.

Kyri lived a very full life. She travelled extensively, enjoyed the theatre and the arts and was a skilled translator and teacher of languages.

But most importantly she was an extremely loved member of the Greek community, a loving and attentive aunt to her siblings' children and a devoted daughter to her parents.

The support and love she showed her family and friends was remarkable, her humour infectious and her kindness to those in need knew no bounds.

For those whose lives she touched she has left a huge void and for her family a devastating loss. May she rest in eternal peace.

- Maritsa Haidemenos (née Lemos) and Elly Hadjipateras (née Lemos)





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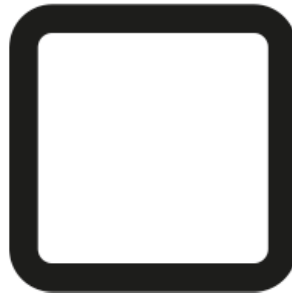
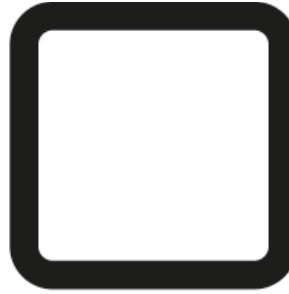
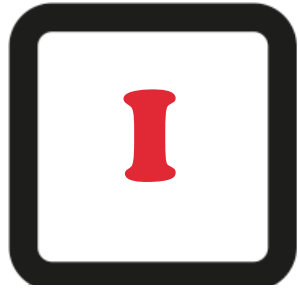
Quondam Sixth Form Bursary.

We're half way there!

We can reach our remaining
target if each of us gave as little
as £10!

Small actions x lots of people =
Big Change

Find out more on page 9



How well do you remember Francis Holland School? Test your knowledge with Former Deputy Head ***Jeannine Addinall's*** quiz - especially devised for Polished Corners! Answers below.

Questions

- 1- Two plants on a ship. Which former headmistress is this?
- 2- What connection is there between our FHS house at the corner and the illustrations for another famous one?
- 3- Name the proverbial pair who opened the swimming pool.
- 4- She produced one of her cartoons for a FHS millennium talk. She is famous for Gemma Bovary, Cassandra Darke and other graphic novels ----Simmonds?
- 5- Who is the saintly person to be found not a million miles from FHS in a place where they sing? Name both for 1/2 mark each.
- 6- Why did FHS move out of its original site on Baker Street?
- 7- When did FHS move to its current site on Ivor Place?
- 8- In which year was The Quondam Club formed?
- 9- Who was the first Headmistress of FHS?
- 10- In which year was FHS founded?

Answers

- 1- Heather Brigstocke
- 2- E.H. Shepard illustrated 'The House at Pooh Corner.' He was an old boy of FHS.
- 3- Joan Collins and Richard Chartres, Bishop of London.[1/2 mark each.]
- 4- Posy
- 5- St. Cyprian- in the church named for him opposite the school. [1/2 mark each.]
- 6- Because the Metropolitan Railway had secured power of compulsory purchase of the property.
- 7- Early 1915
- 8- 1886
- 9- Gertrude Frost
- 10- 1878

University *Destinations*

2021

United Kingdom

Allan, Charlotte-Rose – Veterinary Science at Royal Veterinary College

*Andrews, Mya – History of Art, Manchester

Atfield, Amalie – History at Edinburgh

Atfield, Bella – History at Bristol

Balls, Mary – General Engineering at Durham

Bilwani, Laiba – Economics at King's College London

Bithell, Sarah – Biological Sciences at Durham

Burnett-Small, Orla – Cognitive Science at Edinburgh

Chernova, Marina – Chemistry with industrial placement at University of Sussex

Collier-Wright, Taline – Modern Language and Business and Management at Manchester

Entwistle, Adelia – Sociology at Durham

Fisher-Turner, Isabella – History of Art and English Literature at Edinburgh

Found, Olivia – History of Art at Edinburgh

Gehl, Talia – Global Management (Enterprise and Innovation) at Regent's University, London

Haralambous, Mary – Psychology with placement at Sussex

Harding, Eliza – Sociology and Social Anthropology at Edinburgh

Harrison, Annie – Linguistics at Cambridge

Horan, Roisin – English Literature at Leeds

Isaacs, Larissa – Psychology at Birmingham

Jacobson, Marina – Geography at Exeter

*Jones, Stella – Psychology at Newcastle – deferred entry

Katsura, Juri – International Relations at King's College London

Klug, Hannah – Natural Sciences at York

Klug, Isabel – Bioarcheology at York

Leykind, Deia – English Literature at St. Andrew's

*Lloyd, Alicia – English Literature at York – deferred entry for 2022

Macklin, Sophia – Architecture with placement at Bath

Maynard, Annelise – Liberal Arts at Leeds

Milton, Zoe – Italian and English Lit at Edinburgh

Morris, Jasmin – Psychology at Leeds

Mullins, Alice – Politics with study abroad at Exeter

Perkins, Jessica – Business Management with Marketing at Leeds

Rouse, Luciana – Graphic Design at Loughborough

Schneider, Marnie – Pharmacology at Bristol

Shah, Keia – Social Sciences at UCL

Shillito, Theodora – Midwifery at Southampton

Sibson, Lorna – General Engineering with a year in industry at Sheffield

Valentine, Ellie – English Literature at Edinburgh

Wolstenholme, Isabel – Social Policy at Bath

Woolf, Georgina – Population and Geography at Southampton

Zeyssolff, Charlotte – History with Study Abroad at Exeter

International

Alikhani, Yasmin – Liberal Arts at Barnard College

Bahanda, Amaara – Business & Communications at New York University

Baygual-Nespatti, Paloma – Liberal Arts at New York University

Brown, Isabel – Liberal Arts at McGill, Canada

Flood, Jessica – English at Trinity/Columbia

Hassenforder, Charlotte – Liberal Arts at Williams College

Murray, Tara – Liberal Arts at Georgetown University

Nygren, Emma – Communications at Northeastern University

Art Schools

*Andrews, Mya – City & Guilds – also offered a place to read History of Art. Unconfirmed at time of print.

Hills, Amelia – Kingston University

Lloyd, Alicia – Art Foundation at City & Guilds of London Art School

Shah, Lily – Central St Martin's

Gap Year

Alekeeva, Valerie

Nassiri, Ella

Thomas, Anna

Yaffes, Chloe

*Two places offered. Unconfirmed at time of print

Class of 2020 students to start university in 2021

Commander, Olivia – History and Political Economy at King's College London

Cocco, Ines – Physics at UCL

De Winter, Lola – History of Art at UCL

Joukovski, Anastasia – Psychology and Neuroscience at Bristol

Upton, Emilia – Natural Sciences at Durham

Von Malaise, Maia – Theology, Religion and Philosophy of Religion at Cambridge

Wilson, Sadie – Geography at Reading

News from the Alumni Network

Welcome to the Francis Holland School, Regent's Park Alumni Network. Over the next few pages, you can see what our FHS Alumni community has been up to. Of course, the best way of keeping up to date with all things alumni is to join our online 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 school and its alumni community! Join here:

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

You can also keep in touch with the school community by post, email and via social media. If you do not wish to receive any communications by post, please update your communication preferences on the alumni network, or alternatively let us know by email.

Email and Post

You can contact Alumni Relations Officer, Claire Brazer, at **alumni@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**

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 for all the latest news.



Francis Holland Regent's Park Alumni Network



Francis Holland Regent's Park Alumni Network



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Alumnae Women of Influence



Emily, who is casting director at Lucy Bevan Casting, was interviewed by Sixth Form pupil, Roisin Horan in January 2021. Also in January, Atalanti was interviewed by pupil, Charlie Prince.

Atalanti is Founder and VP at Giving Women, a Membership Association, who have formed a community for women in need; putting them in touch with women who are in a position to support them.

Both interviews are available to watch on the alumni network and can be found in the alumni news section.

This year, the School's Women of Influence Series was one of the most impressive since the series began six years ago. Broadcast online every Monday throughout the academic year, guests were interviewed by pupils with the main discussion centring around the theme "Stronger Together - A New Beginning".

This past academic year saw two alumnae guest as Women of Influence speakers: Class of 2009's Emily Brockmann and 1970s alumna Atalanti Moquette, née Hadjipateras.



Upper Sixth Leavers' Dinner 2021



On Friday 25th June, the Upper Sixth celebrated the end of their school days at Francis Holland at their much-anticipated leavers' dinner.

Held at the school, the girls enjoyed dinner in the beautifully decorated hall following photography opportunities in the courtyard garden. Speeches made by Headmaster, Charles Fillingham, Head of Sixth, Nick Gridelli and Head Girl, Tara Murray praised the hard work demonstrated by the year group and wished everyone much success for the future.

A total of 25 prizes were awarded, including the Polished Corner Prize to Jessica Flood (for most outstanding leaver of 2021), the Parsonson Prize for personal progress to

Alicia Lloyd, and the Headmaster's Prize (for outstanding service to the school as Head Girl) to Tara Murray.

The dinner was also an opportunity for the girls to recognise the efforts made by the Quondam Alumni Association, who sponsored the first drink of the evening, in preparation for their new status as Francis Holland alumnae, or 'Polished Corners' as they are historically known.

We wish all UVI leavers' every success for their future and look forward to welcoming them back to the school as Quondam's newest members!



Alumnae Speak

‘In Conversation’ Series

In place of our in-school series of careers talks, previously known as ‘Jujiro’, this year’s pandemic restrictions meant that we took to the Internet, offering instead a selection of alumni guests, ‘In Conversation’ with current pupils, alumni and teaching staff. First up was Claire Valoti, Snapchat’s Vice President and 1997 alumna.

Beginning with her days at FHS, Claire shared slides of her days as a pupil and spoke of the hard work that went into her studies, and the leadership and management skills developed as a result of her roles as both Head Girl and Hockey Captain. After studying Politics at the University of Nottingham, Claire began her career at media agency Mindshare across world-class brands before rising to become the Director of Agency Partnerships at Facebook UK and now Vice President of International Business at Snap Inc. (parent company of Snapchat).

In February 2021 we were delighted to welcome Class of 1988 alumnae, Alexis Albion and Tamsin Ogilvie (née Tillier). Alexis is Lead Curator at the International Spy Museum in the U.S and Tamsin is founder and designer at Tamsin Ogilvie Design. Both women spoke to their audience about building careers in History and Design, crediting Francis Holland’s teachers and all-girl environment for giving them the confidence to take their passions in a variety of directions.

Lastly, in the spring we were delighted to welcome Class of 2010 alumna, Kaammini Chanrai. Kaammini is the UK Diversity

and Inclusion Manager at Vodafone and also founded Gender and the City - an intersectional and feminist website upon completion of her MSc in Gender, Development and Globalisation at the London School of Economics.

Below, from L-R Tamsin, Claire, Kaammini and Alexis.



Alumni Mentorship Scheme

Francis Holland School has a fantastic reputation in supporting students both academically and pastorally, as we hope you will have experienced first-hand in your time here. As many of you are aware, in 2020 the School established an Alumni Mentorship Scheme to support the transition to the Sixth Form for pupils new to FHS. This September, we are delighted to tell you that we will be repeating the scheme for LVI students.

“My mentor helped boost my confidence to make new friends as I adapted to life at a new school. She also gave me advice on gap years at university which I found very useful”

“Having the meetings through calls made it much more convenient and made me more relaxed during the first few meetings”

“My mentor provided me with a strong path for university courses and also gave me an insight into different ways to improve the efficiency of my revision time”



By offering a guiding hand, we believe that alumni make a real difference to another Francis Holland girl's future. Alumni mentors are also role models, career champions, coaches and guides who aim to take personal interest in the growth and development of their mentee over the course of the year.

The programme commences in September 2021 (at time of writing) and would match Lower Sixth students with each volunteer adult mentor. We anticipate the time commitment would work out to be approximately 30 minutes a week for the first month and then 30 minutes every fortnight.

If you are interested in becoming a future mentor, please email alumni@fhs-nw1.org.uk

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Class of 1982



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