

COLCHESTER COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS
OLD GIRLS'/ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION
NEWSLETTER – Spring 2016

Marsyl's Musings

Now that Colchester has a Close named after our headmistress I was recalling my first memories of Ruth Hardy King. When I went in to see Miss King for the first time I was just five years old. I had a snail in a container with a lettuce leaf to eat. Nothing fazed Miss King. She kindly suggested that it would be happy on the window ledge by the open window. I could collect it later before I went home. I thought she was a nice lady.

Marsyl Knott, President

Editor's Notes

In the last edition I was delighted to report that I had received some very interesting articles and I extended my thanks to those who had sent them but the plea for more input from you all still remains! I must thank Joan Gurney (née Appleton) for her continuing support and Daphne Jones (née Drabble) for her superb memories. There is also very little "News of Old Girls". If you have any memories of Miss King, please let me have them – it would make very interesting reading. All you need to do is email me with snippets of your memories of school or what you have been doing since leaving, etc. No great literary work is required!

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Information, news, comments, photos and articles for the next Newsletter by 31st March 2016.

Ruth King Close

Colchester's rapid expansion has resulted in a need for great numbers of new street names. Colchester Civic Society, realising that an opportunity to recognise our rich heritage was being missed, offered help to Colchester Borough Council in this matter and were eventually accepted as consultees on street names in the urban part of the Borough. Not every developer is prepared to play ball, but some are. By chance, the first opportunity for input by the newly formed Street Names Sub Committee of the Civic Society was the development on the site of the erstwhile Essex Education Offices at Altnacealgach in Park Road, immediately adjacent to CCHS. They were told that the road into the development was likely to become Scholar Close, a name that had been approved by ward councillors and the developer. Although this reflected the past use of the site, the committee thought it was far too bland and decided to ask me what I thought as they knew I was an Old Girl. As Civic Society Vice Chair and OGA Secretary, I was in the perfect position to liaise, and liaise I did. The OGA members were quite predictable and I was very pleased to report back that they wanted the road to be Ruth King Close. The Civic Society had quite a fight on its hands but the new name was eventually accepted. Henry Spyvee, a former Borough Councillor and one time Mayor of Colchester, who chairs the Street Name Sub Committee, commented that "The collective wrath of the OGA was not something that Colchester Borough Council were prepared to face!"

The Civic Society decided that there should be a formal unveiling of the street sign, something that we will aim to do wherever possible as it is good to highlight the reasons for a name, particularly for the new residents. The OGA were obviously invited, as were representatives from the School, the developers, the ward councillors and, of course, the residents. The Mayor, Councillor Theresa





Higgins, agreed to unveil the sign with help from current CCHS students - Year Seven and Sixth Form. And so it was that, on 11th March, a bright, sunny morning, a large group gathered to watch this wonderful commemoration of an extraordinary Headmistress. Henry Spyvee and our own Chair, Liz White, both spoke. (*The usual unflattering photograph is shown left!*) It was a very poignant, moving, occasion but there was laughter too as Henry recounted the story of Eileen Warner's terror when she couldn't understand the Maths homework set by Miss King. Eileen's father told her to go and see Miss King the following day to confess that she was stuck, saying that he would go with her if necessary. Eileen plucked up the courage to face the music by herself, although she was absolutely petrified. To her

surprise, Miss King sat her down and went through the lesson again until she understood. Later in life, Eileen became a Maths teacher!

After the unveiling, everyone was invited back to Liz White's home for coffee and some of Liz's yummiest cakes. It was a particularly big gathering as Civic Society members joined the Old Girls and Liz had to open the annexe to her house as well. Poor Jean, calling out the numbers of the numerous winning raffle tickets, was quite exhausted by the end of the morning as she had to go from room to room each time to make sure everyone could hear!

It was, all in all, a delightful occasion, well worth all the hard work!

Jo Edwards (Mabbitt 1960-67)

CCHS OLD GIRLS'/ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 14.30 HOURS 11TH JULY 2015 AT GREYFRIARS

Before the meeting and whilst the members enjoyed their welcome drinks, Nadir Suleman, Operations Director of Grey Friars, introduced himself and gave a brief summary of how it, together with Hillcrest and All Saints House, has been so elegantly transformed into a luxury boutique hotel, bar and restaurant by ONC Investments Limited. This will be the first five star hotel in Colchester. It has 26 bedrooms and suites, a restaurant, brasserie, cocktail bar and lounges, as well as terraces and gardens. In addition to overnight accommodation, Grey Friars will also be open for everything from breakfast and afternoon tea to dinner and cocktails!

Acting Chair, Liz White, then thanked Nadir and his staff for making us so welcome in the impressively converted venue, and for giving us a privileged private preview, as Greyfriars was not due to be opened to the public until 23rd July. She reminded everyone, especially those who do not generally attend OGA/Alumnae functions that future planned events would prove to be equally enjoyable.

Since everyone was keen to commence on the guided tours of the building and find out how things had changed (or remained the same), it was intended that today's business would be dealt with as quickly as possible. Most of the items would be covered in the secretary's report.

PRESENT - 58 members

APOLOGIES - Marsyl Knott, Gillian Marshall (Head), Joan Gurney, Joyce Blackwood, Jenny Lewis, Jennifer Pennick, Jane Powell, Dorothy Tanner, Marlene Smith, Carol Milwau (Zimmer), Dianne Couch

Joan Gurney was very sorry to miss the AGM, due to a family wedding. She did, however, write a letter, copies of which were circulated at the meeting. Joan, together with Alan Skinner, has written the history of Grey Friars and copies were available to buy at the meeting (cost £10).

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING - 6 JULY 2013

These had been distributed to members and were approved and signed by the acting Chairman, Liz White.

MATTERS ARISING - None

SECRETARY'S REPORT – Jo Edwards

First of all, may we offer our apologies for no AGM last year, cancelled because the numbers attending would have been in single figures! What a difference a change of venue has made. We hope, however, that this is no flash in the pan and you will all come to next year's meeting which will probably be back in Norman Way!

The committee has been a little at sixes and sevens this year. First of all, we were terribly shocked by the sudden serious illness of our Chairman, Marsyl. We are very pleased to report that she is recovering from her stroke but it will take time. We wish her well. Then Bobbie, our incredibly efficient Minutes Secretary, resigned. She had been travelling from Brentwood to OGA meetings but is now moving to Kent, which is a step too far. We will miss her and would like to thank her for all that she has done for the Association. The rest of us are all very busy and need some help. I sincerely hope that this afternoon we will have some volunteers!

We have had a couple of events during the year. A garden party at Liz's house in Lexden Road and a coffee morning at the Officers' Club, not very well attended but most enjoyable. If anyone has any thoughts about future events, please see one of the Committee later.

Wearing two hats, I was approached by some of my fellow Committee members from Colchester Civic Society about the possibility of naming a new residential road Ruth King Close. The road in question is on the Altnacealghagh site off Park Road, adjoining the current school site in Norman Way.

On the subject of Head Teachers, the Head Teachers' Board we have commissioned, will be erected at the School in the coming year. We hope to have a small ceremony for the occasion.

Our Constitution and the suggestion that we should make a donation to the School from our funds. We started with a basic draft which we sent to you all for comments. A few responded and their comments and suggestions formed the basis for considerable discussion in Committee and we now have something that we think covers everything it should, whilst remaining fairly simple. I have suggested that the proposed Constitution is set out in the Autumn Newsletter, which will give our entire membership a chance to read it. It will come with a recommendation for acceptance by the Committee and the Newsletter will contain a voting slip. I hope that this is acceptable to you all. The donation to the School from our funds was proposed by Monica Taylor at our AGM in 2013. This, again, has been the subject of much cogitation. We asked the Head for suggestions about specific projects for the School and it became apparent that any OGA donation would be a drop in the ocean as so much money is needed for the School to develop. It was also suggested that we could donate to the School Fund to help disadvantaged students. This idea was greeted with SLIGHTLY more enthusiasm by Old Girls but, overall, the opinions seemed to be that we should keep our money, firstly, we now have no subscription and little income. We abandoned subscriptions a few years ago when the School asked us to include all leaving girls in our membership. We have money but also have annual expenditure. Our insurance, for example, is very expensive but necessary as we have to be insured for events even those at the School. It will not be long before we have to top up the School Leaving Award fund, originally funded by a legacy from Miss King, but the capital fund is diminishing fast.

The award (£100 each year) is now given to a leaving girl who has made an outstanding contribution to the School and not necessarily to the girl with the best exam results. It goes to the girl who has given her time to help others, who has supported extra curricular activities, and has gone that extra mile. It is therefore a wonderful addition to a University application or a CV. We really must continue with this long standing award. The Committee, guided in some part by those who have commented vociferously on

the proposal, but also that our financial position may be at risk if we make a donation now, and have decided that we should maintain the status quo at the moment. However should a situation arise requiring us to review that decision, we have ensured that our proposed Constitution would allow us to do so. Incidentally, this year, the School Leaving Award has been given to Emily Atkins. She has written to us.

I shall finish by giving our thanks to the School for the support they give us, eg, printing the Newsletters for those who pay for a hard copy. Our thanks also go to the Committee and finally our thanks to Grey Friars for this wonderful occasion! The hotel will soon be open and I am sure that you will all be regular customers. I know I will be.

TREASURER'S REPORT – Jean Johnson

There are copies of the accounts available in the hall. For those of you who don't always attend meetings, I should say that as well as being the treasurer, I also organise most of the events for members. I think these are the shortest accounts I have ever presented and this is probably because we have to limit the number of local events this year. I must apologise for this – I have had increased family commitments and it became difficult to arrange the usual lunches, etc.

However, you will see from the accounts that Liz White hosted a Garden Party at her home in August and as we didn't have to pay a charge for hiring a hall this resulted in a profit of £53.

At the Coffee Morning held in June at the Colchester Officers' Club, their charge was £6.50 per person, and, although we had booked for more people, they only actually charged us for the number that attended, so this event broke even.

As usual our main expenses have been for insurance to cover members at various events, and postage. We charge an annual fee if members wish their newsletters to be posted. The local events mailing list does incur a major postage cost, although as many of you know I do telephone members, at no charge to the OGA, with invitations, or email them when I can.

As Jo has said, we are grateful to the School for printing our newsletters and also for enabling us to use the School website so members can access their newsletters on line.

There is one unusual item on the accounts, a short term loan to the School Leaving Fund for £100. This was to cover the School Leaving Award. At the moment Marsyl is in charge of this separate account and we decided not to worry her with writing a cheque when it was needed. The money will be returned in next year's accounts.

Also, as Jo has already said, our funds are slowly diminishing; the amount in our savings account is £4094.32 which, discounting the £100 loan, is nearly £250 less than we had in the same account last year.

Usually at this stage I ask if there are any questions, but if there are any points anyone would like to raise perhaps they could in this instance see me after the AGM.

MOTIONS

Liz thanked Marsyl for all her hard work in the past and expressed sorrow that she was unable to continue as Chair of the CCHS Old Girls/Alumnae Association because of her ill-health. This had previously been discussed by the committee and Tina Powell asked the members if they would like to honour Marsyl by electing her President of the Association. A vote was taken and there was an overwhelming show of hands in agreement. It was agreed that further details would be provided in the draft Constitution.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

There were no new nominations, although it was hoped that some new volunteers may show an interest during the afternoon and were encouraged to speak to any member of the committee after the meeting. It

was proposed by Liz White that the existing committee were re-elected en bloc and this was overwhelmingly agreed by a show of hands.

Marsyl Knott - President
Elizabeth White – Acting Chairman, Newsletter Editor
Josephine Edwards - Secretary
Jean Johnson - Treasurer
Tina Powell - IT
Mary Rickard – Minutes Secretary
Charlotte Anderson

ANY OTHER BUSINESS - None.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING - To be decided. (*see below)

The meeting closed at approximately 3:30pm.

Signed by (Chairman):

Dated:

There then followed tours of Grey Friars in small groups, led by staff members. Mini afternoon tea sandwiches, savouries, entremets and scones were served.

* The next AGM is on Saturday 16th July at the School in Norman Way. Coffee and biscuits will be served at 11am followed by the business meeting and then lunch. Costs: Coffee £2, coffee and lunch £8 Please complete the form at the end of this newsletter or speak to Jean Johnson.

News of Old Girls

Congratulations to former student Victoria Bush (2008-2015?), who has been chosen to represent Essex County Council at a special Gold Duke of Edinburgh presentation to be held at a Buckingham Palace Garden Party in May. This is celebrating the diamond anniversary of the scheme hence the grand celebration. She also completed the Diamond Challenge recently when she had her hair cut short for the Little Princess Trust which provides wigs for young children.

Memories of the School

Daphne Jones (Drabble 1958-65)

I joined CCHS in September 1958, and, like all new pupils was given a school uniform list some weeks before the start of term. There was no budget priced school uniform from supermarkets in those days. Indeed there were no supermarkets! Owen Ward in Colchester High Street was the sole recommended supplier, unopposed and expensive. In the frugal fifties, purchasing a complete school uniform was a costly business!

The most expensive item was the school blazer, navy blue with the school badge embroidered on the pocket. Like the parents of all new pupils, my mother duly purchased this garment for me. I had outgrown it after about a year, and like many of my peer group, never had another. Parents of CRGS boys cannot have escaped so lightly. Their distinctive purple blazers were an essential part of their uniform from commencement to Sixth Form. We girls wore jumpers or cardigans indoors when chilly at school, never blazers.

Outdoors there were other alternatives, mainly the gaberdine mac. At the time this rather heavy and shapeless garment, belted at the waist, was in the possession of nearly all school children of all ages and sizes, male or female. The girls' version had a button-on hood. It was a practical, if rather ugly item of clothing, available in all school uniform colours: dark navy (CCHS colour), bottle green, grey etc. I

believe some versions had a button-in fleecy lining for winter, although I never had one of these. When I reached my mid teens I acquired a more stylish mac made of a more modish material. It was light navy blue in colour. However, school uniform rules were very strict. It was the responsibility of the P.E. mistresses, especially Mrs Pipe, to enforce these rules. A member of staff (I never knew who) reported to Mrs Pipe that I had been seen wearing a royal blue coat whilst walking to and from school. I had to appear in my new mac before Mrs Pipe for inspection. Luckily she decreed that the colour was indeed navy blue, albeit of a light shade, and that I could continue to wear it.

To return to the uniform list - a school tunic in navy blue in regulation style was an essential garment. The length was prescribed – four inches (I think) above the ground when kneeling. This exact length cannot have remained in place for long for fast-growing girls but we certainly did a lot of kneeling! Every day in assembly in the school hall we knelt to say our prayers and to sing the school hymn (“God be in my head”). We wore these tunics for the first two years (or was it three?) at CCHS. After that we were allowed to wear a skirt in either navy blue or grey. Mini skirts had not yet made an appearance, so ours would have been around knee length. Rather flared, pleated skirts were popular at the time.

We wore white blouses in a traditional long-sleeved shirt style. No other styles were available or even considered. A school tie was worn at all times with winter uniform. Jumpers or cardigans were navy blue, often hand knitted. We were all competent knitters in those days. We wore black or navy elasticated belts with a metal clasp. These belts included a small purse, sufficient to hold a few coins.

Of course there was the school beret in cherry red. These were not purchased from Own Ward, but were available directly from the Home Economics department (did we call it that then?) at school. On journeys to and from school we were never to be seen without it. Even on hot summer days, when wearing a summer dress and no coat or cardigan, the beret could not be left off. If girls were spotted in town after school, wearing school uniform without a beret, they could be reported and punished with an “order mark”. If, however, the non-wearer could establish that she had been home first, before venturing out again hatless, then it was deemed that no breach of uniform rules had occurred.

The school scarf was an optional extra, a wide college style scarf in a felt-like material. The CCHS version was dark navy with a cherry red stripe. If my memory is correct they were first introduced a year or two after I joined the school in 1958, and being considered quite trendy, were popular. I still have mine tucked away, together with my school tie and beret.

In summer we wore cotton dresses, but these were not available ready-made. We purchased material from school – again from the Home Economics department, and were responsible for arranging for the making of these dresses ourselves. There were prescribed patterns, but I remember there were at least two choices of style with differences in the bodice. The skirts were always gathered and quite full. In my first year there had been quite a recent change in the choice of design for the material itself, and there were still some old style material dresses being worn. These were, I recall, a red and blue irregular checked design upon a white background. The new material was of brighter colours, a choice of three: deep pink, blue or green, each with white stripes. There were several complaints that the material split easily (although I never had any problems with mine), and a couple of years later the design was changed again. This time it was narrow stripes in either blue, red or green, again all with white. The Sixth Form dresses had navy and white stripes. There were rules about when summer uniform could be worn. An announcement was made when it was considered warm enough to don our summer dresses, and similarly when winter uniform should be resumed.

Two pairs of shoes were required: indoor and outdoor shoes. We were required to change shoes immediately upon entering the school building, and there were plenty of members of staff and prefects around to ensure that we did so – a practical precaution, as we tramped around the school fields during our break time. I think perhaps rules were relaxed as we got older, and certainly when we reached the Sixth Form and had our own entrance door.

Socks could be navy, grey or white – usually long navy or grey socks in winter and short white ones in summer. In my early teens there was a fashion for long white socks, allowed at school, but banned for me by my mother who considered that they looked “as if you are going in for a hospital operation”. Of course we all longed to cast off our childish socks and wear “nylons” (stockings in those days, not tights). This plea was resisted as long as possible by most parents who had to pay the bill for several easily laddered pairs of stockings per week. Eventually my mother conceded and allowed me to wear nylons, provided I wore thick 60 denier stockings. I think I might have looked better in socks! However, at the age of fourteen I got my first Saturday job, firstly as a lift girl at the local Co-op, and later backing books at Shippey's bookshop. I was able to keep myself in finer nylons at last!

School rules even extended to some items of underwear. We all wore petticoats or slips under our skirts. No problems with these until the craze for can-can petticoats came along, when I was in my early teens. These were made of several layers of stiff netting, which scratched your legs and, if you wore them, laddered your nylons. But women have always suffered for fashion, and they made our skirts stick out beautifully. Of course they were immediately banned at school. Many girls thought they had found a way around this rule by wearing at least three ordinary slips under their skirts in order to achieve a more fashionable outline. Sharp eyed teachers were not to be so easily duped, and could, and often did, demand to know the number of petticoats a girl was wearing. If more than one, the offender was made to take off the extra layers there and then. Efforts to disobey this rule did not last for long!

We could, however, find an alternative for the listed navy knickers, as long as we kept a pair handy for lessons in gymnastics. These were ugly voluminous garments, with elastic around the waist and each leg, any piece of which could suddenly and embarrassingly snap without warning. For other sports we wore shorts, which were certainly not very short, of the culottes or divided skirt variety.

These were also rather unflattering. The P.E. teachers wore a similar garment, but their shorts were even longer and baggier than ours. Sports tops were white, and were required to have our full names embroidered across the front in red, in letters of sufficient size to be read from the side lines of any sports pitch. Black plimsolls completed our outdoor sports wear, but indoors we had to do gymnastics in bare feet.

The small number of third year Sixth Formers were (in my later years at least) not required to wear school uniform, but they had to dress in a suitable style, certainly nothing too casual.

There may have been no written rules for staff clothing, but there were certainly strict dress codes. Nearly all of our teachers were female. None would ever have appeared at school wearing trousers. Mostly their dress was rather formal, often smart matching skirts and jackets, with a rather formal blouse. Miss Philips, the Deputy Head, was a tall and imposing lady who had three identically styled suits, each with a rather masculine styled jacket and a straight, but definitely not tight or short, skirt. Usually she wore a plain grey or dark blue suit. For special occasions she appeared in a bottle green version. Miss Scott favoured seersucker blouses. Perhaps she was anxious to keep warm, as she appeared to wear a great number of garments beneath these blouses. As, with her short stature, she stretched to write her maths calculations high on the blackboard, we were busy counting her numerous shoulder straps, visible beneath her blouse, and speculating as to what these garments might be. She was nevertheless a really good maths teacher. Probably only the art teachers dressed informally, even if their more bohemian garments were mostly covered by an overall.

The few male teachers were also formally attired in suits, with of course the addition of a white lab coat for scientists. Male staff did not remove their jackets, even in hot weather. This dress code for men was also observed in the bank in which I later worked. No men were to appear in shirt sleeves until after closing time when there were no customers to observe such shocking informality!

School Magazines

We have acquired a small batch of School Magazines for the year 1982 – “High Life ‘82”. If anyone is interested in having a copy please give me a ring on Colchester 579688. I will be keeping one copy because it mentions my own daughter several times, but the rest will be disposed of after a few months.

Jean Johnson

Joan Gurney (Appleton 1938-1951)

Since the publication of “Grey Friars, Colchester’s Forgotten Corner” and the opening of the website, many photographs and memories, which were previously unrecorded have arrived on our desks. These have included views of the frontage and the interior of Grey Friars both in the days of CCHS and prior to 1920 when it was occupied by the Sisters of Nazareth. There are also pictures of groups of children in the nuns’ school (which they opened shortly after 1904), and of the CCHS Preparatory Department when little boys were also admitted. Very few unfamiliar photos have turned up showing more than one or two of the original mature trees in the garden – but there are exceptions (*picture above*)



In the well known set of 9 professional photographs recording the site during the 1920s when CCHS first arrived, a few feature a number of trees. One shows the walkway through the herbaceous borders edged by fruit trees, including the pear tree which used to shed its hard fruit on to the path in autumn (*picture left*)

The Holm oak, whose spreading canopy now overshadows the former tennis/badminton court still remains. It is very worthy of its preservation order as it now begins to exceed its 400 years of life. The former magnificent conservatory with its entwined wisteria also features in many postcards as well as several yews which are scattered about the garden. Their dark green leafy twigs with glowing red berries formed an annual test of our painting skills in nature study lessons. One yew came down in a storm in 2002 and provided some excellent material for a local wood carver.

Several former CCHS pupils recall that a large Scots Pine grew on one side of the playground and that there was also a lime, a eucalyptus, chestnuts and a big beech which was removed to make the back entrance to the clinic next door. My favourite however, was a walnut tree which grew near the exit from the side passageway and the bicycle sheds. There was always a stampede at breaktime to gather and feast on the fallen nuts in autumn.

The most intriguing tree, because of its history and folklore, has to be the black mulberry which is remembered by Beth Chatto who was a pupil at CCHS in the early 1930s. Another former pupil remembers that it blew down during that decade. But whereabouts in the garden did it grow?

Mulberry trees live to a great old age but become gnarled and brittle as the years roll by and often need props to support their branches. If the Grey Friars tree were alive today, it could be over 400 years old. The oldest tree which was planted in 1548 is purported to be still standing at Syon House.

The mulberry has many medicinal properties. In Greek mythology it is a symbol of misfortune in love, and it is said that the fruit turned from white to dark red from the blood of Pyramus and Thisbe who were killed in the shade of a mulberry tree. I wonder if "A Midsummer Night's Dream" was ever performed by CCHS in the shade of the Grey Friars black mulberry tree!

For me the most captivating story is that of the black versus the white mulberry. In the Preparatory Department of CCHS I can remember keeping silkworms in cardboard boxes and feeding them on black mulberry leaves – a few more trees existed in other gardens near Grey Friars (*picture right*). But only silkworms fed on white mulberry leaves produce silk of the correct textile strength because of the high sericin content of these leaves.



The King of France, Louis XIII, persuaded James I to plant black mulberries all over Great Britain in the belief that a silk trade could be developed here and a frenzy of planting began in the 17th Century. This false information was a strategy used to avoid the threat to the established silk trade of France. The pupils of CCHS therefore who reared silkworms on black mulberry leaves produced such low grade silk that it could not be successfully spun or woven and the whole breeding process was, therefore, just an exercise in natural history.

The spot where the Grey Friars mulberry tree grew, nevertheless, holds some magic for me. If you can pinpoint exactly where that was, please contact the website - greyfriarscolchester.org.uk . I would love to know.

News from the School

CCHS is now on Twitter! Follow them @CCHSG_ for the latest news and updates

Curriculum Reform

There is considerable curriculum reform taking place at the moment and the school is in a very strong position, having developed a curriculum which balances what is educationally sound, with the demand for academic achievement. Schemes of work, assessment and learning opportunities are in place in light of curriculum reforms and new examination specifications. The school has maintained a personalised differentiated curriculum that optimises achievement for all and continue to focus on sharing good practice as far as learning and teaching are concerned. Lesson observations are now all very good or outstanding and staff regularly share good practice. The school also places strong emphasis on a very wide range of extra curricular activities.

Essex County Newspaper Education Awards

The school felt it appropriate to nominate a student and member of the support staff. The finalists enjoyed an Awards Evening at the Weston Homes Stadium, presented by award winning magician Michael J Fitch and the Gazette and Essex County Standard Entertainment reporter Neil D'Arcy Jones. Martyn Gosling, School Chef, was nominated by the school as Support Staff Member of the Year and student Emily Atkins as School Personality, who had overcome adversity. Emily won her category.

Target 2.0 Competition

This is a national competition run by the Bank of England where 300 schools compete nationally to give teams of students aged 16-18 the chance to take on the role of the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee, assess economic conditions and the outlook for inflation . At the start of December, the team of Year 13 students made a presentation to a panel of judges from the Bank on what monetary policy they would set to achieve the Government's inflation target of 2.0%. Each member analysed the following areas of the economy:

1. Amelia Hacon - Team captain and policy recommendation
 2. Lily Cornelli - UK domestic demand
 3. Sacha Pearey - World economy They now move on to the East of England stage representing Essex which takes place in February. Mr G Hughes
 4. Isabella Sargeant - Financial markets
- They won the Essex Regional Finals and competed in East of England stage of the competition in February where they were runners up to Saffron Walden County High School.

Jack Petchey Awards

Congratulations to Isabella Gray who has received her Award from West Mersea Cricket Club for her help in serving the local community. Each summer Isabella and her sister help to run the junior cricket training for West Mersea Cricket Club and Graham Pryke the club president nominated them to each receive the award.

Congratulations to Tabitha Stock Year 12 who has demonstrated courage and resilience over the past couple of years. She has been a great support to her father and younger sister after an unexpected family death and has also helped a close friend to overcome her health issues.

Biology Bake Off 2015

The Biology Bake Off in October was a huge success, raising over £285 for the Catherine Bullen Foundation, which is currently supporting the completion of a clinic in Otjimanangombe, Namibia. The Catherine Bullen Foundation is a charity working with local community organisations to improve the quality of life and relieve poverty in Namibia, in memory of former CCHS pupil Catherine Bullen. There were 63 entries for the Bake Off from cakes to cookies showing a tremendous variety of human, plant and animal biology. Entries depicted a brain, heart and even a dissected frog all in incredible detail. The winning cakes were voted for by members of the Science Department with Izzy Cleghorn (Year 7), Izzy Lane (Year 8), Phoebe Hubbard (Year 9) and Cat Blacklock and Meray Alfhaily (Year 12/13) each winning their respective year groups with cakes that amazed the staff with their ingenuity and detail.

OXFAM Youth Ambassadors

After we registered as a group we decided the best way to make a difference to Syrian refugees would be directly by fundraising and indirectly by educating. We have been selling cakes to raise money for £20 winter kits containing necessary items to help refugees survive harsh winters. Each kit contains warm bedding, buckets for carrying water, waterproof plastic sheeting and tools to clear snow, etc and is sent directly to families in need across the continent. We hope to raise £400 but are desperate to raise more in order to support more families. We would be very appreciative for any extra donations either or by giving money to your daughters which we will collect. Any donations –whether £1 or £20 can be sent via our GoFundMe page (www.gofundme.com/oxfamyouth). We have also been putting together a presentation to educate and raise awareness concerning the Syrian crisis which has already been well received by Year 7 & 8 forms.

Kalya Aung (10C)

Biology Lunchtime Talk - Shark behaviour and conservation

Visiting CCHS for the second time, shark conservationist Dan Abbott delivered a talk 6th form Biologists about behavioural patterns he had observed in sharks as part of his internship with White Shark Africa. He shared his photos and videos of Great Whites in Mossel Bay, including several that showed the sharks ‘mouthing’ the cage with people inside. He explained that the sharks are not trying to rip the cage apart but they are just curiously investigating the strange object in the only way they can - with their mouths. Dan also talked about the negative influence of the media constantly labelling them as vicious killers as a widespread fear of sharks makes it increasingly hard to protect endangered shark species and the slaughter of sharks to make shark fin soup is still supported by several restaurants in our own country. To help with this issue, Dan is part of a Bite-Back charity which runs campaigns to protect sharks, including one to stop shark finning in the UK.

Congratulations to Chloe Barnes (7L) who was the overall winner for all age categories in a competition to design a T-shirt for George the Chimp at Williams & Griffin. Her prize was a Colchester Zoo Cadet animal experience and a W&G gift voucher. At the Zoo Cadet animal experience Chloe learnt fascinating facts about the animals, had the privilege of feeding and stroking the giant tortoises and also had the opportunity to stroke the baby white rhino. She enjoyed feeding the Amur tigers and llamas and getting very near to the wolves and hippos and saw one of the white rhinos having medical treatment on his foot. Most of all she loved tickling the tummy of the Aardvark! It was a special day and an incredible opportunity to get close to these wonderful creatures and learn so much about them.

Outstanding results for CCHS in British Biology Olympiad

Fifteen Year 13 Biologists sat the British Biology Olympiad exam in January, a national competition run by the Royal Society of Biology. The students all attend weekly extra curricular Biology lessons where areas of Biology are explored in greater depth. The British Biology Olympiad exam has very challenging content that goes beyond the A Level specification and this year, over 7200 UK sixth form students took part. All of the CCHS girls were placed, achieving medals or commendation, which is superb. We have one student, Danielle Young, in the top 150 nationally who is going through into round 2. The second round paper is even tougher than the first paper and we wish her well. The round is part of the process to select a UK team to go to the International Biology Olympiad which is taking place in Vietnam in the summer. Overall the students achieved, 3 gold medals (Danielle Young, Alice O'Connor, Ellen Hazlehurst), 7 silver medal (Ines Boavida Cawley, Charlotte Wilson, Georgina Flagg, Yi sun, Isabelle Stevens, Amber French, Geraldine Roper), 2 bronze medals (Lucy Grimwood, Katie Scales), 1 was highly commended (Olivia Payne) and 2 commended (Erin Kavanagh and Megan Lancaster). Congratulation to all of the students, this is an outstanding set of results.

The Biology extension group are about to start breeding fruit flies to look at genetics.

BBC School Report

School Report is a nationwide scheme set up by the BBC to enable students to act as journalists for a day. 2016 marked the tenth year for School Report – but the first year of CCHS's involvement. The students' work can be found on the school website. Gracie Tyte (7H) gives her account of the day...

I was lucky enough to be nominated by my English teacher to take part in BBC School News 2016, with nine other students from Year 7. On the 10th March, we got to work in the iLab writing news stories and, with a deadline of 2pm, we had to get our head down and concentrate to make sure we finished in time! Surrounded by a field of sweets, we all sat huddled in front of our computers, completely engrossed in our news.

In an hour's time, two students, Ozzadeh and Lily, were to be interviewed live on BBC Radio Essex. Meanwhile, with only two hours left until the deadline, the rest of us were busily writing away. Before the day had begun, we had discussed our ideas with each other, and all agreed we wanted to do an article on the European Union referendum. Three students wrote this, whilst the rest of us did our research to report on our own story. I chose to write about the trending hashtag #RideForOlivia, as I felt I would really like to know about what it was all about. After researching the issue, I found out the tragic story of Olivia Inglis, who died falling from her horse, and the meaning behind the hashtag. Mrs Folkerd offered an interesting statement regarding her views on the death of a sports person.

We had emailed our local MP, Will Quince, with some questions in the morning and I got to write up his responses as a Q&A piece after I'd finished my article about Olivia Inglis. I found out some interesting facts about what he is thinking about improving in Colchester and how he got elected. As the day drew to closer to the deadline, the iLab was suddenly plunged into a flurry of fingers as the last few stragglers who hadn't finished their report rushed to finish in time – while the rest of us relaxed and scoffed the rest of the sweets! At 3pm, Rhiannon, Helen and Maria were also interviewed by BBC Radio Essex. The rest of us sat down and reflected on what we'd achieved.

Overall, I learnt a lot being part of this project. I have most definitely been inspired to become a reporter!

Events

Over 30 members met for lunch at the Siege House, Colchester, in October. This was a successful event and most people found it a convenient venue.

I'm sorry that due to my stupid fall down only three stairs at my home in November any thought of organising the next event had to be put on hold. During this time Jo was reporting back on the negotiations which were taking place with the builders of the properties off Park Road, the Civic Society and the Borough Council to see if we could be involved in the official naming of Ruth King Close. I was relieved the Road Opening, followed by our Coffee Morning was eventually postponed until March!

I am now in the process of researching other locations for lunch or coffee and members on my list will be hearing from me soon. The only other definite event is the AGM at the School on Saturday 16th July at 11am for coffee, followed by lunch, and the Garden Party on Thursday, 18th August.

Jean Johnson

Legacy

Many of you will remember Bessie Violet Taylor, as an Old Girl and a valued member of the School Staff. Bessie kindly left a legacy of £500 to the OGA. This has now been received and your Committee has decided that it should be donated to the School Leaving Fund account.

REPLY SLIP - Please delete as appropriate

Please return to: Tina Powell
35 Wavell Avenue, Colchester, Essex, CO2 7HR
Tel: 01206 561816
e-mail: cchs_oga@yahoo.com

Make all cheques payable to: CCHS Old Girls' Association

Colchester Events

I would like to be included in the local Colchester Events mailing list.

Name Maiden Name

Address

..... Post Code

e-mail: Tel:

Years at CCHS: from to

Please send to Jean Johnson, 10 Landseer Road, Colchester, CO3 4QR or call on 01206 579688

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Saturday 16th July 2016

(Please return to Tina by 24th June)

I wish/am unable to attend.

I will pay £8.00 for coffee and lunch/£2 for coffee only. Cheque enclosed.

I would like to make the following nominations to the committee:

I would like to propose the following motions:

NEWS for inclusion in the next Newsletter

Please write any news of Old Girls or Staff overleaf. With today's litigious society it is important to obtain the necessary consent for its inclusion! Maiden names and dates at school are useful!

Name Maiden Name

Address

..... Post Code

e-mail: Tel:

Years at CCHS: from to