

Hywelian Guild 2013



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Cover photographs (from top):

Noah's Ark garden, celebratory song

First Summer at Hazelwood for Junior School girls

Official opening of the new playground at the Junior School, Hazelwood

HYWELIAN GUILD 2013

It was a chance remark that got me into this mess. All I said was that I knew how to use a particular desk top publishing package, and the next thing I knew, I was sitting in the Editorial Chair, wondering how to fill half of the first page.

This is very much a first for me, and it's a first for the Hywelian Guild magazine, too. Many of you will be reading your magazine online. This innovative approach has been stimulated by need to economise on costs, particularly postage, and a desire to appeal to that wider audience which is far more at home with the computer screen than previous generations. Readers (whether online or 'on lap') need have no fear that the magazine will be any less interesting or stimulating. All the important things are there – progress reports, family news, and updates on the progress of former pupils. There was mention of sporting en-

deavour in the last magazine and we are thrilled to report on progress in that area. There is, of course, the usual collection of photographs to show you what the school has been up to over the last year, and some indications of what is to come.

We have always known that Howell's girls get themselves into far-flung parts of the world, and we are delighted to hear from them about their lives today, and their remembrances of school days.

The Editor, of course, is merely the one who puts the jigsaw pieces together. The pieces are provided by all those who send in contributions, harry contributors and generally make things happen. It is they that we thank most heartily – without them you would have no magazine, either on your screen or in your hand.

Lyn Owen

BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU WISH FOR!

When we asked for your news, we expected a gentle flow of information. What we got was a (very welcome) deluge!

Unfortunately, there are postal restrictions on the weight of the magazine. We have therefore had to prune some of your news, in some cases,

quite drastically, for which we apologise. However, for those who can, you will find the full versions of longer news and feature items in an online appendix. We appreciate that not all of you have (or want!) online access, so perhaps a word with a computer literate friend or family member ...?

A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

On the morning of 11th November last, we held an Armistice Assembly for the whole school. Later, I accompanied Year 6 to the Cenotaph in Llandaff, where some of our girls laid a wreath from Howell's School to commemorate those who had lost their lives in war. Meanwhile, Mrs Gosney, Deputy Principal, conducted a short remembrance ceremony in the Stone Hall, attended by senior pupils, and during which a wreath was laid. A two minute silence was observed by the whole school. (This will become an annual event.)

In the Stone Hall, a new plaque commemorates four Hywelians who died directly or indirectly as a result of both World Wars. Gertrude Roskell and Kate Banks carried out nursing duties during the First World War: Gertrude in Alexandria, Egypt, and Kate in West Harptree, Somerset. Gertrude died of appendicitis and Kate of blood poisoning as a result of washing bandages. In World War II both victims

were killed in air raids. Barbara Williams was training at RAF Cranwell, soon after leaving school, and Betty Cooke of Llantrisant died in Llwynypia Hospital.

2012 was an especially important year for Hywelians: we opened our Museum on Saturday 28th January. I am very grateful to everyone who attended that event. At the opening, Mrs Sully spoke about the creation of the Museum and introduced six girls depicting the school through the ages. These 'living exhibits' then joined us for the rest of the afternoon! I must also thank all those Hywelians who so kindly donated items for the Museum. The Museum was Mrs Sully's idea - as soon as she suggested it I knew it would be a success! Those of you that have seen it already will agree how amazing (and professional!) it is. It is thanks to the Parents' Association, particularly the Social and Fund Raising group, that we were able to create the Museum,



*Opening the Museum
January 2012*

and there is a board outside the Museum that acknowledges this. As with the book, Mrs Sully has exceeded our wildest dreams. I think this is the first museum in the history of the Girls Day School Trust.

The new Library, incorporating the *Goarin Reading & Research Room* and the *Margaret Lewis Memorial Library*, is at the very heart of learning at Howell's. Physically in the centre of the old building, it is a welcoming environment for those with a love of reading and learning. At its opening, Mrs Wilks explained the process of transforming the Library; one of her librarians, Sophie, spoke passionately about the many events and activities associated with the Library.

My thanks once again to those of you who have given so generously to the Annual Fund. I look forward to showing everyone the new outdoor learning spaces in both the Senior School and the Junior School.

This year, we also launched our Legacy Fund. Thanks to a substantial legacy of £48,500 from Rev. Ann Sheldon, an alumna of the school, the Junior School playground now has an outdoor classroom and theatre space, which has enhanced our girls' wellbeing as well as developing their problem-solving and creativity skills.

Each year I attend The Drapers' Education Dinner with the Chair of Gover-

nors and the Head Girl and Boy; this year it was again a fascinating evening. I sat next to Sir Peter Bottomley MP and we had an interesting debate on education generally. We have very strong links with the Drapers and money from Thomas Howell, invested on our behalf and managed by the Drapers, helps to pay for bursaries and building works in the school.

Academically, the school goes from strength to strength, with an outstanding set of results again this summer. At A-level, nearly a fifth (23%) of entrants achieved an A* grade.

Over half (55%) gained A*/A grades and 82% achieved A* to C grades. 12 students gained all A* grades and 33 students gained all A* and A, grades

At GCSE level, 7 girls achieved all A*s, and 29 girls achieved all As/A* grades. Of the total entries, nearly half (47%) gained A*, over three quarters (78%) achieved A* or A grades and 99% gained A* to C grades.

I look forward to welcoming you all to Howell's throughout the year.

Sally Davis
Principal

“ the school goes from strength to strength ”

WHO'S WHO IN 2013

Please note that, as the magazine is also being produced in an online version accessible to all, for security reasons we have not printed private addresses and telephone numbers. For those Hywelians wishing to make contact who do not have email access, please contact the Committee via School

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Officers and Branch Secretaries serve in a voluntary capacity, with appointment approved at the AGM. There is always a welcome to anyone wishing to serve on the Committee: please contact the Secretary for further details.

FOR THE DIARY

SUMMER LUNCH AND AGM 2013

This year's lunch will be held on the last Saturday in June—the 29th. Tickets will be available during May and June from Committee members

Please note that there is no January meeting - the AGM will be combined with the Summer Lunch.

FUTURE EVENTS FOR 2013

Wed 20 Feb	1.45 - 3.30 pm	Whole School Open Afternoon
Fr 8 March		Strawberry Tea in aid of Breast Cancer Care
Fri 3 May		Parents' Association Ladies' Luncheon*
Tues 7 May	1.45 - 3.30 pm	Whole School Open Afternoon
Sat 18 May		West Wales Branch 40th Birthday*
Thur 27 June		Parents' Association Summer Picnic*
Sat 29 June		Hywelian Summer Lunch*
Thur 4 July	6.00 pm	Summer Concert
Fri 5 July		Founder's Day Assembly and Thomas Howell Breakfast*

Dates for the Spring Concert to be confirmed

*Hywelians are particularly welcome at these events!

DEAR HYWELIANS

We began the year with our AGM combined with two very exciting developments at school, the opening of the refurbished Library and the Museum in the Board Room. More will be found about these two developments elsewhere in the magazine.

However, we had to have some serious discussions about the changes which we would have to make to keep the Guild

going, and you all received a letter from me outlining those changes.

The principal change relates to the production and distribution of the Magazine; this is the

first edition to go online, with limited print copies for those who have requested them. We are very grateful to Mrs. Davis for underwriting the cost of the Magazine, and I am very grateful also to those Hywelians who responded to my letter with cheques for our funds – thank you all so much.

We are now working much more closely with the school than we have previously, with Hywelians being welcomed at all the school concerts and major events. We have had several Vintage Teas preceding these events, and I am delighted that these have been supported by an increasing number of Hywelians. Mrs Vanessa Yilmaz, the Director of Development and Communications, is very keen that Hywelians are involved in as many activities as possible, and we are hoping to widen the range of these to attract even more people. By the time this magazine is published, we will have had an exciting venture in association with John Lewis, and we have more ideas in the pipeline.

Watch the website for developments!

Our Summer Lunch was a great success with 58 people attending. Next year, of course, it will also be the occasion of our AGM, and I hope that as many of you as possible will come now that we have moved it to the summer months.

It has been a great year for Hywelian achievements, particularly on the water. Hannah Mills excelled by becoming World Champion in the 470 Class with

“ It has been a great year for Hywelian achievements on the water ”

her sailing partner Saskia Clark, and winning a Silver medal in the Olympic Games. Mererid Hunt has put all those of us who have

retired to shame by entering the Clipper Round the World sailing race and sailing 40,000 miles round the world in all weathers. A few of us went to Southampton to welcome her back after twelve months away, when the boat she was helping to crew, *Singapore*, came third in the overall race. More about these achievements elsewhere in the magazine.

I would like to record my thanks to my Committee, who have given me much support through the year, for which I am very grateful. And we all owe thanks to Mrs Sally Davis, without whose generous support it would be difficult for us to continue. Finally, thanks to Lyn, for offering to step in as Editor, after Anna Eckersley, who did such a wonderful job for us last year, was unable to continue.

I hope I shall have the opportunity of meeting many of you in the coming year.

Sue Rayner
Secretary

BRANCH REPORTS

For those Hywelians who live away from Cardiff (some a long way away!) the branches offer a way of keeping in touch with Hywelians. Contact details of Branch Secretaries may be found on page 7

SCOTTISH BRANCH

WE ENJOYED a very happy lunch at the Parklands Hotel, Perth on 27 July 2012. Unfortunately, only five members were able to attend: Mary Craig (Rayer); Jill Docherty (Puddicombe); Barbara Tren-grove (Harvey); Jean McGregor (Coleman) and Jean Cox (Nelson). Mary was unable to stay for lunch, but we were able to catch up on her news. We very much appreciated her travelling from Edinburgh to be with us. The date for next year's lunch has not yet been settled - it's hard to suit everyone! There would certainly be a very warm welcome for any members joining us for the lunch!

Jean Cox

SOUTHERN BRANCH

THIS YEAR we had two meetings at the Lyndhurst Park Hotel on the edge of the New Forest, which seems to have become our regular venue for lunch in April and September. We always have a great deal to talk about - schooldays, family news, what's going on and so on. Conversation can be very wide-ranging! We average six members at our meetings; and are keen to add new members to our group; we'd be pleased to welcome anyone wishing to join us.

The dates of our 2013 meetings are:
Thursday 25th April (12 noon),
Thursday 26th September (12 noon).

Carol Evans

WEST WALES BRANCH

WE'VE HAD two meetings during 2012, both held at Ena Davies' home in Burry Port. Each followed the same format; buffet lunch, then a formal meeting, where news from School and about Members was shared. We were saddened to learn that Emily Haley (née Meller) and Megan Thomas (Miss Walford) had passed away; both were stalwart supporters of the Branch. They regularly attended our reunions until a few years ago. We extend our sympathies to their respective families.

Our October gathering was particularly lively as we welcomed Sue Rayner (newly appointed Guild Secretary) and Vanessa Yilmaz (HSL Director of Development) who travelled from Cardiff to bring us up to date with events at School.

May 2013 sees the 40th anniversary of the founding of West Wales Branch, and we plan to mark the occasion with a special event. Our chosen venue can only cater for a limited number, so if you'd like to attend please contact me by phone (01639 698 455/07962 530 698) before 31 January 13 (if we've reached our limit, we'll put you on the 'reserve' list.)

Catherine Coulson

BRIDGEND

Unfortunately we have lost three of our members in the last year, Margaret Morris (née Phillips, died November 2011);



West Wales Branch members at their meeting at Plas y Mor, October 2012.

(L to R) Standing: Virginia Egerton (née Carter); Marianne Rees (Phillips); Catherine Coulson (Johnson); Delana Davies (Thomas); Siân Steele (Pierce).

Seated middle row: Elizabeth Winn Jones; Hazel James (Jones); Barbara James (Lloyd); Ena Davies (Evans); Daphne West (Moore); Mary Jones (Evans).

Seated front row: Vanessa Yilmaz (HSL Director of Development; Sue Rayner (Davies)(Guild Secretary).

Kaye Griffiths (née Apjohn, died August 2012) and Megan Thomas, a former teacher in HSL who died in October 2012 in her 100th year. Our sympathy goes to all their families.

At members' request we have again held three meetings this year, in spite of dwindling numbers. Our Spring meeting with AGM was held in the Grove Golf Club, near Porthcawl. 19 members attended for lunch. Fourteen members, including two guests from HSL, attended our Summer Supper at the Fairways Hotel, Porthcawl. The other group of women in the dining room were even more chatty than us so we retired to the bar after the meal where Mrs Chyba and Mrs Yilmaz from School talked about the school's fundraising activities etc. At the time of writing, we are looking forward to our Advent Service and lunch in the Bear Hotel Cowbridge on November 28th.

Provisional dates for 2013 are:-

Wed. 6th March (lunch) The Grove, S Cornelly

Tuesday 11th June (Supper) Fairways Hotel, Porthcawl

Wed. 27th November Advent Service in Holy Cross Church, Cowbridge followed

by lunch in the Bear Hotel.

Pat Parry

LONDON BRANCH

Our two meetings a year are very informal. The tea party at the Drapers' Hall in April or May is popular because of the magnificent setting, and on 12th May about 45 "old girls" met for tea; we were delighted to welcome a large party from Llandaff. We thoroughly enjoyed Vanessa Yilmaz's lively talk which gave us an up-to-the-minute view of what is happening at School. Twenty of us then got together on 17th October for lunch at Brown's Restaurant in Charing Cross Road. It was most enjoyable and even had a member there from the States, Elizabeth Pearson Griffiths. The Drapers' Hall tea will be on 18th May 2013, which we hope will be well-attended. To encourage younger members to join us for lunch in October we are thinking of meeting on a Saturday. The date and a booking form for the Drapers' Hall tea party will be in my New Year letter.

Diana Paul

WHAT ARE THEY UP TO NOW?

We're always pleased to hear the latest news from Hywelians, wherever they may be. This year, we've had such a bumper crop that we've had to prune them quite severely to get them all in!

CLARE ETHERINGTON, now Dr Lyn, left School in 1980, works as a full-time GP, and was last year elected a Fellow of the Royal College of General Practitioners for services to the profession. One daughter is reading Classics at Bristol University, and the other is working in research on red squirrels.

JANE CROAD met up with Joanna Davies, whom she hadn't seen since she left Howell's in 1976. She lectures in Cardiff Metropolitan University and would like to hear from Kristin Litton, Gina Pritchard and Penny Jones.

ADRIENNE CROCKETT is a consultant psychiatrist in West Yorkshire, recently appointed Clinical lead in Acute Pathway. Her two daughters are in Swansea and Cardiff universities, so Adrienne says she will be more often in Cardiff in the future.

KAREN SMITH (née Powell) was in Howell's from 1972-79. She and her husband farm in Gloucestershire. Meat from her Old Spot pigs and market garden produce are sold locally. Her daughters are hoping to study Business Management and Biological Sciences respectively.

SHIRLEY HARRIS (née Belman) left School in 1952. Now retired, she volunteers at a London Cultural Centre, recently joined a choir, plays table tennis and is currently rehearsing for

a charity version of *Strictly Come Dancing*. Reading, entertaining family and friends and walking the dog also fill her time. No wonder Shirley recommends retirement and says it's not all about watching TV!

CAROL GOLTEN was at Howell's from 1967-72. Since 1995, she has been working as a psychotherapist, after 15 years as a PA in a London stockbroker company. She works for both the NHS and the private sector and recently finished training in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. Carol's 17 year old son is hoping to go to university to study Economics; they both enjoy playing golf. Carol would love to hear from anyone 'who remembers me'

JANE CHESTERFIELD (1970-77) recently moved to Reading after living in London for 30 years. She would like to hear from any Hywelians living in the Reading area.

JULIA DAVAGE (née Full) lives in Whitchurch in Cardiff, and in January 2013, will be returning to teaching. All three daughters attend Welsh-language schools. She recently met up with Miss Seager (RE) and Mrs Gaynor Howard (Music), and is still in touch with Sarah Percy (with whom she was in nursery school!), Sandra Harwood and Julia Farnham.

REBECCA NICHOLSON (née Shellard) was a pupil at Howell's from 1992-99. She married Mark in April 2011, and

baby Reuben was born in July 2012. Currently on maternity leave, Rebecca teaches physics at Hampton School.

LARA KENNEDY left School in 2007, gained a BA in Classics at Bristol, and has recently begun to study for a PhD in anthropology at University College, London. Her time at Howell's instilled a fascination with social and cultural anthropology, and she hopes that her work will inspire a greater relationship between people and their environment.

RUTH POMSON (née Joseph, Howell's 1959-66) is lucky enough to live on Orkney during the summer months and spend the winter months in Cyprus. Both are rich in archaeology; The Orkney Isles has wonderful scenery and local food, while Cyprus offers a mild winter climate and plenty of skiing and walking.

NICOLA EVANS (Mrs Robinson) left School in 1983, and now lives in Cricklade with her husband and daughter. She qualified as a pharmacist, and worked for a few years in the NHS before moving into computing. Following the birth of her daughter, she was a part-time Teaching Assistant and returned to pharmacy four years later. She is now a specialist pharmacist in Aseptic Services.

GILL SEWELL (née Williams) was at Howell's from 1971-78. She and the family moved to New Zealand in 2006, and live in the beautiful south east of Auckland. Her oldest daughter lives in Cardiff, while the second daughter is in university in Otago. Her son and third daughter are at high school. Gill is the General Manager

for the largest dairy exporting company in the world, employing 12,000 people worldwide. She has been able to travel extensively with her work, and the family has just returned from a holiday in Tahiti. She sees Nicola Thomas (née Jordan) regularly ("though not often enough") who lives two hours' drive away, and is in touch with other Hywelians *via* Facebook.

MARIA MCCARTHY (1974-81) is working as an author (*The Girls' Guide to Losing your L Plates; The Girls' Car Handbook*) and journalist and has recently written for Glamour, Good Housekeeping and The Sunday Express. She also appeared on BBC Breakfast news talking about pot-holes, parking and petrol prices.

KRISTA BIGNALL left School in 1987. She has daughters aged 15 and 12, and has lived in Bristol since 1999. Now working part time as a Systems Engineer for a software design/manufacturing company in Somerset, she'd like to hear from anyone who remembers her (who isn't already her friend on Facebook!) and any ex-Howell's girls who live in the Bristol area.

JANET WILLIAMS (née Hustwick) left Howell's in 1965. She and her husband very much enjoyed their roles as Olympic Ambassadors and Gamesmakers in July. Their son has recently been appointed to a post at Aberystwyth University, and they are now hoping to see more of Wales.

DEBORAH WILTSHIRE (née Williams) was in School from 1964-71, then studied languages at Swansea University. Having taught for many years in north Somerset, she is now semi-

retired and doing supply teaching. She recently completed a degree in Applied Art and Design and has studio space in Weston-super-Mare, where she frequently exhibits. Deborah meets up with Carole MacLean (McKenzie) and Teresa Batten (Dacey), and is in contact with Jane Owen (Rhys). All celebrate their 60th birthdays this year.

SUE PHILLIPS (née Davies) was a boarder in 1971-72. She is a director of Crossroads Care in Penarth, with which she became involved when her mother developed Alzheimer's Disease. She worked in journalism and public relations before becoming head of Communications for Royal Mail. She is in regular contact with Valerie Harris (Richards), with whom she shared a dormitory in Bryntaf, and also with Viv McCergo, Verity Law and Jane Belva Jones.

CAROLINE SCHILT (née Gould) and her husband celebrated their Silver Wedding anniversary in August this year. Among a number of Hywelians attending a party were Dorette Barnet (Gould), who was Miss Lewis's first Head Girl, and bridesmaids Fiona Hawkins (Ashcroft) and Sue Smith (Gould). Caroline says their Hywelian bond is very strong and the group is known (affectionately, we hope) by their husbands as, 'The Coven'!

ELIZABETH PILL was in School from 1956-63, and after 22 years teaching in Further Education, she retrained as a therapeutic counsellor. Until her retirement two years ago, she was a college counsellor, working with students, and still does some voluntary work. Children and grandchildren are

"spread around the world", which has both advantages (opportunities for travel and holidays) and disadvantages (missing them and environmental effects of flying). Liz has recently been editing some family cine film and, for those interested, there is selected footage of Cardiff in bygone times on Youtube (*lizanne631*)

ANNETTE DALL'OGGIO (née Platts) left Howell's in 1972. She married her partner of 24 years just before he passed away last year. She returned to work in the Foreign Office and took voluntary redundancy in September 2011 after 31 years' service. She is now a full time artist, renting a studio and exhibiting regularly. Her landscapes are of locations as varied as the Isle of Skye and Provence, she is looking forward to three weeks in Venice, and plans an extended tour of Provence next summer in a camper van bought with redundancy money!

Annette was reunited with a number of fellow pupils at a recent Summer lunch and regularly meets up with them. She has also stayed with Ruth Geuter (Vivien Whitehead) and Suzi Garcia (Fletcher). Annette says she is very grateful to them all for the friendship and support she received at a very difficult time.

SYLVIA HORNER (née Maskew) was a boarder from 1940-47, and remembers when Old House was damaged by a landmine (the same one that destroyed much of the Cathedral). She was amused to learn that daughter Sue (Brown) used the same furniture when she was a boarder from 1967-70.

Since being widowed a second time in 2011, Sylvia has busied herself with gardening, walking, bridge and has recently joined a country dancing class. She is also delving into family history, a task made easier these days by the internet. She also supports her Bridge Club and church by making preserves—in spite of an elderly EC ruling that second hand jars should not be used!

Daughter Sue came back from Australia in early spring, and they embarked on a return trip from Tromsø to Kirkenes—sadly the northern lights did not perform as hoped. Sylvia has enjoyed a number of National Trust holidays, including to Lundy. She says she didn't know why she so much wanted to go there, until she remembered that Mary Jefferson (Knighton) had made the trip some 60 years ago, of which Sylvia was envious.

Sylvia also notes that it is erroneously stated that the old fashioned gymslips had to be four inches above the ground when kneeling. In fact they had to be *no more* than four inches: the only person who got away with anything shorter was the games student Ann Evans—and hers was “more of a pelmet” says Sylvia.

ANGELA SUTTON, who was in School from 1972-79 has led an adventurous life in the RAF as an air traffic controller. This meant postings to a number of RAF bases in the UK and in Cyprus and Germany. Angela was promoted to Squadron Leader and commanded her own squadron at RAF Leuchars from 2003-05—hard work, but very rewarding. She was involved in coordinating Army, Navy and RAF

deployments in Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya; she spent four months in Afghanistan herself in 2009. In August 2011, she was in charge of the RAF events team which organises where the RAF assets (Red Arrows, Battle of Britain Memorial Flight and Falcons) make their displays throughout the year. Then, after 33 years' service, she was made redundant in September 2011. The family now lives in Margate, from where she now runs her own business in Events Management and is organising an 2013 air show at Manston. Their two daughters are now happily settled in new schools, her horses are enjoying their new stables and Angela and her husband have time to enjoy walks on the beach with the dogs.

EIRWEN WILLIAMS (née Thomas) left School in 1950, and still meets two Hywelians regularly: Dilys Harris (Hughes) and Rosemary (Bunty) Thomas (Parrish), the latter arriving in school as the other two left. Eirwen is also in touch with Judy Horning (Zeidman), Pat Williamson (Price) and Glenys Lindsey (Rees) - whom she met at a Summer Lunch after 50 years!

JULIA HORTON-POWDRILL (née Horton) left Howell's in 1966. She is married and now lives in Pembrokeshire, where she runs her own business *Wild About Pembrokeshire*. She runs year-round courses on the numerous uses of seashore, hedgerow and woodland plants in medicines, cosmetics and food and drink. She is also the founder and organiser of the *Really Wild Festival*, a fast-growing “and wacky” event, held annually in

St David's and is a director of Pembrokeshire Tourism. Julia also writes and is currently working with Pembrokeshire County Council on their Age-Friendly Communities programme. For more information about Julia's work, see www.wildaboutpembrokeshire.co.uk and www.reallywildfestival.co.uk

CHRISTINE WILLIS (née Best) was a pupil from 1946-56. After school, she studied at university in Geneva, then married and came back to live in Cardiff until 1974. The marriage did not last, and she went to London to do a Law degree and then Bar finals. Following a short time practising at the Bar, she started her own business, *Home from Home*, specialising in short-term rentals. The business still thrives and Christine is now semi-retired and living back in Llandaff.

CATHERINE CRAWFORD (née Evans, Howell's 1992-99) married her Australian husband in 2009; their son, Rhys, was born in 2011. After six years as Deputy Head of a primary school in London, the family is moving to sunny Queensland in December this year. Catherine says that this year, being the 20th anniversary of the start of their Howell's days, several friends organised a get together, and had a wonderful time.

CATHERINE FOSTER left School in 1949. Catherine spent much time singing while at Howell's, and has continued to sing throughout her life (though no longer has a top B!). She sang in a performance of Gluck's *Orfeo* in New York's Carnegie Hall, with her Chamber Choir from Ottawa and the contralto Marilyn Horne and she

has just taken part in a performance of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* with the Sooke Philharmonic Chorus.

(www.SookePhilharmonicOrchestra)

Catherine remembers taking the role of Dido in a School performance (in 1948 or 1949) and was saddened to read of the death of Betty Earwicker who sang Belinda. Catherine thinks Rhiannon Howell sang Aeneas, and often wonders what happened to her fellow singers from School, and to Margaret Palmer who played (viola?) in the orchestra.

CAROL TARR (née Harvey) left Howell's in 1958 and writes with news of both herself and her sister, Barbara Trengove. After a stroke and mobility problems requiring a lengthy stay in Aberdeen Infirmary, Barbara is now able to get out more. Carol herself now lives in Cheshire and tells of an interesting connection *via* her husband with Howell's Denbigh. His two great aunts attended HSD as boarders in the late 1800s. From the school records (now in the care of Denbigh Record Office at Ruthin Gaol), Carol was able to trace their progress through the school. One remained as a Governess, then teacher at the grand sum of £10 per quarter! There was also a letter of complaint to the Headmaster of Ruthin Boys' School about the attempts of his pupils to contact Howell's girls through the fence. "Nothing changes!" says Carol.

VERITY BLEATHMAN (née Goldsworthy) was in school from 1990-97. She obtained a Pharmacy degree from Bath University. She married in 2010 in Llandaff Cathedral and is now on maternity leave following the birth of a

daughter in February 2012.

LEON JIM left Howell's in 2010. He is studying for a BA in Geography at Plymouth University: this year he is on placement with Plymouth City Council as a town planner, and will complete his studies next year. He intends doing an MSc in town planning with a view to making it his career.

(How nice to hear from one of our male Hywelians — here must be more of you out there. What about it, guys? - Ed)

LIZ SIBERRY left school in 1975. After working a Civil Servant in London, Liz now splits her time between London and Mid-Wales. She is semi-retired and is a non-executive director of the

Office of Nuclear Regulation and a member of the University of Wales Council. She sings in several choirs and is involved with a number of history and heritage groups in Wales.

JOANNA DORSCH was a boarder in Kendall in the early 1970s, and although she did not become a Hywelian, she has kept in touch with a number of fellow pupils, and would like to widen her contact with others.

SARAH LAWTON (née Marsh-Smith) left school in 1968, and is still working as a GP in Leeds. Three of her four children are currently working 'down under', the fourth has a 17 month old son who calls Sarah 'Gaga' - much to the amusement of friends. Sarah visited school last year and was amazed that parts of it are still recognisable!

Late Hywelian News: The new Dean of Llandaff Cathedral is to be the Venerable Janet Henderson, an Hywelian. Janet is currently Archdeacon of Richmond in the diocese of Ripon, and will be installed at Llandaff in March next year.

GETTING TOGETHER AGAIN

A celebratory Party Lunch took place on September 29th 2012 at The Rivington Restaurant, Greenwich, for the Class of 1962 leavers. Our large table occupied the whole mezzanine level of the building!

There were twenty of us in atten-

dance, from all parts of Britain, Canada, and New Zealand. Victoria Perry (Miller) was warmly thanked for her expert planning and organisation of a highly successful event.

We intend holding another celebration in five years' time.

SHELLEY CROCKETT says that she is trying to organise a reunion of those who left School in 1981, possibly at the Summer Lunch in June 2013. Please get in touch with Shelley or

Ann Brook (Cross) via Facebook, and pass on the information to anyone else you know who might be interested.

THE HYWELIAN GUILD AND THE GDST

Sue Rayner, Secretary to the Guild, explains how closer links are being built between the GDST, Howell's School, and Guild members.

When I became Secretary of the Guild in January, I discovered that the GDST invites all those in my position to attend an annual conference. I found it really useful to meet my counterparts, hear what similar problems some of us have, and to get ideas for the future. It is clear that successful guilds/associations work very closely with their schools. In this respect I have been greatly assisted by the appointment of Mrs. Vanessa Yilmaz as Director of Development and Communications, We have been working closely throughout the year increasing the number of School events which Hywelians can attend. This year, Hywelians have enjoyed:

- The Senior School concert in the Spring
- The Summer concert (with Vintage Tea)
- A spectacular production of *Beauty and the Beast* this autumn
- Participation in the Open Day in November, where we have revived the tradition of competition between Hywelians and current students (table tennis and netball this autumn)
- An enjoyable evening shopping at John Lewis with wine and canapés and a goodie bag

Vanessa and her assistant Hannah Roberts are also giving Joyce Shields (Membership Secretary) and me database access, so that we can let Hywelians know both about future events at HSL, and when the magazine is placed on the website – something Joyce and I could not do from our personal computers. The more eMail addresses we have, the more we can keep you informed! If you are happy to be added to this database, please let Joyce or me know.

Vanessa is also developing some exciting contacts which we hope will lead to yet more interesting events for next year.

AT OUR SPORTS DESK

In the Hywelians vs School table tennis challenge, the result was a 5-5 draw.

Hywelians won the netball competition 21-14. There's obviously life in Hywelians yet! Look out for some new challenges in the future.

(It's a pity the Welsh side didn't do quite so well that day ... Ed)

If you are interested in taking part in next year's events, please contact Julia Baker at School. Volunteers are always welcome - we need to keep those youngsters in check!

A LIFE ...

Hannah Mills was a pupil at Howell's from 1999-2006. Now 24, Hannah's achievements in her career have put her—well, on the crest of a wave!

As an extremely talented and committed sailor, Hannah was in the Olympic sailing squad representing Team GB in the 2012 Olympic Games. Hannah had the honour of being the first Welsh athlete to be selected for the Games.

As an indication of her talent, Hannah and Saskia Clark, her sailing partner, won silver in only their second competitive event at Hyères. Several successes followed and only six months after getting together, they won silver at the Olympic test event in Weymouth and Portland.

Hannah showed obvious talent when, at only eight years of age, she started sailing at Llanishen Reservoir, Cardiff. Coached by Alan Williams, Centre Manager at Plas Menai on the Menai Strait and the Welsh Optimist Coach at the time, she won a string of titles over the next seven years. Hannah progressed through various sailing squads, becoming the first girl to win a string of British Optimist titles and the National Championships on home waters in Pwllheli, competing against both boys and girls in 2002.

At the 2003 World Championships in Gran Canaria, Hannah was placed fifth out of 250 competitors, male and

female, from over 50 countries, and is the only British girl to have won the Optimist Girls' World Championship. Moving from Optimist to 470 class, she won Junior World and European crowns with Katrina Hughes.

Needless to say, Hannah and Saskia's silver Olympic medal is the crowning glory of a career—so far!

Sally Davis, Principal of Howell's School commented: "Hannah is a dedicated and determined young woman, who has done remarkably well since moving up to senior level and into the 470 class. It is a

fantastic achievement for Hannah to have competed in the 2012 London Olympics and everyone at Howell's is very proud of her Olympic Silver Medal."

Hannah said: "It was really exciting and a tremendous honour to have competed in The 2012 Olympics. The hard work and determination resulted in our achieving a Silver Medal and for now, I am very proud of the achievement"



(With acknowledgements to First Eleven Ind Magazine)

...ON THE OCEAN WAVE!

Mererid Hunt (Margaret John) tells of her once-in-a-lifetime experience taking part in a round the world yacht race. [Mererid's full account can be found on the School website]

My adventure started in October 2009, when I was interviewed (and accepted) for the 18 months' training programme, a mixture of practical (on the water) and theory (in the classroom) training. I was to be part of the international crew of *Singapore*—eleven nationalities, ten crew doing the whole circuit and another 41 joining and leaving at various points. The race would consist of a series of legs, within which were the races themselves. This was the eighth biennial race, founded by Sir Robin Knox-Johnson. When he realised that more



Mererid at the start of her journey

people had climbed Everest than had sailed around the world, he established this event to 'enable ordinary people to do something extraordinary.'

Thus it was that at 16.30 hours on 31 July 2011, the cannon of the Royal Yacht Club fired and ten vessels were escorted down Southampton Water to the starting point at Cowes I.o.W. After a short sprint to Madeira, it was into the first race—finishing line, Rio de Janeiro—with nothing before us but the open Atlantic. We had hoped to swim in the open sea when we reached the Doldrums, but no such

luck: we sped through at 9 knots! As the temperature rose and we approached the Equator, those who had not 'crossed the line' before made their obeisance and offerings to King Neptune. Thirty three days after leaving Southampton, we crossed the finish line at Rio in third place—not bad considering the problems we had had with rigging and sails.

Leg two was from Rio to Cape Town. With changes to our crew we headed out into the South Atlantic and Southern Ocean, to finish on 29 September 2011 under the shadow of Table Mountain. The albatross which flew into our rigging certainly would have had a severe headache at least!

Our third leg would take us from Cape Town to Western Australia, and took us 29 days, arriving in early November. This leg was regarded as the most challenging, and so it proved, as we changed course to avoid an iceberg and had to contend with damaged sails. Although we managed to repair two of them, the third, the size of a tennis court, required the floor of Geraldton sports centre for its repair.

Leg four was from Geraldton to New Zealand, then we were to race from New Zealand to the Gold Coast. Unfortunately, we suffered steering failure and were forced to put in to Melbourne. The local yacht club managed to repair the problem, and we enjoyed a roast lamb dinner generously supplied by relatives of

**“...ordinary people
can do something
extraordinary”**

our crew. Because of our delay, we dropped out of that particular race, but on the next run, came fourth. Destination Gold Coast, where the boats were lifted out of the water, hulls were cleaned and new anti-fouling paint applied. (Blue, so we looked like Smurfs for a few days afterwards!)

From Gold Coast, we were off to Singapore, with race eight scheduled from Singapore to Quindao, China. With special dispensation, I had brought with me a Christmas cake and mince pies, which we shared on Christmas Day. Roast turkey, stuffing, broccoli and roast veg. followed by steamed Christmas pudding and white sauce, made a very memorable Christmas meal.

We re-crossed the Equator in January 2011 (with another ceremony for new first-timers). During our journey through Indonesia, we experienced tropical storms and high humidity, manoeuvred through fishing fleets and oil rigs and kept our eyes open for pirates. In our home port (Singapore), we enjoyed a Chinese New Year celebration and, of course, had to partake of a Singapore Sling in the Long Bar of Raffles Hotel!

At Quindao, we were met by a plethora of uniforms - dignitaries, police, navy, army, immigration etc, before processing along a red carpet and being presented with bouquets and other adornments.



Singapore's billowing spinnaker

We then retired to the Yacht Club for drinks and nibbles. Then down to earth again, as we shopped in local supermarkets! As a bonus, crew from various vessels took a train trip to Beijing, where we did the whole sightseeing thing -

Tiananmen Square, the Forbidden City, part of the Great Wall and the Olympic Park. (I confess to having got lost for 45 minutes, thus missing out on the Imperial Gardens!) In all, our trip to Beijing (train fare, accommodation, entry fees and food) cost us the grand total of around £142.

The Quindao to San Francisco leg started in March in snow, and for the next 29 days everything - the boat, us, our clothes - was damp as we experienced high winds and big seas. We lost overboard (and rescued) a crew member early one morning. We noted the date of 20 March twice as we crossed the International Date Line, and in spite of 'surfing' a Pacific roller, our speed of 27.5 knots was not enough to win us that race, and we came second.

The next race was from Panama to New York. We had some time before negotiat-



Singapore and New York meet.

ing the Panama Canal, so spent the days in maintenance, swimming and playing bridge. It took 51 hours to traverse the Canal; one vessel had seaworthiness problems so we took the chance to visit two World Heritage sites: Fort San Lorenzo and

Portobello - the latter after its capture by the British in 1749 inspiring place names in London and elsewhere. Our passage up the east coast to New York was marked by wind and squalls, but we eventually arrived in New York on 27 May.

On our passage from New York to Halifax, NS, we were aided by the Gulf Stream, and then the Labrador Current, strong east to west currents, made itself felt. At Halifax, we were able to enjoy a bit of sightseeing before the next race.

As we left Halifax at the start of race 13 (unlucky?) I was seasick for the first time. We passed within 45 nautical miles of the Titanic, then passed the Grand Banks off Newfoundland. We had a fast crossing, thanks to the prevailing westerlies, and crossed the race line in Derry/Londonderry in second place. From Ireland to Holland, the next race was

to be our only win - marked by a yellow pennant proudly flying from the rigging!

The final race was from Holland, across the North Sea, through the Straits of Dover and the Channel to the Solent. Our second place in this race was sufficient to give us third place in the overall event.

The fleet assembled in V-formation to be escorted up the Solent to the marina where we would disembark. The flotilla would be led by *Suhaili*, the boat in which Sir Robin Knox-Johnson achieved the first non-stop solo circumnavigation in 1968-69. We motored into the marina

in reverse order to receive our prize and stand proudly on the podium. Then, after the experience of a lifetime, it was time for reunion with family and friends. What were my thoughts at this point?

If I had the wherewithal, I'd do it all again!



The final approach (Singapore, centre)

LEAVERS 2012

Rather than just list the university intentions of those leaving in the summer of 2012, we thought we'd take a slightly different approach. Of the 84 pupils heading for university:

- The number of males (8) and females (7) remaining in Wales was more or less equal;
- Over four fifths of pupils (68) opted for English universities, with twice as many girls(42) as boys (26) (although, of course, there are at the moment more girls than boys in HSL);
- One intrepid female is heading north of the border to Scotland.
- London is the most popular destination (16), followed by Cardiff (9) and Birmingham (7). West country universities also proved popular (21), and other destinations will welcome one or two students.
- Science courses (which include medicine) attracted more or less the same number of males(26) and females (24), while the arts are dominated by females (25, males 10).

Gap years will be taken by a couple of male students and by rather more females. Some of those listed as going to university have deferred entry to next year.

WHAT A PERFORMANCE!

WHAT DO YOU GET if you muster together several main characters, a chorus, a canteen full of cutlery and a large orchestra? The answer is a superb production of that well-known fairy tale, *Beauty and the Beast*.

The capacity audience was entranced by the sheer *joie de vivre* of the School's latest musical venture, from the opening overture to the finale. It was all there: colour, sound and huge talent.

Like all good fairy stories, the plot is simple. Pretty girl rebuffs unsuitable suitor, who takes revenge. Pretty girl ends up in enchanted castle where nothing is quite what it seems, held captive by ugly character. Repulsion grows into love and – well the rest is predictable. Walt Disney's cartoon version, on which this production is based, is familiar to us all. What made this performance so exciting was that the cast was made up of real people, and the music, singing and dialogue were there with you in the theatre (otherwise known as the sports hall).

It would be invidious to pick out individual principals of the cast for their performance – they were all supremely confident in their singing and acting. I was impressed by the way they had got under the skins of their characters, so that you

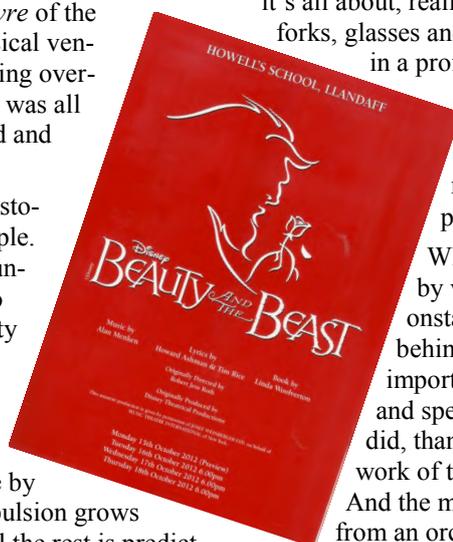
felt they *were* those individuals, not just part-playing. Interestingly, only a few of them are thinking of the stage as a career: I can't help thinking that's the theatre's loss. The chorus members of all ages were well-drilled and obviously enjoying themselves immensely – which is what it's all about, really. Knives, spoons,

forks, glasses and plates were all there in a profusion of silver and blue—and what an inspiration to put Thomas Howell's mark on the back of the plates!

While we were delighted by what we were seeing onstage, what was going on behind the scenes was just as important. Scenery, lighting and special effects were splendid, thanks to the very hard work of the back stage crew. And the music! Such a rich sound from an orchestra full of very talented pupils. All that preparation and rehearsal had really paid off, and congratulations are very much in order for everyone involved in this wonderful performance.

I think back to my days in Howell's, when performances of Shakespeare, Goldsmith *et al* were as much as we could manage in the Great Hall. As I sat in the Sports Hall that evening, I couldn't help but wish I'd had the kind of opportunity offered to Howell's pupils today.

CMO



SCENE AND HEARD - PHOTOS FROM
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST



*Beauty and the Beast - the
final scene ...*

*... and the final chorus
line-up*



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY



Howell's was host to an event to mark this special day on 18 March 2012. Hywelians (including Calan McGreevy and Sue Rayner) were invited to have tea with the girls. Next year's event will be a Strawberry Tea on 8th March 2013.

FROM THE LOST PROPERTY CUPBOARD



The photograph above was found in a copy of the Hywelian Magazine for January 1952, sent to the school. Unfortunately, we have been unable to reunite the photograph with the sender. If you know who might have sent the magazine, or indeed, who the subject of the photograph might be, please contact either Janet Sully at School, or the Secretary, Sue Rayner.

Do YOU HAVE a boarder's brown tweed suit and yellow blouse? Is there a blue, square- or V-necked games tunic lurking at the bottom of a cupboard? The School Museum has some gaps in its uniform collection and would be very grateful indeed for any donations of these particular items. Janet Sully or Sue Rayner would be delighted to hear from you.

Name that girl!

WHILE RESEARCHING the Howell's history book, Janet Sully came across some photographs which seemed to feature one individual. One is of a group of girls gardening in the borders of School Field with Miss Taylor. The individual in question is behind the wheelbarrow. The other is of boarders in their dormitory, and the same girl is the one standing by the open drawer. Janet says that she spoke to one lady at a School function, but didn't make a note of the name. Janet would be very grateful if anyone can identify this person, along with the date (she thinks it might have been the early 1950s). It would be a bonus if we could find out who were some of the others in the photographs! Can you help us out?



EVENTS, DEAR GIRLS, EVENTS



Elizabeth Bayliffe (née Goarin) in front of the plaque to her father, after whom part of the new Library is named, following her generous donation to the Annual Fund



A selection of uniform items in the Howell's museum (the individual on the right is not a museum piece!)



More uniforms at the opening of the Library and Museum

WALES 101

(Nicola) Jean Paterson (Nicola Kearns Beattie) left HSL in 1953. She recently won a competition, and will be writing for The Denver Post. Hers is a slightly tongue-in-cheek account of why Americans go to Ireland, but bypass Wales.

Say 'Celtic' and you think of Ireland with its magnificent scenery and marketing skills. We all love the Irish: every American President looks for a bit of Irish in his ancestry. They make up fairy stories, and we believe them. From years of abuse, famine and awful weather, they have built on their identity with wondrous dancing and singing, golf courses and Blarney Stones, whisky and dark Guinness—a marketing man's dream.

Wales is a small Celtic country, large in the Welsh mind, but nowhere else, it seems. Comparatively few people go there:

maybe I shouldn't be a one man marketing band for my mysterious little country. Perhaps I should leave it in the mists of time with its standing stones and fortress-like castles.

So where is Wales? How can I place it for you? From Liverpool, going west, you'll drive into some of the most beautiful country in the world. Snowdon, the highest mountain in England and Wales, is surrounded by lakes and waterfalls. The Isle of Anglesey has a little known, but mighty Beaumaris castle, and a wild coast line to walk and wonder at. From London you drive west, about one hundred and fifty miles, or fly to the airport just outside Cardiff, the capital city of Wales. Once there, you can

take a tour into the Rhondda Valleys — think *How Green Was My Valley*. The history is recent and terrible: robber barons and coal, exploitation and extreme poverty. Or listen to a Male Voice Choir which puts all that history to work in song. Much of Cardiff, like Denver, was built with the profits of mines and railways. Drive to the Gower: coves and small secret beaches, and the long strand of Rhossili.

“The history is recent and terrible ... listen to a Male Voice choir which puts all that history to work in song”

Keep driving west to St. David's and into ancient Wales. Solid and vast, the fifth century cathedral at St David's was built in a dell, away from the

eyes of marauding Vikings. You're on the Pembrokeshire coast: walk for days and feel better: cliffs and medieval harbours, farms and fishing. Bed and Breakfast with the Welsh Welsh. They will feed you and talk your ears off; they love Americans.

In mid Wales you can watch clever border collies gather hundreds of sheep(the best sheepdogs in the world), and find your way to the Penderyn a single malt whisky distillery. (Ireland only has blends!) In June drive to the Vale of Llangollen where they hold an international Eisteddfod—an amateur dance and song festival—every year. Competitors

(Continued on page 27)

HOWLERS OF THE PAST

How many of us remember the days of the General Knowledge paper? Perhaps the best part was the subsequent reporting of those inventive answers commonly known as 'Howlers'. They are nothing new, as this item from the school magazine of 1912-13 shows:

"The papers were much better done this year, though we were sorry to see fewer entries than usual. The following are some of the amusing howlers which relieved the tedium of correcting:

<i>Aeroplane</i>	<i>to see how soon a man may kill himself</i>
<i>Chef d'oeuvre</i>	<i>poached egg; breast of a dove; chef sauce</i>
<i>Clinical thermometer</i>	<i>one on the incline</i>
<i>Tannhauser</i>	<i>by Homer</i>
<i>Coup l'oeil</i>	<i>many eyes</i>
<i>S.O.S.</i>	<i>Society of Sailors; Society of Sons; Surgical Operations Society</i>
<i>Llandaf to London</i>	<i>1000 miles</i>
<i>M.S.S.</i>	<i>Municipal Secondary School</i>
<i>Lord Ninian Stuart</i>	<i>The Conservative Member for England</i>
<i>Dieu et mon droit</i>	<i>God save our King</i>
<i>Tête á tête</i>	<i>two on the same level"</i>

One should also note that, according to those who sat that paper so long ago, an egg weighs one pound, Shakespeare painted the frescoes in the Great Hall, an umbrella has 60 spokes, and to remove an insect from the ear, one should sponge it and drink water.

The ingenuity of a Howell's girl under stress should never be underestimated!

(Continued from page 26)

come from central Europe, and everywhere else. Nearby are Swallow Falls and Beddgelert. Eat your picnic at Blaenau Ffestiniog and watch a demonstration of slate splitting. Enjoy wonderful spring lamb in scattered Victorian towns and spas and be prepared to try and understand Welsh: the language is growing along with our identity.

And as the Welsh sing to the Welsh Americans who left Wales, as I did.

*"We'll keep a welcome in the hillsides,
We'll keep a welcome in the vales,
This land you knew, will still be singing,
When you come home again to
Wales."*

That means everyone.

IN THE BEGINNING ...

A 19th Century Hywelian, Margaret Hair, who was at HSL in the very early days, recalls her schooldays.

You asked me for some recollections of my school life at "The College" as it was fondly known in the early days. I entered as a pay boarder in February 1865; a case of smallpox in the domestic staff had delayed the commencement of term by a fortnight. I remained at Llandaff until June 1873, and in September of that year was married. Now, after 40 years, I can say that if I had to choose an education for my grand-daughters, it would be modelled on that given me by the gentlewomen I hold in the highest affection and esteem, Miss Baldwin and Miss Ewing. My school life had its ups and downs, but on the whole was a happy one; compared with what I hear of its curriculum today, it would prove very dull.

Things have changed since 1865, particularly the system of teaching, but the solid groundwork of knowledge given us in those days is not surpassed in these more advanced times, at least to my way of thinking. Casting my memory back, what appeals to me most is the high standard of honour Miss Baldwin inculcated in her pupils. A strict regard for truth, respect for our parents, and that "spirit of the heart" which is the basis of all true living, were her constant themes: where she failed, the fault

was ours. Miss Ewing was a woman of varied and up-to-date knowledge. Reading lessons in the first class were frequently taken from the leading and general articles in *The Times*.

Among dissipation, the annual flower show at Cardiff ranked as a great event. In Whit week, Llandaff Fair was held, and regularly preached against in the Cathedral, for the booths where refreshments etc., were sold were in part fixed against the walls of the burying ground.

Bishop Ollivant, Dean Williams, and Archdeacons Crawley and Blosse figured largely in our school life. The boundaries of the little city were circumscribed and its inhabitants formed a most select coterie. Jonah Roberts in the early days of his fame visited relatives on Llandaff Green, and the then Marquis of Bute sometimes attended service at the Cathedral, before he came of age and returned to Rome. Lord Tredegar, now dead, was a great favourite at prize-givings. Many of those who shared with me the advantages of those days are lying dead or have made their homes in other lands. "The Thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts" and I have wearied you, I fear! Some day I shall be glad to visit the old school.

CAN YOU HELP?

Janet Sully is keen to acquire copies of the School (not the Hywelian) magazine for 1974-5 and 1975-6. If you are willing to part with them, please contact the Guild Secretary, Sue Rayner.

THAT CROWNS EVERYTHING...

Barbara (née Mealing, then Lloyd Hughes, now Forte) shares her memories of a momentous occasion.

Around the middle of May this year, my niece was in a school Staff room discussion of the approaching Golden Jubilee celebrations. "It's a pity the children's mothers and grandmothers are too young to remember anything about the Coronation; we need someone old". "I know someone old," said my niece (49) "My Aunt Barbara is 84!"

I was living in London at the time of the Coronation: like many of my age I have an excellent recall of things from long ago, although not so good with short term memory. Thus it was to a school 14 miles from where I live (one of the few in which I had not been a Supply Teacher!) that I was to go and talk about the Coronation. I envisaged a small group of 12 children sitting around my knees – yes, I could manage that. The Head met me and took me, not to a small classroom, but to the Hall where the whole school was gathered—more than 250 pupils! "About 45 minutes," she said, as she and her staff began to leave! Fear – and belated sense - came to me. "Teachers, Health and Safety! Would some of you please stay, - bring your coffee if you like". I launched into my story. The children seemed enthralled – except for the one at the back who'll always make trouble: fixing him with an icy stare, I said, coldly "Is there anything wrong, dear?" and all went well. I knew I had

them in the palm of my hand, when, acting as the Archbishop, I raised the imaginary heavy crown above my head and the whole of the first row did the same! My 45 minutes were soon over and off I went.

The next day the BBC phoned me to say that someone had heard me – not the Director General, surely?

Well, no, but could I appear on BBC

"I knew I had them in the palm of my hand"

Wales on Monday morning? Well, in for a penny in for a pound! Oh, no money involved: I want to keep my amateur status!

They would ask me ques-

tions and I would answer. Monday morning came and I was given a voice level test and told I would be first on. I wondered what the questions would be and, more worryingly, what my answers might be. Jamie Owen's voice said, "And now we have Mrs Barbara Forte—Barbara tells us all about it." No questions that I could hang an answer on. My Mother's words "Never say you can't, say you'll try!" came to my aid, as did HSL's "Keep to the left and no talking" altered to "Keep on talking!"

And the questions? There was only one: "What was the atmosphere like?" My answer?

"It was so tangible you felt you wanted to cut off a piece and take it home with you!"

Not bad for an 84 year old with short term memory loss!

ONE HUNDRED AND SOMETHING NOT OUT

MRS MORFYDD MORGAN was born on 11th April, 1907, one of eight children; also still living are her sister Dot, aged 94, and a brother, 92, who lives in Dinas Powys. Her father had a grocery business in Fishguard and made deliveries to the surrounding villages, using boats if the roads were impassable. Mrs Morgan came to Howell's for the sixth form from Fishguard Grammar School, having done well in her School Certificate. Having come from a large and close-knit family, she was very homesick, and said that the other girls at Howell's already had their own friendship groups, and she felt an outsider. At Christmas, she developed chicken-pox and refused to go back to Howell's the next term, going instead to a local College.

At Howell's Mrs Morgan made one good friend: Beti Rees, who went on to establish the first Welsh and university bookshop in Cardiff. Mrs Morgan also remembers Megan Anthony, whose father was the headmaster of the village Primary School which Mrs Morgan attended. Mrs Morgan was particularly friendly with Megan's sister Dilys, and recalls that Megan later became a chemistry mistress at Howell's, then went on to become Headmistress at Carmarthen Girls' School and married

the Headmaster of the Boys' School.

Mrs Morgan thought Miss Trotter formidable. She disliked the food at school but thought that what was on offer reflected the effect of food rationing in the war, and remembers eating margarine and boiled parsnips. The girls were, though, given a nice piece of cake at about 11 o'clock. Mrs Morgan remembers wearing the navy gymslip, and having to run

around the school field before breakfast and playing lacrosse. She boarded in the school (before there were any boarding houses) and had her own room. She used to finish her homework secretly under the bedclothes, by torchlight, because she had not had time to complete it in the allocated two hours.

Mrs Morgan still lives on her own in Penylan, Cardiff, and does her own washing and cooking. A friend of her daughter's visits her regularly. Although quite deaf, her eyesight is very good indeed, and her mind is razor-sharp.

She had a hip replacement at 97 and is well known at the Sainsbury's store in Colchester Avenue. She hopes to visit Howell's in the spring.

(Janet Sully visited Mrs Morgan on Friday 16th January 2011.)



*Morfydd Morgan
(née Llewelyn),
aged 103¾*

..AND ANOTHER ONE!

JANE BARRATT, daughter of another long-lived Hywelian, writes:

"My mother, (MARGARET) GABRIEL WILLIAMS (Mrs Gay Davies), became a boarder at Howell's School at the age of 12, leaving a village where later, her family were to own the first



Mrs Gabriel Davies on the occasion of her 100th birthday

car and their phone number was St. Athan 1.

My mother joined Oaklands House which was run by a much loved Miss Bellamy.

Mum's striking memory was a two lap run around the hockey pitch every morning before they were allowed any breakfast! (See also the previous page.) She loved Cookery and Botany but hated French; she didn't appreciate always being called "so dull" by her French teacher!

After leaving school, my mother studied Nutrition at Cardiff University. At the outbreak of war she joined the WRAC as a private before rising through the ranks to become an officer. As Captain Williams she ran an anti-aircraft battery and was responsible for the shooting down of German aircraft. It was during this time that

she says she has to thank Hitler for bringing my father into her life! At the end of the war, while still in the army, she spent time teaching the WRAC girls home skills in preparation for civilian life. After leaving the army, my parents married and Mum became a full time housewife and mother to my sister and me.

She has been a keen and active member of the WI and local church, serving on various committees, and she has had varied interests over the years including gardening, painting, bee-keeping and baking.

Now known as Gay Davies, my widowed mother still lives on her own in the same family home. With two

daughters, five living grandchildren, and two (soon to be three) great grandchildren, she has plenty to interest her."

At her birthday celebration, Mrs Davies was delighted to be reunited with her

younger sister, who flew from Canada especially for the party. Annie Paterson (a youngster of 90 years, and known as Clair) is also a former Howell's girl



Mrs Davies with sister Annie Paterson

THREE GENERATIONS

Saskia Blair (Mrs Russell) recounts the memories of three generations of Hywelians.

Among my earliest memories of Hywelians are the table tennis matches against the Old Girls (as they were as to us) - demon table tennis players who often thrashed us keen sports girls. What I most looked forward to was team teas which I think were made by Hywelians and were reminiscent of a Hogwarts tea party, with loads of cakes and mountains of sandwiches. These were a feast for a starving, sporty teenager: all that was missing was lashings of ginger beer!

I used to visit School as a Hywelian with my mother. We used to see old school photos in which Granny would stare at us across the Stone Hall. Now I have graduated to that wall with my mother and grandmother. I have tried to persuade my sister Camila to join the Hywelians. She says it is too painful and doesn't feel ready to come back to school yet. She thinks she had it hard—what does she know! As a child I listened to stories of my grandmother Valerie Redmond (née Horrocks) and my mother Christine Blair (née Redmond) who were both boarders. I don't think Camila knows the half of it!

My grandmother was a boarder in The Rise between 1931 and about 1938. Val loved school, and, like me, lived for sports lessons and lunchtime games. These had to be endured by my less sporty friends in turn, as lunchtime games were compulsory, along with two games lessons and a gym or swimming lesson every week.

Val recounted stories of having to walk through BDR (Big Dining Room for the

youngsters reading this) in her mac as there was no roof after a fire. Her father used to meet her by the School Field railings on Cardiff Road and surreptitiously pass her bars of chocolate which she would hide in her blue big knickers (maroon bags in my day) so that they would go unnoticed as she sneaked into her dorm and hid them in her trunk.

My Mum (Tina) was a boarder in Hazelwood, (now part of the lower school) from 1958-64. She went on to Swiss finishing school in Chateau D'Or. As boarders, they were allowed to go into Cardiff on Saturdays, but imagine the embarrassment in the 60s of having to wear brown tweed suits, yellow blouses and brown felt hats. She says she was only allowed to wash her hair once a week, but funnily enough she used to slip in the bath most nights! She also tells of sitting in front of one plate of congealing food for two days, not allowed to leave the table until the plate was cleared.

For me things were easier. I do remember being told to eat my liver by Mrs Lloyd, but hiding it in the back of my mouth before dashing to the toilet to spit it out. I also remember the sixth formers standing outside the door making sure we had our hats and gloves on if we had our macs on, with scarves tucked in neatly. There were also stories of locals phoning School to say that they had seen girls on the bus without their hats. This meant certain detention on a Saturday morning!

Such fond memories across several generations.

IN MEMORIAM

It is always sad to report the passing of Hywelian Guild members. We send our condolences to their families and friends.

Margaret Morris (née Phillips)

Barbara Forte writes:

Margaret came to Howell's in 1938. She obtained a degree in Sociology and was a respected lecturer at Bridgend College. She was also a school governor in Cardiff. Margaret was a faithful member of the Bridgend Branch of the Hywelians and regularly attended meetings. She worked as a counsellor for the Samaritans for many years and had a life-long interest in politics. She will be sadly missed by all her friends.

Mrs M E (Beti) Jones

Beti Jones was Deputy Chairman of Governors for a while in the 80s and used to preside over the Junior Prize-giving in the days when separate Prize Days for Junior and Senior girls were held in the Great Hall.

Penny Meyer Polins, herself a former Howell's pupil, writes that Beti was Rt Hon Lord Mayor of Cardiff 1989-90. She had also a very wide involvement with a number of organisations and charities; Penny remembers that Beti was also her Guide Captain. She had suffered with dementia for a number of years.

Mrs Georgina Templeton (née Powell)

Kate Templeton reports with sadness the death of her mother, who died on 7 October this year at the age of 99. She had suffered ill health for a number of years. Of the three Powell sisters who attended Howell's, only Mrs Betty Jane Johnson now remains alive.

Dorothy Hughes (Everett)

Dorothy's niece *Carol McKenzie* (MacLean) is a Hywelian herself, and says that her aunt was thrilled when Carol began her Howell's career in 1964, and bought Carol her leather satchel.

Dorothy came to Howell's as a boarder, and throughout her life, she talked about the happy times she had spent there and the escapades of herself and her fellow boarders. One of her teachers (Miss Tickner) even taught me Latin in the 1960s. The only thing she did not like was breakfast.

After school, Dorothy worked in the Civil Service. She married John during the war and they lived most of their life in Cardiff. They had no children but did have grandchildren! My own mother died when my eldest child was almost two and Dorothy took over as surrogate Grandmother to my three children. She lived a full and active life until her health deteriorated. She regularly attended Hywelian meetings and was an active Church member. She died in the University Hospital of Wales on 30 December 2010, following a stroke.

Dr Hilary Clark Thomas

Elizabeth Dowsett writes of the death of Dr Clark, former Head of Geography at Howell's and mother of Charlotte, a former pupil. Hilary had been for the last few years the environmental coordinator for PONT Mbale Link, an initiative between Rhondda Cynon Taf and Uganda, and founded PONT's environmental

work group. She went on to develop the UN Territorial Approaches to Climate Change (TACC) pilot project, helping Ugandan communities to adapt to the impacts of climate change. Hilary was Visiting Professor at the University of Glamorgan and a climate change consultant to the Welsh Government.

Elizabeth (Beth) James (née Jones)

Daughter *Jennifer Stamp* tells us that Beth died on 10 April 2012, aged 88, at Llandough Hospital, after several years' ill health. She attended Howell's between 1935 and 1940. She trained at the Rachel Macmillan College, London, and subsequently taught at primary schools in London, Barry, Penarth and Mid Glamorgan. A keen bridge player, Beth was a member of Rhiwbina Bridge Club for many years.

Margaret B Nicholas (née Burnell)

Margaret's son *James* was kind enough to forward his mother's Howell's-related memorabilia to us. The following information is taken from the Scranton (Pennsylvania) Times of 20 December 2011.

Margaret and Donald were married for 55 years until Donald's death in 2002. She was a devoted mother and grandmother, and took great pride in her Welsh heritage. She was much involved in local organisations and charities and was a keen golfer, being a member of, among others, Royal Porthcawl GC. Margaret and Donald travelled widely, including Antarctica, China, Egypt and of course Great Britain. She was survived by her son, granddaughter and cousins.

Mrs Vivienne Hayes (née Hill)

Viv attended Howell's as a Scholarship daygirl from 1944-49; she was followed by her daughter Valerie Harris (née Rich-

Nest Owen

Nest, who died on 15 February 2012, aged 80, was a former member of staff at Howell's. She was the widow of George, mother of Elenid and Damien, and grandmother of Andreas and Ioan.

Mrs Beryl Silkstone (Osborne)

Suddenly on 26 April 2012, wife of the late Henry, mother of Anthony and Lynne. Grandmother of five and great grandmother to three. Beryl left school in 1944.

Joan Francombe (Rhys)

Died peacefully, aged 93. Widow of Phil and mother of Sue. Grandmother to Beth and Alex and great grandmother of three.

Dr Elizabeth (Betty) Havard

Died at her home in St Nicholas, aged 83 years. Wife of Cyril and mother of Peter, Robin and Timothy, grandmother of seven. Betty was a retired GP and former Deputy Chair of Cardiff Magistracy.

ards), who boarded from 1967-72. Viv joined the Army after school and travelled widely before moving to Woking and working as a Probation Officer. She and her husband retired to Cornwall to be near their daughter. Her death came after some months' suffering from vascular dementia.

Lydia Shaxton (née Richards)

Lydia was born in Peterston-super-Ely in 1927, into a musical family, an inheritance which lasted throughout her life. She studied harp and singing at the Royal Northern College of Music in

Manchester, then moved to teach music in Sussex, where she married Bruce in 1953.

They emigrated to South Australia in 1956 and lived there for the next 32 years. Lydia worked occasionally with the South Australian (now Adelaide) Symphony Orchestra and also appeared on television and sang *penillion* with fellow countryman Huw Jones. She also worked with blind children, putting on performances such as Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat, in which each child had a specially-composed part. At home and among friends, she encouraged part singing, and earned the title 'Bossy Boots'.

Her own children became professional musicians: Juliet a violinist and Rhydian a cellist. Lydia also taught and her star pupil was Alice Giles, a prominent Australian harpist. Alice wrote,

"I have always felt how lucky I was to have that absolutely perfect beginning, full of the joys of music and freedom with the harp, with no fear, just love"

Diana Green (Mrs Morgan)

Lesley Phillips (Mrs Morgan) was at school from 1959-66. She writes:

My mother, Diana, sadly passed away in February 2012 in her 90th year. Diana won a boarding scholarship to HSL and joined her sister Pat in Hazelwood house in the late 1930's. She was very keen on sport and appears in many old team photos, especially hockey and cricket. When the school swimming pool was built, she and her sister Pat were among the first to swim in it! My mother was at school when World War II started, and remembered the headmistress (Miss Trotter, I believe) announcing it in the school hall.

She wanted to make sport her career, but the war thwarted her ambitions. Her father was reluctant to let her attend college in Southampton, which was then being bombed by the Germans. Instead she volunteered for the Women's Land Army and spent the rest of the war delivering pit props to mines in the South Wales valleys, driving buses taking POWs to farms to work, and working on the farms with the other Land Girls. After the war she joined the family business with her father, until she married. In retirement, she kept up her love of sport by joining her local bowls club and swimming.

Granddaughter Victoria was at HSL from 1985-94

Catherine Morgan (Mrs. Powell)

Catherine (known as Minnie Morgan in school) was a pupil, member of staff, Vice-Chairman of the Guild and founder of the Bristol Branch of the Hywelians. She had a lively mind and visited School in 2010



Catherine Powell on her 90th birthday

to tell current pupils about her life in Howell's. Her daughter Judith is a Hywelian. Catherine died in Llandough Hospital at the age of 96 on 5 October 2012. *Liz Jenkins* was Catherine's god-daughter and writes:

"We all have such good memories of her when she was on form, and it was fortuitous that she was able to provide those interesting insights into her life at Howell's."

JEAN, BARONESS MCFARLANE OF LLANDAFF. 1926-2012

Annette Hickling, Jean's niece writes to give the news of her aunt's death. The following appreciation of Jean's life is taken from an obituary in The Guardian:

JEAN MCFARLANE was born in Cardiff, and following her years at Howell's School, she trained at St Bartholomew's Hospital, London. She returned to Cardiff and worked as a health visitor for some six years. In the early 60s, Jean took the post of Education Officer at the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) in London; and from 1967-69, she led the *Study of Nursing Care*. She became Professor of Nursing and Head of Department at Manchester University, where she remained until her retirement in 1988. In 1979, she was made a life peer and took the title of Baroness McFarlane of Llandaff.

She was involved in several other organisations and interests. These included: the Royal Commission on the NHS; Fellow of RCN and first Chair of RCN Congress; The Commonwealth War Graves Com-

mission; National President of the Girls' Brigade, and member of the General Synod of the Church of England. She was also a Vice-President of St Ann's Hospice in Cheshire and sat on four select committees during her time in the Lords.

Her obituarist, Jean Clark, recalls her own debt to Jean McFarlane:

"She took me under her wing, listened patiently to my sometimes wild ideas, supported me when those ideas got me into trouble, and encouraged me to pursue them. ... I am proud to be one of her 'babies'"

Jean's sister, Mary McFarlane (Mrs Donaldson) was also a Howell's pupil. She died in 2011 at the age of 95.

A memorial service for Jean's life was held on 3 December 2012 in Manchester.

GWEN NICHOLAS (MRS JARVIS) 1910-2011

Gwen's son Peter wrote of his mother's long and interesting life. The following is taken from Peter's account.

GWEN NICHOLAS was a boarder at Howell's School. From there, she won a scholarship to University of Wales, Aberystwyth, where she obtained a first in Botany and was awarded the Gold Medal for her year. Along with her husband, Geoff, she taught in Llanfyllin, Powys and in Brigg, Lincolnshire.

While in Howell's, Gwen had written to a young man in Prague, a correspondence which was to last more than 40 years; in 1968, her pen friend came to visit. Gwen and Geoff made a return visit later that

year, just as Russian tanks rumbled into the streets. They were expelled on a German train. Their exploit was banner headlines in the local press and they were much in demand to give talks about their experience.

After Geoff's death, Gwen moved to Shrewsbury to be near her brother and even in her late eighties, was still travelling widely - taking a submarine trip on the Great Barrier Reef and riding an elephant in Chiang Mai - "a lot more comfortable than riding a camel!"

MARGEURITE (“MARGOT”) DESMOND, NÉE MILNER.

Janet Sully interviewed Margot Desmond for the Howell’s history book, published in 2010, and writes of a lady with remarkable memories of her school days.

Margot died in hospital on 2nd March 2012, just two days before her 102nd birthday, after having a fall in the residential home in Barry where she lived. She was one of three Hywelians who celebrated their centenary in 2010, the other two having predeceased her. Margot was at school at the end of Miss Kendall’s time and at the beginning of Miss Trotter’s headship. Margot married a doctor; they had no children. Margot was visited regularly by Hywelian Dr Anne Bryan, née Williams, and it was Anne who contacted school in 2009 and said that Margot, a proud Hywelian, was keen to share her memories of her schooldays. These were duly included in the book on the history of Howell’s School which was



Margot Desmond on the occasion of her 100th birthday

written for the 150th anniversary in 2010.

Margot had quite extraordinary memories of the staff who taught her and remembered exactly where her old school friends lived. She enjoyed her 100th birthday party in March 2010, looking immaculate as always, and was delighted to receive a card from the Queen.

Janet says she was honoured to be invited to attend her 100th birthday party (having met her when she went to

interview her for the book) and also went to her funeral in Barry. The photograph alongside of a proud Margot with her card from the Queen appeared in the book - she had her birthday just in time for it to be included!

MEGAN THOMAS (MISS WALFORD)

MEGAN THOMAS taught maths at Howell’s, along with other subjects. During her time on the staff, there were so many Thomases that staff were often known under other names, hence Miss Walford. She died in Morriston Hospital, Swansea,

on 5 October 2012, in her 100th year.

Megan Thomas had been a faithful member of the West Wales branch of the Hywelian Guild for many years, and branch members will miss her presence greatly.

IRENE ELIZABETH DAVID, BEM, was born on 26 October 1918, and died on 18 October 2012, writes Kay Powell. She worked at Bletchley Park during the war, then remained in the WRNS, becoming

the senior officer in Wales until her retirement. She left Howell’s around 1937. She had lived in Plasturton Avenue and Cathedral Road, Cardiff, and was living in a nursing home in Howell’s Crescent.

ANNE (ELLIE) EVANS (NÉE BRAY)

The following tribute is taken from Amy Wack's obituary of Anne, which appeared in The Guardian on 22 November. Although Anne was not a Hywelian, we know there are those who will be interested in her life.

Anne Evans, who wrote poetry under the pen name Ellie Evans, has died, aged 70. After a life mostly dedicated to others, this vivid, sharp, funny woman developed her literary talents over the last decade or so. After her poems began to appear in magazines, she was approached directly in 2009 by the independent publisher *Seren*, where I am poetry editor, to put together a collection of her work. This was published last year under the title *The Ivy Hides the Fig-Ripe Duchess*. Having first come across her striking poems when they were submitted for a competition, I was delighted, when I finally met Anne, to discover a character as lively as her work.

The daughter of Betty and Percy Bray, Anne grew up in Cardiff with a younger brother, Rob. She went to Howell's School, Llandaff and in 1960 went on to St Hugh's College, Oxford, to study English. After university, Anne worked

briefly in publishing and, in 1966, married Huw Evans, an economist, whom she had known in Cardiff. Because of his work, they had spells living in Hong Kong, Brussels and Washington DC. Anne and Huw had two sons, Richard and Lewis.

While in Britain, Anne worked as an English teacher, including at James Allen's Girls' School in Dulwich, London, where she was head of the English department. The many tributes from former pupils emphasise her energy and inspiration, kindness and humour. Anne had a strong social conscience – she was a Justice of the Peace and a Samaritan, and undertook charity work, including helping Powys Young Carers and the Red Cross.

After her marriage ended in 2000, Anne made a new start, moving to Llangattock in Powys, mid-Wales. She took a Master's degree in creative writing at Bath Spa University, and followed it up with a PhD. At a writing workshop in Greece in 2006 she happened to meet an old boyfriend from her Oxford days, the writer Roger Green, and they rekindled their romance. She is survived by Roger and her sons.

It is inevitable that there is a large number of death notices and obituaries in a publication like this. It is therefore very cheering to be able to report some new arrivals!

Sue Thomas (a former Editor of the Magazine) has informed us of the birth of a grandson, Alexander Stuart Leeke, born 9 April 2012, a son for Kirsty (née Thomas, HSL 1992-99) and Matthew. Our heartiest congratulations go to the family.

Congratulations, too, to Calan (Davies) and Malcolm McGreevy on the arrival on 25 November of Feliciano, a son for Delyth (McGreevy) and Paul, and a brother for Ana Heulwen, born 6 March 2011

Online Services

We are always happy to feature website addresses of Hywelians who wish to advertise business/career/service. We charge a fee of £20, which goes towards the cost of printing the magazine. Please contact Joyce Shields for details:

joyce@joyshields.demon.co.uk

Jayne Barr (née Loxley-Hughes)

Jayne thoroughly enjoys working with people to improve their businesses. Her website is well worth a visit, to gain an idea of how she works with clients:

www.creative-consulting.co.uk

Elinor Wynne Lloyd

Elinor's love of all things Greek grew from a visit to Greece made at the age of 12 with her parents, Dilys and Wynne Lloyd. Her shop is very near to the British Museum, and is called (what else?) It's All Greek To Me.

www.itsallgreek.co.uk

Saskia Russell (née Blair)

Saskia has a physiotherapy practice in Cardiff. For more information, please visit her website at:

www.saskiablair.co.uk

REMINDER!

If you would like a hard copy of next year's Magazine, please remember to send a stamped addressed C5-sized envelope to Joyce Shields, the Guild's Membership Secretary, by the end of September 2013.

AND FINALLY...

Copies of Janet Sully's fascinating history of Howell's School are still available—one would make a lovely gift for a former pupil who perhaps is not a Hywelian. The book was published in 2010,

the 150th Anniversary of the School's founding, and is lavishly illustrated with photographs.

To obtain your copy, please contact the School office on 029 2056 2019 or email:

mail@how.gdst.net

SPONSORS 2013

SCIMITAR DEVELOPMENTS

Hywelian Guild 2013



Appendix

Note

If you have read this year's Hywelian Magazine, you will be aware that many of the items had to be reduced in size, some very considerably, so that we could get everything in.

In this Appendix, you will find some of the longer articles in their original form - although they have been edited for grammatical and typographical errors.

Lyn Owen, Editor

OBITUARIES

GWEN NICHOLAS (MRS JARVIS)

Peter Jarvis, a Cambridge lecturer and writer, was a very devoted son to Gwen, and sent this in about his mother. It was delivered by Peter at Gwen's funeral service.

Gwen Nicholas (Mrs Jarvis) Left School 1928. Died at the age of 101 in December 2011.

A little bit of history to start.

Mum was born in 1910 in Port Talbot, South Wales, the third of seven children. Her father died when she was nine, and the family struggled to send Mum to board at Howell's School in Llandaff. At school she struck up a correspondence with a penfriend in Prague, of which more later. A very bright young lady, she got a State Scholarship to the University of Wales at Aberystwyth and graduated with first class honours in Botany and the Gold Medal for her year. It was here, through her membership of the College netball team, she met Geoff my father on sporting awaydays to other UoW colleges. Dad was in the tennis team. They also shared a passion for ballroom dancing. They lost touch after University as they both began their teaching careers, Mum at Bromsgrove and Dad at Llanfylllyn, near Oswestry. Eventually, after a romantic chance meeting on a train, they got married in a Welsh Chapel in Port Talbot in August 1939 and Mum moved to teach, also in Llanfylllyn, where Geoff was living with his elder brother Tom.

They decided to move to Brigg, in Lincolnshire where they could both teach at secondary level. They were able to furnish the newly-built, rented house when Dad won a modest amount of money on the Pools. They had furniture hand-made in London, and Nick still has some of these elegant 1930's pieces in his house.

During the war Mum took over Dad's lessons at Brigg Grammar School whilst he was away fire-fighting in Grimsby. The school was very congenial and other teachers became our godparents. Times continued to be tough for many years after the war. Mum and Dad were very kind to young teachers who came to the school – especially Jack Moore and David Jones together with the headmaster's daughter Betty Daughton. David Jones was a lodger for a time, and Nick remembers being banned from the front room as Dave courted his glamorous Italian girlfriend. We were expected to get on with our education on our own, but Mum did step in to help Steve with his Biology A-level, when it was obvious, a month before the exam that he hadn't learnt anything. She repeated this coaching

feat for Peter, when he was seriously contemplating a career change to medicine. Unfortunately, although they had dissected frogs and plants in the kitchen, they hadn't done a fish – which of course came up in the exam.

On the social side, I'm not sure our parents realised quite what a disadvantage it was to us to have them teaching at the schools where we studied. Famously, mum said to a class of teenage Convent girls that you could train plants to grow up a wall or a fence, and equally you could train animal parts to grow in a different direction if you taped them up. The example she gave was Peter's ears - they were sticky-out ears in the beginning and she trained them with adhesive tape to be more mannerly! Needless to say Peter heard about this to his mortification at the ballroom dancing sessions, attended also by said teenage girls!

Mum and Dad lived in the same house for nearly 50 years, bought it in the mid 1960's as sitting tenants, and installed such luxuries as central heating, to replace the coal fires and the Jack Frost on the inside of the bedroom windows! It could be cold in Lincolnshire – we used to remark that there wasn't a tree between us and Siberia. When I was a toddler Mum had me in bed with her during the day to keep warm through the terrible winter of 1947.

Of course as teachers with sporting and Scouting extracurricular activities, term time was a blur of work and marking. Summer holidays were the times we three brothers most remember as happy family times. In the early days we went by train back to South Wales, and to Chip-ping Campden to visit grandmas and relatives. In later years after we had acquired a car, we tried our luck in Cornwall and Devon. One occasion sticks in Nick's memory – having driven overnight in the car – of having breakfast fried up on a camping stove out of the boot of the car, as the sun rose through the early morning mist on the top of Bodmin Moor. We got more adventurous - our first foray into Europe was to drive down through France to Rosas on the Costa Brava – a spot Peter had reccied as a student on a scientific diving trip. That was combined with a tour of the Loire valley chateaux and Chartres on the way back.

Just as Nick, the youngest, was about to leave

home, so our parents' adventures really began. Originally they were going to Australia, but at the last minute they turned it into a round the world trip. They went to Rome, Athens, Cairo and Bangkok and then to Australia where we had relatives in all the major cities, as well as Pete working north of Perth, and Steve doing an elective in the Western Australian outback. Then to Fiji, and back home through Los Angeles and New York. What a trip! And all recorded by Dad on Kodachrome slides.

Then in 1968 Mum's school penfriend in Czechoslovakia, Karel Straka – they had continued to correspond throughout those 40 turbulent years - came to England for a visit in the Prague Spring. They had never met before, so this was an emotional meeting. Nick had the privilege of showing him round Cambridge University where he was studying at the time. Mum and Dad bravely did a return visit to Prague in August that year, even as the picture darkened – and of course got caught up in the Russian invasion, with tanks on the streets – they were eventually expelled by train over the German frontier. There were banner headlines in the *Lincolnshire Times*, and they were much in demand thereafter giving illustrated talks of their experiences.

Sadly Mum then had to endure the consequences of a tragic hospital accident, that left Dad in a coma for over a year until his death – a trial she dealt with, with great devotion and dignity, holding his hand every day.

Eventually she linked up with her younger brother Haydn moving in 1995 from Brigg to Shrewsbury to be near him and Peter's family. Haydn was an inveterate traveller. They went back to Australia several times over the years, the last time when Mum must have been in her late eighties. This time she went in a submarine to view the glory that is the Barrier Reef, and rode an elephant on a side trip to Chiang Mai.

When Nick asked what that was like she said 'a lot more comfortable than riding a camel!' She continued to surprise us when she insisted she wanted to come to the Greek Islands at the same time as we were going on a flotilla sailing holiday. She stayed at the Sunsail watersports centre with Anne, her carer. She was really happy to be parked on the verandah overlooking the activity on the beach, with a good book. Anne, a keen walker, meanwhile explored the whole area on foot. The highlight of the holiday was the beach barbeque on an uninhabited island. To get there, both she and Anne had to be carried onto a yacht - by Antipodean hunks. She dined out on that story for quite a while. She and Anne went back the next year, on their own!

Her final holiday was with Nick in 2006 to the Scilly Isles, where they stayed at the luxurious Island Hotel on Tresco. They flew by helicopter from Penzance which was quite an experience, and, in gloriously warm September weather toured the island on a golf buggy, visiting the exotic Abbey gardens, and watching seals by boat. They also visited Wells Cathedral on the return journey, and she was able to tell the verger that she had last visited in 1926 – 80 years before.

After her move to Shrewsbury at the age of 85 Mum sold her car (phew!) and set to establishing a new and independent life for herself and made a whole new set of friends. All of us brothers are very grateful for the welcome this town gave to our mother and for the loving care she received here towards the end of her life. So there we have it – a life full of warmth, humanity and hard work that reflects the history of the 20th century – lived to the full with a great zest for life. She found it easy to make friends wherever she was living, and many of you are here now. We shall miss her greatly.

JEAN, BARONESS MCFARLANE OF LLANDAFF

The following account is an obituary written by June Clark (Lady McFarlane's niece) which appeared in The Guardian of 24 May 2012. Web links have been retained so that readers may follow them up if they wish.

Jean McFarlane, Lady McFarlane of Llandaff, who has died aged 86, was one of [nursing's](#) great pioneers. Her work on what has come to be called the nursing process is now an integral part of every nursing curriculum and every nurse's practice. In 1974 she was appointed England's first professor of nursing, at Manchester University, where she developed a degree course and established the country's first professorial nursing unit. She was also responsible for England's first nursing research programme (the [Study of Nursing Care](#)), and was mentor to many of those who became the nurse leaders of the next generation.

Although most of her career was spent in England, Jean was born in Cardiff, the youngest of five children, and her pride in her Welsh roots was reflected in the title she took when she was made a life peer in 1979. She went to Howell's school, Llandaff, and after initial nurse training at St Bartholomew's hospital, London, returned to Wales to train and then work as a health visitor in Cardiff. The perspectives on healthcare afforded by her six years' health-visiting experience strongly influenced the nursing degree that she established later at Manchester – a four-year programme which prepared nurses to work both in hospitals and in community settings, as either district nurses or health visitors.

In the early 1960s, when Jean qualified as a nurse tutor and took a post as education officer at the [Royal College of Nursing](#) in London, the idea that nurses might benefit from a university education and even undertake research was greeted with incredulity, both inside and outside the profession. At the RCN, she became one of a small group of educators who formed the Association for Integrated and Degree Courses in Nursing and began to try to overcome these prejudices. In the absence of any university programmes in nursing, Jean took a BSc in sociology at Bedford College, London, and a master's in manpower studies at Birkbeck College.

Then, in 1967, on the initiative of Marjorie Simpson, a former colleague at the RCN then working at the Ministry of Health with a specific responsibility to develop research in nursing, came an invitation to lead the Study of Nursing Care. The enterprise was conceived as a series of linked individual projects on various aspects of nursing, in which students would also learn research methodology and gain academic qualifications. In the culture of the time, the initiative was revolutionary, and the results were equally startling. Some of the studies, produced over a number of years, are today seen as classics, and from the first cohort of six students later came the new gen-

eration of professors of nursing.

Over and above the massive task of co-ordinating the programme and supporting the students, Jean's particular contribution was her book *The Proper Study of the Nurse* (1970), which was both a synthesis of the first six studies and an argument for nurses to undertake research into their own practice and to develop the academic discipline of nursing.

In 1969 Jean handed over the project to become the RCN's director of education, then perceived as the leading post in nursing education in the UK. But following an internal reorganisation, she resigned – and was immediately snapped up by Manchester University. She remained there, as professor of nursing and head of department, until her retirement in 1988. She was able not only to initiate some of the most exciting developments in nursing – the first degree in nursing, the first professorial nursing unit, the first joint appointments for nurses between a university and a hospital, the development of "grand theory" in nursing, the introduction of the systematic problem-solving approach known as "the nursing process" – but also to act as support and mentor to many who were struggling in a still-hostile environment.

My personal debt to Jean is immense. I was a rebellious and arrogant young student nurse, and she took me under her wing, listened patiently to my sometimes wild ideas, supported me when those ideas got me into trouble and encouraged me to pursue them. Later, she guided and encouraged my research and academic career. I am proud to have been one of her "babies".

Jean's influence extended far beyond Manchester. Between 1976 and 1979 she served as a member of the royal commission on the NHS. She was one of the first fellows of the RCN, and the first chair of the RCN representative body (now called RCN congress). In the House of Lords, she was a member of four select committees. She served on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and was national president of the Girls' Brigade. She was a committed Christian, a staunch member of her local church, and between 1990 and 1994 a member of the General Synod of the Church of England. She took particular interest in the hospice movement, and was until 2008 vice-president of St Ann's hospice in Heald Green, Cheshire.

- Jean Kennedy McFarlane, Lady McFarlane of Llandaff, nurse, born 1 April 1926; died 13 May 2012

LYDIA SHAXTON (NEE RICHARDS) Musician

Born 22 May 1927, Peterston-super-Ely, S Wales

Died 12 February 2012, Surrey, England

LYDIA was born on Pwll-y-myn Farm in South Wales and spent her early years on a dairy farm. The family was Baptist and attended Croes-y-Parc chapel, where she began playing the organ as a girl.

Aside from music, her other great love at the time was riding her pony Jazz, which won several prizes in the show ring.

Both Lydia's parents had a passionate love of music and this Lydia inherited, passed on and shared with members of her family, friends and the public during her lifetime. She studied the harp and singing at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester and her first job as a music teacher took her to Elsted in Sussex, where she met Bruce Shaxson. They married in 1953.

The young couple, with their first child, emigrated to South Australia (SA) in 1956. For the next 32 years they lived in SA. Bruce worked as a district sales manager for Shell, and they lived in Adelaide, Berri and Whyalla, before settling once more in Adelaide.

As a harpist, Lydia found occasional work with the South Australian - now Adelaide - Symphony Orchestra. She also appeared on television in recitals and singing Penillion (Welsh poetry) with fellow harpist and countryman Huw Jones, whom she knew from college. At home and with friends she was endlessly creative with music, having all the children sing parts together. It no doubt helped her earn her

nickname Bossy Boots.

She helped with the harpists at the annual Music Camps in Adelaide and at the National Music Camp when it was held in Adelaide.

But her real efforts as a musician were reserved for the blind children of Townsend House. Lydia and her pupils were well known for annual performances of productions such as *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, and she would compose musicals to involve each child. Some of those children continued to higher musical studies.

Her own children, Juliet and Rhydian, became professional musicians; Juliet now a violist with the Zurich Opera Orchestra and Rhydian a cellist at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. She taught harp privately, and her star pupil was the prominent Australian harpist Alice Giles.

"I have always felt how lucky I was to have that absolutely perfect beginning, full of the joys of music and freedom with the harp, with no fear, just love and the flow of energy for it all," wrote Giles.

In 1988 the Shaxsons returned to the UK to be closer to their families. Lydia had enriched many lives in SA through her musicianship, generosity and great sense of humour. She died of complications following heart surgery. She is survived by her husband, children and four grandchildren.

NEWS

ANGELA SUTTON

I left Howells in July 1979 and joined the RAF in August - I was very keen and what a fantastic job it turned out to be! I completed my basic training and then became the youngest ever qualified Air Traffic Controller in the RAF.

My first tour was at RAF Benson near Oxford where the Queen's Flight were stationed so I was flown all over the world by some gorgeous pilots. I moved in 1981 to RAF Cottesmore near Oakham in Rutland where I met my first husband. When I became pregnant with my son William, the RAF were going to ask me to leave (no such thing as maternity leave in the RAF in those days), so I bought a Riding School and Livery Yard so that I could turn my hobby into a living. This was not a good move financially and I decided to re-enter the RAF in 1986.

I was posted to RAF Wyton (1986-88) and then on to RAF Cranwell where I had a tour in air control (1988-90), but also taught young men and women how to become RAF officers (1990-92). I was subsequently posted to RAF Waddington (1992-95) and spent some time in Budapest controlling the Airborne Early Warning aircraft over the Baltics.

I was divorced in 1993 and in 1996 moved near Maidenhead and became a controller at the London Air Traffic Control Centre where I ended up as the Emergency Controller for all airborne emergencies in English and Welsh airspace.

I met my second husband at Waddington (in the Amateur Dramatic Society -he was Abanazer and I was Aladdin in a pantomime!) We had a little girl Samantha in 1998, and then we were packing again. This time, we all moved to Cyprus for two and a half years for lots of sun, sea and brandy sours. Whilst we were in Cyprus my husband left the RAF and became a house husband to look after both our beautiful little girls (Amber was born in 2002). I was then promoted to Squadron Leader and given my own squadron to command in Scotland at RAF Leuchars near Dundee (2003-05).

To command your own squadron is the culmination of all the hard work as an air traffic controller and it was hard work but so rewarding. Then we were off

again – this time to Ramstein in Germany (2005-07): what a fantastic tour, half an hour from France, some great German neighbours who have become lifelong friends and all the perks of working on an American Airbase (tax free shopping here we come!)

From there we were posted back to England to Northwood in NW London to the Headquarters which coordinates the RAF, Army and Navy in any deployment. I was heavily involved in Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya (2007-11). I spent 4 months in Afghanistan in 2009 which was extremely rewarding although I wasn't expecting to get mortared quite so much. I also had the awful task of repatriating all the men and women who died during that dreadful summer.

In Aug 2011 I was posted to RAF Northolt where I was in charge of the RAF Air Events Team. That meant that we organised where all the RAF assets (Red Arrows, Battle of Britain Memorial Flight, The Falcons etc) would display during the season. Unfortunately I was told on 1 Sep 2011 that I was to be made redundant. What a blow after 33 years of Service.

I didn't know what I was going to do (My son was a Flight Lieutenant trainee pilot weeks away from qualifying and he was made redundant too!) I lost my military housing, the boarding school allowance and my husband was to lose his job as we couldn't afford to stay in London. Luckily enough we had bought a house in Margate a few years before, thinking that we would eventually retire there.

Our retirement plans were brought forward and here I am today starting up my own business in Events Management. I have just landed the job of organising the airshow for 2013 at our local airfield (Manston) and am looking for a few more jobs like that and I'll be happy. The girls are settled in their new schools, my horses are enjoying their new stables and my husband and I are taking some time out to enjoy walking on the beach with the dogs!! If anyone needs an Event or Project Manager please take a look at www.asenterprises.co.uk!

CAROL EVANS (DIAMOND)

Unfortunately, Carol's news was omitted from the Magazine proper, for which we are very sorry indeed. We hope that its inclusion here will go some way to making up for our oversight.

2012 has proved to be quite an exhilarating year with much to celebrate. 2011 ended with a party to mark David, my husband's, eightieth birthday. For the fourteenth year running, in January we departed for a three month stay in South Africa. We travel widely in Natal and Eastern and Western Cape and spent our time in some splendid hotels. As a result of our numerous visits, we now have many friends there. In South Africa, we also celebrated my seventy-ninth birthday and fifty-fifth wedding anniversary. Whilst at

home, we visited our daughters in Gravesend and Cardiff, my husband's birthplace, Tewkesbury, as well as Llandovery and Llangammarch Wells. Unfortunately he has recently had to spend a few days in hospital with a heart problem but he is now on the road to recovery and whilst our next visit to South Africa is in doubt but we must be optimistic about it. Last month, we jointly had a book published - *D-Day Beaches - An Illustrated Companion*. David wrote the book and I was responsible for the photography.

JANE CROAD

I had a fantastic experience after I wrote a few words for the Hywelian Magazine in 2010. I gave a brief synopsis of what I had done in the 34 years since leaving Howells, which I managed in very few lines. I asked if anyone had any contact with two great friends I made at Howells - Joanna Davies and Ruth Humphries - who I haven't seen since I left.

Joanna contacted me by e-mail after being alerted by her sister, who in turn heard about Jane's entry from a Great Aunt who was an Hywelian.

We met up with our families in West Wales in 2011 and it was fantastic to meet her. We chatted non-stop for about two hours: it was so lovely to see her after so long.

We haven't seen each other since, but I am determined to keep in contact and to meet her again soon. It really was a very special time seeing a dear friend again, remembering some fun times we had at Howell's, and catching up on what we had done since, including husbands, jobs and children. What was so special is that we talked as though I had just seen her days before, feeling so relaxed and comfortable in the company of a school friend. It was a fantastic experience, but it did remind me how time flies and that making time to keep in contact with special people is so important.

I used to see Kristin Litton a quite regularly but I understand she is now flying around the world following her son who plays cricket! If she sees this, I hope she gets in touch. Gina Pritchard and Penny Jones were also good fun and it would be great to catch up with them too.

I am still lecturing at Cardiff Metropolitan University and have two daughters, Liz and Iz - one is in Howells and loves it.

I am in contact with Ena Evans of Bury Port. She was in Howell's in the war years and is a fascinating and incredibly energetic person. She hosts many of the West Wales Hywelian reunions, which Liz (my daughter) and I have attended. Liz was so thrilled when Ena gave her a book she had been given as a prize for Welsh in 1942, when she was in Upper IV A. It is great that different generations from Howell's can relate so well.

It was interesting as well that Ena was presented with that prize in 1942 by Miss Lewis. The latter was still Headmistress when I left in 1976 - still maintaining a great level of interest and enthusiasm, and making sure that we girls and our 'folks', as she referred to our families, were in no doubt as what we SHOULD be doing!

FEATURES

MERERID HUNT

Mererid's epic adventure is recounted here in her own words. Her account will be fascinating for everyone, but particularly for those who sail, as they will know what hazards she faced on this trip.

On Sunday 31st July 10 identical stripped-down 68ft masthead cutters paraded down Southampton Water, escorted by the helicopter carrier HMS *Illustrious*, and an armada of spectator boats, as they made their way to Cowes, for the start of the 2011-2012 Round the World Clipper Race, founded by Sir Robin Knox-Johnson when he realised more people had climbed Everest than had circumnavigated the globe. It's the longest race (and the only one organised for amateurs) at 41,000 nautical miles (nm) over 12 months, when the boats gain points over 8 legs, 15 races, scoring gates, ocean sprints.

We lined up, and at 16.30 hrs the cannon of the Royal Yacht Club fired and we crossed the historic starting line to set off on the eighth edition of a biennial event, an opportunity for "ordinary people to do something extraordinary".

I was aboard *Singapore* (sponsored for the fourth time by The Keppel Corporation) but my adventure had started with an interview at Clipper Headquarters, Gosport (31st October 2009) when I was accepted for the programme of training – 4 weeks on the water (the English Channel) and a week of theory in the class-room – spaced-out through 2010, culminating in the final week's training in June 2011 with our Skipper and some of my fellow crew members. We met for the first time in Southampton at Crew Allocation (30th April 2011) when the 10 skippers were announced and read out their crew lists (aboard *Singapore* from 11 nationalities, 10 would be going all the way around, and 41 members would complete various legs) before we moved off into meeting rooms to get to know each other. In the afternoon we boarded our respective boats for publicity photos.

Leg 1 was a short sprint to Madeira 1,340nm followed by Race 2 to Rio de Janeiro 3,850nm.

We headed east out of the Solent into the English Channel towards Ushant (NW corner of France) then crossed the Bay of Biscay to Cape Finisterre (NW corner of Spain) approx half-way for this first race with nothing now but the open North Atlantic Ocean between us and the finish line. We acknowledged Singapore Day, 8th August, and two days later had a 72hr "pit stop" for victuallers, chief engineers and crew to buy anything they had forgotten, before heading further south and steadily increasing temperatures as we closed in on the Equator. The much anticipated swim alongside the boats, becalmed in the Doldrums, didn't materialise for us as we sped through at 9 knots! Those of us who hadn't "crossed the line" before visited the "Court of King Neptune" (courtesy of our social organiser and skipper) and tossed a peace offering overboard as we entered the Southern Hemisphere. The trade winds

continued to carry us south and in the shadow of Sugar Loaf Mountain we crossed the line in third place, 33 days after leaving Southampton - well deserved we felt, following a Heath-Robinson repair to our steering and major damage to one of our Spinnakers. Pushing trolleys around Makro felt like "the morning after the night before" as we explored the shelves and modified the menus to accommodate availability. Whilst my team and I did this, another team was patching the sail together with sticky Dacron strips, ready for me to spend the next two days machining them securely in place. Meanwhile the food team packed everything into waterproof bags (one for each day to the next port) and stored them securely under our bunks, odd and even on opposite sides, working from bow to stern so the boat remained balanced as they were consumed.

Leg 2 Rio to Cape Town 3,400nm. 10 September

We said farewell to three of our crew, welcomed three new "leggers" on board and headed out into the South Atlantic, then the fringes of the Southern Ocean to the finish line on 29th in Table Bay under the shadow of Table Mountain. (An albatross flew into a shroud and went away with at least a headache and may even have died later).

Leg 3 Cape Town to Geraldton, Western Australia, 4,800nm, 29 days 5th Oct-2nd Nov.

Again there was a change in crew as three left and four joined. This was looked upon by many as one of the biggest challenges of the race. We mainly followed lat 41° but at 43°S *Qingdao* saw an iceberg, so a fleet warning was issued and all bulkhead doors had to be closed until moving further north approaching the finish. At one point all three spinnakers were in need of repair so I dropped out of the watch system (09.00-21.00x4hrs and 21.00-09.00x3hrs) and was "pedal to the metal" patching and machining until two were fit to fly again. It took two days, spread out in the high school sports hall in Geraldton to repair the last one as it was the size of a tennis court.

Leg 4 Geraldton to Tauranga, New Zealand, 3,600nm. 6-26 Nov and Race 6 Tauranga to Gold Coast, Eastern Australia, 1,370nm. 4-13 Dec.

Four leggers left and we said hello to four new faces but race 5 didn't go according to plan. The steering gave way again but this time there was no onboard solution and no part to be found in the stores the fleet carried, so Clipper HQ had to make arrangements for us to put into Queenscliffe, Melbourne. The local yacht club effected a speedy repair and we retired ashore to a roast leg of lamb dinner, courtesy of Kate and Penny, mother and sister of our first mate, Will. We left the next day, 17th Nov, on the morning tide but were so far behind we had to drop out of the race and make our solitary way around the

north of NZ, while the fleet rounded the South Island. After a restful stopover it was a short, high speed dash across the Tasman and Coral Seas. *Gold Coast*, having won every leg so far, was beaten by six minutes into their home port by *Visit Finland*, and with confidence restored, we came a creditable fourth. The boats (each sponsored by a corporation, city etc) were lifted out of the water, hulls cleaned and re-coated with blue anti-fouling paint. There were quite a few "smurfs" wandering around for the next few days until the vivid paint wore off. My husband travelled out at the end of term arriving on 19th but our time together was short as the race re-started on Christmas Eve. We said farewell to three crew who had been with us from the start and welcoming seven leggers in place of four who left.

Leg 5 Gold Coast to Singapore 4,500nm 24th Dec-28th Jan. and Race 8 Singapore to Qingdao, China, 2,578nm 4-22 Feb.

On Christmas Day I was off watch on "mother duty" with an Australian from the other watch, and at 17.00 hrs, for the daily meeting of the crew with the skipper, we served mince pies and Christmas cake, which I had made before leaving home and had been given special dispensation to import into Australia. The cake had then travelled to Perth, with a crew member who had come to meet us, been iced by his wife and then brought on board when he had rejoined the crew; fittingly he was now sharing mother duty with me. We made apricot and walnut stuffing, roasted a boned breast of turkey, boiled broccoli but cheated with boxes of frozen roasted root vegetables now well thawed out!. I made white sauce with rum (the boats are normally dry) and we steamed a rather large Christmas pudding, made for us by Kate. After dinner I went on watch whilst Bill slept until his turn.

As it was the hurricane season we avoided the Torres Strait and went around Papua New Guinea, re-crossing the equator on 5th January, with another Neptune ceremony for the latest first-timers. We sailed through the Celebes and Sulu Seas between Malaysia and the Philippines and experienced high humidity and tropical storms, manoeuvred through fleets of fishing vessels and drilling rigs lit up like Christmas trees, and received a warning of pirates before putting into our home port. During this stopover we re-victualled at Carre-our, took part in a "salad toss" for Chinese New Year and drank a Singapore Sling in the Long Bar at Raffles Hotel, where the tradition is to toss the empty monkey nut shells on the floor.

Then it was off again into the South and East China seas, and into the plummeting temperatures of the Yellow sea to the home of the sailing events for the 2008 Olympics. Each boat was met by a sea of uniforms: immigration, police, navy, army etc before disembarking onto a red carpet. A child presented each of us with a bouquet of white roses, carnations and gypsophila, tied up with white satin ribbon, took your left elbow and escorted you to the stage. Each skipper was presented with a gold coloured satin

cape, lined with red velvet and with their name and dragon embroidered in red. The fleet received a white rabbit fur hat and a red wool scarf with a medallion shape embroidered in gold coloured thread.

After the speeches of welcome we were again escorted to the quayside yachting clubhouse for drinks and nibbles. Re-victualing was at Metro (aka Makro) and Carrefour before 16 of us from several boats went by express train to Beijing for two nights.

We walked through Tiananmen square and the Forbidden City, but I missed the Imperial Garden as I got separated from the party and was lost for 45 minutes before being re-united. The following day we stopped off at a jade factory on the way to Jonyong Gate to walk along part of the Great Wall, then visited a cloisonné factory and a government tea garden before wandering around part of the Olympic City Park as it was lit up for the night. The train fare, entry fees, two nights' B and B cost just £142 – the train tickets even had our passport numbers printed on them!. We were back in time for the Race Dinner and Entertainment hosted by the local Communist Party dignitaries, each skipper receiving a decanter of the local "fire-water". Members of the fleet were each presented with, and wore, a garland of orchids.

Leg 6 Qingdao to San Francisco 5,680nm, 4-31 March.

We woke to light snow, re-assembled at the stage and paraded to our boats behind a flag bearer (the snow having been brushed off the red carpet). Seven leggers had left for home and four new members had joined us.

We slipped lines and headed to the start line. Because of poor visibility, starting was called off 20 minutes before the due time, so we motored and did a "Le Mans" style start at sea the following day.

Driving rain, high winds (up to 55 knots), big seas, the boat covered in condensation and everything aboard being damp (including us), was to be the norm for the next 29 days as we crossed the largest ocean in the world. Each day and week blurred into the next. We were not allowed above lat 42° because of worse conditions and during my 03-06 hrs watch on 9 March, the bowman was washed overboard. Fortunately his life-line held and he was quickly pulled back on board. We crossed the International Date Line on 20th March, the 17th day of the race, so the following day was also 20th March!

On 26 March, the helm surfed down a "Pacific roller" and recorded 27.5 knots but even this didn't break the race record. Three days later, we came in in second place, looking forward to drying out and warming up - we'd had only three hours of sunshine in the entire grey crossing - but not complaining, as we were aware that one fleet member had been air-lifted to hospital in Japan and that the US coast guard evacuated another.

My husband again flew out at the end of term so we spent Easter in Yosemite and then explored San Francisco.

Two of the leggers stayed on, one from leg 2 rejoined us and there were four new faces.

Leg 7 San Francisco to Panama, 3,329nm, 14 April-6 May; Race 11 Panama to New York, 2,100nm, 13-27 May.

The Golden Gate Bridge was the start line and it soon became very rough as we turned parallel with the coast, but within a few days it was calm and warm as we sped south. Will, First Mate, and Bill led a commemoration for ANZAC day on 25th and Bill had made ANZAC biscuits on mother watch the day before. By 30 April there was no wind and the race was called, so four new watches were devised as we motored towards the marina near Panama City, almost a week away.

We did general maintenance and cleaning, swam alongside some afternoons and Chantal ran a bridge school to pass the time. An ex-president was buried on 7 May, so out of respect it was a "dry" day everywhere. On 10th a pilot came on board at 08.30hrs and we finally began the 12 hour transit of the Panama Canal, 51 miles in convoy, rising up through the locks to Gatun freshwater lake, then down the locks to Colon. The Canal is run by the Canal Company and only their personnel handle the traffic; all revenue goes into the state coffers, so Panamanians pay very little income tax.

The fleet was delayed when one of the boats failed its sea-trial after repair, so a few of us from *Singapore* took the opportunity to visit two World Heritage sites - the ruins of Fort San Lorenzo and the old city of Portobelo. Drake was buried off the coast in 1596 and it was captured by the British fleet in 1739, giving rise to the use of the name in London and elsewhere in the 13 Colonies. We left in the evening, heading north into the Caribbean Sea and had a "Le Mans" style start 24 hours later. We went through the Jamaica Channel, the Windward Passage separating Cuba and Haiti, then the Caicos Passage out into the Atlantic Ocean. Variable winds, squalls and thunderstorms were the order of the day up to the Ambrose Channel and the finish line, before motoring into Liberty Landing marina, New Jersey in time for Memorial Day.

Later in the week the fleet motored over to North Cove marina, near Ground Zero, in anticipation of the send off from Manhattan. Again I was able to explore with my husband during his half-term visit.

Leg 8 NY to Halifax, Nova Scotia, 600nm, 7-11 June; Race 13 Halifax to Derry-Londonderry, Northern Ireland, 2,350nm, 15-29 June; Race 14 to Den Helder, North Holland, 800nm, 7-12 July; Race 15 Den Helder to the Solent 260nm, 19-21 July; Ocean Village marina, Southampton 22 July.

two leggers stayed with us, one rejoined after the first half and five joined, fresh for this final leg. We headed north, with a helping push from the Gulf Stream, before the Labrador Current, flowing east to west, made itself felt. Then it was north-east, parallel to the coast into Halifax. Seven of us shared the hire of a vehicle and spent a long day visiting Peggy's Cove, Mahone Bay and Lunenburg, a World Heritage site.

Leaving Halifax I was sea-sick for the first time as we entered the North Atlantic. The Titanic sank 700nm east of Halifax and our boat passed only 45nm from the site. The Grand Banks, off Newfoundland, took us close to the Flemish Cap ("The Perfect Storm"). We had a fast crossing thanks to the prevailing westerly winds and crossed the line in second place before we motored from Greencastle down Lough Foyle into the city marina.

From Ireland we headed north around the British Isles, down the North Sea and south-east to Den Helder. Through the last night we could see the lights of *Visit Finland* the other side of the gas rigs, but we held them off to cross the line first - our only yellow pennant.

Gold Coast and *Visit Finland* were already too far ahead in first and second places respectively to be caught, but the final sprint back across the North Sea, through the Strait of Dover and down The English Channel to the Solent would decide overall third place, and *Singapore* achieved this by coming home second.

The fleet passed Calshot Spit in single file, then assembled in a double V formation off Hamble Point to be led by *Suhaili* to the parade finish off Netley. *Suhaili* is the 32 foot Bermudan ketch sailed by Sir Robin Knox-Johnston in the first non-stop solo navigation in 1968-69, and she took part in the Avenue of Sail for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. We then motored into the marina in reverse order for the prize giving reception and podium before being re-united with our loved-ones on the quayside after the experience of a lifetime. If I had the money I would do it all again!