

# Hywelian Guild Magazine

— 2018 —



## Contents

### Page

3	.....	Welcome
4	.....	President's Letter
6	.....	Dear Sally
8	.....	Secretary's Letter
9	.....	Who's Who – Hywelian Guild people
11	.....	Branch Reports
14	.....	A-Level and GCSE Results
16	.....	Who, what and where – Hywelian updates
19	.....	Reunion News
20	.....	On Yer Bike – Cycling Achievements
22	.....	Hywelians in Print
25	.....	Recent Arrivals
26	.....	Sofa or Saddle?
28	.....	The Great Hall – Janet Sully looks back
32	.....	Memories of 'Diz'
34	.....	Swimming at HSL in the 40s
36	.....	Obituaries and <i>In Memoriam</i>
40	.....	Tribute to Martha
43	.....	Reminders

*Cover photos: Front: Merchant of Venice. Back: Views of Great Hall*

# Welcome!

IT NEVER FAILS to amaze me how quickly the year goes by, and it's time to put together another Hywelian Magazine.

Once again, you have been most generous with your contributions; without these, there would be no magazine for me to put together and for you to read.

As always, I am grateful to those who do far more sleuthing than I do and for whom I have endless admiration as they come up with details of who was in School when and what they have been up to since.

While this is very much a magazine to help former pupils keep in touch,

we are also delighted to find out what is going on in Howell's now. We have accounts of superb academic achievements and activities, and of Hywelians of all ages and what they are up to. There are sad reports of lives ended and joyous tidings of weddings and births.

In particular, and as every year, I must thank Sue Rayner, our Guild Secretary, and Joyce Shields, Membership Secretary, for their encouragement and support, and Hannah Roberts, who is the Hywelian liaison with School.

I hope you enjoy this magazine: do let us know what you think!

*Lyn Owen, Editor*

## A date for your diaries...

The AGM and Summer Lunch this year will be on Saturday, 30 June. Further details about tickets will be circulated nearer the date.

This event is a wonderful opportunity for a reunion of your year – make a weekend of it!

## President's Letter

Mrs Sally Davis is President of the Guild and Principal of Howell's School. Below she gives an account of goings-on in School and some useful advice – not just for Howell's students, but for all of us. It's never too late to learn!

IT HAS BEEN ANOTHER exciting year, with plenty of events and activities as usual. Perhaps two of the most significant things this year have been the restoration of the Great Hall and the arrival of a new member of the community.

The restoration took place during the academic year 2016/17 and no part of the Great Hall has been left untouched. The greatest difference is that we have taken out the stage, which has revealed the original dimensions of the hall: we now have an enhanced space to use for a variety of activities. All the paintings have been refurbished. I am very grateful to the Hywelian Guild and those individual Hywelians who donated money towards restoration of the large painting of The Merchant of Venice. £10,000 was needed and we are nearly at the target. In addition, other Hywelians helped to fund the stained glass window or gave towards the General Fund. I am hosting a thank-you lunch on 14 February for everyone who contributed. If you haven't had chance to see the Great Hall, do come and visit.



*Sally with new 'Hywelian', Disney.*

The new member of our school community is a golden retriever who, after much thought, we have named Disney. The day I introduced the dog to the school we were all dressed in Disney clothes in memory of Martha, a Year 8 student, who sadly died early in the year. We asked the girls to name our dog and a number of them came forward with the name Disney which we felt was appropriate. Martha

loved all things Disney and we plan to hold a Disney Day at the end of the summer term until her year group leaves the school in Year 13.

We are doing a number of other things in memory of Martha; later in the magazine you can read my tribute to her as I was honoured to be asked to talk at Martha's funeral.

As you know, we recruit a number of new students both male and female for the College and we work hard to keep the students we have. Every year I talk to the students and their

parents about what makes Howell's special. This year it took the form of a letter to my 16-year-old self.

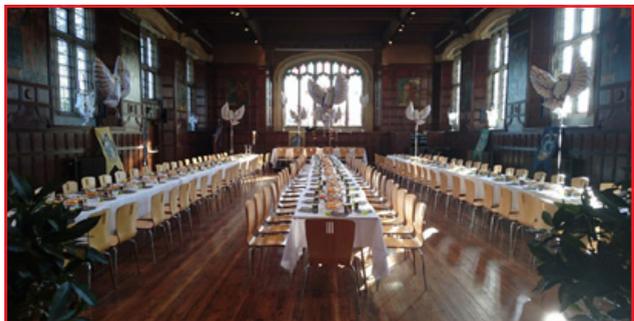
I wonder what some of you might write to your 16-year-old selves. If you have any ideas, or would like to write such a letter and send it to me, I am always looking for some new assembly material! I look forward to hearing from you and to welcoming you back to Howell's or to one of our events in London.

*Sally Davis, Principal*

*Sally's tribute to Martha may be found on page 40.*



*The Great Hall, 1959*



*The Great Hall, 2017*

Here is Sally's inspiring letter to *all* Hywelians – potential, new and established.

**Dear Sally,**

*Let me start by saying you are still young, you may feel grown up; you have your first boyfriend and you are taking your GCSEs this year but, trust me, your parents still probably know best. Just know that you will make mistakes – lots of them; it will be ok – you will learn from them. Never be afraid to take a risk, to try something new but be careful of perming your hair too often. It's not a good look for you.*

*You have so many hopes and dreams: keep them. You will realise a lot of them but – going back to that boyfriend – ditch him, you'll be glad you did. Also know that breaking up is not the end of the world. You will cry a lot, but you will survive and, yes, your mother is right (did I mention parents usually are?): 'There are plenty more fish in the sea and you will kiss a lot of frogs but you will meet your prince, I promise.'*

*Work hard in school, very hard; always do your best, but remember as long as you do your best that's all you can do. No one expects or can expect any more. Make sure you attend all the lessons, listen to the teachers, and I know you love all those extra-curricular opportunities. Grasp them with both hands but you know what your mother always says, 'Don't burn the candle at both ends!' (Did I mention that parents are usually right?)*

*When you feel overwhelmed, talk to someone, it's ok, lots of people feel like that. Get some help: everyone needs some at some point in their life and maybe this time is yours. You may feel overwhelmed making the decision where to go to sixth form. Go with your heart, go where you feel welcome and comfortable. Go to a place where they will let you fly, while still supporting you all the time.*

*Think hard about who your friends are: your true friends. They are the ones who will tell you the truth even when it's hard for them to do so. Stand up for what you believe in – if it makes you unpopular with some people they weren't real friends anyway. I know that's hard but stay strong and true to yourself. That will always work for you.*

*Don't rush through the next two years at sixth form. I can tell you, you will have an amazing time but it will be over soon enough. Spend the time with true friends because even though you will stay in touch life can sometimes get in the way. Thank the teachers who teach you in lessons, support sessions, revision sessions. They will do more than their job asked for. They will have a bigger influence on your life than you realise. And hug your family often and say thank you. They sacrificed a lot to give you the life you have had and will have. Hug them because in two years you are going to move away from home and go to university and not have the ability to do so when you want to.*

*Remember, as your father would say when you are upset, 'Stay strong. You are a Collingbourne after all and you have an easy life. My mother had eleven children to feed and the cows to milk.'*

*Know that you are loved and the future you are walking towards right now is brighter than you can imagine, although there will be dark days as well. As your mother would say (and remember your parents are usually right) 'It's always darker before dawn and it will be alright in the end and if it's not alright it's not the end yet.' You will decide to go on a PGCE course because you wanted another year of studying not because you wanted to be a teacher (after all, your mother thought it was a nice little job for a woman and you were going through a rebellious phase at the time). You certainly didn't think she was right! Although you know differently now. Once you teach your first lesson you will be hooked, absolutely hooked. You will love to teach, you will return home and become a Deputy and eventually the Principal of the most amazing school in Cardiff. You will expect to move on after a few years as you always did when teaching in London, but this school will get under your skin, into your bones. You will love it and you will stay. You will become part of an extended family who will excite you, energise you, inspire you and you will love to come to work and perhaps the most surprising thing of all, you will decide this school needs a dog and you will love going for a walk each day with student volunteers.*

*Sally – work hard, have fun and stay true to yourself. When things get tough remember one of your mother's sayings. She had one for every occasion and if she didn't, she made one up. You will find yourself doing the same and realising as you look back at your 16-year-old self – your parents were (usually) right.*

**Sally**

## Dear Hywelians...

Hywelian Guild Secretary Sue Rayner reports on the new-look Great Hall and other goings on in HSL.

THIS TIME LAST YEAR, we were awaiting the completion of the refurbishment of the Great Hall. In June 2017, those attending the Summer Lunch were able to see it in most of its glory. The Hall seems much larger without its stage; removing that and the curtains has revealed some interesting details, and has enabled us to see several of the Shakespeare panels which previously were scarcely visible. Restored, they look beautiful.

However, the work was not complete in June, as one great task remained: the restoration of *The Merchant of Venice*, the major painting over the double doors at the back of the hall. Restoration of many of the other panels had received sponsorship, but because of its size, this panel had not. In September, therefore, the Guild Committee decided to launch an appeal to raise the £10,000 required. Guild funds kick-started the appeal, as it was felt that such a major project should include a contribution from Hywelians.

Unfortunately we could only contact Guild Members for whom we have email details; postage costs would have been much more than we could justify. We have managed to raise £9,200 so far; if there are any Hywelians out there who would like to make a donation,

it would be very gratefully received! Gift Aided contributions would be very welcome (Please see below for details of this). Even a small donation would be a great help in reaching our target. Now that it is almost finished, the Hall is looking splendid.

Otherwise, it has been another busy year at school with a wonderful production of *Annie* in the autumn, another successful 'Cocktails at Christmas' and many other activities in which Hywelians are always so welcome to join.

My thanks as ever go to Sally Davis, Vanessa Yilmaz and her team, especially Hannah Roberts, to my Committee, particularly Joyce Shields, who keeps in touch with so many of you *via* Facebook, to Lyn Owen our valiant Editor, and to those of you who have contributed to this magazine.

With best wishes for 2018.

*Sue Rayner*

*If you wish to make a Gift-Aided donation, please make it payable to Howell's School Llandaff, (the Guild is unable to take advantage of Gift Aid) and say that it is to go towards the restoration of The Merchant of Venice. Thank you.*

## Who's Who in 2018

*The magazine is now also produced in an online version accessible to all, so we have not given private addresses and telephone numbers. If you wish to contact the Guild, please do so via Hannah Roberts by emailing [Hywelians@how.gdst.net](mailto:Hywelians@how.gdst.net)*

### Hywelian Guild Officers and Committee

#### Principal and Guild President

Mrs Sally Davis, Howell's School, Llandaff, Cardiff  
Tel: 029 2056 2019

#### Deputy Principals

Mrs Natalie Chyba	<i>Deputy Principal</i>
Mrs Judith Ashill	<i>Deputy Principal and Head of Junior School</i>

#### Extraordinary Vice-Presidents

Miss J Turner, Mrs J Fitz

#### Vice-Presidents

Mrs Ena Davies (Evans), Mrs José Rawlins (Parry Thomas)  
Miss Margaret Evans, Mrs Nicola Davies (Salter)

#### Secretary

Mrs Sue Rayner (Davies)	<i>suerayner43@gmail.com</i>
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#### Assistant Secretary

Mrs Frances Smallcombe (Gray)	<i>frances.smallcombe@googlemail.com</i>
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#### Treasurer

Mrs Saskia Russell (Blair)	<i>saskia@saskiablair.co.uk</i>
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#### Assistant Treasurer

Ms Kerry McFarland	<i>kerrymcf@hotmail.co.uk</i>
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#### Auditor

Mrs Julia Evans (Martin)

#### Liaison Officer

Mrs Julia Baker	<i>yjbaker55@hotmail.com</i>
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### **Magazine Editor**

Mrs Lyn Owen (Hawkins)      *lyn\_owen1@btinternet.com*

### **Membership Secretary**

Mrs Joyce Shields (Bingham)      *joyce@joyshields.demon.co.uk*

### **Committee Members**

Ms Kay Powell, Mrs Calan McGreevy (Davies)  
Mrs Helen Graham (Moger), Mrs Sheila McFarland (Hamley)  
Mrs Catherine Coulson (Johnson), Mrs Janet Sully (Webb)  
Mrs Anne Hayward (Bates)

### **Branch Secretaries**

#### **London**

London Diana Paul      *diana@themounthouse.com*

#### **Bridgend**

Dr Pat Parry (Lennox)      *patparry@greyholme.com*

#### **Southern**

Vacant

#### **Scottish**

Mrs Caroline Mclean (Robison)      *croft.mclean@btinternet.com*

#### **Thames Valley and Chilterns**

Dr Elan Preston-Whyte (Jones)      *elan@rjpwhyte.plus.com*

#### **West Wales**

Mrs Catherine Coulson (Johnson)      *coolsave@telecomplus.org.uk*

#### **USA – Northern California**

Mrs Debbie Ward (Buss)      *familyward@sbcglobal.net*

Mrs Karen Plambeck (Millar)      *kputawiz@sbcglobal.net*

#### **Australia**

Mrs Christine Atkinson (Treeby)      *ballets@bigpond.net.au*

*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*

## Branch Reports

### West Wales Branch

West Wales Branch once again held two meetings during 2017, hosted by Hazel James (née Jones) and Marianne Rees (née Phillips) respectively. Both were happy occasions, following our usual format – catching up over an informal buffet, accompanied by plenty of laughter and reminiscing!

Our next meeting is pencilled in for April 28th 2018, although at the time of writing this report the venue hasn't been finalised.

*Catherine Coulson*

### Scottish Branch

The Scottish Branch met for lunch on Monday 21st August. Seven of us made the journey to the Parklands Hotel in Perth: Barbara Trengove (née Harvey), Mave Ersu (Mavis Jackson), Caroline McLean (née Robison), Jean Coleman (née McGregor), Cali Ingham, Mary Craig (née Rayer) and Andrea Burnet. Caroline arrived slightly late, having been delayed on a stretch of unfenced single-track road by a Highland bull engaged in a romantic tryst with one of his cows, in the middle of the road! Such are the hazards of rural life.

We had been unable to find a convenient date for us all in 2016, so it was particularly nice that so many of us could make it this year. It was also lovely to welcome Andrea to our group, as she has recently moved north of the border to Angus. As usual, we enjoyed a delicious lunch and catching up with each others' news, before heading home to our own corners of Scotland.

Dorothy (Dorrie) Miller has been living in Lanarkshire for about a year, although she is planning to move back south again soon. Dorrie was unable to attend the lunch but she and Caroline enjoyed a chat on the phone and she sent her good wishes to the group.



*L-R: Cali, Mary, Mave, Caroline, Barbara, Andrea, Jean.*

*Caroline McLean*

## Bridgend Branch

We held two meetings in 2017: an early evening supper in Cottrell Park Golf Club and an Advent Service in Holy Cross Church Cowbridge, followed by lunch in The Bear. We are looking to increase the number of Hywelians who attend this event. At Cottrell Park we were only nine but enjoyed our meal and chat around the table in the small conservatory. Barbara Forte had to cancel on the day as she had injured her shoulder in a fall.

We were 22 at lunch in the Bear, our numbers supplemented by six staff from school, including Sally Davis who gave us a report on school activities. This year we ate in 'The Cellar' which was decorated for Christmas and much cosier for our smaller numbers. A large group of Year 7 students joined us for the Advent Service which was held during the church Christmas Tree Festival. We had a chance to admire the trees following the service. We are hoping the students will play a more active role in the service next year.

Several of us attended the Summer Lunch in the Great Hall and admired the improvements that have been made and the renovation of the paintings.

I am sad to report the death in October of Beryl Norton who was a long-term member; she retired last year because of ill health. She was a close friend of Barbara Forte; who attended Beryl's funeral and spoke about their friendship at our meeting. Several members have suffered fractured bones following falls and we wish them a speedy recovery. We have decided to repeat the two meetings in the same venues this year – dates to be arranged.

[See p.29 for Barbara's tribute to Beryl – Ed]

Pat Parry

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## Thames and Chiltern Branch

In last year's report for the Thames Valley and Chilterns Hywelian branch (covering Bucks, Berks and Oxfordshire) I bewailed the fact that the area the branch covered was so widespread it was increasingly difficult to find a venue at which to meet which would not involve any one member having to travel further than anyone else. This year a solution was found!

We met in London in May at Waterstone's bookshop in Piccadilly. I can thoroughly recommend its top floor restaurant where the manager booked a large table in a quiet area so that six of us were able to eat and talk without interruption for a couple of hours. We decided that the change of venue to London and to Waterstones had the advantages of accessibility and the opportunity to combine the lunch with a visit to the other attractions of London on the same day.

Elan Preston-Whyte

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## Californian 'Twig'

The Californian Twig continues to flourish in these difficult times. We have had devastating fires to the North and South of us, followed by horrendous mudslides as the natural barriers containing the hillsides were all burnt away. We were jolted awake by a mighty earthquake which luckily caused very little damage but earthquake preparedness is essential right now. Karen and I have coffee together regularly and are always open to meeting with resident or visiting Hywelians.

On the personal front, I enjoyed a wonderful visit to Pembroke in December to reconnect with Sian Dickens and meet her son, Harry. I met Sian on my very first day at HSL as we caught the same bus from town to Llandaff. We were both in Drapers and in my Upper IV year, Sian was House Captain. Despite not seeing each other for 41 years, we talked non-stop for five hours. Hywelian friendship is an amazing thing.



*Debbie and Sian together after 41 years*

*Debbie Buss*

## London Branch

We had our usual two meetings during the year. Tea at Drapers' Hall on 13 May was well attended; we welcomed the party from Cardiff, including Sally Davis and Vanessa Yilmaz. Both spoke about current activities at the school, in particular the refurbishment of the Shakespeare wall paintings in the Hall. On 18 November, Sally Davis very kindly arranged for us to have our autumn meeting at the Lansdowne Club. This was much appreciated by our members, who enjoyed the surroundings and an excellent lunch. We are hoping to meet again there this year.



*London Branch at Drapers' Hall. Susan Pearson-Griffiths is wearing the red top*

A very sad piece of news is that Sue Woodrow (Pearson-Griffiths, HSL 1955-1962) died on 7 November 2017. She had been an excellent and conscientious secretary of the London Branch of the Hywelians and a great supporter of Howell's School. She is much missed by us all.

*[See p 37 for more memories of Susan. – Ed]*

*Diana Paul*

## Howell's students triumph again!

In a time when academic standards are under intense scrutiny, it's good to know that the staff and students of Howell's continue to excel. Here, we summarise this year's A-level and GCSE achievements.

DESPITE THE CHALLENGES thrown up by the reformation of the A-level system, Howell's students have excelled in their A-level examinations in 2017. Of the students sitting A-levels, 21% reached the highest A\* grade, with 70% receiving A\*-B grades. In addition, 86% of students who studied for an Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) gained A\*-A grades.

Two of the Drapers' Scholars kept their heads – and their spirits – high in uncharted waters, and will be following their dreams to the UK's top universities. Desiree will be studying medicine at Oxford University, and Ffion is headed to Cambridge, where she will study Human, Social and Political Sciences.

Drapers' Scholars are students from a variety of backgrounds given the opportunity to study at Howell's, through the legacy left by Thomas Howell. The school continues to be supported by the Drapers' Company and its Bursary Fund creates opportunities for girls and boys from all backgrounds to excel.

Sally Davis, Principal of Howell's said,

"This year's group were caught midway between the old and new specifications at A-level, and have studied in an environment where at times it has felt that the ground has been moving beneath their feet. The content of some A levels has changed this year, especially on science subjects where mathematics features far more strongly. In addition AS levels have been "decoupled" from A-level exams and no longer contribute to the final result. I am delighted with their response to this new system and can only applaud an amazing team of staff and send my most heartfelt congratulations to this cohort of 2017."



*Two of the Drapers' Scholars kept their heads – and their spirits – high in uncharted waters, and will be following their dreams to the UK's top universities.*

## ...and at GCSE level, the success continues:

TEACHERS AT HOWELL'S were giving the Bunsen burners an extra polish on the morning of 24 August 2017, as the school's doors opened on the dot of 8.30am to allow a constant stream of students to collect their GCSE results.

Across the board, students did very well, with 61% of all grades achieved at A\* or A, but it was in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) subjects that the girls really hit the heights.

In Biology, 69% of all students gained A\*-A, in Chemistry 73% of the grades were A\*-A, 58% of students taking Physics gained A\*-A grade and 59% A\*-A was achieved in Maths.

Nearly 60% of our girls gained A\*-A in English Language and 61% gained A\*-A in English Literature.



*Across the board, students did very well,  
with 61% of all grades achieved at A\* or A.*

Mrs Davis said: "I am delighted for our girls, who have all done so well in their GCSEs this year, and have excelled in the STEM subjects. It is wonderful that so many of them will be continuing with Mathematics and Science subjects when they start their A-level studies at Howell's College next term. They may be the first generation able to end the hugely uneven mix of boys and girls going into STEM-related careers. To achieve this society needs to avoid sending out the message that some activities and careers are 'not for girls' or 'not for boys'. At Howell's, all of our students – including the boys in the co-educational College – are encouraged to chase the dreams they want, not the ones that they feel they are expected to choose."

## Who, what and where

Start here for a comprehensive round-up of what Hywelians of all ages are getting up to these days.

**Bethan James**, and her husband Jamie had an adorable baby girl, Robyn, in February 2017. Beth is now one of the scientists working on NASA's Space Telescope Programme, having moved to Baltimore last August 2016.

Beth is one of the students appearing in the video which opens the Howell's website, and can be contacted at:

*bjames@ast.cam.ac.uk*

**Estelle (Ngoumtsa)** graduated with a First Class Honours in Physics from Queen Mary, London/Melbourne, Australia, and is now in Copenhagen doing an MSc in GeoPhysics.

**Carole Golten** (HSL 1967-1972) is now the Lady Captain at Bushey Hall Golf Club in Hertfordshire. Carol took up golf about 10 years ago and spends most weekends on the course. She says, "It keeps me fit and has given me a great social life. My handicap is now 23 but I hope to improve on that." "As for work, I am a psychotherapist and work for the NHS and privately in London."

**Maria McCarthy** (HSL 1974-81) lives in Sidmouth, Devon and works as a journalist for Good Housekeeping, Saga and Woman's Weekly magazines.

Recent features by Maria include Behind the Scenes at the National Trust's Lanhydrock House, a feature on historical re-enactment which involved interviewing a man who dons £2,000 worth of armour to fight at Battle of Bosworth re-enactments, and an



*Maria with Christopher Biggins*

accountant who spends her weekends role-playing an Anglo-Saxon called Hild. Maria lectured on how to publicise your book at Winchester Writer's Festival, and met Christopher Biggins when speaking at Sidmouth Literary Festival. Maria was also a finalist for The Guild of Motoring Writers/ AA Campaigning Journalist of the year 2017.

*[Further information about Maria's career can be found in the online Appendix]*

**Alice Poole** (HSL 1987-1994) is a Technical Director and Head of the Governance and Public Sector Reform Service Line for the International Development division at ICF in London. She regularly travels to Nigeria, as

Project Director of a large governance programme there, as well as overseeing projects in the Sahel and Iraq. Alice married Julian Taylor at the end of April 2017, in Chelsea Old Town Hall in London, and is enjoying the early stages of married life. Neither Alice nor Julian changed their surnames on marriage.

**Madeleine Evans Webb**, left School in 2014 and graduated in 2017 from Imperial College, London after getting a first in Biological Sciences. She was awarded an academic bursary to study for an MSc in Population Health at University College London.

Madeleine's sister **Harriet Evans Webb** left HSL sixth form in 2012 and gained an Upper Second degree in English Literature at Exeter. She recently returned from travelling and working in Australia and is now an account executive in London, based in the Luxury Travel Team of the PR Agency Four Communications.

**Natalie Smith** writes, "After finishing my A Levels at Howell's in June 2017, I travelled to Tanzania and volunteered there for seven weeks with the charity Raleigh International. It was an incredible experience. We worked in rural and remote areas of Tanzania, first on a Natural Resources Management project and then a Water, Health and Sanitation project. I won the GDST Travel Scholarship which went towards my fundraising for the charity and allowed me to have such a fantastic and

rewarding time making an impact on people's lives.

*[Natalie's full report and more photographs about her time in Tanzania can be found in the online Appendix. – Ed]*

**Carole McKenzie** (now MacLean) reports that **Teresa Dacey** (Batten) and **Debbie Williams** (Wiltshire) meet regularly for a long lunch with plenty of talking! "We normally meet in the Chew Valley area of Somerset as Teresa lives in Bath, Debbie in Portishead and Carole in Axbridge (near Cheddar), Somerset. A few times a year we are joined by **Jane Rhys** (Owen) from Dinas Powys, **Frances Rope** (Wookey) from Glos and sometimes **Sue Lisle** (Johnson Hill) from Northants, at various venues. We would love to meet up with or hear from anyone else from our era at Howell's – 1964-1971."

**Danielle (Dani) Treharne** was Head Girl at HSL in 2002-3. From school, she went to Oxford where she obtained a First Class degree in Modern Languages (French and Italian); she also speaks Welsh, German and Spanish. Danielle is now working for BIMA, developing their expansion strategy across Africa. BIMA is a technology-based organisation which helps to provide low-income families



with insurance against illness and injury. Danielle has previously worked in the Democratic Republic of Congo and for the Javelin Group. She volunteered for five years with Kiva.org microfinance. [see also BIMA's website – Ed]

<http://www.bimamobile.com/about-bima/africa/>

**Judith Jenkins** (née Beynon, left HSL 1957) says:

"I will be leaving the warmth of Brisbane this year (2017) to spend my first Christmas in UK for about twelve years. I don't own a coat or a raincoat, so the first thing to do is organise borrowing some clothes! But the plus side is that I will be able to attend the Howell's Christmas Concert in the Cathedral, and meet up with Pauline Cottam, Carole Gay (née Charles) and Sian O'Donnell (née Evans) for lunch in Cardiff. "My family will get together for the first time since 2001 to spend Christmas with my daughter who lives near Banbury. My grandson, Joe, is on contract with the Welsh Rugby Union, based in Swansea, playing for the Wales 7s; he was not able to get back here for Christmas, so we are all going over there instead. "Life here (Brisbane) is wonderful; I live in a retirement village which is more like a holiday resort with all the facilities that you could imagine. I play the organ for Church services, I play piano duets with a friend and I play bridge so life is all about 'playing'. I love living here but it will be so good to

meet up with family and friends again. Read the next instalment in 2019!"

*[Sadly, Judith was unable to get to the Carol Service because of snow, but did meet her friends – Ed]*

**Rachel Hargest** (left HSL 1982) is a consultant general and colorectal surgeon based mainly at Cardiff's University Hospital. In 2017, Rachel was awarded the prestigious Association of Surgeons in Training (ASiT) Silver Scalpel Award, which recognises excellence in surgical training. Rachel is only the second female recipient since the award was introduced in 2000. She received the Award for her contribution to training junior surgeons and supervising post-graduate students. Rachel is also President of the Surgical Section of the Royal Society of Medical Education. Rachel said: "I was delighted and honoured to receive the Silver Scalpel Award ... It is a pleasure to work with such enthusiastic and committed students and trainees who will be the surgeons of the future in Cardiff and further afield." Rachel's sister Elizabeth left HSL in 1983, and works in the Health Service as a radiographer.

*[For a longer report and photographs, please go to the online Appendix – Ed]*

**Gil Sewell** (née Williams) left HSL in 1978. She tells us: "I still live in Auckland, New Zealand and am now HR Director at Auckland District Health Board. I have just received confirmation

that I have been confirmed as a Fellow of the Australian Human Resources Institute (AHRI). There are very few AHRI Fellows in NZ, so I am delighted! Anne Westacott (Mrs. Pound) is coming to visit at the end of January; I'm looking forward to seeing her and her younger daughter, having hosted her elder daughter last year. I'm also hoping to see Nicola Jordan (Mrs. Thomas) very soon, who lives in Tauranga, a mere two hours away.

News from Cardiff born Channel Island based **Bobbie Allen** (left HSL 1989):

"After what seems to have been a lifetime of trying to find her niche in life, Bobbie Allen has finally found the job that suits her best. Having escaped teaching after 16 years in the job, she is now managing a B&B on the tiny channel island of Alderney. The small, friendly guest house has a quirky personality, and Bobbie is now working to make sure that she maintains the standards she set herself last season. Swapping lesson plans for menus and staff meetings for friendly chats with guests, it seems that hospitality is the way forward for this Hywelian!

## Celebrating 50 Years

Karen Thomas (née Ware) gives details of a proposed reunion.

IT WILL BE 50 years since we all anxiously walked up the steps on our first day at HSL – and first met our 'soon to be' new friends!

On 8 September 2018, we are holding a celebration for the 1968-1975 group. If you would like to join us in Cardiff for part or all of lunch, dinner and other activities please contact Karen Thomas (nee Ware) on:

karenthomas007@btinternet.com or via Hywelians@how.gdst.net.

Any ideas for the day will be gratefully received...

We are already in touch with about 25 'girls' from our year group and would like to find more: we very much hope you will be able to join us.

*[For those planning reunions, we do encourage you to think about joining other Hywelians at the Summer lunch – Ed]*

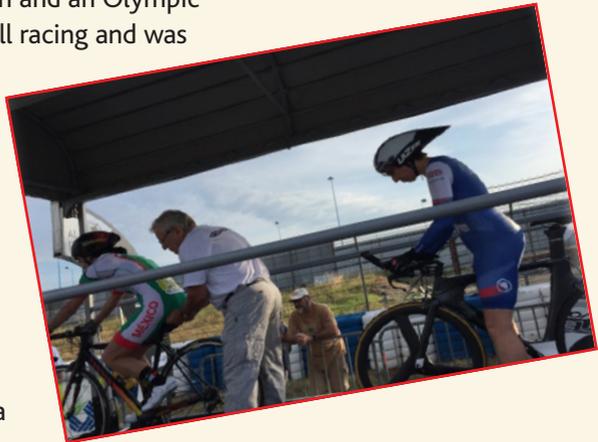
## On Yer Bike!

Readers may remember from last year's magazine that we featured Sarah Matthews (née Watson James, HSL 1971-78) and her sporting achievements. Well, Sarah has been challenging herself even further: her account of her latest exploit, which took place in late August 2017, is below.

"YESTERDAY I COMPETED in the UCI Gran Fondo World Championships Time Trial. To get to the World Champs you need to be in the top 25% in your age group at a qualifying event. I qualified at the Tour of Cambridge in June where I won my age group.

Yesterday was my first World Championship and I was up against a number of riders in my age group (55-59 yrs) who've raced in a number of these events; my goal was to be in the top half of the field of 14. Jeannie Longo a well-known French cyclist who was French and World Champion and an Olympic medallist in her youth is still racing and was in my age group.

The race was 14.2 miles starting at the Motor Racing Circuit in Albi on bumpy, winding country roads and included a short climb to Florentin, a short descent to Rouffiac and many sharp turns. It's a very technical course on a



time trial bike. The race finished with a circuit around the race track.

I rode as hard as I could and amazed myself by coming third – a podium place. I was absolutely thrilled and was presented with my bronze medal at a ceremony at the end of the morning.”



Hywelians really do seem to be an energetic lot! Clare Johnson (née Hector Thomas) tells us that she, too, has been busy on her bike, competing in the 2017 Cardiff Velothon. Clare says:

“ON SUNDAY 9 JULY I joined the Singleminded team of some 22 people taking part in the Velothon, and completed the 140km route. It was an extraordinary experience to take part in this event on closed roads. There was a party atmosphere and great support all the way round.”



To see more photos of Clare in action, follow the link below:

[http://www.marathon-photos.com/scripts/event.py?event=Sports/CPUK/2017/Velothon%20Wales&match=6846&name=Clare&new\\_search=1](http://www.marathon-photos.com/scripts/event.py?event=Sports/CPUK/2017/Velothon%20Wales&match=6846&name=Clare&new_search=1)

Set up last year, Singleminded is an initiative to raise money for cancer and this year it is targeting ovarian cancer <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/singleminded-velothon-targetovariancancer-2017>

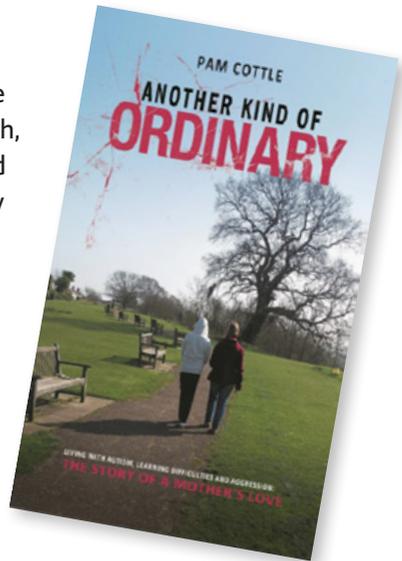
## Hywelians in print

Hywelians have had a busy literary year! Pam Cottle (née Staines) tells of her life since school, and her inspiring book about living with a child with autism.

I attended Howell's School, Llandaff from 1970-1977, leaving to study French and Theatre Studies at Warwick University, before completing a PGCE. I have since taught French, English, German and Drama, to students aged from 11 to 70, in a variety of settings, usually part-time, fitting my work around my family commitments. I later returned to studying, graduating with a Master's degree in Comparative Literature from King's College, London, in 2007. I have been married for over thirty years and have three grown-up sons.

My greatest legacy from my years at Howell's has been my life-long love of learning, something I have regarded throughout my teaching career as the ultimate aim to instil in my students. Over the years, I have gathered GCSEs in Italian, Spanish and Sociology 'just for fun', and I hope to dip into art history at some point in the future. I am currently studying a Level 3 Counselling course, with a view to possibly re-training as a professional counsellor. My Christian faith remains important to me: I have been involved in pastoral care in my local church for many years and do some lay-preaching. This has taken me to Uganda to teach on the School of Ministries programme in Masaka (I plan to return there in Spring of 2018.)

The one thing I never thought I would do is write a book; I did not set out to write a book, I simply sat at my computer one day and wrote. I then continued to do so. After sharing a few extracts with friends, I was encouraged to share my story with a wider public. *Another Kind of Ordinary (Living with Autism, Learning Difficulties and Aggression): the Story of a Mother's Love*, was published earlier this year.



The topic of autism has been brought to our attention recently, both through the *Chris Packham* documentary and 'The A Word' series, shown recently on BBC1. For some of us, these scenarios have become part of our everyday life. As a mother raising an autistic child, I have chosen to share my story of parenting, with its moments of triumph, despair, hope and determination, as well as reflections on my experiences and on the unfolding future for our family. This is intensely personal, yet my experience with other parents informs me that many others have shared similar paths.

I invite you to read my story and share it both with those who might be going through similar circumstances and others curious to find out more about this life-long condition, currently featuring on our television screens and newsfeeds. The book is available in paperback and will shortly be available as an e-book.

[*The preface to Pam's book can be found in the online Appendix – Ed*]

Angela Fish (née Kear) continues to write books and tells us of events in 2017 and projects in the pipeline for the coming year.

Yet another very busy year, working with schools across the UK and attending Book Fairs, library events and school fetes. All three 'Ben' books have received many favourable reviews. The National Union of Teachers magazine has reviewed and recommended the first two books for KS2 pupils, while the third has been reviewed but not yet published.

I have a picture book coming out in late 2017/early 2018. Aimed at 3-6-year olds, it is a pirate story called *The Captain's Favourite Treasure*. I have been very fortunate to work with a talented illustrator, Sharon Davey (Creative Fox), who has brought the story to life.



London Book Fair 2017

I have also been working on two other novels. One is for older children (8-12): I continue to receive support (and guidance) from the same Howell's Juniors who have assisted me in the past. The other is a novel for adults. At the time of writing, both are some way off being ready for submission to publishers. Maybe next year...

I was interviewed live on the Roy Noble Show for BBC Radio Wales in February 2017 – nerve-wracking but a great experience! In March, I was interviewed on Showboat TV (Carmarthen) and was also part of a panel interviewing other authors from Wales.

Then in April, I was invited to speak at a conference in Leicester about writers working with schools. It's heartening to see the commitment to encourage young people to read.

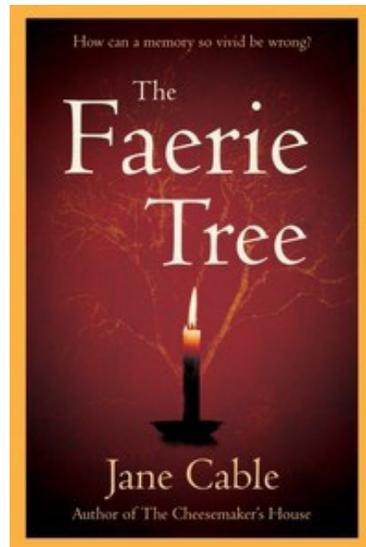
[See *photographs of Angela in the online Appendix – Ed*]

Finally, Jane Cable (née Simpson) tells us about another book, *The Faerie Tree*, published in 2015. Her other books, *The Cheesemaker's House* and *Another You* have been featured in previous editions of the HG Magazine. Jane now lives in Cornwall.

*The Faerie Tree* is set in 1986. That summer, Izzie and Robin hold hands under The Faerie Tree on the banks of the River Hamble and wish for a future together. Hours later tragedy rips their dreams apart. Then, in the winter of 2006 Izzie spots a down-and-out on the streets of Winchester – a man who looks very familiar... How can a memory so vivid be wrong?

Jane was also lucky enough to work with the National Trust to create a history day at Studland, the setting for *Another You*. Jane says, "Even though the weather was wet and windy, more than forty people turned up."

[For more information about obtaining Jane's books, please go to the online Appendix – Ed]



## Recent Arrivals

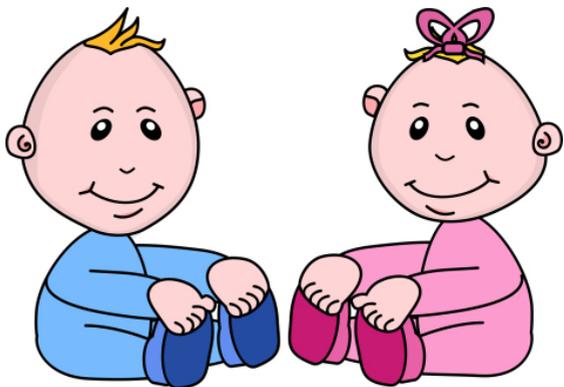
We're always delighted to report the arrival of Hywelians' offspring. We offer our congratulations to Rachel and Sarah and their families.

**Rachel Cornelius Williams** says, "My husband, Tom and I welcomed our gorgeous baby girl, Sophie Kate Williams into the world on 2nd June 2017, weighing 7lb 9oz! She is doing really well and we are besotted!"



**Sarah Finlay** left HSL in 1997. She says, "I'm not sure whether new babies count as Hywelian news seeing as it's rather a common occurrence for old students to have them but anyway there we go."

Of course they do, and Henry arrived in April 2017, to join sister Eliza (then three) who is very proud of her little brother.



## The sofa or the saddle?

Laura Swarbrick (HSL 1990-95) confesses to having a preference for the easy life. Her adventures, as told below, belie that!

MY SISTER RACHEL (Smith, HSL 1982-87) teases me that, given the choice between being energetic or staying at home, I will always pick the easy option and curl up on the sofa! She reckons that I have used up a lifetime's supply of adventurous, go-getting energy in my first few decades, and now prefer an easy life. In a way, she is right. I spent my 20s working hard, joining the classical music business straight out of university (I studied Music at Oxford), whilst leading a busy social life in London and getting through more flats and houses than I care to count. This time of my life was sadly overshadowed by the death of my lovely, kind and talented mother. Among the friends that supported me through this were three Hywelians – Shirley Mukisa, Anna Wiles and Ellie Bolton (1990-97) – who had of course known my mum. Having this link back to my childhood meant a great deal to me, and I'm proud to say that these three friends remain a big part of my life (27 years and counting). During this time as a young 20-something, I also took surprising comfort in the form of cycling, commuting to my Notting Hill office daily on two wheels, and finding great peace of mind in being alone with my thoughts on the bike.

In 2008, when I was in my late 20s, this passion led me towards what was, for me, the ultimate adventure: cycling 2,000 miles from Canada to Mexico down the West coast of the USA. As soon as I booked it, I knew this would involve a major life change. Leaving my job and flat behind, I completed the unforgettable ride. Sending my trusty bicycle home, I continued into Mexico on foot, flew to the Baja California Peninsula and kayaked around a remote island in the Sea of Cortez, then joined an overland trip exploring Belize and Guatemala. After flying home to spend Christmas with my family, I was off again, this time to Tanzania to teach English in a remote village in the West Usambara mountains.



*Laura on her American adventure, 2008*

I concluded the trip with a holiday with my sister on the island of Zanzibar, before re-joining one of my volunteer friends for adventures on horseback, quad bike and the white waters of the Nile in Uganda, and finally crossing Lake Victoria back into Tanzania for a safari in the Serengeti National Park.

Following this trip of a lifetime, it was time to settle back into London life and a new job, in a period of my life that had the usual share of ups and downs. In 2012, feeling that it was the right time to move away from the capital, I accepted the post of Artist Manager at the classical music company Hazard Chase in Cambridge, where I manage and develop the careers of professional musicians around the world. Feeling quickly at home in Cambridge, I started rowing again (14 years after last sitting in a boat in Oxford!) and played the violin in a local orchestra, where two years later I met my future husband, Rupert. In 2017 we were married, on a summer's day which, whilst not particularly sunny, was the brightest and happiest of our lives. By this time I had also been promoted to Associate Director of Hazard Chase, which reached its own 25th anniversary in 2015; I am proud to be part of its next chapter.



*Wedding day: Laura with Shirley Mukisa, Ellie and another friend*

So, whilst I agree with Rachel that these days I would rather relax with a coffee and a crossword than hike up the nearest hill (fortunately such things are lacking in Cambridge anyway), I feel that the adventures of life have taken a different turn for now: a job in a field I'm passionate about, a beautiful city in which to live, and newly married life with a wonderful man. Luckily, he is also a keen cyclist, so who knows which country we will be traversing together ...



**Mrs Janet Sully, the School's Head Archivist, has written the following account of the Great Hall and the landmarks in its history.**

WITH THE RESTORATION of the Great Hall now complete, it seems appropriate for this year's Hywelian magazine to give a résumé of some of the landmarks in its history.

The Hall was formally opened on 26th June 1900, as part of the new south wing, by the educationalist Lady Verney. She unlocked the door with a key designed by the architect,

George Halliday, which was presented to her by the Chairman of the Governors, Lord Tredegar. It bore the county arms on one side, engraved in enamel and gilt, and an inscription on the other. Day girls were allowed to wear white dresses on the



*The Great Hall circa 1907*

occasion. The boarders' request to do the same was rejected by Miss Kendall: as consolation, they were allowed to wear white silk and lace shawls over their new green Sunday dresses. The first play performed in the Hall, in December 1900, was *As You Like It*, and the South Wales Echo reported that the production "reflected great credit upon the mistress of elocution" and "also disclosed much natural aptitude in the histrionic art".

A Shakespeare play was subsequently performed in the Great Hall each December until 1938. Presumably Miss Kendall's enthusiasm for The Bard was why the eleven Shakespearean scenes were chosen as the subject matter for the murals. The artist commissioned to undertake the task, J M Staniforth, was much better known as a political cartoonist. It took him about two years to complete the work (1903-05) and he must have been frustrated both by having

the quality of his early designs questioned and having to prise payment from the Governors. The total cost was about £350. Now restored to their former glory, the scenes look stunning and Staniforth's skill and attention to detail can be properly appreciated.

In the early years, drill, piano and singing lessons took place in the Hall. The music master, George Beale – the only male member of staff – was also the cathedral organist and Miss Kendall was known to stand outside the Hall as girls went in for singing or piano lessons, to make sure that they were suitably clad in his presence. Initially the Hall was lit by gas, electric lighting not being introduced to the school until 1923. The obsolete ornamental gas brackets in the Hall remained in place for a very long time; in 1959 electric candles were placed in them.

Prizegiving took place in the Great Hall until the 1990s. Lord Tredegar had fought at the Battle of Balaclava, and the ceremonies during his time reflected his fondness for military tradition. In his honour, the poem "The Charge of the Light Brigade" was recited with



*Speech Day 1960 – Sir David Eccles*

precise diction on every occasion. No doubt many Hywelians will recall that the military precision at this annual event lasted well into the 1980s.

In the 1920s, under Miss Trotter, one task of the Clerk to the Governors was to sit in the Hall on the first day of term and receive cheques for the term's fees from the girls before they were allowed to go to their form rooms. They had to deposit the cheques in a large aspidistra pot and, at the same time, hand certificates to Miss Bellamy (the senior mistress) confirming that they had not

been in contact with any contagious disease during the holidays. Activities in the Hall at this time included different types of dancing, an annual League of Nations party and house concerts.

On V.E. Day, 8th May 1945, pupils were summoned to the Hall to hear Miss Lewis announce that the war in Europe was over. Soon the League of Nations parties were replaced by United Nations parties. The girls wore national costumes or other topical fancy dress and processed around the Hall, after which their outfits were judged by Miss Lewis. Then there was Greek dancing, followed by tea, and yet more dancing.

In Centenary year, 1960, there was a plan to build a new Hall to accommodate everyone more comfortably than in the original Hall. This plan was finally abandoned in 1968 as the cost was prohibitive, although for several years the idea of building a gallery above the existing Hall was pursued. In 1981, under Miss Turner, improvements were made to the Hall, financed by investment from the money raised in the appeal launched in 1960. A pair of double doors created a new side exit to the asphalt; there was a new floor of Danish oak; the panels and Shakespeare murals were professionally cleaned; and there were new strong lights.

Until the Sports Hall was completed in 1997, a form of Christian worship took place in the Great Hall every day. By then the whole school could barely fit into the Hall, so under Miss Lewis and Miss Turner the girls stood throughout, apart from when they knelt for prayers. "Amens" were always sung. During the summer, when the Hall was used for public exams, Prayers took place outside on the asphalt, with the girls standing in rows around the big horse chestnut tree. In Miss Lewis's day, Miss Marjorie Cole played the piano outside, her music secured with clothes pegs.

The Great Hall – the "jewel in Howell's crown" – has continued to be used for a many purposes, ranging from public examinations and workshops to musical events, plays and talks. It is also very popular as a venue for external functions, including wedding receptions! Its restoration will ensure that future generations will be able to enjoy it for many years to come.

## The Great Hall – Landmark Photographs



*Howell's School, Llanaf. The Assembly Hall.*

*The Great Hall, 1922*



*Lunch to celebrate the opening  
of the new building, 1982*



*Concert for Hywelians after  
Centenary lunch, 2006  
(Mrs J Fitz standing, left;  
Mrs E Phillips under the  
clock)*

Many Hywelians will remember Miss Disney, Gym and Games Mistress at School from 1933 to 1954, with varying degrees of affection. Here, Wendy Rix (Elizabeth Wright, Hazelwood (1945-9)) gives a very personal glimpse of her relationship with Miss Disney, universally known as 'Diz'.

I WAS AFRAID of Diz, though not in the beginning.

The first time I saw her she was supervising us as we laid the lunch tables, and the exaggerated S-shaped profile and her rocking method of locomotion – as much sideways as forward – made me think she was a rather aggressive member of the domestic staff. I soon learned.

“We have a nuisance every year and you are this year’s!”

Understood. I was a nuisance because I arrived into the Upper instead of the Lower IV. I was a nuisance because I had an unfamiliar background: I came from a ‘Progressive’ school. I was a nuisance in class, because I was lost in Latin but ahead in French and biology, and showed that I found the history teacher patronising. Word got around. Yes, I was a nuisance.

But I could do an undergrasp somersault. Diz was impressed.

“Where did you learn to do that?”

“The gypsies taught me.”

She turned away and addressed the other girls as if nothing had been said.

It was true; an unintentional part of my ‘progressive’ education.

Came my first swimming lesson, and Diz had us all lined up in twos along the side of the pool, one behind the other, all shivering. What was her command – “Enter the water!” perhaps? I always associated her with brusque military instructions in her distinctive gravelly voice. (*From a sandpapered larynx*, as Kevin Crossly-Holland has it.)\*

Galvanised, I entered the water in the obvious way, head first – even though I had never dived in my life. I surfaced to find everyone else gingerly letting themselves in over the side, feet first. Not as afraid as I am.

At the end of the school day, I used to come down the stone stairway in the main hall three steps at a time, until one day, on turning the last corner, I miscounted and caught my heel. No pain, just total loss of feeling as I stood on one leg with the offending foot off the ground, stock still in the flowing mass of the after class exodus.

“What are you doing?”

From the hall below, came the voice of Miss Cole the music teacher – friend of Miss Disney and equally frightening to me, a non-musician by this time. Foot to ground and in agony, I limped past her.

“Go and get ready for games and stop making such a fuss!”

In the cloakroom I couldn’t get my games shoe on.

Someone told Miss Cole. Deliberations and discussion followed and I was to have an X-ray. Diz owned the only car in the school and was deputed to drive me to the hospital. In her aged little black Ford, it was a totally silent journey. Yes, I was afraid of Diz.

It was the last day of the summer term, and I was crossing the netball court, when I heard her bark

“Tie your hair back!” I whipped my head around.

“It doesn’t do for a young girl to look alluring!”

Alluring? Me? With my straight thick hair, so recently out of plaits? Was this some sort of compliment?

Many years later, on holiday in Norfolk with my young daughter, I was examining a tide table posted on the boathouse at Burnham Overy Staithe, when I heard behind me the familiar grating tones. It all came rushing back, and, taking a very deep breath, I paused, and said the name before I turned:

“Miss Disney?”

There she stood, still the familiar S-shape, still in the familiar blue marl gym tunic. (How many did she own?)

“Hullo,” I said, “How nice to see you again.” And I held out my hand.

“It’s Liz, from Howell’s,” I added.

She looked straight through me and continued talking, vaguely, over my shoulder.

Did I look so different? Didn’t she remember? Could she have forgotten the thorn in her flesh that I had been? She could – because, sadly, she had forgotten everything.

But she herself is not forgotten. She lives on in Hywelian memory – in mine for over sixty years – and, as I have just discovered, also in verse.

In school I never saw her room, but in Norfolk, the poet says she

*“Rents one windy room at the top of a ladder. Reeks of Kelp.”*

And did she have webbed feet, as he claims? We never saw her swim. Had she sometimes been afraid?

[\*Crossley-Holland, Kevin, *No.5 Diz in Waterslain and other poems*, Hutchison 1986, London]

**Sylvia Horner (née Maskew) reminds those of a certain age of the experience of swimming at Howell's in the 1940s under the auspices of Miss Disney**

DOES ANYONE REMEMBER the rules of the baths, which had to be recited to Diz before one was allowed in the water?

"I must not shout or scream.

"I must not push anyone in or under the water.

"When the whistle blows I must stop and listen.

"I must dry and dress quickly."

This last was the undoing of one 11 year old who said,

"I must dress and dry quickly."

She was sent to the back of the queue for getting it wrong.

Our Speech Days were enlivened by the Chairman of the Governors, Alderman the Reverend William Saunders, and his deputy, Alderman Mrs Rose Davies who had their own mutual admiration society. They praised each other in strong Welsh accents, in stark contrast to the Head (Miss Lewis) who spoke very properly. On one occasion Alderman the Reverend William Saunders told the school that we should be very proud of ourselves for obtaining one hundred and sixty seven, (or thereabouts) life saving certificates that year.

"But then" he said, "You've got the only bath in South Wales. The only bath, look you"

That was when we had to learn to keep a straight face.

Much later in the 1980s my husband and I took advantage of the new Pembroke hotel in Blackpool to get our seven-year-old grandson swimming, using a three month family pass. I had to dress Paul in the female changing room and one day we were joined by two young girls with distinct Cardiff accents. One said,

"Oh, I do hate this costume"

"Is it your school one?" I asked, having recognised the scarlet.

"Yes, I think it's terrible."

"Where is your school?" I asked.

"Oh, you'll never have heard of it."

"Is it Howell's Llandaff? Do you know why you have a red costume?"

"No, I think it's horrible."

So I told her that when the baths were new in 1937, Miss Disney chose the colour because she didn't want anybody lying on the bottom unnoticed.

She ran off saying,

"Mummy. I've found a very, very old girl!"

That was 30 years ago. Does she remember the occasion?

I now try Nordic Walking. One day we were discussing artificial respiration; our leader had never heard of the Schaeffer method. How many people can remember the land drill in the Gym when our partners tried to break our ribs and later were supposed to gently help the patient to rise?



*For those who may not have known her,  
or have forgotten what she looked like,  
this is Miss Disney in the 1940s*

## Obituaries and *In Memoriam*

It is always sad to record the passing of Hywelians; our sympathy goes to the families and friends of those whose names appear here.

**Patricia Frances Martin** (née Jones), was a student at Howell's School during the early 1950s. Her son, Peter, sent the following information: "Pat passed away in September 2016." She was a good lacrosse player and was very proud to have represented Wales in her younger years. "She became a home economics teacher and later married, having two sons. Once her boys were more independent she joined the WRVS where her work was featured in the Daily Telegraph (September 17 1993).

Elaine Knapp (née Smith, HSL 1979), writes that her mother, **Veronica Smith** (née Davies, HSL 1946), died in Llandough Hospital in February 2017.

Veronica was an active Hywelian, joining the Bridgend branch in 1977, and visiting other branches including Bristol, Border Counties and occasionally London Drapers' Hall. She also attended many Hywelian events in school, usually in the company of her great friend Judith Williams. Veronica was a well-known figure in Llandaff, fully immersing herself in the village community where she will be remembered for her involvement with the Cathedral, her many years' service as Brown Owl to the 2nd Llandaff Brownies and her general contribution to village life. Veronica was a proud

Grandmother to Erica, Tim and Jack. She was thrilled to see Erica married, Tim studying at Cardiff University, and was especially proud that her youngest Grandchild, Jack, became the 4th generation (and 1st male!) to attend Howells – his appointment as deputy head boy being a great source of pleasure to her.

Jan Sainsbury (née Hughes) (HSL 1960-1967) attended the funeral in October 2017, at The Priory Church of St Mary, Usk, of Hywelian **Margot Etheridge** (née Margaret Folley), who was a dear family friend. Margot was born in Whitchurch on 26th August 1921 and won a day scholarship to Howell's School in 1931. Margot lived in Usk all her adult life, and was married to Viv Etheridge, a local business man, and one-time Chairman of Monmouthshire County Council. They had two children, Janet and Richard, four grandchildren and seven great grandchildren, all of whom she was extremely proud; they gave each other much joy. Her granddaughter Kirsten was ordained as an Anglican Priest when Margot was 86. Although Margot had been brought up a traditional Anglican, she was very supportive in her granddaughter's ministry both in Tunbridge Wells and in her current role as vicar of St Peter's

shared Church in Guildford. Margot had been a widow for many years but was an active member of the community having been Mayor of Usk in the 1980s, and was still making charming and informative speeches whenever an appropriate occasion arose. She was a trustee of Usk Conservative club, an Honoured Member of Usk Inner Wheel, ran St Mary's Church Guild well into her eighties, and was a patron of the local Usk band, who played at her funeral. Margot, representing Usk in Bloom, was honoured and delighted to meet the Duchess of Cornwall last year. She died at home in Usk on 6th September 2017, aged 96, having been out for lunch and played bridge in the afternoon.

Linda Newman (née Williams, HSL 1964-1972) writes:

"My mother, **Jean Davies** (née Williams) passed away on 29th June 2017 at the age of 94. She was a day girl from 1934 to 1939, and had very fond memories of her time in HSL, particularly the games lessons and inter-house competitions, hockey and cricket being her favourites. This no doubt stood her in good stead for playing golf well into her 80s!

**Elizabeth Frewin** (née Vaughn) passed away peacefully at home on 15 July 2017. She was survived by daughters Julie and Kate, her two sons-in-law and four grandchildren. She left HSL in 1950.

**Dr. Sylvie Mary Harrison** passed away peacefully at her home in Victoria Park, Cardiff on July 7th 2017, aged 86 years. She left school in 1948.

**Janet Mary Sturrock** (née Wright) died suddenly and unexpectedly at home on 26th May 2017, aged 81. Joyce Shields remembers:

"Janet and her husband Ian had two children; sadly their daughter Julia died in childhood from leukaemia. Their son, Neil, worked in Russia and married a Russian wife. Their daughter is studying architecture in Cambridge. Janet had two other grandchildren.

**Mary Jefferson** (née Knighton) was born in Penarth in 1928 and won a Howell's Scholarship in 1939. She left in 1946. She died in May 2017, at the age of 88. Sylvia Horner (née Maskew) writes that her friendship with Mary goes back to when they were both at junior school: "She was enthusiastic about games and won various house trophies for hockey, lacrosse and cricket regularly. "She won an award to Bedford College to study chemistry, and completed teaching training after her degree. "Mary was teaching in the southeast when she met and married Derek Jefferson. They had a son and two daughters, and Mary combined motherhood with lecturing at the local training college. In 1973 Derek was moved to Sheffield and Mary transferred to Wentworth Woodhouse Training college, where she renewed her friendship with Dorothy Fleming (née Oppenheimer), and persuaded her to give the students a course on Jewish life. "Mary became concerned with Methodist aid to Sierra Leone, visiting the region several times; she continued with local Methodist concerns after she

retired. She was also a governor of her local school. Derek died a few years ago. Debbie (her daughter) told me that after a serious stroke last year Mary lost her will to live: she had always been in charge.”

*[A full account of Sylvia’s memories Mary’s life can be found in the online appendix – Ed]*

**Gillian Nancy (Deddie) Davies** died in December 2016 after a serious illness. She was born in Bridgend and her passion for acting was demonstrated at Howell’s. She trained at RADA, where she acquired her nickname – reputedly for her dedication to the acting profession. She had a prodigious acting career, which included the part of Nell, the stationmaster’s wife in *The Railway Children*. She married Paddy Ward in 1966, and they remained together until his death in 2011. She excelled at comedy roles, appearing in a remake of *The Rag Trade* and *Clochmerle*, among many others. Her passion for acting was matched by her dedication to charity work, particularly on behalf of older people. She once spent five days in a residential home for a BBC *Today* investigation.

*[A full account of Deddie’s career, reprinted from The Guardian, appears on the online Appendix – Ed]*

**Lynda Margaret White** (née Davies) died in June 2016. Her daughter, Alison, says that Lynda was always most grateful to Howells for offering her a scholarship and for the excellent

education she received there just prior to and during the Second World War.

**Faith Williams** (née Woodward)

Dr Ruth Williams (HSL 1972-1980) suffered a double tragedy when both her parents died on the same day in the summer of 2017. Here she recounts some memories. *[Ruth’s full account appears in the online Appendix – Ed]*

Mum attended School during the Second World War, from 1940-1946. (Her late sister **Patricia Wheeler** (née Woodward) followed her a year later.) She spoke fondly of her times at HSL, including: the air raid shelter under the Great Hall, the French teacher ‘Mademoiselle’ who left abruptly to marry her beau who was an Army officer, and her fear of the daunting P.E. teacher Miss Disney. Mum made lifelong friends at School including Gwen Eastlake who still lives in Tenby. Miss Lewis became Headmistress while she was at School, and was still there during my first four years. Mum attended parents’ evenings with some trepidation in case she had to speak to Miss Lewis! Mum became a civil servant and once Dad returned from National Service in the Royal Navy, they concentrated time and resources building their home in Welsh St Donats. They married in 1960 and I was born 18 months later. My parents were responsible for a milestone in the history of School in 1972. They lobbied the Board of Governors who agreed to extend the boundary for day girls beyond Cardiff and Penarth

to the entire Vale of Glamorgan. I was much happier to be a 'day-bug' rather than a boarder. Mum supported Dad throughout his 48 years as a local Councillor. She was his consort when he was Chairman of Cardiff Rural District Council in 1967, and was Mayoress of the Vale of Glamorgan Council in 1981, instigating the Mayoress' charity coffee mornings and the popular Charity Ball. In the 1970s Mum was Clerk to Welsh St Donats Community Council.

Barbara Forte pays tribute to a longstanding friend. She writes:

**Beryl Norton** (née Williams) died in October 2017, after a number of years of ill health (but not spirit!). Heather and I attended her funeral at Christ Church Lakeside on November 7th 2017. Beryl and I first met in Rhiwbina School when she surpassed all the other pupils with the news, "I had a baby sister last night!" – beat that! As I was older than Beryl I was moved up; as a result I went on to HSL earlier in 1939. As we older ones did not bother with the younger ones, we lost contact. Beryl was in a very friendly form and friends from those days stayed in touch: Jacqui Pollard, Val Tucker, Betty Earwicker and Heather Kelly, to name a few. Beryl married in 1950 (so did I). Beryl moved to London (so did I). She lived in Barnes (so did I!) – opposite her in Elm Grove Road, a total surprise to both of us; thus our friendship continued. A few years later she moved back to Cardiff and – yes, you've guessed it – so did I! Together with Heather (Kelly) we

started going to the HSL Summer Lunches, where we would encourage any lost, lonely-looking souls to join us until their friends arrived. Once we had 23 in our group. We, Beryl, Heather and myself, became loyal members of that vibrant branch, the Bridgend Hywelians – The Three Graces, Friends Forever. Beryl had a very loving family, Brian, Richard, Deborah and Simon. She was an excellent cook and her sponges were fabulous; there was always a warm welcome in her house. She and Brian were married for 65 years before he died; his loss affected her greatly and she gradually became house bound. Heather visited frequently and some of her remaining friends kept in touch. When I was unable to visit her, our contact was by phone. She used to say 'even if I can't see you – talk to me!' – so I did.

**Susan Jennifer Woodrow** (née Pearson-Griffiths) on 7th November 2017, aged 74. Sue was the wife of Russell, mother to Sarah and Nick and grandmother of four. On becoming the Principal of Basildon College, Sue was the first female Further Education Principal in Essex. She had many friends from Howell's, Llandaff, University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, her career in FE, her membership of school governing bodies, her love of art and literature, her work for charity and the time she had spent in Canada. She was also a Vice President of the Hywelian guild. Sue donated her body to medical science. *[An obituary appeared in The Times on 25-28 Nov. 2017 – Ed]*



Martha Pugh was a Year 8 pupil at Howell's. Her death in 2017 was obviously a great loss for her family, but also for the family of Howell's School. Here, School Principal, Sally Davis pays tribute to Martha.

WHEN SOMEONE ONCE asked Martha where she came from, rather than saying 'Cardiff', she replied, "I come from Howell's School." – I remember smiling when her mother told me that.

Martha loved Howell's – and the whole Howell's community loved Martha. Easily identifiable around the school, everyone knew her name, asked about her constantly when she was not in, and silently rejoiced when she returned to us once more. This time she hasn't come back but she will always be remembered by the Howell's family.

'Enthusiastic, lively, determined, a pleasure to teach, popular with her peers, makes friends easily, tries hard, always gives of her best.' These are just a few of the many, many positives I read about Martha as I re-read all her reports from Nursery when she joined us, aged three. In every report, she has 1s in everything for effort.

It's often said by GDST in London, when they talk about the schools, "Ahh, but it's different at Howell's" – and it is. We are a close family community and our support staff, as well as our teaching staff, have all been with us for years.

Kitchen staff worked closely with Martha's mother on Martha's nutritional needs, and they would watch and be thrilled when she was eating well. The caretakers, even Clive who looks after that roundabout, would ask me, "How is little Martha doing? We haven't seen her for a while." Admin staff would be thrilled to see her and give her a warm welcome. She was sometimes late in, or left early so they would see her regularly.

Teaching staff admired her determination to do her work – although it would be true to say that Maths was not her favourite subject! Jo Kenyon, who taught Martha in Year 3, started teaching her at home that year and continued to give her extra support, especially concentrating on the dreaded maths. Sunday afternoon was their time together. I know Martha loved Jo and really enjoyed the time they spent together.

The girls in Year 8 were wonderful friends to her, keeping in touch, sending her cards and, most recently, collecting money to buy her some Disney toys, as they knew she was having a particularly tough time. They are now giving that money to LATCH. Yes, Martha loved Disney and on the day of her funeral we had Disney films playing for those girls in Year 8 who were not there.

Always looking to the future, Martha was an inspiration. The English Department asked the girls to write what they'd like to be when they grow up and to write in the style of Roald Dahl. This is what Martha wrote: it shows Martha's great sense of fun.

### **What I want to be when I grow up**

*"When I grow up I would love to be a zoo keeper. It would be gloriumtious! I find sometimes that animals are more interesting than human beings.*

*I love hippodumpling and jiggyraffes even though they are ucky\_mucky and they whizzpopper a lot which can be very smelly and filthsome! Sometimes they can be whoopsey but sometimes they can be earbursting.*

*But when I become a zookeeper I will avoid snakes. They eat swatchscollop which they swallow up whole, I would rather feed them childers! If I did have to look after them I hope it would be when they are snozzling not when they are open eyed!*

*So when I grow up I definitely want to work in the zoo. I hope monkeys don't play tricks on me and are not too frothbuggling. At least they have whoopsey\_splunkers bananas!"*

Martha was smiles, sparkle and sunshine.

Martha was laughter, lovely and loved.

Martha was happy, hopeful and Howell's.

We are going to miss you dreadfully Martha.

We are dedicating the small courtyard in the heart of the school to Martha and her group have raised funds for the outdoor furniture and tiles which we are going to decorate the area with. Martha's parents have also sponsored a painting, Romeo and Juliet, in Martha's memory the inscription is:

*'In loving memory of our beautiful girl Martha Pugh, Hywelian forever'.*

The poem on the next page was written by one of Martha's friends, Tabi.

### **The Girl Who Climbs Mountains**

I watched her grow day by day,  
Always around to run and play.  
I felt the world stand still,  
As we danced to Taylor Swift,  
Always around to give me a lift.  
I watched her grow and flourish  
While others watched in awe,  
As we lunged down the corridors,  
And fell right into German in C4.  
In Music we rocked and rolled.  
Whilst Mr Cheeke cheered for more,  
And Mr Beckett wanted to rock in a dark corner,  
Closing each and every door.  
In PE we danced which was wonderful larks,  
And our skill and panache were fantastic,  
Poor Mr Baker let us,  
Knowing our future careers didn't lie in gymnastics.  
In Art we laughed,  
As we built paintbrush towers,  
And flicked red paint,  
Whilst we were meant to be drawing flowers.  
Our laughter kept us going as we climbed up Pen-y-fan,  
"Can we picnic in a rain storm?"  
Martha shouted "yes, we can!"  
She made us feel happy,  
And never sad,  
She made us feel wanted,  
Of course we're so glad.  
I know she's watching us somewhere,  
Up there where she shines,  
A part of her stays with us,  
A bond that never untwines.  
I watched as she brightened up our lives,  
With such courage that she had,  
All I can say with all my love,  
Is thank you Martha's mum and dad.

*Tabi, Year 9*

## Reminders

If you would like a printed version of next year's Magazine by post, please remember to send Joyce Shields an A5-sized envelope (C5) carrying a LARGE stamp of the correct postage, by the end of September 2018. Joyce's address can be obtained from Hannah Roberts, Hywelian Liaison at School by emailing [Hywelians@how.gdst.net](mailto:Hywelians@how.gdst.net) or telephoning 029 20 26 1825.

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IF YOU ARE NOT ALREADY a Facebook user, you might like to consider joining the Hywelian Guild Facebook page. It's a lovely way to keep in touch (or even get in touch!) with school friends and other Hywelians.

Joyce Shields, our super-efficient and knowledgeable Membership Secretary would be delighted to give you further details of how to join.

The page is only open to Hywelians and is not publicly available.

Contact Joyce at: [joyce@joyshields.demon.co.uk](mailto:joyce@joyshields.demon.co.uk)

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## The Bronwen Jacques Trust

MRS BRONWEN JACQUES one of the earliest Secretaries of the Hywelian Guild. When she died in 1975, she left her house near Gloucester to the Governors for the benefit of former pupils and ex-members of staff. The Governors decided to sell the house and, with the proceeds, created a Trust fund.

Half the money was given to the Cartref Homes in Cardiff with the proviso that two former students or ex-members of staff would have priority entry to one of the homes each year. The remaining money was invested and the resulting income is administered by a sub-group of the Hywelian Guild Committee, chaired by Mrs Davis.

The income is available to help any former student or ex-member of staff who may be in financial difficulty, whether or not a member of the Guild. The names of those assisted remain confidential within the sub-Committee.

*Hywelians wishing to apply should address their letter to Mrs Sally Davis.*

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# Hywelian Guild Magazine

— 2018 —

## Appendix

We are always pleasantly surprised by the wonderful contributions that come in for the Magazine. Sadly, restrictions of size, cost and postage mean that we can't use some items in full. This appendix contains the full versions of those contributions we had to edit. You will also find web and social media contacts for contributors.

*Lyn Owen, Editor*

*Please note that while we are pleased to highlight Hywelians' business interests, this does not constitute our endorsement thereof.*

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## In Memoriam

### Mary Jefferson (née Knighton)

Mary Jefferson was born in Penarth on the 3rd of September 1928. When she was six, she was told to look after me, a new girl at Victoria Council School. She continued to do so all her life. Mary won a Howell's Scholarship in 1939 and was installed in the Old House, being transferred with the rest of us to Kendall, 128 Cardiff Rd, after Christmas 1940, when the cathedral was bombed and Old House on the Green was badly damaged.

She was one of a group from Kendall who was very enthusiastic about games and she regularly won various house trophies for hockey, lacrosse and cricket. Others in that group were also in the first school teams. Mary took C.W.B. in 1944, being one of the last group to do so in four years. She then spent three years in the Science VI form. In her last year at school, she was cast as the Prince in the school production of Romeo and Juliet. It was hard not to laugh when she spoke to the war-ringing factions exactly as she spoke to juniors who broke a rule!

She won an award to Bedford College to study chemistry. She had to do well because her parents could only support one child at university and her younger brother Donald, had priority. Boys were more important than girls then ...

Mary completed her teaching training after her

degree and at times, she substituted for Megan Anthony, who was ill, taking Chemistry in school. She was surprised to find that the staff had very little more comfort than the girls.

Mary was always a practising Methodist and I believe that it was when she was teaching in the southeast she met and soon married Derek Jefferson. His early circuits were in Worcester and Redditch. They had Tim, Ruth and Deborah there, and Mary combined motherhood with lecturing at the local training college and much Methodist activity. Our children knew them well and my daughter's comment on hearing of her death was "She knew everything, was always right and very kind. I was frightened of her."

In 1973 Derek was moved to Sheffield. Mary transferred to lecturing in Wentworth Woodhouse Training College. She re-newed her friendship with Dorothy Fleming (née Oppenheimer), and persuaded Dorothy to give the students a course on Jewish life.

Mary became increasingly concerned with Methodist aid to Sierra Leone, visiting the region several times; she continued with local Methodist concerns after she retired. She was also a governor of her local school. Derek had several strokes and died a few years ago. Debbie told me that after a serious stroke last year Mary lost her will to live. She had always been in charge.

*Sylvia Horner (née Maskew)*

### Jose Rawlings (née Thomas)

The information about Jose's passing came too late for the main printed magazine. Here, Barbara Forte remembers a friend.

"Jose died on Jan 18th 2018. She was also known in School as Josephine Parry Thomas.

We were both from Rhiwbina School where she was often called Josephine 'Paraffin' Thomas. Such refined Junior school humour!

At Howell's, she was a boarder and I was a 'daybug'. She was ALWAYS top of the class, right through Rhiwbina, through Howell's, and at University in Aberystwyth. In later years I met a student who was at Aber at the same time as Jose. He said, "Not THE Jose Thomas? She was ALWAYS ahead of us!"

Jose was married to the late Ken Rawlins and they had two sons, one of whom had lived in South Africa and whom Jose had been able to visit. Latterly, Jose lived in Cowbridge and had until recently been a faithful member of the Bridgend branch of The Hywelians.

There are not many of us 1939 entrants left now – I think we were unique! – and I am sure that they would join with me in remembering Jose with affection."

*Barbara Forte*

# Adventure and Activity

## Natalie Smith

*Below is the full report of Natalie's exciting and worthwhile stay in Tanzania. It is followed by some photographs of her stay.*

FROM MID-JULY to the beginning of September 2017, I volunteered in Tanzania with the charity, Raleigh International. The seven weeks were split into two sections: volunteering on a Natural Resources Management project, where we planted trees in the community, and volunteering on a Water, Health and Sanitation project, helping to build a toilet block in a local school.

At the beginning of my final year in Sixth Form, I decided that I would definitely take a gap year as I didn't know what I wanted to study at university. When planning my gap year, I knew that I wanted to do something worthwhile with my time and I researched many groups which offered the opportunity to volunteer abroad. Raleigh had been recommended to me by various friends and family and they had all praised not only Raleigh's positive impact on the communities but also the incredible and life-changing experience that comes with volunteering on a Raleigh expedition. After researching the charity more, I learnt that Raleigh focuses on helping vulnerable communities, by teaching the local people skills and trades, such as improving their Water and Sanitation systems, youth entrepreneurship and community resilience. Working and living within a rural and vulnerable community really appealed to me; I think it is really important to step outside of your comfort zone and Raleigh offered me the opportunity to do this by immersing myself into a completely different environment and culture.

I was especially motivated to volunteer because I found it difficult to believe that there were people my age who lived in

absolute poverty, and that the only difference between us was where we were born in the world. I wanted to be able to play a part in making a positive difference, even if it was just for one person. I also wanted to contribute to and have an impact on a community, share skills and meet people from less privileged backgrounds than me. I was particularly inspired to take action when reading about Raleigh's work in supporting young people to set up small businesses and teaching children about the importance of hygiene through their WASH programme.

I needed to raise £3050 for Raleigh International and did so in various ways. I raised roughly £600 through JustGiving as I ran the Cardiff 10K in April 2017. I also applied for the GDST Travel Scholarship and won £400. I was also awarded a further £400 from my Church. I wrote in the local newsletter that I would be volunteering in Tanzania for seven weeks and a parishioner had spoken to the Catenians about my work and suggested I applied for funding. On my return, I gave two talks in my Church and raised over £500.

Following on from the work of our fellow volunteers in phase One, we spent our first week in Ikaning'ombe packing biodegradable tubes with soil ready for transplantation of tree seedlings. Once we filled multiple wooden pens with tubes of soil, we planted pine samplings in each tube, ensuring every day they were watered and had enough access to sunlight. Unfortunately, we were not able to help the villagers plant the tubes into the ground, as we had to leave Ikaning'ombe ready for our next phase. We know, however, that our work was greatly appreciated by all of the locals there and that the pine trees will have a huge impact on their lives, as we were applauded for our efforts at the project site. Alongside the invaluable help that we received from the local villagers and our project partner,

TFCG (Tanzanian Forest Conservation Group), we exceeded our initial aim of completing the 150,000 pine samplings ready for plantation. We learnt that forestry in Tanzania is decreasing at an alarming rate due to the dependency on wood for fuel, homes and buildings. In planting so many trees, we not only educated the locals on the importance of re-planting in order to achieve sustainability, but also secured the growth of new trees in 20 years' time. Our twice-weekly lessons in the local primary school also focussed on raising awareness of the causes and effects of global warming and deforestation within the local community. We also planned and delivered an "Action Day" where over 100 villagers attended. During our Action Day, we demonstrated the use of a "Tippy Tap", promoting the importance of washing your hands and good hygiene. We also discussed the advantages of a compost system and we presented a quiz for the young children, the questions based around the classroom topic of sustainability in the community.

We spent phase Two in the lively village of Nyamwezi. We worked alongside the "Fundis" to build a block of 16 toilets for the local school. Before receiving help from Raleigh, the school only had four unisex toilets which they shared with the local secondary school. Our manual labour will no doubt be of huge benefit to the school. Within the building there will also be a cubicle allocated to girls who are menstruating and also one for children who are disabled and need more space. The long term benefits to the community include improved hygiene levels which hitherto have been poor, resulting in increased health problems within the society. We also taught lessons aimed at the school teachers, focussing on the safe and hygienic preparation of food. Similarly, our weekly SWASH Club sessions focussed on educating the children on the importance of clean hygiene and health through fun games and activities.

The best experience on expedition for me has been the opportunity to live in a local

home stay. Although in totally unfamiliar surroundings, I have been able to establish warm relationships and have enjoyed making conversation with our home stay families and learning about their culture. I can only describe the experience as a privilege, as the opportunity to fully immerse myself into the culture and life of a local has been immensely rewarding. Having my comfort zone stretched has been challenging, as my daily routine was altered considerably and also the living conditions were not what I have been used to. Although these aspects have been demanding, it is incredible that I have been able to experience and witness different ways of life. I also think that seeing people my age living in poor conditions and having access to considerably less than I do has been challenging, but again it has been incredibly rewarding to play a role in a project which will have an impact on their lives. Having limited access to my family was at first difficult but I soon relished the opportunity to immerse myself into the local culture and I really enjoyed the freedom and experience.

I would say that one of the things I have learnt is how to adapt to the local culture and into the nearby ways of life, allowing myself to get a full experience of the local way of life. For example, by going to church with our host family and helping to cook the meals, we learnt so much about the local culture.

Since volunteering with Raleigh, I have learnt to have a different outlook on my life and learn more about myself. It is important to be compassionate and a good listener and I feel that volunteering with Raleigh International and helping others less fortunate than me has made me develop as a person. It has been great for me to work alongside other like-minded young people and work together to make a positive impact. All the volunteers on this expedition have been of a similar age group and we all got along really well, with strong friendships cemented into our lives because of Raleigh. We have been able to teach each other about each other's ways of life back at

home and talk about what we plan to do in the future, and give each other advice about various things. The fellow volunteers have made this expedition an incredible experience.

My experience volunteering with Raleigh International has been extremely eye opening,

unique, at times emotional, but most of all incredibly rewarding. A truly memorable experience, I would recommend volunteering abroad with Raleigh International to anyone. I had a fantastic time and it feels even better knowing that I have had an impact on people's lives.



## Who, what and where

### Maria McCarthy

MARIA LIVES IN SIDMOUTH, DEVON and is the author of *The Girls' Car Handbook*, published by Simon and Schuster

Maria's website is:

[www.mariamccarthy.co.uk](http://www.mariamccarthy.co.uk)

For a short video of Maria talking about potholes on Breakfast News, go to:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-17378492>

Maria's social media account is:

[www.twitter.com/mariamccarthy11](http://www.twitter.com/mariamccarthy11)



*The photo is of Maria at the  
Winchester Writer's Festival 2017*

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### Mary Crawley (née Unwin)

MARY'S INFORMATION CAME too late to be included in the main print magazine. Here she tells us of her change of career.

"I left Howell's School Llandaff in 1997. I worked for Barclays Bank for a number of years, but unfortunately was made redundant, due to relocation last year. I have decided to take this as a positive event, and use the opportunity to set up my own business as an Independent Mortgage Adviser. I am still in touch with a lot of my friends from school – and am hoping that appearing in the magazine may be able to raise some awareness of what I am doing."

## Pam Cottle

Pam's book *Another Kind of Ordinary (Living with Autism, Learning Difficulties and Aggression): the Story of a Mother's Love* was published in 2017. Below is the preface, which explains how this inspiring book came about.

### PREFACE

As a secondary school teacher expecting my third child, I thought I knew what to expect from motherhood and how to deal with most situations. However, I was totally unprepared for what followed as I embarked on a course where past experience was irrelevant and no systems were effective. These are the events that followed and my reflections on my new life.

Ben does not look any different. He is good-looking, athletic and slim. Most of the time, with most people, he is charming, thoughtful, open, friendly and polite. Within the close family, his behaviour is sometimes very challenging. He usually maintains eye contact. His wider use of language conceals his limited ability to understand and process it. To you at a first glance, he looks like any other teenager but he has learning difficulties and is autistic. This combination is a dangerous cocktail of conflict, confusion and vulnerability. It results in a life for our family where unpredictability is a constant and the potential for verbal and physical aggression is never absent. This mix has become our everyday; another kind of ordinary.

It is my story but it is also the story of many mothers living with similar challenges – some of whom you will meet in your daily lives. There are no answers yet, only greater understanding and that comes through shared experience.

This book tells my story from pregnancy to the approach of Ben's eighteenth birthday. It is divided into five parts: a series of (roughly chronological) anecdotes for parts one to three; my personal reflections on different issues in part four and a look to the future in part five.

## Angela Fish (née Kear)

[www.angela-fish.com](http://www.angela-fish.com)

The following photographs give a flavour of what Angela was up to in 2017.



World Book Day 2017 at HSL

Year 4

Two exciting developments to report within the media world. I was invited to be interviewed live on the Show for BBC Radio Wales in. Somewhat nerve-wracking but a great experience.



With Roy Noble, February 2017



At a publishing conference in  
Leicester, April 2017



Hywelian Guild