



KOSA NEWS



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The Magazine of the Old Scholars of Kingswood Grammar School and its successors

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EDITORIAL...

As this edition is being put together, BBC4 is repeating the three-part series called *The Grammar School: A Secret History*.

I was impressed by the number of contributors who spoke with feeling about their experiences at grammar school, some with tears in their eyes, as they recalled the tremendous start they had in life as a result of passing the 11 plus. Many spoke about the social mobility which the grammar schools engendered.

But the programme also recognised the sense of failure felt by those who did not pass the 11 plus and therefore went to a secondary modern school. This was the failure of society as a whole in not taking steps to capture the skills and abilities of this section of the school population. But has the comprehensive school resolved this problem?

DIARY DATES:

SPRING LUNCH & AGM:

The AGM is booked for **SATURDAY, 12th APRIL 2014** at LINCOMBE BARN, Downend BS16 2RW to start at 12.30. Come at 12.00 for a chat and a drink from the bar and we sit down for lunch at about 1.00pm. It's the opportunity for you to have your say about KOSA. Fill in the enclosed form now and send it to our Treasurer, MARTIN HARRYMAN, 5 Brecon View, Bleadon Hill, Weston-Super-Mare, BS24 9NF Tel: 01934 812315. All cheques payable to 'KOSA'.

The unaudited accounts for KOSA for 2013 are included with the AGM Agenda as an insert to this edition. Audited accounts will be available at the AGM.

46ers REUNION:

The date for the next lunch at KATHLEEN HARDWICK'S farm down in Clapton-in-Gordano has been fixed for **SATURDAY, 17th MAY 2014**. If you started at KGS in 1946 and haven't yet attended, phone her on 01275 853180 or Mobile: 0783 7528427 or PRISCILLA POWELL (now MAGUIRE) on 0117 9593902 to book your meal. Always a very pleasant occasion.

AUTUMN LUNCH:

Already booked for **SATURDAY, 18th OCTOBER 2014** at Lincombe Barn, Downend. Please book the date in your diary now.

OBITUARIES...

VERNON STOKES (38-43) has informed us of the passing of REX BRITTON (38-42)

'Rex passed away on 25 May 2013 at the age of 86. He was brought up in Kingswood and was a member of the old 1860 ATC Squadron which was based at the School. He became, with me, a member of the squadron band.

'After the war he moved with his family to Birmingham and joined his father at a retail outlet as a shop assistant, his father being the manager.

'He married Pauline in 1950 and they moved back to Kingswood, this being the start of his selling career as he joined Lever Bros as their local representative. He then moved to Colgate but shortly after he joined a well-known watch company covering the South and South West area of the country from Hampshire to Cornwall. He also dealt in antique quality rings and other jewellery until his retirement. Pauline died in December 2008.

'We used to meet at the local newspapers most mornings and recollect our experiences whilst 'on the road' as I had my own business as a leather goods wholesaler in that area.'

MONA OWEN (41-48) (now TIMKO) came over to the UK from her home in Alberta, Canada to attend the funeral of her school friend PAMELA HELEN NASH (41-49) and has given us this brief obituary:

'Pamela passed away in hospital in October 2013. She was born in Frenchay but went to school in Downend where I met her in 1935 when we were five years old.

'After going to Kingswood Grammar School she attended Redland College, Bristol after which she taught in Bristol for a few years, before she went on a teacher exchange in 1959 to British Columbia, Canada. Before returning home she toured the United States and Canada.

'She eventually became the head mistress of an infants school in Soundwell where she stayed until retirement.

'She was very active in the Red Cross and her church and her last few years were in a retirement home in Clevedon. She was always very good at art and so she helped residents of the retirement home with their art projects. Pamela never married.

'I attended her funeral on October 11, 2013 in Downend.'

We have also been informed of the passing of JOHN EVANS (37-42), who lived in Kingswood and JOAN WEBB (40-46) (later FRY) from Bournemouth.

To all those who have lost a loved one we extend our condolences. We are sure that their world was the better for their existence.

OCTOBER LUNCH...

We arranged a Rugby Reunion at the last lunch, which was well supported by those who played for the School and the Old Boys RFC. JOHN BISHOP (52-58), a past Captain and Chairman of KOBRFC, has passed us this note of the proceedings:

'It did not take long for the tales of past rugby glories to be aired once again. A large turnout of ex-players ensured that

camaraderie was fully underway well before we sat down for lunch.

A characteristic of all rugby memories is that they become, shall we say, enhanced the more often they are related. Consequently, I listened enthralled to several stories of tries scored and daring-do at crucial moments during a game, all of which I had heard on previous occasions. This time however, 8 members of the opposition had been sidestepped, handed-off etc. etc. on a 50 yard dash to the line. Whereas, if truth be told the try was the result of a pass received 10 yards out, with not a soul in sight. The fact that I am as guilty as the next man with tendencies to exaggerate, enables me to enjoy these reminiscences time and time again.

'There were 19 ex-players on 2 appointed tables with several others sitting with their contemporaries around the hall. 25 in total plus a few who booked but did not make it for one reason or another. I also heard from 4 others, apologising for their absence due to holidays etc.

'Thanks to one and all for helping to make the gathering to celebrate 60 years of KRFC so enjoyable.'

We also used the lunch as the basis for a reunion of those who started at KGS in 1953, which was arranged by PAULETTE VINEY (now Markley) and RITA RAYNER (now Burrage). Paulette has given us a flavour of the get-together:

'Realising that it was 60 years ago last September that, as naive yet hopeful 11 year olds, we crossed, with eager anticipation, if not a little trepidation, the awesome threshold of KGS (aka 'The Cowsheds'), where we would be hope-

fully indoctrinated with a full education, knowledge, and an advancement in life and culture, (well perhaps not in every case!).

'RITA RAYNER (53-59) (now Burrage) and I thought it would be a good idea if we could get a few of us together to mark the occasion. So with the help of your obliging and hard working Editor, Mike Bendrey, letters were sent and tables booked at the KOSA Autumn Lunch at Lincombe Barn.

'We sat back and hoped that at least a few might make it, but I was amazed and delighted at the response. It was so good to hear from all of you who took the trouble to contact me, by the old fashioned postal service, phone, or more modern electronic email and text - how communications have advanced since those KGS schooldays! Obviously for various reasons not all of you could make it on the day but enough came to make it all worth-while.

'We all had a great time reminiscing about the years at KGS, the teachers, the other schoolmates and the stories of what we all got up to, remembering names and events, some funny, some sad, some serious and some downright hilarious. We talked of how our lives, careers and families had developed over the ensuing years. Lots of photographs helped us remember names, events and pupils which, in some cases, we had even forgotten about, and generally lots of very happy memories of our youthful experiences.

'Sadly the time went by much too quickly, so some of us agreed that we would meet up again at the April Lunch (so put that in your diaries - 12 April 2014) and we will also arrange a more informal get-to-



gether when the weather is more clement (perhaps a barbecue/buffet) where we can spend more time talking and recollecting before we all get past it!

ANOTHER 53er...

Someone who also enjoyed the 53ers reunion was MONICA JONES (now McCulloch). Monica writes:

‘It was an excellent event and so good to meet up with so many friends from the distant past. So many memories to recall and events to catch-up on over the last 50+ years. There just wasn’t enough time to talk to everyone!’

A big ‘thank you’ to all those who helped to bring the event to fruition.’

By coincidence Monica enclosed a cutting from a quality newspaper which was headed ‘Axing grammars ‘led to the collapse of school standards’.

A report published by the influential Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) found that English school leavers had poorer literacy, numeracy and problem-solving skills than their grandparents (that’s us!) – the only place among 24 wealthy nations where this was the case.

A reader in psychology at Glasgow University reported that ‘it would seem that primary and secondary education was so good that it still has an effect today’. Many grammars were replaced with comprehensives in the 70s and today there are just 164 grammar schools left.

‘...In England and N. Ireland the 55-plus age group did so unusually well compared to other countries that it makes sense that grammars were a major factor... The 55 to 65-year-olds were among the best educated in the developed

world’.

He added ‘that there was a trend away from ‘streaming’ according to ability within state schools ...after 1997, and by 2007 the proportion of lessons taught according to ability stood at just 40%.

Monica concludes ‘We can consider ourselves so very fortunate to have had a grammar school education.’

...BUT ANOTHER VIEW...

PHIL DARKE (48-52) has been prompted to write about his views on grammar school education:

‘Charles Dickens wrote the following passage:

“All the schoolfellows and others of old had either done superlatively well or superlatively ill and this is so common the case that I never can imagine what became of all the mediocre people of people’s youth – especially considering that we find no lack of the species in our maturity.”

‘Perusal of KOSA NEWS seems to confirm the validity of this statement. On its pages we read of ex-KGS scholars who have distinguished themselves in the fields of scientific research, education, art, and religion, etc and it is natural that siblings and schoolfellows should bask in the reflected glory of their achievements. Nevertheless, many of these clever people seem only to have realised their full potential in our erstwhile colonies.

‘No doubt those who have done ‘superlatively ill’ would not wish to disclose the details.

‘I opine that the academic ambitions of the majority of our ‘mediocre schoolfel-

lows' was limited to obtaining a GCE (Ordinary Level) at sixteen years of age, leaving school, and gaining a congenial and remunerative occupation in commerce or industry. That is, the metaphorical 'scum' who were cursed by 'FROGGY' DAVIES (French) and destined to 'leave this school to become dockers, stevedores, and (in the case of the girls) serve behind the counters of Woolworth's stores.'

'Have their lives been less devoid of interest than those of the star pupils? It would be interesting to hear the views of the 'mediocrities' even if these were to dilute the efforts of the high achievers and dim the lustre of KGS.

'I attended the school from 1948-52 therefore my views may be somewhat unfashionable in these times when educational mania fosters childish frivolity far beyond adolescence.'

...AND A RESPONSE...

As Editor I would like to respond to PHIL DARKE'S letter:

I welcome Phil's comments about the success or otherwise of KGS people. KOSA NEWS has always welcomed news and views of all persuasions; after all, success is a relative concept and who can say that someone who has not reached the giddy heights in business, industry, commerce, government or academia but has raised a family of responsible adults can be regarded as any the less successful.

In many cases success may be measured by achievements of personal goals such as happiness, contentment, friendships and making contributions, in many different ways, to charitable and social causes.

'FROGGY' DAVIES' comment to Phil was obviously misplaced; I would suggest that no one is able to predict what a person is likely to make of his/her life based on experience of them in their youth, even up to the age of eighteen. Stories abound of teachers (and others such as parents!) predicting a youngster's wasted life, only to be proved completely wrong by the subsequent stellar rise of that person in his/her chosen field.

He should have appreciated that the economy and society generally needs all types of skills, dockers and stevedores included, and we would still need people behind the counter in Woolworth's if they hadn't gone bust!

Predicting the future success of grammar school pupils would be particularly prone to error. They had already been creamed when they arrived at grammar school as a result of the 11 plus, imperfect though that was. It could be expected (and proved to be so) that a relatively high proportion of them would achieve the heights; others would not.

A grammar school education provided opportunity – the opportunity to achieve whatever an individual was capable of. In its time it provided a means of social mobility whereby many from working class (not a popular term) and manual backgrounds could progress to professional and managerial positions if they both wished to and possessed the ability.

Indeed, our politicians currently express concern that social mobility in the UK is at an all-time low and falling behind other advanced nations. Needless to say they seem to be unable to come up with proposals which are likely to solve the problem. The suggestion of a return of

grammar schools or their equivalent is unpopular, yet private examples of a grammar school type education booms.

Yes, many were limited to achieving 'O' levels and obtaining 'a congenial and remunerative occupation in industry and commerce' as Phil suggests. To others 'O' levels were the first step, the open door, to 'A' levels, then degrees or professional qualifications – each one an important hurdle to be overcome in achieving competence in a chosen field.

Even if 'O' levels were passed or failed, the basic education received from KGS was sound and, for me at least, taught the lesson that you're never too old to learn. Education is a life-long process which should never end with school, college, university or apprenticeship.

If any so-called 'mediocre' people out there would like to send in their views we would, of course, be pleased to publish them.

KOBRFC...

KINGSWOOD RUGBY CLUB (formerly Kingswood Old Boys RFC) has recently reached its 60th year. JOHN GRAY (46-53) who was responsible for founding the Club, has written the following short history as a tribute to its 60 years.

'Prior to 1953 the Old Boys of Kingswood Grammar School raised a team each year to play the current school 1st XV at the end of each rugby season. On the occasion of my last match for the school, several old boys said they would like to form a club so that they could play every week rather than just once a year. As I was leaving school, I was asked if I would organise it.

'It meant me going to the Bristol Combination and persuading them that we had what it takes to run a new club – the older men of the rugby world were not convinced that a young 18 year old would be able to do it. Others felt we were too far out of Bristol (remember most rugby matches were played on the other side of Bristol at that time). 'Perhaps we should approach Gloucester.' Anyway, I won the day and ended up with their blessing and a number of fixtures for the new season 1953-54.

'Next I had to negotiate with the school. Fortunately the then Headmaster, NORMAN RIDLEY, was extremely helpful and let us use the school gym on Tuesdays for training and the Tenniscourt Road pitch for our home matches. JIMMY WILD (sportsmaster) lent us a set of navy blue jerseys. Fine for most of us, although some of the bigger lads struggled to get in them!

'On the day of our first match I cycled around the area of Kingswood, Hanham, Staple Hill and Downend calling on everyone picked to make sure they would be there. Communications were much different 60 years ago! I remember the feeling of elation and pride when 15 of us formed up on the pitch waiting for the referee to blow. Whether we won or not escapes my memory but it was the elation of getting 15 chaps together that was the achievement.

'Away fixtures were the next problem. Where were all the grounds and how to get there? We only had one car and 2 motorbikes between us. TONY BURGESS was always selected for away matches as he had the car; but nevertheless 6 or 7 players had to go by bus.

Selection was a problem too. We had 18



players for 15 places. Three reserves were necessary in case any player was absent and the discussion often went: 'we must pick TERRY HIBBS this week as he hasn't played for three weeks; or 'No we can't do that we are playing and they are a very good side'. Then we had the problem of those rugby players who came home from University at Christmas and expected to play for the Old Boys. You can imagine the reception when a regular member who had paid his subs was asked to stand down – and so it went on.

'Over the next few years we gradually increased members as more and more boys left school and we started a 2nd XV. We moved from playing at the school to Lees Hill – a Council pitch and we slowly improved our fixture list.

'I moved away in 1969 and soon after the Club became an open club as the school no longer sent us players. Now KRFC is a strong club with a huge junior section and several teams of all ages. It has its own ground and club house and is well respected in the area.

'There are a great many people who have worked hard over the years to make KRFC such a successful Club but I am proud of the efforts a few of us put in during those very early days to get it going.

The photo above, supplied by DEREK MOODY (48-56), is of the School 1st XV of 55-56 in those blue shirts loaned to the early Old Boys' RFC.

The sportsmaster, 'JIMMY' WILD, is standing on the left of the group

TONY RECALLS...

TONY DOWN (55-62) writes:

'The recollections of contemporary 'TOBY' COCKRAM in the last issue made me chuckle and highlighted the similarities in our experiences at KGS.

'During one lesson, in form 2B, I was shooting paper pellets from an elastic band. In order to get a better angle on my target I waited for an opportune moment and stood up to take aim. Glancing towards the corridor, I realised with horror that Headmaster C N RIDLEY was watching me through the window. 'Oh, gosh,' I said to myself (or words to that effect!). Later, standing in his study, I was informed that my punishment was to help MR MOORE, the groundsman, to clear up a few leaves. It was the end of October and the school field around the oak tree and along the bottom fence was ankle deep in leaves. It would have been quicker to rebuild the Pyramids!

'Following a heavy fall of snow, I and a few others were lobbing snowballs into the crowd waiting to go into the canteen. Inadvertently, one of my missiles hit a certain Physics master in the back of the head as he was going into lunch. To say that he was not a happy 'Bunny' is an understatement and he furiously started to round up all and sundry. I took off so fast that even Usain Bolt would have had trouble keeping up and I escaped unscathed. Sweet revenge, perhaps, for all those slaps around the head he used to mete out.

'Like many others, I remember the sting of the gymshoe wielded by Sportsmaster 'JIMMY' WILDE. I am sure that the word Dunlop was permanently tattooed on my backside.

'Being of the same era as 'Toby' Cock-

ram, I knew many of the people mentioned in his letter. I started in form 1H with BOB DAVEY, 'WOOKEY' COLE, PHIL DURY, PETE STEVENS, GORDON JACKSON, MIKE PUZEY and also ALEX HENRY and JIM MATTHEWS, both sadly no longer with us. Then onto 2B, 3L1, with form master 'FROSTY' WINTOUR (French) and 4L1 under the eagle eye of ERIC HILTON (Music).

'At that time 'O' levels were usually taken in the 5th form but we were fast-tracked and took the exams in form four. Most people in the class studied 8 'O' levels and I believe that the results that year (1959) were excellent. Perhaps GORDON JACKSON, who seems to have a remarkable grasp of the history of our era, might be able to confirm that – or otherwise.

'From there we went straight into the 6th form to study for 'A' levels, my particular subjects being French, Latin and German. I was fortunate to have excellent teachers; MISS SPILL and MR WINTOUR for French, STUART SYKES, MISS BAILEY and VAL RICHARDS for Latin and KEITH SHARPE for German. Thanks to their efforts and patience I managed to pass.

'Sport played a large part in my life and I represented Haskins House in Rugby, cricket, athletics, cross-country and soccer, although Rugby was, and still is, the love of my life. I played for the 1st XV for three years, becoming captain in my last year, and also for various Bristol public and Grammar Schools XVs along with PHIL DURY and PAUL DAVIES. The photograph (below) is an informal shot of the 1st XV (59-60) outside one of the 6th form huts, probably the one which 'Toby' Cockram and 'MUGSY' MEAKIN had stuck back together!



Those from that era may recognise in the back row: Terry Anstey, Paul Davies, Alan Knott, Harry Thomas, Mike Mealing, Terry Bleakman, Tony Richards, ?, and in the front row: Pete Lynes, Tony Down, Dave Gifford, Bill Barker, Pete Stevens, Thomas, Phil Dury.

‘Unlike ‘Toby’ who professed not to have liked girls I was interested in them from about the age of seven and in my early years at KGS I always tried to get a window seat in class so that I could watch the 6th form girls playing tennis!

‘Despite my many misdemeanours, I was made a Prefect in 1960 and lived in that little room which ‘Toby’ so wistfully describes. MARY PRING, LYNETTE DAVIES and JENNY READ were also prefects at that time. The photo (on the next page) was taken at a charity hockey match between the boy prefects and the girls’ first team in 1961. Mary and Jenny are both in the front row. A note of caution: do not get too excited by the long-haired well-endowed ‘lady’ in the back

row. That’s TERRY ANSTEY in drag! Happy days.’

Others recognised on the photo are (back row to the right of Terry) Diana Smith, Mike Jones, Tony Down, Dave Anne, Pete Stevens, Nigel Carey and Mike Puzy. Front row: Noreen Crockford, Mary Pring and Jenny Reed.

IN THE NEWS...

Part-way through the preparation of this edition of KOSA NEWS your Ed stopped for lunch and to catch the BBC 1.00pm News. There, talking about the first girls’ choir to sing at Canterbury Cathedral for 900 years, was The Dean, The Very Reverend Dr Robert Willis. This rang a bell so I decided to look him up on *Wikipedia*. Although there’s no mention of his KGS *alma mater*, he’s one of our KOSA members who reached the dizzy heights in the Church of England.

Combining *Wikipedia* and *Kingswood Chronicles* I prepared this pen portrait of ROBERT WILLIS (58-65):



ROBERT ANDREW WILLIS (born 17 May 1947), an Anglican priest, theologian and music composer. He was ordained as a priest in the Church of England. He was the Dean of Hereford before becoming the 39th Dean of Canterbury in 2001.

Robert is a graduate of Warwick University and Ripon College Cuddesdon. He is the present Chairman of the Deans' and Provosts' Conference of the Church of England and has been a member of the General Synod since 1996.

He is an accomplished pianist and lover of opera as well as a keen tennis player and traveller; he has also written some hymns. He is a passionate cat owner.

The Very Reverend Dr Robert Willis DL was ordained in 1972 to serve as a curate in St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury, and in 1975 went on to be Vicar Choral of Salisbury Cathedral and Chaplain of the Cathedral School. In 1978 he became Rector of Tisbury in Wiltshire, mov-

ing from there to be Vicar of Sherborne Abbey in Dorset in 1987. In 1992 he became Dean of Hereford and in 1999 he was elected as Chairman of the Deans of English Cathedrals, a position he still holds.

As Dean of Canterbury Robert is also Chairman of Governors of the King's School. He sat on the Council of the University of Kent from 2003 – 2009 and is an Honorary Fellow of Canterbury Christ Church University. He is also Chairman of the Trustees of Jesus Hospital and President of the Parkinson's Disease Society in Kent. In his time as Dean of Canterbury he has welcomed the Queen to distribute the Royal Maundy in 2002 and enthroned Archbishop Rowan Williams in 2003. He helped welcome the Lambeth Conference to the Cathedral in July and August 2008 and in the same year he was made a Freeman of the City of Canterbury. He received an Honorary Doctorate of Divinity from Yale University in 2009 and a Knighthood of the Order of St John in the

same year. In 2011 he was appointed a Deputy Lieutenant of the County of Kent.

Robert talks about the significance of Canterbury on Youtube. Go to http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4BhIQrs_2Wk for his short talk.

A quick scan of *Kingswood Chronicles* reveals that at KGS he contributed positively to school life. In 1964 he played the role of The Earl of Loam in the production of *The Admirable Crichton* and took part in the mock election as the Conservative candidate. He came a close third. In 1963 he was awarded an orchestra prize and played in the performance of Mozart's String Quartet K157 at the School Concert that year.

He won a prize for the his 'A' level results in 1965 in which he obtained English Lit., History and Music (not religious knowledge?) and the same year he won the Kingswood-Land's End-Kingswood prefects' hitch-hiking race, along with another outsider ROLAND FUDGE, according to *Kingswood Chronicles* 'by a short head'. It seems that he went to the University of Warwick straight from KGS to read History and Politics.

...ANOTHER REV...

JOHN 'TWEEDY' HARRIS (53-60) follows up on his letter in the last edition:

'Thank you first of all for putting into a recent edition of *KOSA NEWS* a search for folk who could remember my blind client from Kenilworth, to whom I read when my turn comes on the rota and who came from Downend. At the 53ers Reunion DAVID GIFFORD (53-60) came to me and said he remembered him and that he used to play football and cricket in Page Park. He then went on to list a few people who also used to play as well

- PETER LYNE and JOHN BISHOP etc. When I rang Richard he was thrilled.

'The 53ers Reunion was great and thank you for all you did to make it what it was - I thoroughly enjoyed myself and I know others did too. I am sure I am about the last of many who will have written to you in a similar vein.

'Perhaps the following would be *News* material, though if you don't include it I will not be offended. Not long ago I was reading devotionally a passage from the New Testament - the healing of the centurion's son in Matthew 8, and a memory from KGS returned that I may not have shared before.

'Some time in the late 1950s I would think, on the request of MISS BAILEY (Latin & Greek) I, with others, took part in the Latin Reading Competition at Bristol University on a Saturday morning. I don't know who else was in our team. We didn't do very well competition-wise - the established Bristol schools perhaps had more acceptable elocution-trained Latin pronunciation, I think. The passage we had to read was that story I was reading that morning, although I think it was the parallel version in Luke's gospel.

'It was what happened afterwards that I remember so well. Miss Bailey took us all to her apartment and gave us lunch. Part of the lunch was something I had never eaten before, but countless times since - a jacket potato!

'When I got to my first teaching appointment on the outskirts of Huddersfield, Jean Harvey was also starting her teaching career on the same day and I found out that she had gone to the same school in Kent that Miss Bailey had become head of. If I remember correctly

Miss Bailey, for whom I had a great regard, was not finding it easy because she was following someone who had made her mark on the school and had been Head for a long time.

'That Reunion certainly set me thinking about KGS days.'

EFFECT OF KOSA NEWS..

Our Chairman, STAN BURRAGE (51-56) was obviously carrying out his role by 'pressing the flesh' after the Autumn Lunch:

'During the Autumn Lunch, I was approached by ROB BURFORD (57-61), over from South Africa, who advised me I am living in the house of his childhood cousin.

'He reached this conclusion by picking up my details from *KOSA NEWS*. I was unable to spend much time with him at the Lunch but arranged for him to drop into my home the following week and fill in each other about events during his childhood. He used to be packed away from his home in Downend to his Aunt in Nailsworth during School Holidays. Bus fare was 2/6 (12.5p) He seems to have had a colourful cousin who, to this day, retains a certain local notoriety.

'During Rob's visit we had a long discussion on the Kenyan connection with KOSA and King's Oak Academy and the presentation by Joseph Gachagua and Jackline Wanjiru, from the Kenyan School, guests at our Lunch.

'As a Englishman living in South Africa, Rob and I both seemed to arrive at the same conclusion. There is no doubt that poverty in Africa can only be helped by ensuring assistance is only handled by bone fide representatives or

by direct contribution to the specific organisation. This avoids the widespread corruption and ensures financial aid hits the target.

'I have been concerned, but am happy to report that our Kenyan efforts are going direct and I applaud King's Oak for their efforts. Their plan is to finance 20 pupils a year who are in poverty and cannot afford education. The costs are approximately £100 per annum per pupil. We raised enough during the lunch to put 2 pupils through one year's education, a real credit to KOSA members. Thanks to *KOSA NEWS* for yet another valuable re-connection.'

MARGARET'S EXHIBITION...

MARGARET LOVELL'S work (50-55) was featured in an exhibition held at The Topsham Society in Devon between 19 October and 10 November 2013. An extract from the web site covered the exhibition:



'Internationally acclaimed, award-winning, modernist sculptor, her works are distinguished by their complex simplicity, the abstract forms are both powerful and graceful; visually arresting. She has been valued by the serious collector since first showing in

London...in the 60s.

'The exhibition in the Art Room, Topsham focussed on a unique collection of sculpture, drawings and prints from 1956 to



KINGSWOOD GRAMMAR SCHOOL
FORM VA 1958



KINGSWOOD GRAMMAR SCHOOL
FORM VM 1958



KINGSWOOD GRAMMAR SCHOOL
FORM VS 1958

53ers...

Page 14 shows the 53ers in forms 5A, 5M & 5S in 1958, for many their last year at KGS. The complete reunion group is shown on page 4 and here are some of the groups scanning photos.



date, many not having previously been seen.' The Art Room web page can be found on:

www.theartroomtopsham.co.uk

Margaret was a pupil at KGS under popular Art Master HAROLD V WATTS in the 50s. She has an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Leicester.

AT THE PALACE...

Many KGS folk volunteer for charitable activities and MARY POWELL (51-56) (now Janes) is a stalwart of Kingswood Heritage Museum.



Mary (on the left of the photo) and others were invited to a Buckingham Palace garden party after the Queen's Award for Volunteers was made to the Museum.

Mary reports:

'It really was a special day. Eight thousand were there from all over the world. the military bands played and afternoon tea was delicious. Saw the Queen and a few other Royals. The gardens were at their best for Spring.

'There was a DVD taken on the day which we all bought as no photos were allowed in the Palace grounds. This photo was taken on our phone as we arrived in the side gate.

THAT BRISTOL L...

DAVID KERSHAW (48-56) remembers an earlier Bristol L discussion in response to BRIAN ILES' (45-50) queries in earlier editions of *KOSA NEWS*: 'Some years ago (1950 or 1960) the Points West TV programme asked people in the street to read the following: Eva Turner was the prima donna of the Carl Rosa Opera Company.

'More often than not it came over as: Eval Turner was primal donnal of the Car Rosal Operal Company

'Notice the other Bristol foible. Once the 'e' is established, you leave it off. Hence Car and not Carl.

'Africal is a materal areal'.

RECORDED SUCCESS...

The Head of Oldland Common Junior School kept a daily report of the school's activities. It included such items as attendance percentages, sickness of staff and school holidays.

Also recorded are the passes of the pupils to Kingswood Grammar School and in a page from June and July 1946 (see page 17) are recorded the successes of

Whitsuntide Holidays and will re-open on Monday June 17th. The attendance for the past week has been 91.3%.

June 17th School re-opened at 9am today.

June 20th Notification was received this morning that Kathleen Hardwick has qualified for admission to the Kingswood Grammar School.

June 21st Attendance last week was 86.3%.

June 28th Mr W. O. Phillips ended his period of Supply Assistant in this school today.

July 1st Attendance last week was 87.1%.

Mrs D. Smith returned to duty today.

July 3rd Mrs L. Thomas is absent from duty today.

July 4th Mrs Thomas returned to duty today, her absence being due to illness.

July 8th Attendance last week was 93.2%.

Notification was received on Sat that Terence Gibbs has qualified for admission to the Kingswood Grammar School.

July 15th Attendance last week was 90.3%. Notification was received ^{today} on Sat that Sheelagh Lacey has qualified for admission to the Kingswood Grammar School.

KATHLEEN HARDWICK (20 June),
TERENCE GIBBS (8 July) and SHE-
LAGH LACEY (15 July).

On another page which has been seen by KOSA NEWS it records on 16 September 1946 that 'BARBARA MILNE has been accepted by Kingswood Grammar School with a view to becoming a teacher'. Did she make it?

A THOUGHT...

In an email to KOSA NEWS some time ago ALAN BRAIN (39-44) asked us to pass on his best wishes to CONNIE PEARSON (39-44). He also asked about having his ashes scattered around the tree (presumably The Oak) when the time comes. He was looking to put more guidance about this aspect in his funeral file, if possible.

The only experience KOSA has of scattering ashes in the School grounds is of our previous Chairman, PETER WALTERS. His wife, JEAN LOVELL (48-56), had obtained permission from the then

Head and our current Vice President, DAVID LEWIS, to have Peter's ashes scattered around the Old Oak. Jean, her son and daughter and your Ed went down one Saturday morning and scattered Peter's ashes in a small, private ceremony. We are sure that Peter would have approved.

Clearly any permission in the future should now be obtained from the present Principal, IAN FROST.

ANOTHER SUCCESS...

ROGER CROMWELL (51-58) came across a report in the *Western Daily Press* of someone who left KGS early but nevertheless became a success in business. No doubt many locals will remember him. Here's an extract:

ALFRED JOHN (JACK) FRY (33-36?) was an energetic football and music loving Bristol boy. Born in Kingswood in 1922, he played the cornet in the local Boys' Brigade and won a scholarship to KGS (then known as 'The Cowsheds') but left at the age of 14 to be a carpenter's apprentice.

Too young to enlist at the beginning of the Second World War, he was an enthusiastic member of the local 'Dad's Army' until he reached 18, when he joined the RAF. Jack survived the war and returned home to Bristol, to his wife Connie and baby daughter Linda, to take over the family cycle shop on Kingswood High Street.

Being very ambitious, Jack wanted to expand the business and soon experimented with vinyl records. This was frowned upon by the elderly and devout of Kingswood but loved by the youth of the day and records sold out as quickly as they came in.

From there he introduced toys, prams and baby-wear but soon the High Street shop was bursting at the seams so the next door premises were bought. A son, John, was born in 1949.

Originally called 'Fry's for Prams', then renamed 'Fry's Baby Fayre', the business rapidly took off with eventually a chain of 12 branches in the Bristol area and a prime site opposite the Pump Rooms in Bath, then further afield – including Weston-super-Mare, Cirencester and Stroud.

Jack was an entrepreneur but with a heart of gold as each Christmas he delivered gifts of toys to local children's homes, although no one else knew at the time.

Eventually the business was bought by Lines Brothers of Tri-ang Toys. Jack was offered a place on the board but, always a one-man show, decided to look for another business to develop. He was still only in his 30s.

Having a very sweet tooth he decided on newspaper shops. Businesses were acquired in Old Market, Brislington, Fishponds and finally the large corner premises which became Henleaze Post Office when he decided he would be the sub-post master. Later he sold the shops and started Wessex Business Brokers Ltd (later renamed Wessex Sales Organisation).

During this time Jack also went into partnership with a builder and architect to develop houses in Bristol and North Somerset.

Wessex Sales Organisation eventually became the leading agents selling sub-post office attached businesses in the whole country, and soon Jack was invited to lecture to sub-postmasters by the Federation of Sub-Postmasters. This last hugely successful business continued with Jack at the helm until his early death from cancer aged only 62 in 1985.



We are always pleased to receive form photos and any photos, both formal and informal, featuring KGS folk. The photo on the previous page was forwarded by JOAN PEELING (46-51) (now Toogood) and is of 4B in 1950.

The photos on this page have been contributed by RICHARD LUCAS (61-68). They are of 3G in 1964 (Form master

MR GRIFFITHS) and of 6iE (MISS ELGAR).

Photos of the late 60s and 70s are particularly welcome as we tend to have fewer of these. Copies of most published photos can be obtained from KOSA on request, preferably by email. A small donation to the coffers of KOSA secures!



LINE FROM LYN...

LYN DAVIES (Cohort 55-62) (now MIN-TO), a new member, has dropped us a line:

'Thank you for sending me the copies of *KOSA NEWS* - I now know what the acronym stands for after making various guesses!

'What a trip down memory name and a reminder of how much time has passed. It is sad to learn that so many of my contemporaries are no longer with us. I have memories of most of them, particularly MIKE JONES. Mike was the person responsible for getting a soccer team going again - I think he had many animated discussions with Headmaster C N RIDLEY until he eventually gave in! This would have been in 1961.

'I found the discussions on the Bristol accent interesting. I moved down from Yorkshire into the second year and was teased unmercifully about my accent with the short vowel sounds. Having done a circle of the country they are not as strong now but still there. Every time I hear a Bristolian I wonder how they dared have laughed at me! I still notice the good ideals and the going to the theatal - in fact an L on most words ending in a vowel and a few in between as well. Another thing is the separation of vowel sounds eg a field is a fee-uld and a gender is assigned to many inanimate objects. Try asking for directions - "take this road and follow him to the pub where he bends to the right" etc! I am all for accents though, it makes an interesting world and it would be a shame to lose them.

'I haven't really had contact with anyone from what was KGS since the late 60s but had heard the odd thing now and again from my family. It is amazing how

a face comes to mind when you see the name. I remembered every one GORDON JACKSON mentioned and all except one from TONY COCKRAM'S (or Toby as I remember him!) article. It wasn't only boys who got hit on the head by MR AUSTEN in physics though! Gordon was a brilliant musician at the time - I hope he fulfilled his promise and made music his career.

'Not all that long ago I had Desert Island Discs on the radio and heard a Bristol accent, the music chosen was of my era and the person being interviewed came from Kingswood so I had to listen more intently and discovered it was COLIN PILLINGER! I was a member of the Chemistry class described by Colin in the *KOSA NEWS* - at that time I think a very quiet boy! - and do remember the prank he related. The ratio of male to female in that class was about 20+:2 and I think 'FISHY' SAMMONS would have been happier if the 2 hadn't been there. On occasions he would come up to me after the lesson and apologise (quite unnecessarily) in case I had been upset by a particular word he had said!

'Like Tony, I remember the 6th form as being an enjoyable part of life. We were the form that took our O-levels in the 4th year and went straight to the 6th form. This meant we were not old enough to go to University at the end of two years and stayed on for a 3rd. I think Mr Ridley had the idea that we would all work hard in the 3rd year and sit Oxbridge exams but in the event the majority did very little except enjoy themselves - and possibly grow up a bit. I remember we used to go down to the pub in Warmley at lunch time, where MR HODSON, the maths master, also went. He used to be in the other bar and kindly turned a blind eye - we were all 18 eventually during the year!

We must have done a bit of work somewhere along the line as most went on to further education.

It would be easy to go on reminiscing but that is definitely a sign of old age. I would be interested to know if Mary Pring or Mary Plaster are on the list or if not then I would be pleased to hear if anybody knows anything of them.

'There was a request of a photo of 4L1 in 1959 from MARGARET REECE. If no one else responded then I do have one but I think the reason Margaret hasn't got one is because she isn't on it. She is on the lower VIth one the following year - I think I am remembering the right person.'

Neither MARY PRING nor MARY PLASTER are on the KOSA list of over 1,100 members. If anyone knows their whereabouts we would be pleased to pass on their details to Lyn – and add them to KOSA. – Ed.

MUSIC MAKERS...

MARGARET REECE sent us this shot of the 1962? School Orchestra some time ago. Missing are Gordon Jackson

(clarinet), Helen Organ (viola) and Frank Dobbins (cello).

Those on the photo are, at the back l to r, Maurice Holland (viola) John Harris (viola), Margaret Rees (cello), Margaret Squires (flute), Richard Holloway (cello), Ruth White (flute), Brenda Ford (clarinet), Freda White (cello) Steven Wellington (Trumpet), Peter Lyne (double bass).

Seated on the front row: Diana Smith (violin), Peter Saunders (violin), David Wheatley (violin), Roger Garland (violin & leader), Miss Julia Beeken (conductor), Jennifer Hunt (violin), Joyce Fudge (violin), Roland (violin), Malcolm James (violin).

IMPROVEMENTS..?

Have standards increased since the old days? On pages 22 and 23 is the Algebra paper from the 1925 First School Certificate Examination from our archives.

It was probably equivalent to the GCE O-level exam of the 50s and 60s, but how does it compare with the current GCSE papers?



UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL.

FIRST SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION.

JULY, 1925.

MATHEMATICS.

ALGEBRA.

[All the questions should be answered.

Mathematical tables are provided.

Write your answers on the **right-hand** page of the MS. book, using the left for rough work.]

1. Show that $a^2 + b^2 + c^2 - bc - ca - ab$ is unaltered in value if a , b and c are each increased by the same quantity x .

2. What are the respective remainders when

(a) $x^4 - 13x^3 + x^2 - 5x + 6$ is divided by $x - 13$; $R = 110$

(b) $6x^3 - 29x^2 + 3x + 90$ is divided by $x - 3$? $R = 0$

Find the factors of the second expression.

3. Simplify:

(a) $\frac{a}{x^2 - ax} + \frac{a}{x^2 - a^2} + \frac{2}{x + a}$;

$$\frac{a^2 + 2ax}{a^2x - x^3}$$

(b) $\left(x - 1 - \frac{6}{x - 2}\right) \left(\frac{x - 3}{x + 1} - \frac{x - 4}{x + 2}\right)$

$$\div \left(1 - \frac{9}{2(x + 2)} - \frac{1}{2(x - 2)}\right). \quad 2$$

4. Solve the equations:

(a) $2(x + 3)(x - 2) - 3(x - 1)(x - 2) = 13x - 26$; $x = -4$

(b) $9xy - 25y = 21$,
 $15xy - 28y + 6 = 0.$

$$\left. \begin{array}{l} x = 2 \\ y = -3 \end{array} \right\}$$

5. Two men buy fountain pens to give as presents. They each spend £17. 2s.; one buys two more pens than the other but on the average gives 6d. less for each pen. How many pens did they buy in all?

6. The salary of the manager of a business is made up of two parts; one is a fixed amount and the other varies directly as the net profits of the business. When the profits are £2000 his total salary is £400; when the profits are £5000 his total salary is £700. Find graphically or otherwise the fixed portion of his salary and what percentage of the profits he receives.

7. Prove a formula for finding the sum of n terms of an Arithmetical Progression.

Find the value to three significant figures of

$$10 \cdot 12 \times 10 \cdot 14 \times 10 \cdot 16 \times \dots \text{ to 12 factors.}$$

575

8. If a pendulum consists of a uniform sphere of radius r attached to a string of length l (measured to the centre of the sphere), the time of swing is given by

$$t = \pi \sqrt{\frac{1}{g} \left(l + \frac{2r^2}{5l} \right)}.$$

13.3

Deduce in its simplest form an equation for finding l when g , π , t and r are known.

Also find t , it being given that

$$\pi = 3 \cdot 142, \quad g = 32 \cdot 19, \quad l = 3, \quad r = \cdot 125.$$

9. Plot the graphs of the functions $2 + \frac{3}{x}$ and $x^2 - 3x$ from $x = -2$ to $x = +5$.

Hence find for what positive values of x the first function is greater than the second.

Also show that the equation $x^3 - 2x = 3(x^2 + 1)$ has only one real root and find it.

[Take scales 10 small divisions as unit x , 5 small divisions as unit y .]

Also in our archives we have other papers from the same date, but neither the Arithmetic nor the Algebra papers give the time allowed for the exam. We have assumed that 2 hours were allowed. Although maths tables were provided there

were, of course, no electronic calculators in those days.

The papers for English, French, Latin, Chemistry, Physics, History and Geography all seem to be of a high standard.

GUIDANCE...

Dated from July 1954, below is an extract from the guidance notes to parents sent out by Headmaster, C N Ridley. The notes were accompanied by a sketch of the School, with each room identified - even the tuck shop!

An additional note was sent out to the girls' parents, prepared by the then Headmistress MISS QUINTON. It set out in specific detail the girls' allowed uniform. It was also definite about what was not allowed - coloured nail varnish and jewellery - with the exception of watches.

These notes are taken from the School rules, and are not intended to be completely comprehensive, but may help parents over the difficult early days.

- (1) Times of School. 8.55 - 12.25.
1.35 - 3.45.

During the morning there is a 20 minute break from 10.40 - 11.0., during which free milk may be taken, or biscuits etc., obtained from the School Tuck Shop.

Children are not allowed into the School building, except in bad weather, before 8.45.a.m.

- (2) School Uniform must be worn at all times at School, on the way to and from School, and on any School journeys or expeditions and at School functions. Children are encouraged to change into other clothes at home, and during the evenings and weekends to keep their uniform clean.

(3) School Meals. A hot meal is provided at midday at the price of 9d, with reductions for brothers and sisters. Each FRIDAY the child must purchase 5 meal tickets, bringing 3/9d in exact change. These tickets are to be used during the following week, and must be inscribed with the child's name and form on the back. They must be taken care of, as loss may mean trouble for a great number of people. Children are expected to eat the food provided, which is a good variety and cooked on the premises. If parents wish their children to do so, they may bring a sandwich lunch, which is eaten in the dining room with the rest. Alternatively they may go home for dinner provided that they are in School again by 1.30.p.m.

(4) Books and general equipment are lent to pupils, and must be taken care of, and returned in good condition. Parents are reminded that they are responsible for any damage or loss of School property, which may have to be made good. Wilful damage to other School property will have to be paid for, and a standard fine of 5/- is levied for windows broken in the course of play.

(5) Personal Property of pupils, such as ordinary clothing, satchels, games clothing, etc., must be marked clearly with the pupil's name. Whilst every precaution is taken to obviate loss it must be stated that, if property is not marked, it will be difficult to trace, and the responsibility must be taken by the parents. Losses must be reported to the Form Master or Mistress, and enquiries made at the Office.

(6) Absence. Absence through illness must be notified immediately if there is a risk of certain infectious diseases. Otherwise, when a child returns to School a note explaining the absence must be sent to the Form Master or Mistress. Leave of absence for private matters will not be given without a note beforehand, and then only upon certain conditions e.g. compulsory holidays of parents in School terms, but not for Music exams, or dental appointments, or Sunday School outings. After a child has been absent for 5 days a card will be sent from School, and parents are expected to reply, giving reason for absence - unless they have previously done so.

(7) Health. Every child is expected to take part in P.T. and Games unless precluded for medical reasons. Every child is examined periodically by the County Medical Officers, and the Schools Health Service is available for remedial help. Cases of eyestrain, or dental trouble outside the routine inspections should be reported by letter to the Headmaster.

(8) Homework. Every child is expected to do homework five nights per week commencing with an hour per night in Form I, and increasing to 2½ - 3 hours by Form V. Each child is issued with a homework journal, and it is the duty of parents to sign this each weekend.

(9) Correspondence and Interviews. All correspondence with the School must be addressed to the Headmaster, with the following exceptions.

CO-EDUCATIONAL..?

KGS was a co-educational school and, indeed, most of the classes were mixed. However, there are quite a number of examples where the genders were separated as in forms VI1S of 1960 and in IVG2 of 1962 (below).

Is anyone aware of the school's logic behind this occasional policy? Lower down the school it may have been based on a disciplinary problem, but surely this did not extend to the sixth form.

Those subjected to both circumstances, which did you prefer, single sex or mixed?



INFORMAL SHOTS...

More of those informal photos which are so much more representative of life at KGS than the annual form photos which form the basis for the School's pictorial record.

Right: The 1964 Hockey team getting ready for their match against Fairfield Grammar School.



Above:
MARILYN DRAPER (58-65) is first to the tape in the 100 yards race on Sports Day.

Below:
Some of the girls on the 1964 Biology trip to the Lake District.

Where are the boys?

THE DELUGE...

December 1955

GEORGE BUTCHER (English) wrote this appreciation in *Kingswood Chronicles*..

'Christmas Entertainment by the Junior Choral and Dramatic Society

'It is more often than not the Seniors who have the chance to take part in public performances, and it was refreshing to see how the Junior and Middle School could rise to the occasion. The choice of plays was not easy. There was much to be said for a Nativity Play, but it was difficult to find one that seemed right. We turned finally to the famous play connected with the Guilds of Coventry, and coupled with it an equally old Chester play, thus attempting to bring to life on our stage plays first performed in city streets over six hundred years ago.

'The plays were extensively cut, the order of events drastically altered, but no words were changed unless they were incomprehensible to a modern audience. The whole aim was to make both plays suitable for young actors and at the same time lose nothing of the spirit or the language of the original.

'Those who took part are to be congratulated.

'The Carols which completed this Christmas programme delighted the many parents and friends who again supported the School on this occasion.'

The photo on the back page shows the whole cast, from left to right:

Angels: Margaret Reece, Margaret Sparks, Jane Hodder

Japhet: C. Thompson

Japhet's Wife: Patricia Reeson

Shem: J. Summerill

Shem's Wife: Noreen Crockford

Ham's Wife: Alison Harris

Gossip: Sylvia Walters

Noah: A. Radford

Ham: J. Winchester

Noah's Wife: Pat Walters

Gossips: Jennifer Hunt, Diane Stewart



KOSA MATTERS...

WELCOME...

....To Joseph Gachagua and Jackline Wanjiru, from King's Oak Academy's sponsored school in Kenya, who were guests at our Autumn Lunch. They gave an interesting talk, after which we raised funds to sponsor two students there. They are pictured above with your Editor MIKE BENDREY, Chairman STAN BURRAGE and Treasurer MARTIN HARRIMAN. (See letter from KOSA Chairman STAN BURRAGE on page 13.)

....To those who have joined KOSA since the last time, using maiden names where appropriate:

Sue Elliott (68-73), Jean Payne (46?), Timothy Palmer (55-60), Delores Powell (widow of Ivor Powell 44-48), Ian Potter (74-79), Susan Allen (58-65), David Pearce (44-47), Lynette Davies (cohort 55-62).

